Chapter 1

Introduction

"What is it that the white men write all day at their desks?"[1]

Of the many social movements that have taken place in the world for the past century, many are actually the product of the reaction to the repressive and hegemonic nature of the power structure in society by one group of people over another. For example, the Women's Rights Movement is the outcome of men's repressiveness and hegemony over women and the Nationalist Movement serves as an instance of the postcolonial reaction of the ruled, to the nature of the power structure of the colonialists. So strong were the reactions and the impact of these movements that many of them managed to shake the power structure of society and attain their respective demands. So powerful were the ideologies of these movements that sometimes, as a consequence, society and the power structure were always repressive, wrong and 'evil' in the eyes of their followers, and contributed nothing to the welfare of their groups.

But is this really so? Do men have no sympathy over their women kind? Are all the colonialists only concerned with transporting back all the riches of the countries they conquered to their mother countries? While we can praise the Women's Rights Movement[2] for their success in attaining equal rights for women,

and the Nationalist Movements for their achievement to drive the colonialists out, men and colonialists are not necessarily 'evil,'—colonialism was not declared immoral until the twentieth century.[3] Each of us is a product of the leading philosophy of his or her own era, for example, men denying the suffrage movement and colonialists during the era of colonization. As Hegel puts it, "every individual is a child of his time; so philosophy too is its own time apprehended in thoughts" (Avineri, 1969: 31).

To focus on British colonialism on Malaya alone, as this thesis intends to do, based on the writings of the two British colonial officers namely Sir Frank Swettenham and Sir Hugh Clifford, I would like to argue that part of what colonization has done to Malaya is to launch her on the road to modernity as this was the leading philosophy of the time and continues to be so until the present era.[4] To add proof to my argument that there is a continuation of the discourse of modernity during the colonial era to the present time, in 1990, more than a decade ago, Anthony Giddens, among the leading contemporary functionalist social theorists, in his book *The Consequences of Modernity* uses the word 'Juggernaut' as a metaphor to describe the irresistible and inescapable force of modernity. According to Giddens, this powerful engine "crushes those who resist it, and while it sometimes seems to have a steady path, there are times when it veers away erratically in directions we cannot foresee" (1990: 139). While Giddens only coined this term in the last decade, Sir Frank Swettenham used the same term in his book *Malay Sketches* (1895), more than a century ago, in which he uses "the irresistible Juggernaut of Progress"

(Introduction: x) to describe the process of colonization in Malaya. Swettenham's junior and contemporary, Sir Hugh Clifford, although does not explicitly mention the word juggernaut, uses other metaphors such as "the boot of the ubiquitous white man," "gigantic track" and "the great wheel of progress" which strongly recalls the juggernaut in his writings. Clifford mentions in his book, *In Court and Kampong* that "In these days, the boot of the ubiquitous white man leaves its marks on all the fair places of the Earth, and scores thereon an even more gigantic track than that which affrighted Robinson Crusoe in his solitude" (1897a: 1) and "The great wheel of progress, like some vast snowball, rolls steadily along, gathering to itself all manner of weird and unlikely people and places..." (ibid., 246).

Swettenham's idea of the juggernaut which appears in the form of the "regeneration" of the Malays is quite revolutionary. It is borne out by the history of British colonization in Malaya. The change in the British policy from non-interference to intervention into the Malay States in 1874, was a drastic one. The discourse of modernity which appears in the writings of the two colonial authors examined in this thesis is set in the context of this involvement in Malaya. Swettenham writes, "The time of regeneration will come rapidly ... . Education and contact with Western people must produce the inevitable result. [The Malays]... must disappear or conform to the views of a stronger will and a higher intelligence...and the process of "awakening" has in places already begun" (1895: x-xi). Clifford, his colleague, also shares the same spirit with him. Clifford emphasizes, "the only salvation for the Malay lies in the increase of British influence in the

Peninsula, and in the consequent spread of modern ideas, progress, and civilization" (1897a: 53), despite his claim that "the Malay in his natural unregenerate state is more attractive an individual than he is apt to become under the influence of European civilization" (ibid., 52). Clifford's claim here suggests that he is more sympathetic towards the Malays as opposed to Swettenham, but even he cannot 'resist' the wave of modernity that he and other colleagues seemed to share. In other words, Clifford sees the influence of European civilization (i.e. modernization and rationalization) is making "the world more orderly and reliable, but it cannot make the world meaningful" (Ashcroft et. al, 1998: 147). In this regard, Clifford shares the same notion with Max Weber for the latter believed that rationalization as a key component of modernization is also a key to its ambiguity (ibid.). Swettenham seems to have no difficulty with his ideas on modernity and the "regeneration" of the Malays and is always supportive of modernity all the way through. In no way can we deny that the two colonial officers are preoccupied with the confrontation between the dissolving 'traditional' society and the emergent modern type. They are the external agents who provide the impetus for change in the Malay society. Such confrontation is a necessary condition of social change, and is to a certain degree a requirement for any radical reformulation to take place in a given society. This is exemplified by the characters in the works of the two colonial officers in this study.

