

# An Attempt to Understand the Driving Forces of Historiography in the Eurocentric Perspective in Southeast Asia

Mehmet Özay\*

**Abstract:** In this paper, I will sketch the issue of historical writing in the Eurocentric perspective concerning two regions, Malaya and the East Indies in Southeast Asia. The reason to take these regions into consideration in the same text can be justified on the basis that both regions have been historically and anthropologically considered concentric. With regard to this region, this paper is an overall attempt to understand the successive efforts of Western individuals writing history from the Eurocentric perspective since the earlier period of Western intervention in the regional socio-economic and cultural changes. In fact, absorption of the native histories is not just a reflection of understanding the native, but an attempt to transform them for some supposedly higher ideals. In this context, it would be neglectful if we did not also note that the native communities in the Eastern sphere of the Indian Ocean studied in this text have historically had Muslim majorities.

**Keywords:** Colonialism, Eurocentricism, Malaya, East Indies (Indonesia), Historiography.

**Öz:** Bu makale, Güneydoğu Asya'da, Malaya ve Doğu Hint olarak bilinen topraklarda, Avrupamerkezci yaklaşım bağlamında tarihyazımına bir giriş niteliğinde kaleme alınmıştır. Bu iki coğrafi bölgenin aynı metinde ele alınması, tarihsel ve antropolojik bağlamda ilintili olmalarından kaynaklanmaktadır. Makalede, Batılı unsurların erken dönemlerden başlayarak bölgenin sosyoekonomik ve kültürel değişim süreçlerine müdahaleleri bağlamında uygulayageldikleri Avrupamerkezci yaklaşım genel hatlarıyla ele alınacaktır. Yerlilerin tarihlerine gösterilen ilgi, salt bu toplumlara anlama çabası ile sınırlı değildir, bunun ötesinde bu toplumlara kimi yüce idealler adına dönüştürme çabası içermektedir. Bu çerçevede, Hint Okyanusu'nun doğusunda kalan topraklarda hâkim unsurun Müslüman topluluklar olduğu hatırlandığında, Avrupamerkezci yaklaşımın önemi daha iyi anlaşılacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sömürgecilik, Avrupamerkezcilik, Malaya, Doğu Hint (Endonezya), Tarihyazımı.

\* Dr., Researcher.

Correspondence: mehmedozay@hotmail.com.

Atf©: Özay, M. (2013). An attempt to understand the driving forces of historiography in the eurocentric perspective in Southeast Asia. *İnsan & Toplum*, 3(6), 271-282.

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.12658/human.society.3.6.M0078>

## Introduction

Colonialism and its historical continuity, imperialism, cannot be understood accurately unless the attempts of Western powers to restructure the epistemology of native societies throughout their time in the colonized lands are underscored. When colonial powers successively arrived in Southeast Asia one after another, they almost all followed the same method of successfully establishing monopolies in fruitful merchant businesses (Ferdinand, 1991, p. 222). Aligned with this process, they also seem to have commenced outlining the history of Southeast Asian nations. Hence, the core aspect of historiography was not just restricted around their power struggles with each other in native lands and seas. While their struggles caused the native state structures to gradually fade away, they, at the same time, carved out the history of the native societies (Dahlan, 1976, p. 7). In this regard, the historical writing on regions such as Malaya (Penang, Malacca, Singapore), Java, and Aceh should be considered as prime examples.

In this paper, I will briefly sketch this issue in relation to two regions, namely, Malaya and the East Indies in Southeast Asia<sup>1</sup>. Here, the attempts of European powers, particularly the British in relation to Malaya and the Dutch in relation to the *Netherlandsche India* are going to be dealt with. The reason for taking into consideration these regions in the same text can be justified on the basis that both regions have been historically and anthropologically considered concentric.

