



Groundings Undergraduate Academic Journal  
University of Glasgow | Glasgow University Union

---

## **Temporal Shifts in Singapore: Renaissance and Retribution of Western Cultures and Colonial Narratives**

**Author(s):** Samarth Pinnamaraju

**Source:** Groundings Undergraduate, April 2023, Vol. 14, pp. 93-105

**Published by:** University of Glasgow, Glasgow University Union Publications

**ISSNs:** 1754-7474 (Print) | 1755-2702 (Online)

**Licensing:** This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](#). Excepted from this is the figure on page 96, which is held under third-party copyright, and reproduced here under fair use guidelines.

The CC BY 4.0 license is a Creative Commons license. This is a non-copyleft free license that is good for art and entertainment works, and educational works. It is compatible with all versions of the GNU GPL; however, like all CC licenses, it should not be used on software. People are free to: Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format; Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. But they must conform to the following terms: Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.

---

# Temporal Shifts in Singapore: Renaissance and Retribution of Western Cultures and Colonial Narratives

Samarth Pinnamaraju

---

*Singapore's relationship with colonialism has long been fraught with resentment while simultaneously being unable to detach itself from its identity as a former British colony. Colonial officer Sir Stamford Raffles is regarded as a national icon, after whom the Raffles Hospital, Raffles Institution and business district Raffles Place are named after. Along the Singapore River is a white marble statue of Raffles, with the plaque reading "On this historic site, Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles first landed in Singapore on 28th January 1819, and with genius and perception changed the destiny of Singapore from an obscure fishing village to a great seaport and modern metropolis."*

*Yet, there have been efforts to counter Western influence in Singapore, to justify illiberal or anti-democratic policies or simply to cultivate a synthetic national identity amongst a majority immigrant population with no primordial connection to the land.*

*It is then necessary to investigate the origins of this strange relationship with the British: a desire to either defend the colonists or to declare Western values as wholly irreconcilable to ours, and therefore need to be rejected.*

---

## Introduction

Singapore is well-known as a global trading hub, having undergone rapid economic growth after gaining independence from the British Empire only in 1963, and

becoming fully independent in 1965 (1). Much of this success is credited to the foundations laid by the Empire, allowing free trade to flourish in the region, although there has recently been a resurgence of the anti-colonial sentiment among Singaporean academics (Sa'at

1: Singapore was unilaterally removed from the Malaysian Federation in 1965 because of racial tensions and politico-economic disagreements.

2: It is important to note that Singapore was also colonised by Japan in the 1940s, but this essay will focus specifically on the legacy of British colonial rule from 1819 to 1963.

et al. 2021: 41) and young people, just as there has been a rising interest in postcolonial theory in academia as a whole (Elam, 2019). This is set against the backdrop of further Western global dominance compounded by the post-Cold War triumph of capitalism, resulting in cultural homogenisation around the world. Unsurprisingly, the Western colonial powers are unpopular among Southeast Asian nations, given that its decolonisation project in the area ended as recently as 1983 (United Nations, 1983: 3) and its continued imperialistic actions. The story is different for Singapore; while Singaporeans campaigned fiercely for freedom in the 1950s, in the present day, the general public is encouraged to forget about colonial exploitation and oppression: Singapore was 'founded', not colonised in 1819. Not only is British colonial history diluted or erased entirely, it is celebrated; in 2019 Singapore celebrated the bicentennial, 200 years after the British first arrived in Singapore, various statues of the colonial officers are erected around the country, and institutions are named after them. They are, in short, oddly exulted in Singapore.

However, academic Thum Ping Tjin argues that the colonial legacy was more negative than it was positive, that Singapore's authoritarian and socially illiberal policies can be directly traced to

British rule (Dzeidzic et al., 2020). Thus, this essay will examine these contrasting views to understand the significance of the symbolic retribution and renaissance of the Western presence in Singapore: how it has ebbed and flowed, influenced culture and politics, and the possible trajectory of the future.

### **The Ebb and Flow of Anti-Colonial Sentiment**

Singapore was initially very anti-colonial: Merdeka (3) was the era of a fierce struggle for independence from the British Empire in the 1950s, up till full internal self-government was granted in 1959. Over the years however, the colonial period and its significance has been forgotten by the general public. More recently, there seems to be a renaissance of anti-West sentiment, though it is not useful in postcolonial discourse as it is more reactionary than it is progressive.