While I began my initial research professing the post-colonial perspective with the assumption that the two colonial officers subscribe to the idea of imperial agenda (for instance, the colonial representation and stereotypical images of the

Malays) in their works, my original position somewhat changed as I moved on. Post-colonial theories and ideologies have been around for a while and may continue to be a part of our academic discourses, but I began to feel that it was becoming exhausted due to its antagonistic nature. The past is always there for us to criticize and condemn, especially when those colonialists were no longer around to be the defenders of their own policies. Colonial encounters have always been viewed negatively by most academic disciplines (i.e. the post-colonial perspective).[5] In the midst of our antagonism (perhaps hatred is too strong a word), we tend to forget the good things that they have left us (the English language, railways, work ethics and the administrative system etc.), even though I understand the nature of that antagonism.

For instance, I have come to accept that such representations of the Malays as being lazy or otherwise are actually the reality the Malays should accept and then learn to rectify. I argue that in the writings of the two colonial officers, many of these representations are supposed to be taken as the 'truths' about the Malays and they are not supposed to be proactive about it. Post-colonial critics usually concentrate on denying these sorts of colonial (mis?)representations and the stereotypical images created actually helped to serve the British. I view this denial as being reactive. Should we react negatively when someone else points out that our action or habit is wrong? Perhaps, we say that it is our right to behave in such a manner, but do we improve our lives at the end of the day by not accepting other people's criticism? The way I see it, we should thank those who dare to criticize us especially if there is

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truth in their criticism. Modernity is about rationalization and part of rationalization is about taking other people's criticisms as a launching pad to better ourselves.

If we look closely at the writings of the two colonial officers under study, what they wish to feature could be summarised as follows: a) to describe the nature of the Malays, b) to describe the process of transition and the 'awakening' period of which the Malays have to go through and c) to describe the positive effects of British rule and modernization on the country and the people. While one may argue that the colonialists always regarded themselves as superior beings and that their civilization was far ahead of any colonised nations, I argue that while this is the truth, the colonialists did not simply let those 'backward' nations remained backward, as what Swettenham says earlier. The British had initiated the progress and the 'awakening' process in Malaya. For that matter, even Karl Marx, being the social scientist and economist, (he is certainly not a colonialist being critical of British policies) admits the necessity of British intervention in Asia and Africa in the article entitled "The British Rule in India," in which Marx writes, "English interference...dissolved these small semi-barbarian, semi-civilised communities, by blowing up their economic basis, and thus produced the greatest, and to speak the truth, the only social revolution ever heard of in Asia." In the same article Marx writes,

> England, it is true, in causing revolution in Hindostan, was actuated only by the vilest interests, and was stupid in her manner of enforcing them. But that is not the question. The question is, can mankind fulfil its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may have been the crimes of England she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about revolution" (Avineri, 1969: 94).

To add to this, Marx writes in the New York Daily Tribune about the disintegration of India's ancient villages at the hands of British capitalism,

> Now, sickening as it must be to human being to witness these myriads of industrious patriarchal and inoffensive social organizations disorganized and dissolved into their units, thrown into a sea of woes, and their individual members losing at the same time their ancient form of civilization and their hereditary means of subsistence, we must not forget that these idyllic village-communities, inoffensive as they may appear, had always been the solid foundations of oriental despotism, that they restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies. We must not forget the barbarian egotism which, concentrating on some miserable patch of land, had quietly witnessed the ruin of empires, the perpetuation of unspeakable cruelties, the massacre of the populations of large towns, with no other consideration bestowed upon them than on natural events, itself the prey of any aggressor who deigned to notice it at all. We must not forget that this undignified, stagnatory and vegetative life, that this passive sort of existence evoked on the other part, in contradiction, wild, aimless, unbounded forces of destruction and rendered murder itself a religious rite in Hindostan. We must not forget that these little communities were contaminated by distinctions of caste and by slavery, that they subjugated man to external circumstances, that they transformed a self-developing social state into never changing natural destiny, and thus brought about a brutalizing worship of nature, exhibiting its degradation in the fact that man, the sovereign of nature, fell down on his knees in adoration of Kanuman, the monkey, and Sabbala, the cow (ibid., 94).

As we have seen above, Marx describes his encounters with the Indians and how capitalism shattered their culture and way of life. In Marx's eyes, what capitalism has done to India (and to the world) is what the Juggernaut of progress has done to the modern world to both Giddens and Swettenham (the latter concentrates on Malaya); while to Clifford, it is what the 'ubiquitous white man' has done with his 'gigantic track' on Malaya. Just to quickly compare Marx's perception of the Indian communities above with that of Swettenham on Malaya, Swettenham writes,

> Mysterious Malaya was a *terra incognita* to official and trader alike. There were no reliable books on the subject, the whole country was an absolute blank on every map; even the names of the States and the titles of their rulers were not known to more than half-a-dozen English men. Of the nature of the country, the character of the people, their numbers, distribution, sentiments, or condition, there was an ignorance, profound, absolute, and complete. An impression, however, prevailed that some kind of internal struggle for power, for place or for the sheer pleasure of fighting, was constantly going on. There was also a strong belief that Malays were treacherous by nature and pirates by trade, and that there were no special inducements for a white man to trust himself in such a barbarous country (1899: 7).