I am going to briefly deal with the overseen factor of understanding the history of native Muslims in their own lands. How were native societies shaped historically? Who molded the social institutions; particularly in education and politics? For the purposes of this paper it should be noted that these institutions are the vehicles to structuring both historical writing and its products, such as both indigenious human power and its institutions. These and similar matters cannot simply be swept aside. Further, it cannot be asserted that all these issues have been ignored by Europeans since the very early stages of their presence in Southeast Asia. Through the considerable diversities of their profession, European actors, each in a successive manner served to justify the goal of European expansionism. It must be remembered here that this expansionism was not limited to the geographical territory of the area, but involved epistemological reconstruction, challenging the existing native intellectual constructions of history and knowledge. In particular, the latter had a very practical consequence in the sense of reshaping the colonized peoples' understanding of their place in the world.

At this juncture, it is worth remembering Edward Said's emphasis on epistemology. He wrote that the attempt of the Oriental approach to distance the authentic epistemology and political philosophy of the Orient "imposed limits upon thought about the Ori-

1 Malaya is almost historically identical to contemporary Malaysia. The East Indies refers to the modern Republic of Indonesia.

ent" (Harrison, 2009, p. 5). Indeed, one result of the Western epistemology which influenced native societies through colonialism was that it divided 'West' and 'other' (Ang, & Stratton, 1996, pp. 65-66). The Western powers underlined their imperial intentions, as colonial expansion in native lands came with the general assumption that colonists had exclusive rights to design the native societies, commencing with the invention of the latter's histories. This policy was the inevitable result of Western "self-asserted superiority" (Ang, & Stratton, 1995, p. 69). Mathieu Courville, citing from Edward Said, pointed out that this process led the Western scholarly elite to gain legitimacy in understanding of the native societies. Whether connected or independent, each member of this scholarly elite group contributed to some extent to the construction of the "epistemology of imperialism" (Courville, 2010, p. 23).

In fact, absorption of the natives' histories in itself is not just a reflection of understanding the native, but an attempt to transform them for some higher ideals, guided by Western perceptions of civilization. In this context, the subject matter will certainly be less well comprehended if the fact that the natives who lived in the Eastern part of the Indian Ocean have historically been majority Muslim communities is ignored or overlooked. Even naming the areas or regions in contemporary Southeast Asia represented a salient act of Western powers molding the geography in their own vision as a result of their engagement in colonial expeditions. Thus, while the Malay Archipelago rested between farther India and the Far East in British imperial perceptions, the Dutch defined it as *Nederlandsch-Indie* (Kratoska, 2005, p. 252). It is worth mentioning here that writing history in the modern sense was in the hands of the Western intellectuals and the Western academia since the very early era of colonialism. Hence, what the striking is that this established tradition has not been transpassed until fairly recent times though the independence movements that emerged in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Noor, 2010, p. 3).

Nevertheless, historical writing about Southeast Asian countries is observed to have been embedded in the European presence as a secondary field, or as remarked by Dipesh Chakrabarty, "variations on a master narrative", say "the history of Europe" (1992, p. 337). This is an inevitable fact to some extent, because native histories have been a crucial subject in the eyes of Western colonial officials and historians since early contacts throughout the colonialization process. Early attempts can be recognized in the works of Marco Polo (late 13<sup>th</sup> century), and Tome Pires (early 16<sup>th</sup> century), which have functioned until today very constructively influencing latter works. The salient aspect of these earliest accounts is that they do not have a place for the voice of natives. Instead, they were based solely on the perceptions and observations of their writers. And one might argue that this approach has been inherited by later writers. In other words, the discourse of these early writings considered the natives "as a passive, silent other" (Ang, & Stratton, 1995, pp. 65-66).

Eurocentric understandings of the communities in Southeast Asia, particularly Malay Muslim societies, has been a subject of investigation for researchers and academics attached to well established centers of research in the former 'metropolitan' countries, places like the School of Oriental and Asian Studies in London, various institutes in Paris and Aix-en-Provence, and Dutch universities and institutions such as *Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies* (KITLV), and had a great deal of continuity with the past. And, furthermore,

Most European scholars have studied the former colonies of their own countries, exploiting archives and research materials retained from the colonial period, with an emphasis on colonial history, ethnology and linguistics. Long established academic journals such as *the Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, *the Revue française d'histoire d'Outre-mer*, and *the Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* continue to publish primarily on the colonial territories once ruled by the Netherlands, France and Britain respectively" (Kratoska, 2005, p. 7).