Firstly, Singapore's anti-colonialism was pragmatic, and this would form the foundation of her politics since independence.

In the context of Southeast Asian anti-colonial movements, Singapore's was seen as unremarkable and pandering to the Western powers because of the relative lack of violence and favourable relationships with the colonial nations,

3: Roughly translated to freedom in Malay.

4: Indonesia saw and continues to see itself as Southeast Asia's Primus Inter Pares, or the First Among Equals because of its violent and difficult decolonisation struggle. (Roberts et al., 1970)

especially when compared to the Indonesian Revolution (4) and the Vietnam War. Though the incumbent political party, the currently centre-right People's Action Party (PAP) was presented as "fiercly anti-colonial", the party for "the downtrodden and marginalised under colonialism" (Sa'at et al., 2021: 58), the desire for sovereignty was paired with a sense of pragmatism that the PAP and later Singapore as a whole, would come to be known for. Party leader Lee Kuan Yew said about their attitude towards the British: We want to be friendly with the British ... In the fight against colonialism we must think up good methods, for colonialism is cunning and clever ... We must keep a cool head and think of methods of retaliation (Sa'at et al., 2021: 56)

It is thus clear that the practical option was to maintain diplomatic relations with the British, given that Singapore is small in population and land-scarce, therefore heavily dependent on international trade. Other countries also served as cautionary tales when they rightly refused to succumb to the will of the colonisers and faced unjust retribution in the form of sanctions and exclusion from trade agreements (5).

Yet, this does not provide an adequate explanation for the exultation of the people who colonised Singapore,

evidenced by the number of hospitals, schools and landmarks named after Stamford Raffles, the man who 'founded' Singapore in 1819.

This is not to mention the erasure and dilution of the exploitation and oppression of locals in schools' history syllabi, such that the general public accepts the celebration of the bicentennial in 2019. In fact, the colonial legacy seemed to largely have been erased from the national consciousness. Interestingly: Singapore's post-colonial condition is marked officially not by our merger with Malaysia ... which was supposed to liberate us from the British empire ... but by our separation from Malaysia... our post-colonial condition has been constantly spooked ... by multiple threats of failed nationhood -- of which colonialism was notably not one (Sa'at et al., 2021: 15)

This ostensibly suggests that the colonial period matters very little to the general public, that while the government might celebrate the bicentennial as a symbolic gesture to avoid alienating the West, the British are not genuinely viewed in an overly-positive light, nor do they exert significant influence over local culture. Paradoxically however, Alfian Sa'at suggests that "Colonialism has just so permeated our structures of feeling [where] you cannot decolonize without

5: The US has imposed various sanctions on Cuba because of its anti-capitalist government, including vaccines during the Covid-19 pandemic. (Stangler, 2021) Haiti has also been sanctioned for its anticolonial resistance. (Elegua, 2022)



**Temporal Shifts:** *Singapore*

also losing an essential part of yourself” (Sa’at et al., 2021: 32). A large part of this is language: if the lingua franca of Singapore is English, a significant proportion of the media consumed by Singaporeans is English-language, often Western, media. This perceived homogenisation of culture and lack of distinctive national identity has led to the dangerous perception that ‘Western’ and ‘Asian’ values are in conflict with each other, that they fall into a neat binary. As a result, ‘Asian values’ such as pragmatism, filial piety and Confucianism were promoted by the government in the 1980s and 1990s (Chan, 1997) as underpinning the larger national identity, an attempt that not only fell flat due to its vagueness and inauthenticity, but also led to a dangerous rise of anti-West sentiment that was mistaken for anti-imperialism. Demands for greater

political representation and human rights for the LGBTQ community are perceived as ‘Western imports’ (Ang, 2021): decolonisation in this sense ironically means to continue the homophobic policies inherited from the British.