We can see the similar concerns over the backwardness of the native's society by both Marx and Swettenham above, revealing whether being a colonist or not, the Westerners who lived in that colonial era subscribed to the necessity for modernization and western penetration into underdeveloped societies.

In essence, the two colonial authors and Marx would agree that the modern way of life would eventually replace the traditional one somewhere along the way. But unlike Marx, who spent only a short period of time in India,[6] the two colonial authors had spent more than two decades among their subject people which made the task of describing the people and the socio-cultural backdrops of their country unerringly difficult. For, as Clifford puts it, "he has learned to love" (1897a: 246) the Malays. To add to that, the experience of living with the natives, to quote Clifford, has taught them "to look upon him [Clifford] as one of their own people" (ibid., 254). Their experience left a tremendous effect on the two colonial authors' attempts to describe the 'unregenerate' Malays, to use Clifford's term, and the authors' opinion on the process of 'regeneration,' to borrow Swettenham's word, of the

Malays. Their views of the Malays have become moderated after being exposed to the Malay way of life.

This study views modernity as being different from colonialism, the former is regarded as an internal process affecting change in the social construction of reality in a society. To put it more bluntly, modernity is the internal process of change in a society with no necessary formal annexation. (Thailand is a viable example). During the colonial era where the process of modernization developed under the impact of external forces (where it was seen more as colonization, rather than modernization), internal initiative was not very apparent. The development was performed in the manner of colonial encroachment blending with local acceptance (after independence, the development was done with a mixture of native conceptions and foreign suggestions) that is to say that we do not eliminate all the good qualities of western civilization. In this respect, the two colonial officers' duty is seen as an effort to shove Malay society towards an ideal of modernity. Modernity, therefore, fell on the shoulders of the colonialists.

I understand that my stance here could invite much disapproval from many quarters, the post-colonial theorists especially, because I seem to justify colonialism/imperialism as an acceptable phenomenon, as if admitting any attempt of the present western superpower to re-colonize the so-called Third World is permissible. I would like to clarify that this study views colonialism (specifically British colonization of Malaya) as a thing of historical past, lest it becomes

historically inevitable to us in the present time, and does not necessarily approve of any future colonizing attempt, therefore, it is not pro-colonialism. This study tries to reveal some of the positive sides of past colonialism but does not necessarily approve all of its schemes. It is a matter of applying different perspectives. For instance, take the Japanese Occupation of Asia during the Second World War. While we continue to hear the criticisms and lawsuits against Japan for their soldiers' atrocities and rapes during the war, the Occupation actually helped to spawn the Nationalist movements in the colonised countries of Asia.

The present attempt of the western powers to re-colonize the world through economic means, in the name of globalisation, should help clear my stance here. Globalisation,[7] from the western perspective, is noble. The whole world is becoming a global village where everybody can share the same information through modern technologies (Information Technology included) and the world should become a better place to live in because we have the means to communicate better with each other. In order to become global, a country has to be technologically equipped, and its citizens have to be technologically educated. However, technology and education come with a price tag and it is an expensive one too. The poor and developing countries have to rely on the advanced countries to assist them. It is through the implementation of this assistance that the poor and developing countries become poorer and poorer, instead of getting better and better. Certainly, it is not that technology is necessarily 'evil' here—human greed and their unscrupulous ways of gaining quick profits in the process of globalisation is unacceptable.[8]

For the past few centuries, Western powers have used different methods to gain and maintain their dominance in the world. During the colonial era as Swettenham explains, the idea of 'Progress'[9] was used to justify the need to intervene into the affairs of the Malay States; now we have globalisation as an ideology of the western powers to dominate the world. While in the past, many of the countries in the world could not avoid being colonised (of which I consider historically inevitable) because we were not as 'Progressive' as the colonialists were, we in the present time must learn to become technologically advanced by cooperating with other developing nations in order to avoid any assistances which could be an economic manipulation by the western power as the only way to avoid any future re-colonization. Our mistake of the past was that we were not united; so, instead of blaming ourselves, we blame the colonizers, but this is beside the point.

The point being that this thesis will concentrate on the element of modernity that those works seem to highlight. The concentration on the element of modernity is important here for the following reasons. One, this thesis treats modernity as a discourse rather than an epoch, therefore, it disregards colonization and post-colonization as an epoch, rather as an evolutionary period where modernity claims its pristine place even to this very day. This is to suggest that while colonialism as an epoch has ended, modernity as an internal process of social construction continues. This, however, is not to accept totally that colonization is morally correct, since we view it from our present perspective. Two, such treatment on this continuum would pave a better way for me to compare the two colonial officers' sense of modernity on

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the Malays as their subject race and Mahathir Mohamad's sense of modernity among his own Malay people in his *The Malay Dilemma* (1970) in the later chapter.