Among the publications of the colonial 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were the *Journal of Malaya Branch of Asiatic Society* (JMBRAS), *Straits Times*, *Straits Times Weekly Issue*, *Straits Mail*, *Penang Gazette* (Malaya-Singapore), *De Java Bode*, *Sumatra Courant*, *De Lokomotief* (Indonesia) etc.

### **Eurocentric Approach**

Eurocentricism refers to European ways of understanding and practicing social sciences, including history, on the basis of methodologies developed in relation to the historical experiences of the European continent. This initial point is supposedly applicable to historical writing of other societies through academic or non-academic works produced by the Western individuals.

Throughout the process, people from all segments of society such as priests, travelers, state historians, and soldiers from all ranks, races and creeds of European nations; and, perhaps peculiarly, administrative officers who worked directly for the Colonial Office, contributed to the production of the cumulative knowledge of the East. Their Eurocentric discourse was unquestionably colored by prejudices towards Muslim communities developed in earlier stages of history, from experiences in places such as Andalusia in the Iberian Peninsula. Furthermore, one can assert that the accounts of the above mentioned scholarly and non-scholarly circles, which reflect European perspectives or Eurocentric approaches, inevitably served to structure the policies of the European kingdoms. These works made the natives' history and geography a research subject dealt with and narrated from the European standpoint (Makdisi, 1998, p. 128). Among the numerous examples, a few can be highlighted: Albert S. Bickmore's *Travels in the East Indian Archipelago*; Anthony Reid's *Witnesses to Sumatra - A Travellers' Anthology*; John Anderson, *Mission to the East Coast of Sumatra*.

In addition, they reflected the European perspective to some extent since the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, because all these works, as argued, have contributed to the establishment of the image of the orient (Aljunied, 2004, p. 3). Citing from Edward Said, these works are the vehicles disseminating the conversion of a non-European world into representation (Said, 1993, p. 99). These ventures of Western intellectual endeavor inevitably served to control the “mind of the conquered or subordinated,” which led to the construction or reconstruction of the cultural environment of the native societies (Alatas, 1977, p. 17).

Taking into consideration both of the arguments above, we can say Eurocentricism functions as a “method of analysis” that gives the “Occidental white” the privilege of molding the Oriental. The Occident applies this method with specific criteria. These are as follows: a) Western reasoning in a linear way has a priori status, and, b) everything must be judged by European norms. In an overall evaluation, the Occident is responsible for the civilizing the Orient, as remarked by Edward Said (Ozay, 1995, p. 11; Said, 1993, p. 30). It is not surprising that this process was realized by the established educational institutions. Thus, initiation of education starting from the sons of elite families through the Malay language (Bahasa Malayu), materialized at schools established by the Westerners conducted by the Dutch (Alisjahbana, 1976, p. 35).

As observed in the early developments in the colonies, the aim was to spread Western knowledge rather than promote oriental studies. In this regard, the argument of Thomas Babington Macaulay, in his “Minute on Education”, 1835, puts the clear conception of Western thought concisely by stating that a “single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India”. Elsewhere, he further advocates that “education should be Western learning, including science, and that the language of instruction should be English” (Milner, 1982, pp. 108-9). This policy is met in practice in the idea and implementation of Thomas Stamford Raffles, who initiated the first complete institution which was supposed to be a “monument to British culture” (*Federation of Malaya on Education for 1954*, 1954, p. 3) and aimed “to stimulate the revival of wealth and civilization in Southeast Asia” (Turnbull, 1972, p. 224). In fact, this policy was based on his idea, stated in his writings, that “Great Britain has carried civilization and improvement in its train” (Raffles, 1991, p. 33). And almost a century later, this issue was again highlighted by Richard O. Winstedt, who proposed the teaching of Greece and Rome history, pertaining to education in Malaya (Winstedt, 1966, p. 132). All these aspects of British colonialism in Malaya exemplify how the natives were perceived by the British and were also subjected to having their culture and history remolded at the hands of the latter.