Moreover, concerns over human rights occupy a unique space in Singapore’s approach to crime. Though its crime rate is low, its approach to dealing with crime is coercive, unlike other countries which enjoy safety from violent crime (World Population Review, 2023). Such a coercive approach is also justified by the false dichotomy between Western and Asian values. The death penalty still actively being used in Singapore for crimes as minor as drug dealing. This is because many liberal democratic ideals, such as the provision of universal human rights, are seen by the people as

Western features that were not applicable to Southeast Asia. 74% of the general public in Singapore agree that the capital punishment should be meted out for the most serious crimes, and 62% agree that it is appropriate even for drug trafficking (MHA, 2022).

This support also likely comes from young people, since Lee Kuan Yew's "brilliant responses" to 'arrogant' Western interviewers about human rights and the death penalty have recently become popular amongst young people on TikTok (TikTok 2022), evincing a renaissance of anti-West sentiment. Prima facie, the

---

*While colonial administration did play some role in Singapore's later success, its part is largely overstated.*

---

interviewers' concerns about human rights may seem hypocritical: how dare they question us on human rights when they have subjugated and brutalised us for years? This is compounded by the misconception that the death penalty is somehow a communitarian approach: that the one criminal must be executed to defend the safety and dignity of society as a whole. Aside from the fact that there are other, more humane means of preventing and reforming criminals, collectivist ideologies have always included the community support for

and promotion of individual rights (Bae, 2008). Confucius himself believed that the government is meant to model virtuous behaviour for its citizens, which is in fundamental opposition to state violence. (Bae, 2008) Overall, the defence of death penalty is rooted in ignorance and contradiction. After fifty years of independence, the time has come to question our own governments as to why social progress seems to lag behind economic progress.

In all, although the British colonial period is not fully acknowledged or addressed in public spaces, anti-colonial sentiment in Singapore manifests itself through an attempt to define national identity in opposition to what the West stands for: liberal democracy, individualism and leisure (Robson, 2017). However, due to Singapore's multicultural immigrant makeup, pragmatism is used to unify its people, and more dangerously, is used to justify the neglect of human rights.

### **Singapore-Upon-Thames**

The colonial legacy is also misunderstood by the international community, who sometimes depict Singapore as an ideal of a decolonised nation, an idea that carries colonialist and racist implications. The renaissance of such a mindset equally applies to Singaporeans who support the exploitation of neighbouring, often less industrialised, Asian states by Singapore. While the colonial context explains the desire for Singapore to conform to Western ideals of modernity, it is

interesting that the British Conservative Party wants to adopt its former colony's policies to achieve domestic growth. Notwithstanding the misconceptions of Singapore as a laissez-faire paradise instead of having a tightly-controlled politico-economic system, and the odd parallels between Brexit and Singapore's expulsion from Malaysia, the concept itself should be something of a symbolic triumph: a former colony serving as the model to be emulated by the colonisers. The conception of the idea seems far from a compliment however, as Conservative writer and politician Dan Hannan claims that the "magic ingredient" that "transformed those swampy mangrove trees into the gleaming skyscrapers" was unilateral free trade. This claim is not just ignorant but blatantly racist in its assertion that precolonial Singapore was an insignificant, underdeveloped jungle until the "erratic and romantic colonial officer... Sir Stamford Raffles" (YouTube, 2019) developed and civilised the primitive natives. Such is the standard colonial narrative that some Singaporeans still partly accept to this day (Chen 2019), crediting the British for our success instead of our own ancestors. While colonial administration did play some role in Singapore's later success, its part is largely overstated. Before 1819, Singapore was a bustling port city that played an instrumental role

as a maritime trade centre in the region. Indeed, excavations between 1984 and 2012 found that there were many manufacturing activities that took place in Singapore after 1300, and a wide assortment of often high quality goods were imported from China and India up till the early 17th century (Miksic, 2013). While the British colonists can be credited for reviving its influence as a maritime port, its 'development' always had the primary purpose of serving the empire rather than the local people (Jones, 1997), leaving Singapore impoverished after decolonisation. This elucidates the pervasiveness of the colonial myth even in today's 'decolonised' and 'enlightened' world, such that even when Singapore is recognised internationally, it is but to reinforce racist ideologies.