The major part of this thesis will concentrate on how the outsiders (i.e. the two colonial officers) view (to a certain extent influence) the Malays achieving modernity and the evolutionary processes that the Malays have to go through in order to achieve it. Mahathir Mohamad's *The Malay Dilemma* stands as a modest effort of a modern, educated Malay addressing views of modernity to his own people, being himself a product of the colonial educational system, should nicely support my argument that the Malays have been engaging themselves in the construction of modernity since the earlier days of colonization up to the present. In many ways, this thesis is about incorporating two different sets of 'eyes'—the colonial eyes and the local eyes—to see the development of modernity among the Malays. Among the important phenomena to witness are whether the Malays have changed from the earlier so-called stereotypical images perceived by the two colonial officers by the time Mahathir wrote his *Malay Dilemma.*

Because of this continuum between the colonial era and the present day and its concerns with modernity, this thesis will make use of the four fathers of classical sociological theorists—Karl Marx, Max Weber, Emile Durkheim and Georg Simmel—as well as a much more contemporary sociological theorist such as Anthony Giddens in discussing the social condition and social change in the Malay society. It seems wise to me to see those issues of modernity through the 'spectacles'

provided by the theorists above—their ideas will provide background understanding and meaning to the structure of a society. It must be borne in mind that the present work does not set out to discuss and interpret the classical social theorists from the viewpoint of a historical sociologist, but to co-opt historical sociology in a literary study around a set of themes of modernity which have been inspired by the works of these two colonial officers and later by a modern, educated Malay.

The use of the perspectives supplied by the classical sociologists here is to provide the actual reflections of the discourse of modernity which were taking place in the Western countries that the two colonial officers under study seemed to be concerned with, in their writings about the Malays. The overlapping concerns of Karl Marx over what he called the 'Oriental Despotism' is very similar to the two colonial authors' concern over their Malay subjects. The study of the daily ethics or the religious influence in a person's life as appears in Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904-1905/1930) is reflective of the two colonial authors' study of how Islam, Hinduism and animism influenced the Malays' daily life.

Of course, the theories provided by the four fathers of sociology encompass a larger scope of human society that cannot be covered by a single study. At best, this thesis will only make use of the sociologists' views on the discourse of modernity, as it echoes alongside the two colonials' writings of the Malays. Therefore, it will be

good to briefly look at some of the perspectives offered by the classical sociologists, as this study will aptly cover.

Karl Marx[10] (1818-1883) stands as the most controversial and revolutionary in his contributions to the formation of modernity, as compared to the other three fathers of classical sociology; in fact, he is perhaps the most difficult of all the theorists we will be looking at in this study. His ideas (rather ideologies) in *Capital* (1867) for example, have been considered as the motivating force for the political struggles of the twentieth century and provided the principles of social organization for societies in much of Europe, Asia, Africa and Central America (Craib, 1997). His theory of social and economic evolution, the transition from feudalism to capitalism, and the idea of the division of labour between workers and the means of production, are particularly important here. As far as a society is concerned, Marx argues that society "is created by human action but acts back upon individual as an external power" (ibid.), which makes individualization possible. For the purpose of this study, Marx's ideology will be confined to the discussion of the political economy in the second and third chapters to see how the Malays' active involvement (the ruler class in particular) in politics and their involvement in the market system produced rapid change and fragmentation in defining the features of modernity in the Malay society. It is also interesting to observe Marx's and Clifford's ambivalence on the issue of the impact of Western capitalism on a pre-capitalist society. The inevitable result of capitalism and industrialization, the alienation of people and their workplace, and class relations will also be touched on. This leads on to Mahathir's *The Malay*

Dilemma (1970) which discusses many of the adjustments needed to achieve social equality in Malaysia whereby the issue of power relation presupposes a racial dominance as opposed to the more generally accepted ideology of racial equality suggested by Marx.

Max Weber[11] (1864-1920) is another important figure in classical sociology. Weber's most important contribution to sociology is his concept of rationalization that appears in his *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904-5/1930). In this book, among other things, he analyses the failure of capitalism against other non-European societies. He concludes that the success of capitalism in western society lies very much on the religious foundations of the West (i.e. Protestant Ethic) which other non-western religions do not seem to share. This success leads to the formation of modern western social institutions not found in pre-modern societies such as "the nation-state, the dependence on inanimate power sources, the commodification of products and wage labour, formal schooling, the secularization of values and norms and the predominance of urban forms of life" (Ashcroft et.al, 1998: 146). The establishment of the abovementioned social forms is made possible by the process of rationalization as its core feature of modern thought which replaces the divine providence with the autonomous rational human mind. In other words, the conception of modernity effectively ended the veneration of tradition and paved the way for the Enlightenment philosophical project of developing "a rational organization of everyday social life" (Habermas, 1981: 9). Since Islam is the greatest single influence on the Malays' way of life, the broader application of the Weberian

thesis, especially on the analysis of the transformation capacities of Islam as their religion and their impact on institutional development in Malaysia, becomes even more salient.