### **Attempts at Historical Writing in Native Societies**

To begin with, it must be recognized that the Eurocentric approach in historiography and understanding is based on the knowledge production process. The establishment of universities, for example, Gottingen University in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, created places where a well-constructed formulation of the knowledge of historicity was produced on the basis of the Western tradition. The superiority of the knowledge as product of the mentioned higher education institutions gets its resources from the sacralization of knowledge as an product of Greek and Roman civilization, where the non-Greek and non-Roman are considered inferior (Ozay, 1995, p. 9). Here, non-Greek and non-Roman refers to the Malay Muslim societies in Southeast Asia.

In one sense or another, Eurocentric force tries to impose the theories of space, time and causality of Kantian philosophy via Western actors. In this context, Edward Said remarks that the philosophers' definition of history as a subject area was determined in the Enlightenment Era. In particular, starting from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, historical writing has been molded and consecrated by history of the modern European state-system. In this regard, Hegel's philosophy of history constitutes an explicitly Eurocentric treatise (Callinicos, p. 166). According to Maxime Robertson, "the Eurocentrism that would find its place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the universalism of the 18<sup>th</sup> century naturally would give way to a belief in the hierarchical separation of cultures" (Makdisi, 1998, p. 105).

With the existence of the European powers, historical writing has been a field directly derived under the influence of the Eurocentric paradigm that emerged from colonial and imperialistic expansion in native lands. This approach includes the practice of assimilating other histories, particularly in colonized geographies, whether expressed openly or not. As Callinicos writes, English speaking historians incline to be a bit racist in their writings, perceived no value in native histories, and degrade their value as captured in the clichéd expression, "the introduction of order into barbarism" (Callinicos, 1995, p. 167; Ozay, 1995, p. 9). The latter sentiment might be framed in terms of "wars, homicides, victims of violence or some other variable" (Mestrovic, 1993, p. 28). In fact, there is no doubt that Westerners emulated the binaries of a cosmos through oppositions such as "rational/irrational, sacred/profane, culture/nature, citizen/barbarian and so on, which were originally produced in the time of ancient Greece." In each case, one is given a central importance while the other is subordinated, paralleling encounters with native societies and their social presence (Aksoy, 1996, p. 114; Ozay, 1995, p. 9). By their attempts to write the histories of the native peoples living on the periphery of the global empires of the European continent, to a certain extent they, "subordinated them by banishing their identities" (Said, 1993, p. 222). Here, it is worth remembering the concept of 'oriental historiography' of Farish Noor. He constructs this concept with adjectives such as "narrowing, arresting and totalizing," with a perspective that reflects the views of Edward Said (Noor, 2010, p. 2; Said, 1993, p. 28).

There is the example of the acquisition of property in the Penang Island, then a part of territory of the Sultanate of Kedah, by the personal efforts of Francis Light in 1786. After that, and in a relatively short span of time, a work of George Leith, then Lieutenant Governor, titled, *A Short Account of the Settlement, Produce and Commerce of Prince of Wales Island* was published in 1804 in London. As can be immediately seen, the name of the island was converted to the British cultural environment (Gallop, 2006, p. 27). Another example comes from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Since the British Colonial center was in India and expanded from there to the Eastern Archipelago, it is no doubt salient how at least some European historians perceived the presence and success of the British in this continent. For instance, a Norwegian historian, cited by Muhammad Aslam Syed in his work published 1861, approached the matter with Hegelian dialectics and asserted that the Hindu Indian was thesis, the Islamic period was anti-thesis; and the British rule synthesis (Aslam Syed, 2006, p. 22). It appears that a Hegelian understanding of historical developments reflected the context of Eastern societies being molded to a European view, which might have been elaborated for material purposes or intellectual superiority, or both.