Another consequence of the misunderstanding of the colonial legacy is Singapore's neo-imperialism in Southeast Asia. The popular perception of British colonialism is that it was benevolent, or at least when compared to countries like India, was relatively peaceful. As Hai Bin Neo illustrates, "What's interesting about colonialism in Singapore is that on the surface it looks wonderful. But everyone knows that there is a trauma. And we don't address it. Or we forget about the trauma... we have been inflicting it on ourselves, on our brothers and sisters, our migrant workers" (Sa'at et al., 2021: 37)

6: Approximately £370.

There is a lack of discourse regarding imperialism, instead there is a general acceptance that simply because Singapore is not suffering as other former colonies are, the colonial legacy is irrelevant to modern politics. Thus, we do not connect the British colonists' use of Indian convict labour to build local infrastructure and the present-day use of underpaid migrant labour from impoverished Southeast or South Asian countries. Many justify it with the belief that "we are doing migrant workers a favour by 'rescuing' them from unemployment" or even lower pay in their home countries, thus "they should be grateful" (Sa'at et al., 2021: 38). This is in spite of most foreign domestic workers (FDWs) making less than \$600 (6) per month (Poh, 2021), a figure almost one-seventh the average citizen's salary (SingStat, 2017), with no governmental attempt to rectify this. One can draw a parallel between this and the colonial narrative of the White Man rescuing the savage native from their primitive ways through subjugation and enslavement. Moreover, Singapore's extraction of sand from other countries and the degradation of coastal ecosystems through the expansion of Singaporean companies is justified with the same logic as the colonists; that we are developing their 'rudimentary' economies instead of exploiting them for our own benefit. As with everything Singapore, we have adapted a British system to fit our local context, evincing a twofold renaissance of imperialistic narratives.

In conclusion, there is a renaissance of the traditional colonial narrative of the 'civilised' people bringing prosperity to the primitive native people, both from the British and Singaporeans. Neither group has a strong understanding of the colonial legacy: while the British who repeat this narrative fundamentally misunderstand the country's economic situation, the Singaporeans with this belief misunderstand colonial rhetoric and how it was used to dehumanise colonised peoples.

### **Singapore, a truly independent nation-state**

There has also been a renaissance of cultural values in response to the rapid urbanisation and sanitisation of areas of historical and cultural significance because they do not fit the image of Singapore as a clean 'Garden City'. This is part of a broader movement against capitalism and hyper-modernism around the world, where the resulting alienation is explored in media and academia. This section will explore two films: the extremely popular *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018), that reinforces the image of Singapore as a wealthy, exotic 'Garden City'; and *Tiong Bahru Social Club* (2020), that deconstructs the relationship between capitalism, wealth and happiness using Lao Tzu's teachings.

While *Crazy Rich Asians* presents Singapore with the rare opportunity to take the international stage, it lacks the authenticity, as it merely utilises the mere



aesthetic of Singapore's affluence to appeal to a predominantly Western audience, thus reinforcing the idea of Singapore as a rich 'Garden City'. The audience sees the country through its Chinese-American protagonist, Rachel's eyes. After landing in the country, all she sees is the opulent aesthetic of Singapore's wealthy, especially when she visits her friend Peik Lin's and fiancé Nick's enormous houses. There are no other distinctly Singaporean features that the majority of Singaporeans who live in modest public housing (SingStat, 2023) can relate to. While Kevin Kwan, the author of the novel, claimed that he intended his work to satirise the experience of rich Singaporeans (Zhao, 2019), the satire and substantial Singaporean qualities are entirely lost in the film. It is instead entirely about the sense of cultural confusion that Asian-Americans, and perhaps Asians living in the West more generally. Aside from the racism and xenophobia they face in Western countries, they are also rejected for being too 'Westernised' in Asia. The latter is represented by Nick's mother's attitude towards Rachel, condemning Americans like her for "think[ing] about their own happiness". When considering that the primary audience is Western, this is dangerously in portrays Singaporeans, or Asians more broadly as holding "culturally exotic" values (Zhao, 2019) and being judgmental. Overall, it merely

reinforces the dichotomy of 'Western' and 'Asian' values without honest representation of the country that it is set in and ostensibly represents.