Emile Durkheim[12] (1858-1917) contributes many useful concepts in his analysis of society on the comparative study of traditional and modern society in what he called organic solidarity where collective conscience binds modern society together, as opposed to the mechanical solidarity where religion plays an important role in its social cohesion. Durkheim's other important contributions, as far as this study is concerned, is his treatment of social facts as things to distinguish them from ideas or ideologies, and the study on suicide. The new and emergent level of common experience in the complicated life of modern human society contributes to the establishment of these 'social' facts. The weakening of common morality in the modernizing process leads people to find themselves meaninglessly adrift and face the state of anomie, which could lead to suicide. His rule is that "A social fact is every way of acting, fixed or not, capable of exercising on the individual an external constraint; or again, every way of acting which is general throughout, while at the same time existing in its own right independent of its individual manifestations" (Durkheim, 1895/1938: 13). In other words, Durkheim considers individual action as being conditioned by the group, and the group action, in the form of collective conscience—shared ways of thinking dominates. Society is viewed as a 'system of active forces' operating upon the individual. This study also considers his concepts of duty and of the good find a common support which binds them together in society.

The concept of discipline in which Durkheim wrote in his *L'Éducation morale* that, "discipline has its justification in itself. It is good that man should be disciplined" is also important to this study. His aim to establish sociology as 'a science of morality' suggests that social facts are consistent and explicable, hence worthy of a systematic research.

Georg Simmel[13] (1858-1918) is perhaps the least known classical sociologist compared to the other three. Simmel's ideas on modernity, that concerns us here, are his treatment of the social and the personal social structure. He is unique in the sense that he begins his social analysis from the basic level—the individual life and his or her engagement in constant dialectic process in what he called the objective culture, which is somewhat similar to Durkheim's social facts. The only important difference is that Simmel argues that in modern societies, those individuals are constantly engaging in maintaining his or her integrity against the objective culture, whereas, Durkheim argues the opposite. While Durkheim viewed society as 'a system of active forces' operating upon the individual as stated above, Simmel sees society constituted 'forces' between individuals. The next quotation from Simmel would summarize his views on modernity and the problems faced by people of this era: "The deeper problems of modern life derive from the claim of the individual to preserve the autonomy and individuality of his existence in the face of overwhelming social forces, of historical heritage, of external culture and of the technique of life" (Simmel, 1950: 409). Quite obviously, Simmel's praise for individual interactions with the larger acceptable objective culture and social integration, is perhaps possible

through economic exchange as he discusses in *The Philosophy of Money* (1900/1990). Another important point is Simmel's ideas on the intra-personal and the interpersonal relationship of the individual which he called 'life process.' Modernization, which brings a series of advantages to human beings, such as the ability to express various potentialities as opposed to the repressed pre-modern society, would contribute towards the integration of a social unit. His discussion related to faithfulness and gratitude, and the complexities of urban life such as punctuality is part of the main concern here.

Since this thesis also considers the writing of the fourth Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad as a comparison and the closure of the two British colonials' views of the Malays as a far as the discourse of modernity is concerned, I bring on board, a person who I quoted earlier—Anthony Giddens[14] (1938-) a contemporary sociologist who explains modernity based on his structuration theory among others, uses the word "juggernaut" (stated earlier) to describe the irresistible and uncontrollable power of modernity which is important in this thesis. The use of Giddens here is also important, especially when he puts into arguments his knowledge of almost all the classical social theorists mentioned above. In a sense, by employing all of his knowledge of the classical theorists, Giddens' theories could be regarded as an extension, a reformulation, or a continuum with the past theorists. This eventually connects almost all of the underlying arguments made earlier by the four fathers of sociology. For example, in his explanation of capitalism and industrialism, being two out of four basic modern institutions, the elements of

commodity production, propertyless wage labour, and the division of labour mirror Marx's, Weber's and Durkheim's ideas except that they appear in the forms of distanciation, disembeddedness and reflexivity which amounted to a much more detailed explanation of modern life and relationship. As far as this study is concerned, his ideas on modern relationship and the third dynamic characteristic of modernity—reflexivity is the utmost importance. For example, Giddens argues that "reflexivity of modernity extends into the core of the self...the self becomes a reflexive project" (1991: 32) that is to say individual self comes to be something to be reflected upon, even molded, coming close to that of Simmel's sense of modernity, which begins with the individual.

In the proceeding chapters, I will make use of the above theorists in my discussion of the subject matters raised by the authors through a combination of one, two, or more according the inclination and the appropriateness of their theories. For example, in the discussion of the personal construction of reality, I am incorporating Weber, Durkheim, Simmel and Giddens and totally leaving out Marx for the latter concentrates more on the political-economic structure of a society, even though I cannot, in any way, deny the fact that Marx considers the 'individuated' individual is a product of capitalism, hence serves as an integral part of the group. It is inevitable, however, not to make full use of other theories than Marx's when it comes to discussing the political-economic issues of the Malays, for he dominates the subject matter concerned, even though I do not dismiss Weber's and Durkheim's ideas altogether.