As to the relation between the Eurocentric approach and historical writing in the view of Farish Noor, it is argued that knowledge production at the height of imperialism was never accidental or innocent. The imperial military outreach of the West went with its epistemic outreach, and the construction of an 'imperialist epistemology'. This construction, inevitably seen in the examples specific to Malaya, commenced with the discovery of Malay language by compiling dictionaries and building grammatical rules with the efforts of individuals such as, William Marsden<sup>2</sup>, William E. Maxwell, Thomas Stamford Raffles, Richard J. Wilkinson, Mathew Swettenham, William Girdleston Shellabear, and Richard O. Winstedt. These individuals, exercising salient efforts in the field, were multi-purpose functionaries whose academic and scholarly concerns complemented their imperialist ambitions, and who worked closely with the security apparatus of the imperial system (Hunt, 1994, p. 14).

Throughout the colonial tradition, the scholarship of British colonial intellectuals, as mentioned in this text, established a local history of Malay (Bolton, 2002, p. viii)<sup>3</sup>. The same approach was conducted in the East Indies by the Dutch colonial administration in 17<sup>th</sup> century; earlier than the British involvement in Malaya. The Dutch used their authority to mold the variety of ethnicities in Java, and later on the outer islands, establishing classical Malay language as a single language (Hoffman, 1973, p. 23). No doubt such endeavors made accessible an essential and immense resource in the form

2 William Marsden. (1984). *A Dictionary and Grammar of the Malayan Language*, Singapore: Oxford University Press.

3 For details see. Gupta, (2003).

of authentic sources, and then made it possible to pen down the history according to the epistemological tradition of the Western writers themselves.

As noted above, the colonial administration build schools, libraries, museums “to acquire and arrest the history of the natives to keep it ideologically fixed, to be reproduced occasionally in pastiche, divorced from context and meaning” (Noor, 2010, p. 64-5). Pertaining to the importance of educational institutions, among the many examples that could be cited, The Malay College at Kuala Kangsar was especially distinguished and targeted by the British colonial administration so as to train selectively the boys of the palace and nobles (Federated Malay States Resident Generals Annual Report for the Year 1905, 1906). In terms of publication, it is worth mentioning at least some works among the literary genealogy here: T. S. Raffles’ *The History of Java*; R. J. Wilkinson’s *The Malacca Sultanate, History of Malay Literature, A Malay English Dictionary*; R. O. Winstedt’s *The Malay Founder of Medieval Malacca*; L. A. Mills’ *History of British Malaya: 1824-1867*; A. Teeuw’ *The history of the Malay Language: A Preliminary Survey*, Christian Snouck Hurgronje’s *The Atjehnese*, etc. Their attempt to redesign native history with their own systemic approach is rightly called Eurocentric. This view can be observed in the stance of Richard Winstedt, a successful educationist and officer during the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Malaya, who asserted, “the Malays were a culturally unsophisticated people and that their history and literature was of no practical use or relevance” (Noor, 2010, p. 66).

It cannot be said during their scholarly efforts, which actually led to a gradual creation of Eastern peoples’ history, that they did not struggle to overcome to their bias. However, it can be also said that their’s was not a naive, innocent mission to satisfy their intellectual curiosities, but was instead due to their own position as the representative of European civilization. They felt a responsibility to come to the terms with the demands their relevant European nations. By their efforts to give a shape to the history of Easterners, they functioned as the apparatus of colonial regimes to consolidate the latter’s existence in native lands.

This is no doubt a reflection of the epistemological issue that successively emerged to confront Western scholars on the European continent but which they also continued resolving in their own way wherever they went in the course of time. That is to say, the problem involves the relation between social changes and the intention of how to understand and give a direction to them. In regard to the Southeast Asian context, from the outset the Western scholarly officials and administrative agencies tried to give meaning to the native societies on the basis of their experiences and studies in Europe. But it is not restricted by this; they transmitted their ‘problematic’ onto the native lands with their own competitions and clashes.