In contrast, *Tiong Bahru Social Club* is made for Singaporeans: the characters are not judgmental, nor do their depictions exoticise Singapore. Instead, they use Singapore's wealth and technological progress to explore the search for happiness amidst capitalism and modernisation. In the film, the main character, Ah Bee, is sent to live in a neighbourhood designed to maximise resident happiness through sophisticated technology, drawing inspiration from *Black Mirror*. Interestingly, the film seems to be a microcosm of Singapore itself: adapting certain Western features to fit the local context. However, the resolution is entirely independent of Western influence. As Ah Bee contemplates the fundamental nature of happiness and its pursuit, his realisation is adapted from a Lao Tzu quote: "Clay is shaped to make a pot, and what's useful is its emptiness... What is is beneficial, while what is not also proves useful." (Yu, 2018: 1) He understands that 'feeling empty' or a lack of constant joy is contrary to the goals of the club, but ideal in its provision of stability and an acknowledgment of the full range of human emotion. While this is

7: The ungrammatical title is typical of Singlish, and is indicative of the type of language used in the film.

not an anti-colonial film, it demonstrates a renaissance of Chinese thought and philosophy. Instead of promoting a synthetic concoction of 'Asian values' in opposition to 'Western' values, the film is interested in examining the overstimulation of Singaporean life. Behind Singapore's economic and academic success, there is a dark underbelly of poor mental health because of the promotion of delayed gratification and the promise of a better future. While other films have depicted this side of Singapore with a clearer focus, *Tiong Bahru Social Club* imagines the 'utopia' of Singaporean capitalism and subverts it with Chinese philosophy that seems lost amidst a Singapore intent on further Westernisation.

Recently, there is also a desire to reclaim 'Singlish', an English vernacular that unites the various ethnic groups of Singapore, to once again assert national identity in concrete terms, although this desire of local media has often been paired with anti-Western themes that has led to criticism for lack of subtlety and thoughtful portrayals. In 2000, the government started the decades-long *Speak Good English* movement that aimed to eradicate this dialect altogether, though its official aim was to facilitate easier communication with foreigners. This movement was largely unsuccessful, as many perceived it to have the purpose of detaching Singapore from any working-class connotations (Rubdy, 2003: 4)

while 41% of Singaporeans surveyed disagreed with the movement altogether (Wong, 2008). As a result, Jack Neo's films have gained massive mainstream popularity in Singapore with how it embraced Singlish and other quintessentially Singaporean mannerisms that were considered 'low-class', encouraging Singaporeans to celebrate what makes us unique. An example of this is the popular film franchise, *I Not Stupid* (7), that focuses on students grappling with the notoriously rigorous Singapore school system, as well as adults dealing with racism in the workplace. Familiar archetypes are used here: the rebellious teen, the tiger mum and the snobbish Westerner. However, since the media industry is in its nascent stage, depiction of the characters and themes are superficial, causing many to denounce local media as simplistic and immature, thus turn to Western media.

This is not, however, wholly negative. This phase of media is necessary in order to foster a national identity, because it represents the process of Singapore finding itself. It is unfair to compare local media with Western media not simply because their entertainment industries have existed for far longer. Colonialism permeates the psychology of the colonised as well, stripping them of their established identities in an effort to subjugate them. While White people have the privilege of establishing their

8: Hokkein for "red-haired", but more broadly refers to White people.

identity independent of race, “the curse of anyone nonwhite is that you are so busy arguing what you’re not that you never arrive at what you are” (Song 2022: 5). In addition to this, most Singaporeans have no primordial connection to the land because the majority of Singaporeans are descendents of immigrants from other parts of Asia, making a broad-based, inclusive identity elusive (Chong, 2007). This explains the way mainstream films and shows focus on highlighting their Singaporean qualities such that they are unable to move into depicting the broader and more universal themes that Western media is known for. As Rankine elucidates, “There’s no private world that doesn’t include the dynamics of my political and social world” (Ulin, 2016), in the same way that Singapore exists within a broader context of immigration, colonialism and Western cultural hegemony and thus the need to establish a national identity in response is ever-present in our media. Hence, there is significant value in Neo’s albeit shallow portrayals of the snobbish ang mohs (8) that are cathartically given their comeuppance by the end of films like *I Not Stupid*. We need this symbolic retribution if we are to move into defining ourselves in concrete, complex terms. In conclusion, there has been a cultural renaissance of Singaporean values and mannerisms in local media in response to growing cultural homogenisation. Even though it is not always very successful in creating or reinforcing a concrete national identity, it is useful in beginning to assert independence from our colonial legacy.