In the analysis of the corpus of literature writing in this thesis, it would be useful to bring on board Mikhail Bakhtin's ideas on dialogic discourse as the analytical model for the following two reasons. One, Bakhtin argues that any true understanding such as another person's utterance is dialogic in nature. Every utterance is the product of the interaction between speakers and the product in the broader context of the whole complex social situation in which the utterance emerges (Morris, 1994). In the reader-response methods, as far as literary work is concerned, there exists three important domains: a) the structural method that involves interpretation of the in-text by which meaning is derived from characters' utterances b) the literal or textual method that involves the author's point of view or persona and lastly c) the extra-textual method which derives meaning from the readers' scholarly analysis. In the writing of the colonial officers under study for example, the utterance could be influenced by the colonial political agenda/ideology, therefore, the words used in the speech may possess not only theme, meaning, or content, but also value judgment, which in turn, explains its dialogic nature. However, it may also be influenced by the subjective experiences and/or the social situation in which the two authors lived (in this case Malaya and the Malays). Either way, their literary work could access its meaning by the second domain.

Two, the dialogic interpretation has become part of the historical-sociological dimension in interpreting the past from the point of view of the present. Current literature would definitely give much of the extra-textual meanings or third domain

of knowledge to the previously understood phenomenon, in this case, the colonial mindset. "There is neither a first nor a last word and there are no limits to the dialogic context (it extends into the boundless past and a boundless future). Even past meanings, that is, those born in the dialogue of past centuries, can never be stable (finalized, ended once and for all)—they will always change (be renewed) in the process of subsequent development of the dialogue" (ibid., front page). For this reason, I see the possibility of the triadic relationships between the colonial authors, their texts and the more recent text of Mahathir Mohamad's *The Malay Dilemma* to generate new extra-textual meanings to the earlier stereotypical images or perception of the Malays by the westerners which becomes part of the dialogic phenomena that Bakhtin touches upon, even though the book is not of the same genre. The same rule applies to the use of other texts, such as that of Hodnett, to justify Swettenham's use of green cicada as a symbolic image which we will come across later. Of course, as meaning is always contextual, always shifting, even this new meaning is not a finalized one according to Bakhtin.

There is an obvious gap of nearly seventy years between the times when the two colonial officers left Malaya and the publication of Mahathir Mohamad's *The Malay Dilemma*. During these seventy years, Malaya has not only undergone a name change from Malaya to Malaysia, but also many other events have affected the global scene as well the local context. This era witnessed the two world wars that claimed more deaths and much disaster in recorded human history. Even though Malaya was not directly involved and affected in the First World War, many

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expatriates were. Many of them had to go back to Europe in order to fight for their motherlands and left small numbers of administrators to oversee the administration of Malaya. However, the Second World War had a tremendous effect on Malaya as well as the world. This time around, Malaya was directly involved in the war and was officially occupied by the Japanese for almost four years. This occupation by the Japanese, an Eastern power, had inevitably changed the perspectives of the Malays on the Western power that after all, the latter is not invincible. This realization, as stated earlier, had spawned nationalist movements all over the colonised world and Malaya was not an exception. While not denying the importance of all the historical events that took place in this period of seventy years, this thesis will only cite a few facts and events which took place during this era which has in many ways, shaped present Malaysia as reflected in *The Malay Dilemma*. The least concentration of the events which took place during this gap is meant to give more emphasis on the perspectives offered by the two colonial officers during the colonial era with the more contemporary local writer, as far as the Malays' struggle towards modernity is concerned. For example, Clifford writes in 1929 that the Malays' notion of time is that they "held time to be valueless, and regarded an hour or two either way as a thing of no account" (*Bushwhacking*, 172) continues to be Mahathir's concern in his *The Malay Dilemma* when he says, "There is no doubt that the Malay failure to value time is one of the most important handicaps to their progress" (1970: 163). Without understanding the important concept of time, the Malays "can never achieve anything on [their] own and [they] can never be expected to advance and catch up with superior time-conscious civilizations" (ibid.). What Mahathir is addressing here

is similar to what Giddens mentions in his book *The Consequences of Modernity* concerning the separation of time and space (i.e. how the invention of the mechanical clock helps human to manage his time and space—different zones and working days), on which the notion of time is very much valued in this modern era.

It is interesting to observe the sequence of events that took place during the era of 1870s, especially the years up to the 1900s when the two authors actively participated in their literary production. First, the era marked the drastic shift from non-intervention to direct rule of Malaya (or the Malay States for the term Malaya was used mostly after 1900s and in this thesis I took the liberty of using it quite interchangeably; after all, it intensifies British hegemony and control over what was considered as the history of this country) indicated by the following dispatch to the Governor-designate, Sir Andrew Clarke, by Lord Kimberly, the Secretary of State which declared:

> Her Majesty's Government have, it need hardly be said, no desire to intervene in the internal affairs of the Malay States; but, looking to the long and intimate connection between them and the British Government ... Her Majesty's Government find it incumbent to employ such influence as they possess with the native princes to rescue, if possible, these fertile and productive countries from the ruin which must befall them if the present disorders continue unchecked.
>
> I have to request that you will carefully ascertain as far as you are able, the actual condition of affairs in each State, and that you will report to me whether there are, in your opinion, any steps which can properly be taken by the Colonial Government to promote the restoration of peace and order, and to secure protection to trade and commerce with the native territories. I should wish specially to consider whether it would be advisable to appoint a British Officer to reside in any of these States. Such an appointment could, of course, only be made with the full consent of the Native Government and the

> expenses connected with it would have to be defrayed by the Government of the Straits Settlements (quoted in Chai, 1976: 4).