In this context, it should be pointed out that a unique example of this sort of attempt is to be found in the works of Christian Snouck Hurgronje, as exemplified in *The Acehnese*, a significant socio-anthropological work.<sup>4</sup> He intended to develop a concept of Acehnese society by his participatory observations in Mekkah (1883/84) and his relatively brief stay in Aceh (1894/95). His attempts, which had a considerable place in the larger project of the Dutch East Indian Company, served a Western dominated “knowledge-production”. As asserted by Farish Noor, the latter concept was “never accidental, or innocent”. It can be strongly argued that since the initial attempts of Western powers to intervene in native social realities, military and economic activity went hand in hand with epistemic activity, and the two in support of each other. Whilst the former was conducted to enrich the colonial states in terms of material well-being, the latter worked towards molding the historical identity of the natives. In particular, commencing from the second part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the European central powers focused on direct “intrusion into nearly all the cultures of the Muslim zone” (Hall, 1976, p. 89).

Thus, the representatives of the Western powers aspired not only to economic expansion backed by military power; their primary purpose was to transform the epistemic reality of the natives. In other words, this attempt was a sort of mapping of the colonized world in the domain of epistemic belonging.

### **How to Sift Colonialism from the Eurocentric Approach?**

Here emphasis should be put on the relation between the tangible and intangible aspects and their relations with each other. Colonization, in a particular geography and in relation to a community as a social entity, was not connected only to the material extraction of the existing sources but also was a vehicle to remold the cultural environment of the colonized. The latter had become placed in the “orbit of colonial order of power and knowledge” (Noor, 2010, p. 5). In other words, the colonialists’ overall end was not restricted to the domain of economics; they were interested also in “cultural domains of life of colonized peoples” (Nyang, & Abed-Rabbo, 1984, p. 259).

When there was no concept of higher education during the early period of colonialization, the knowledge system was produced during the venture of the Western scholarly administrative elite, such as T. S. Raffles. The vision and mission of the Singapore Institution, better known as ‘Raffles’ Institution’ was determined by Raffles himself, aiming “diffusion of European culture among the upper classes,” which also included Christian civilization (The Straits Times, 1872, p. 2). Teaching Roman and British History, which formed part of the curriculum in Free Schools, in Singapore for instance, represents a common example of this (Singapore Institution Free School, Fifth Annual Report, 1838-39, 1839, p. 5).

4 see. Hurgronje, (1906).

In fact, it can be argued that there is a consistency in vision and mission of the colonial education policy implemented since some centuries earlier. For instance, the authorities of the Dutch East India Company ordered the governor in Batavia to pay attention to the instillation of the Christian religion in education institutions in the year 1617 (Robequain, 1978, p. 398). This policy was observed to have been implemented in the form of teaching the Bible and related Christian treatises in Free Schools which first emerged in the 1830s (Singapore Institution Free School, Fourth Annual Report, 1837-38, 1839, p. 2).

There is no doubt that these approaches and narratives implicitly reflect a Western-oriented view which is inconsiderate of non-European environments (Chakrabarty, 1992, p. 338) and this is transmitted, to some extent, in the work of the native 'students'. This transmission is not only seen in the secular, but also Islamic histories of the region, including works analyzing traditional Islamic education centers and works written on Islamic sciences. All these efforts of the Westernized native scholars become "symptoms" of the concept of "subalternity" of native resources. This attitude of the Western educated scholars is based on fear, whether implicitly or explicitly felt, and as a pressure on their academic mentality. Owing to this reason, when they are questioned on the matter why they become self-alienated to their natives resources, though they do not directly blame the authentic scholars, but, being polite, they categorize the scholars as not being scientific enough (Chakrabarty, 1992, p. 337).

