

THE TRADE CONTACTS
in the Border Areas
between **MALAYSIA** *and* **SINGAPORE**



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PREFACE

This compilation of material, the result of the fourth research period on the border issues carried out by the researchers of the Research Center for Regional Resources-the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (PSDR-LIPI) Jakarta, Indonesia, is on the Trade Contacts in the Cross Border Areas between Malaysia and Singapore. It was carried out in Johor Bahru (Second Link) and Woodlands in Singapore in June 2008 and August-September 2008. In this research we focused on significant border issues relating to the relationships between the countries in the region, particularly in the islands of Southeast Asia. Through these relationships they perceive that they greatly depend on each other in social, cultural and economic matters.

Our experience here has been quite different from that in the other areas we studied since the border between Malaysia and Singapore has another history in comparison to the border issues among the borders in the Southeast Asian regions such as those between Thailand and Laos. The difference is that Laos is a 'landlocked' country, while Malaysia and Singapore have their maritime regions. Recently there has been a good relationship between Thailand and Laos as they are dependent on each other economically. Meanwhile, the relationship between Malaysia and Singapore has a strong basis not only in terms of the economic aspect but also in socio cultural matters as they can understand one another's languages and were also both within the British sphere of influence. This means that the Malaysians easily communicate with the Singaporeans. As has also occurred in the border areas between Thailand and Laos, recent developments in the Malay Peninsula show that the trade contacts in the cross borders between Malaysia and Singapore have strongly contributed, particularly, to the Malaysian economy. However, the Singaporeans also enjoy the economic benefits of the trade contacts since Singapore is under the Malaysian influences that offer agricultural and handcraft products to them. Both countries, Malaysia and Singapore, are strong emerging countries due to their economic development as well as

the tourism industry in the region. Recently the Malaysian and the Singaporean governments have realized that both countries need to improve their trade and economic relations, since the gateways between the two are considered not as the 'backyards' of the states, but as 'front yards' through which to enter and conduct affairs. We need to learn better how we should utilize the lessons of the Malaysian and Singaporean experience in arranging the borders as means for cultural and social relationships as well as places for trade and economic development.

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Jakarta, December 2008

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CHAPTER 1

A SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE BORDER AREAS BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE

I Ketut Ardhana

The Background

In Southeast Asia the border is considered a window of opportunity for a country to develop its region. Through their borders some countries in the region cooperate in developing the “border”, which in the past was remote, underdeveloped and lacking in infrastructure. At present, the border is no longer a remote area, as now countries provide joint cooperation not only in terms of the political aspects, but also in terms of trade contacts and economic development. This can be seen not only on the mainland of Southeast Asia such as in Thailand, Vietnam and other countries, but also in the islands of Southeast Asia like on the border between Malaysia (Johor) and Singapore (Woodlands), with Singapore known as the world’s easiest place to do business (Ardhana 2007: 153) and also as a trade emporium (Regnier 1990: 1). Johor or Johore (Hanum 2004: 16) is a state with a population, in 1991, of 2,074,297; approximately 7,360 sq miles (19,062 sq km) in size located at the southern extremity of the Malay Peninsula, Malaysia, opposite Singapore. Johor is the most southerly point of the Asian continental mainland. The name “Johor” originates from the Arabic word *Jauhar*, ‘gem/precious stone’. Before the name Johor was adopted, the area south of the Muar River to Singapore island was known as *Ujung Tanah* or “land’s end” in Malay, due to its location at the end of the Malay Peninsula. Johor has two ports, Pasir Gudang Port and the Port of Tanjung Pelepas. Some analysts have

concluded that replacing the causeway with a bridge would allow a creation of a comprehensive port system linking Pasir Gudang Port and Tanjung Pelepas Port in Johor; some go on to suggest that this presents a threat to Singapore's port activity, thus explaining the initial reluctance of Singapore to agree to the causeway replacement