This mandate for the Governor to intervene in the affairs of the Malayan States clearly came with no clear instructions as to how it would be implemented. It seemed to suggest, in the context of Asia, a move which was practically new and indicated that imperialism and the Empire itself lacked purpose or to a certain extent ideology, as Jan Morris claims, that the British Empire "never really possessed an ideology—was temperamentally opposed, indeed, to political rules, theories and generalizations. It was the most important political organism of its time, yet, it was seldom altogether sure of itself or its cause" (1994:2). After going through all of the political and ideological struggles (Winslow, 1972), technology and military advancements (Headrick, 1981), Britain managed to become the colonial power and exercised power politics, moral responsibility and economic benefit (Darby, 1987). By the 1930s, Britain and other European colonizers occupied about 84.6 per cent of the land surface of the globe (Fieldhouse, 1973: 373). By default, however, this thesis argues, they eventually helped to modernize the world.

However, colonization is not only about the natives' encounter with the colonizers' visions of modernity, but it is also an encounter between Eastern rationality and the more advanced and developed Western ones. Besides engaging in the discourse of modernity, this thesis does not dismiss altogether the claims made by the post-colonial theorists regarding colonialism—it is still a valid academic discourse as stressed earlier—that the two authors could not help being involved in

disseminating the imperial agenda, especially when their own country Britain, proudly declared itself an imperial nation (Hobsbawm, 1987). Their leading elites took the imperial idea as their creed, and were also fully aware of the 'superiority' of the white man—both in the political, ideological and biological sense—to uphold the imperial idea. Their task, as seen by many post-colonial critics, was to propagate the imperial idea, which to many British officers, our two authors included, would mean to 'civilize' the colonized people according to the divine civilizing mission of the Anglo-Saxons on "both spiritual and material, of superior civilization; to establish light, order, and law in the dark places" (Islam, 1979). In fact, I will also observe how successful the dissemination of the imperial idea was through the writings of these two colonial officers and/or whether it stands as the actual British policies on Malaya. This may well be part of the philosophy of the colonial time which our two authors might subscribe to the same notion; as to what extent the philosophy really governs their mode of writing is what this thesis will also determine.

For that reason, in some cases, I will be able to provide the postcolonial perspective[15] to counter such images of 'Other' and their 'Otherness' in the works of fiction of the two authors, hoping to achieve what Loomba has suggested that post-colonialism is "not just as coming literally after colonialism and signifying its demise, but more flexibly as a contestation of colonial domination and the legacies of colonialism" (1998: 12). However, we have to accept, to quote Loomba again, that "the colonialist production of knowledge was not a simple process. It necessarily included a clash with and a marginalisation of the knowledge and belief systems of

those who were conquered, as also with some oppositional views at home" (ibid., 66). In this case, the two authors dare to state their stance even though it is not in line with the opinions of the majority of the home audience.

I am treating this thesis, just like Pratt in her *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992), as a study of genre as well as a critique of ideology simply because the majority of the works of these two authors fall exactly within the realm of creative writing, which overwhelms with the ideology of imperialism at the same time. It can be safely said that my approaches are both archival and that of the sociology of knowledge. I have to point out, at this juncture, that due to the analysis of the authors' short stories under study, which occupy the main chapters, the various sections of this thesis may contribute to its lack of uniformity and evenness. However, I hope the unity is found in the discussion on the discourse of modernity in Malaya. As Jan Morris suggested earlier that the "Empire never really possessed an ideology," that is to say that there was no grand plan devised beforehand. What was expected of the British Officers was to exercise their power over the Native Government. As far as this thesis is concerned, we can say that even the writings of Sir Frank Swettenham and Sir Hugh Clifford were very much beyond expectation. It was therefore the product of a purely creative effort of the two exercising their penmanship to describe the emerging of modernity during this hegemonic phase in Malaya, which makes the analysis quite a unique one. This is to suggest that the time they spent on their desks, writing about Malaya and its people could be after all, worthwhile, despite the natives' failure to comprehend their noble actions.

The overall implication is, of course, that in order for the two colonial officers to implement modernization on the whole of society is that they have to negotiate between their love of the natives and the political agenda that they embraced. To modernize successfully, the Malays not only had to change their political and administrative structure, but also the structure of socioeconomic relations, as Marx would have indicated. The result would be that the condition of the Malays' social life has changed and the Malays need to realize this transformation. By then, as Clifford puts it during his voyage up from Pahang to the north, those countries and their people who "suffered for untold centuries to pursue their ancient way, untouched and untroubled by the flood of Europeans invasions and encroachment—moral, social and intellectual, as well as material" (1897a: 17), would forever be replaced by a new generation of modern and rational Malays. As to whether this is being achieved is what this thesis will also determine.