Given the points above, it can be observed that there has been a successive attitude of Westerncentric historiography, and it is not surprising that the Western powers visiting the Southeast Asian port cities approached their subject with well-established Eurocentric perceptions of history and historical writing. For example, the very early European sailors set off with orders from the Pope of the Catholic Church in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, aiming to discover the Lost Christian Community somewhere in the East. Thus, journeys were sanctified by the highest level of the Church authorities on the basis of the 'knowledge' acquired from the Pope. Another salient venture was conducted by the Roman Catholic Bishop of the Syrian Christians when he aimed to find out the "lost tribe of Christians" who are believed to have "descended from the ancient Christians of St. Thomas" in the East (Philip, 1998, p. 304).

The above-mentioned attempt did not include initially how to comprehend the Eastern societies, states or their histories. That is not to say that the Europeans did not attempt to understand the native societies, but they reconstructed the natives' histories, creating similarities with past European experiences. If we remember that philosophers of history relate the history of Europe with the developmental phases of capitalism (Callinicos, 1995, p. 171), it is understandable how their work in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia served to write the history of the region in question. The work of Anthony Reid titled, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680*, emulates Emanuel Wallerstein's *The Meditterreanean*. It has been argued by various

scholars and researchers that the prime end of the colonial powers was “looking after their economic interests” by fierce commercial rivalry (Dahlan, 1976, p. 2). This view is implicitly or explicitly presented in a variety of histories of Southeast Asia stressing that the centuries which witnessed the European sea powers in Southeast Asia are the ones that have also become research areas of intense research (Chandra, 1987, p. 19).

In this regard, it is worth talking about the Aceh context, which is always connected by Snouck Hurgronje, who may be regarded as the outstanding figure of the Eurocentric approach owing to his work during the Dutch War (1873-1911). He was then a contemporary scholar of Islamic sciences. It is interesting to revisit his approach to elaborate analytically Aceh social composition. He based his argumentation on Aceh society by observing and interacting personally both in Mekkah and Aceh. It is also observed that he built up Aceh social reality using authentic information through his interviews with native elites and commoners during his time in Aceh and Mekkah. And his data collection process reflected the native narratives.

## References

- Aksoy, N. (1996). *Batı ve başkaları*. İstanbul: Düzlem Yayınları.
- Alisjahbana, S. T. (1976). *Language planning for modernization: The case of Indonesian and Malaysian*, The Hague: Mouton.
- Aljunied, S. M. K. (2004). Edward Said and Southeast Asian Islam: Western representations of Meccan Pilgrims (hajjis) in the dutch East Indies, 1800-1900. *Journal of Commonwealth and Postcolonial Studies*, 11, 1-2.
- Ang, I., & Stratton, J. (1995). The Singapore way of multiculturalism: Western concepts/Asian cultures. *Sojourn*, 10(1), 65-89.
- Aslam, S. M. (2006). *Muslim response to the west: Muslim historiography in India: 1857-1914*. New Delhi: Adam Publishers & Distributors.
- Bolton, K. (2002). Introduction: Codifying Malaya: Nicolas B. Dennys and the descriptive dictionary of British Malaya. In N. B. Dennys (Ed.), *A descriptive dictionary of British Malaya*. London: Ganesha Publishing.
- Braduel, F. (1992). *Civilization and capitalism: 15th-18th century* (Vol 1. The structures of everyday life: The limits of the possible) (Trans. S. Reynolds). Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Callinicos, A. (1995). *Theories and narratives: Reflections on the philosophy of history*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Chakrabarty, D. (October, 1992). Provincializing Europe: Postcoloniality and the critique of history. *Cultural Studies*, 6(3), 337-357.
- Chandra, S. (1987). (ed.). “Introduction”. *The Indian Ocean explorations in history, commerce and politics* (pp. 11-27). New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Courville, M. E. (2010). *Edward Said's rhetoric of the secular*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Dahlan, H. M. (July, 1976). Malay traditional society and a colonial encounter. *Akademika, Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 9, 1-21.
- Federated Malay States Resident Generals. (1906). *Annual Report for the Year 1905*, (In. Straits Settlements, Report on the Federated Malay States for 1905, (In. *Straits Settlements Reports on the Federated Malay States*, 1904). London: Printed for His Majesty's Stationary Office, by Darling & Son.
- Federation of Malaya on education for 1954*. Kuala Lumpur: Nan Yang Press.