## **The Future of Postcolonial Singapore**

In conclusion, Singapore has a complicated relationship with the West and colonialism. We have suffered its traumas without fully acknowledging and unpacking them, causing social progress in terms of human rights issues to lag behind economic progress. It has also caused neo-imperialist actions in the name of economic progress. Nevertheless, the very existence of this discourse is evidence of progress in this respect. Singapore is moving towards building a solidified and inclusive national identity independent of its relationship with the United Kingdom and its colonial past through television and films. This is a struggle simultaneously common to all decolonised nations yet specific to Singapore because of its unique relationship with the West. While history is not commonly studied and discussed because the education system acts as a “well-oiled lawyer and doctor producing machine” (Tan et al., 2018), the Ministry of Education (MOE) is taking steps to address this. It aims to promote the study of history through the introduction of humanities scholarships for pre-university students (MOE, 2021), as well as the study of specifically Southeast Asian history through the modification of syllabi (Teng, 2020). This is in tandem with the rising awareness of politics and governance among youth (Zhang, 2022). Hence, we are slowly starting to examine the past and its ties to the present in order to set a more optimistic trajectory for the future.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

Ang, H. M. (2021, February 1). Gender identity issues 'bitterly contested sources of division'; Singapore 'should not import

these culture wars': Lawrence Wong. CNA. Retrieved January 21, 2023, from

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/singapore/moe-gender-identity-issues-gender-dysphoria-culture-wars-296366>

Bae, S. (2008). Is the death penalty an Asian value? *Asian Affairs*, 39(1), 47–56.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/03068370701791899>

Crazy Rich Asians. 2018. [film] Directed by J. Chu.

Chan, J. (1997). Hong Kong, Singapore, and "Asian Values": An Alternative View. *Journal of Democracy* 8(2), 35-48.

[doi:10.1353/jod.1997.0018](https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.1997.0018).

Dziedzic, S., Bland, B., Bley, B., & Thanapal, S. (2019, May 24). Singapore's quarrel over colonialism. Lowy Institute.

Retrieved March 20, 2023, from <https://www.loyyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/singapore-s-quarrel-over-colonialism>

Elam, J. D. (2019, January 15). Postcolonial theory. obo. Retrieved March 20, 2023, from

<https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/display/document/obo-9780190221911/obo-9780190221911-0069.xml#:~:text=P>

ostcolonial%20theory%20emerged%20in%20the,feminism%20and%20critical%20race%20theory.

780190221911-0069.xml#:~:text=Postcolonial%20theory%20emerged%20in%20the,feminism%20and%20critical%20race%

20theory.

Elegua, B. N. M. (2022, January 12). Haiti: New Colonialisms, continuing resistance. Grassroots International. Retrieved

January 21, 2023, from <https://grassrootsonline.org/blog/truth-haiti-continued-resistance/>

Findings from recent studies on the death penalty in Singapore. Ministry of Home Affairs. (2022, October 19). Retrieved

March 20, 2023, from

<https://www.mha.gov.sg/mediaroom/press-releases/findings-from-recent-studies-on-the-death-penalty-in-singapore#:~:text>

=The%20studies%20show%20that%20there,a%20significant%20amount%20of%20drugs.

Golden Village Pictures . (2020). *Tiong Bahru Social Club*. Singapore.

Jones, D. (1997). *Strategic Pragmatism: The Culture of Singapore's Economic Development Board*. By

Edgar H. Schein.

Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1996. xvi, 275 pp. \$27.50. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 56(2), 566-568.

doi:10.2307/2646326

Khoo, B. K. (2021, September 6). Singapore is 'most fatigued' country in the world – and we're tired of it. *CNA Lifestyle*.