Swettenham's works of fiction were mostly published during the last period of his active life while serving under the British Civil Service in Malaya from 1871 until 1904. He retired in 1904, while on three years home leave. His first work, *Malay Sketches*, as mentioned above, was published in 1895. Then, came *Unaddressed Letters* in 1898, the year he was knighted. *The Real Malay* followed shortly after that in 1899. In 1912, he published *British Malaya*, which was considered a "standard work [of history] on the Peninsula, until the revisions by Parkinson and Malaysian historians in the 1960s" (Barlow, 1995: 709). *Also and Perhaps* appeared in 1914. His last works, as far as Malaya is concerned, *Footprints*

in Malaya was more of an autobiography which was published in 1942, the year his good friend and colleague in Malaya, Sir Hugh Clifford passed away, and three years before his own death in 1945. Of the six works mentioned above, only selected short stories from *Malay Sketches, Unaddressed Letters* and *The Real Malay* will be discussed in detail in this thesis since they involve the fictionalised characters on the Malays where his authority seems to exercise. *Footprints in Malaya* and *British Malaya* will be used as a reference since they are more of an autobiographical and historical writing respectively.

The works of fiction of Clifford, which are covered in this thesis, were written mostly during his stay in Malaya from 1883 until 1904 when he left for Trinidad. The writings actually began during his stay in Pahang as a Resident. With hard work and enthusiasm in learning the Malay language, Clifford passed the colonial service's grammar examination, a compulsory examination by now, in 1885. Being a person who can speak Malay gives him many advantages and serves him well both as a British Resident to the Sultan of Pahang and the writer of the works of fiction as many of his stories "have been told to me [Clifford] by natives ..." (53). His works of fiction written during this period are *In Court and Kampong* (1897a), *Studies in Brown Humanity* (1897b), *Since the Beginning* (1898), *In a Corner of Asia* (1899), *Bushwhacking* (1901/1929),[16] *A Free Lance of Today* (1903) and *Saleh: A Prince of Malaya* (1926a).[17]

The works of fiction of Swettenham and Clifford have been used in Allen's *Two Imperialists* (1964), Syed Hussein Alatas' *The Myth of the Lazy Natives* (1977), Victor Savage's *Western Impression of Nature and Landscape in South East Asia* (1984), Zawiah Yahaya's *Resisting Colonialist Discourse* (1994), Mohamad Rashidi Pakri's "Cultural Comment and Point of View in Clifford's Early Fiction" (1998)(unpublished) and Philip Holden's *Modern Subjects/Colonial Texts: Hugh Clifford and the Discipline of Literature in the Straits Settlements, 1895-1907* (2000). Alatas' work makes use of a few phenomenal examples from the text of the works of fiction to justify his exasperation over the laziness of the Malays being negatively portrayed by the colonists. As the title suggests, Savage's work has a geographical tone to it, which makes the analysis more towards human geography. Zawiah's recent work deals with resisting the colonial agenda in which, in her views, continues to 'colonize' the mode of thinking in the current method of teaching literature in Malaysia. My work on Clifford, being the second latest after Philip Holden's use of Hugh Clifford in his analysis of the literature in the Straits Settlement, mostly involves the conflict the author has on his claims of narrative and the claims of imperialism with the two classes of Malays. In our recent quest for evaluating a national identity based on the premise of nation-statehood and everything that it entails, there seems to be a lack of interest in a revival of colonial writing for the text invites the critical discussion in the post-colonial classroom (Gandhi, 1998). No work has been done so far to evaluate the selected short stories and novels of the two colonial officers[18] for its worth in the discourse of modernity.

In Chapter 2, I will discuss the construction of society from the socio-cultural and economic perspectives of the Malays and how the attempts affected the Malays' traditional society. Chapter 3 will deal with the political and judicial construction of modernity whereby the concentration is on the Malay upper class. Chapter 4 will concentrate on the personal construction of modernity [to witness few instances of change individual towards a more rational being after being exposed to the discourse of modernity]. Chapter 5 will make use of Mahathir Mohamad's *The Malay Dilemma* to prove the success or the failure of the discourse of modernity in the Malay society discussed earlier in the thesis. It will become obvious that the analysis of the works of these three authors (two colonials and one local) from the perspective of modernity and the colonial discourse analysis will mirror the formation, transition and transformation of the ideology of imperialism and in itself towards modernity.

The British Empire is long gone and dead, but the study of its literature remains relevant especially with respect to the elements of neo-colonialism which continue to be present in today's world except that they exist within different names and forms. The world we live in today, and the people we see around us, have been affected by colonial history in the past, be it good or bad—we should be able to relate to the present forms of colonialism better, at least, if we are able to recognize it. In the case of Malaysia, the vast body of its literature, especially the literary works before the turn of the nineteenth century, has not been thoroughly researched, even though historical research has done ample justice on her history. Literature is a study of interdisciplinary studies of a people, a country and the world; it is a better guide to

the spirit of any given time. The ideology of neo-colonialism continues to be present in our times just as the ideology of imperialism was for the past centuries. Modern society is not without interracial prejudices and the hegemony of certain sections of the society and continues to be part of our daily lives and we have to deal with it with care, based upon what had happened during the colonial era, and this is what makes my investigation of this imperial literature more relevant today.

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