- Gallop, A. T. (2006). *A cabinet of oriental curiosities: An album for Graham Shaw from his colleagues*, London: The British Library.
- Gupta, A. F. (2003). The imagined learner of Malay. In J-M. Dewaele, A. Housen, & L. Wei (Ed.), *Bilingualism: Beyond basic principles*, Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Hall, D. G. E. (1976). *A history of Southeast Asia*. Hampshire: MacMillan.
- Harrison, N. (2009). 'A room place full of possibility': Said's orientalism and the literary. In R. Ghosh (Ed.), *Edward Said and the literary, social, and political world* (pp. 3-19). New York: Routledge.
- Hoffman, J. E. (July, 1973). The Malay language as a force for unity in the Indonesian archipelago: 1815-1900. *Nusantara*, 4, 19-35.
- Hunt, R. A. (1994). *A biography of William Shellabear: Soldier, missionary and scholar of Malaysia*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur.
- Hurgronje, S. (1906) *The acehnese* (Vol. 1-2) (Trans. A.W. S. O'Sullivan). Leiden: E.J. Brill.
- Kratoska, P. H., Raben, R., & Nordholt, H. S. (2005). *Locating Southeast Asia, in locating Southeast Asia: Geographies of knowledge and politics of space*. Singapore: Singapore University Press.
- Makdisi, S. (1998). *Romantic imperialism: Universal empire and the culture of modernity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Marsden, W. (1984). *A dictionary and grammar of the Malayan language*. Singapore: Oxford University Press.
- Milner, A. C. (1982). *Kerajaan: Malay political culture on the eve of colonial rule*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press.
- Noor, F. (2010). *From Inderapura to Darul Makmur a deconstructive history of Pahang*. Kuala Lumpur: Silverfish Books.
- Ozay, M. (1995). *Westernizing the third world: The Eurocentricity of economic development theories*. London: Roudledge.
- Philip, K. (1998). English mud: Towards a critical cultural studies of colonial science. *Cultural Studies*, 12(3), 300-331.
- Raffles, L. S. (1991). *Memoirs of the life and public services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles* (With an Introduction by John Bastin). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Robequain, C. (1978). *Malaya, Indonesia, Borneo and The Philippines: A geographical, economic and political description of Malaya, the East Indies and the Philippiens* (Trans. E. D. Laborde). London: Longmans, Green And Co.
- Said, E. (1993). *Culture and imperialism*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Singapore Institiution Free School. (1838). *Fourth Annual Report, 1837-38* Microfilm NL 5826, National Library of Singapore. Singapore: Singapore Free Press Office.
- Singapore Institiution Free School (1939), *Fifth Annual Report, 1838-39* Microfilm NL 5826, National Library of Singapore. Singapore: Singapore Free Press Office.
- Stjepan, G. M. (1993). *The Barbarian temperament: Toward a postmodern critical theory*. London: Routledge.
- Sulayman, S. N., & Samir, A-R. (1984). Bernard Lewis and Islamic studies: An assesment. In A. Hussain, R. Olson, & J. Qureshi (Ed.), *Orientalism, Islam and Islamists* (pp. 259-285). Vermont: Amana Books.
- Syed, A. (1977). *The myth of the lazy native*. London: Frank Cass and Company Limited.
- The Straits Times. (November 9, 1872). *Correspondence* (Microfilm NL5043). Singapore: Lee Kong Chian Reference Library.
- Turnbull, C. M. (1972). *The straits settlements 1826-1867: Indian presidency to crown colony*. London: The Athlone Press.
- Winstedt, R. (1966). *Malaya and its history* (7th ed.). London: Hutchinson University Library.