Retrieved March 20, 2023, from

<https://cnalifestyle.channelnewsasia.com/wellness/singapore-most-fatigued-country-world-we-are-tired-278311>

Miksic, J. N. (2013). *Singapore & the Silk Road of the Sea, 1300-1800*. Singapore: University of Hawaii Press.

Poh, J. (2021, September 27). Cost of hiring a domestic helper in Singapore (2021). *Income*. Retrieved March 20, 2023,

from <https://www.income.com.sg/blog/helper-costs>

*Raffles Renounced: Towards a Merdeka History*. (2021). Singapore: Ethos Books.

Roberts, C. B., Widyaningsih, E. (1970, January 1). Indonesian leadership in ASEAN: Mediation, Agency and

Extra-Regional Diplomacy. *SpringerLink*. Retrieved January 21, 2023, from

[https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9781137397416\\_13#:~:text=Indonesia%20has%20long%20been%20said,establishment%20of%20ASEAN%20in%201967](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9781137397416_13#:~:text=Indonesia%20has%20long%20been%20said,establishment%20of%20ASEAN%20in%201967)

Robson, D. (2022, February 24). How east and West think in profoundly different ways. *BBC Future*.

Retrieved March 20,

2023, from <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20170118-how-east-and-west-think-in-profoundly-different-ways>

Rubdy, R. (2003, January 10). Creative destruction: Singapore's speak good english movement. Retrieved January 21,

2023, from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-971X.00219>

Safest countries in the world 2023. *World Population Review*. (2023). Retrieved March 20, 2023, from

<https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/safest-countries-in-the-world>

Singapore Department of Statistics. (2023, February 9). Households - latest database. *SingStat*. Retrieved March 20, 2023,

from <https://www.singstat.gov.sg/find-data/search-by-theme/households/households/latest-data>

Song, Min Hyoung (2022). *Climate Lyricism*, Duke University Press. (pp 1-15)

<https://doi.org/10.1215/9781478022350-001>

Stangler, C. (2021, June 18). U.S. sanctions on Cuba and Venezuela hamper the global fight against covid-19. *The*

*Intercept*. Retrieved January 21, 2023, from

<https://theintercept.com/2021/06/18/covid-vaccine-cuba-venezuela-sanctions/>

- Sure Boh Singapore on TikTok. (2022, April 27). TikTok. Retrieved February 21, 2023, from <https://www.tiktok.com/@sureboh.sg/video/7091201514114452738>
- Tan, N. C., Lai, J., Wahidah, F., & Quek, H. (2018, February 5). Don't sugarcoat it, we know we're not elite. RICE. Retrieved March 20, 2023, from <https://www.ricemedia.co/current-affairs-opinion-sugarcoat-singapore-non-elite-junior-colleges-not-elite/>
- Teng, A. (2020, March 4). Parliament: Humanities subjects to feature ASEAN region more prominently over next 3 years. The Straits Times. Retrieved March 20, 2023, from <https://www.straitstimes.com/politics/parliament-humanities-subjects-to-feature-asean-region-more-prominently-over-next-3-years>
- The miracle of Singapore. YouTube. (2019, March 12). Retrieved January 21, 2023, from <https://youtu.be/Zx8CePPpz3o>
- Ulin, I. by D. L. (2016). The Art of Poetry No. 102. The Paris Review. Retrieved January 21, 2023, from <https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/6905/the-art-of-poetry-no-102-claudia-rankine>
- United Nations. (1983). United Nations. (n.d.). The United Nations and decolonization | . United Nations. Retrieved January 17, 2023, from <https://www.un.org/dppa/decolonization/en>
- Wong, T. (2008, August 27). Speak Good English? 4 in 10 S'poreans say 'no need lah.' The Straits Times
- Yu, J. (2018). The Taoist Pedagogy of Pathmarks: Critical Reflections Upon Heidegger, Lao Tzu, and Dewey. Germany: Springer International Publishing.
- Zhang, W. (2022). Political disengagement among youth: A comparison between 2011 and 2020. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.809432>
- Zhao, Y. (2019). Crazy rich Asians: When representation becomes controversial. *Markets, Globalization & Development Review*, 4(3). <https://doi.org/10.23860/mgdr-2019-04-03-03>