From historical notes we know that the early records of Singapore are vague. However, it could have been a small seaport during the era of the Sriwijaya Empire although Singapore rose in importance during the fourteenth century under the rule of the Sriwijayan prince Parameswara. A Chinese account, mentions the area at the tip of the Malay Peninsula. <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0107963.html>. According to the Chinese report, in 1320, the Mongol Court sent a mission to a place called Long Yamen (Dragon's Tooth Strait) for elephants. From that source it is interpreted that the story could refer to Keppel Harbour. It is also noted that a visitor from China, Wang Dayuan, who came around in 1330, called the main settlement Pancur in which Chinese were already living in certain areas. But it could also be one of the earliest references to Singapore as Temasek, a Sea Town, which was also a flourishing trading post in the fourteenth century, The name is found in the Javanese *Nagarakretagama*' of 1365 and also mentioned in a Vietnamese source of around the same time. A contemporary Chinese account states that Singapore was a pirate island. Later, by the end of the 14th century, the Sanskrit name, Singapura, meaning Lion City, became most common. It is important to note that Singapore was a trading centre in the Sriwijaya Empire before being destroyed, in the 14th century, by the Majapahit Empire. It was sparsely populated and *Sejarah Melayu* from the 16th century for instance, notes that Temasek was a developing trading post in the 14th century. Invasions by the Thais and Javanese in the 1390s drove the raja to flee north to Melaka to found the Sultanate. From historical evidence we know that Singapore was caught up in the struggles between Siam (now Thailand) and the Java-based Majapahit Empire for control over the Malay Peninsula. According to *Sejarah Melayu* (Malay

Annals) Singapore was defeated by Majapahit. However, Iskandar Shah, or Parameswara, a prince of Palembang, later killed the local chieftain and installed himself as the island's new leader. He was driven out, either by the Siamese or the Javanese forces of the Majapahit Empire and fled north to Muar on the Malay Peninsula where he founded the Malacca Sultanate. The Malay Annals mention that it was formed in the Muar area following the arrival of Permaisura or Parameswara. In the 14th century when the forces of Majapahit managed to subjugate Singapore, Permaisura and his followers established settlements named 'Biawak Busuk' before settling down and establishing the settlement of Malacca (Hanum 2004: 21). A Javanese poem, written in 1365 by Prapanca and considered the most important work of the vernacular literature developed during the Majapahit era, venerates King Hayam Wuruk (who reigned 1350-1389) and gives a detailed account of life in his kingdom. When shortly after he was driven out, either by the Siamese or by the Javanese forces of the Majapahit Empire, Singapore remained an important part of the Malacca Sultanate as the fief of the admirals (laksamanas), including the famous Hang Tuah. Hanum notes (2004: 18) that during the reign of Raja Seri Rama Wira Kerma in Singapore, a place called "Sayung" was thought to exist beside the Jorore River. The Malay Annals relate the story of Badang, a retainer of the Singaporean ruler who was said to have hailed from "Sayung". It is said that Badang, before becoming a warrior, was a labourer, clearing land at a place called, "Seluang" (at the upper reaches of Kota Tinggi). Sayung was located at the upper stretches of the Johore River and it is believed to be "Sayung Pinang" which still exists in Johor. It is said that Sayung Pinang is located 26 miles or approximately 41.6 km from Kota Tinggi. In the 16th century Sayung Pinang was the administrative seat of the Johore Sulatanate. <http://inic.utexas.edu/asnic/countries/singapore/Singapore-History.html>. After the fall of Malacca (Melaka) to the Portuguese (1511) (Ismail 2002: 27), the former Sultan of Malacca continued to rule over Johor and the Riau Archipelago. It is important to note that besides the local people, in Johor there were, in the 18th century, the Bugis, a Malay people from Sulawesi

who became dominant. Later, in 1819, a British-installed sultan granted the site of Singapore to the British East India Company and became, for practical purposes, its independent ruler. This situation caused the relations with Great Britain to be friendly. Meanwhile, Johor remained one of the most peaceful of the Malay states. Johor and Great Britain established formal treaty relations in 1885 and in 1914 Johor became a British protectorate, when it entered the Federation of Malaya. However, due to the Japanese occupation in 1942, some development programs were delayed influencing the intensity of the movement of people and goods between the two countries. Later on, further developments successfully encouraged the relationship between Malaysia and Singapore after the Japanese conquered Singapore, but unluckily, after the defeat of the Japanese, the developments could not be continued. Today Johor marks the border of Singapore and Malaysia and is a symbol of the close relationship between the two countries. In the past, the Strait was an area of conflict for some state interests over, for instance, some small islands such as Ubin Island and Tekong Besar Island to the east of Singapore which have access to marine camps in Changi, located in South eastern Singapore. (<http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9043887/Johore-Strait>). Since the union of political and cultural areas under British power, it seems there has been a similarity between the two regions in terms of political, economic and cultural aspects. Due to the British policy in Malaysia and Singapore, there had long been contacts between the people since they were under the same British influences. However, after the independence of both the countries, the British began not to influence their political development. As a result, they began to be Malaysian or Singaporean. This means that they began realizing that they were of different citizenship. Johor was classified as one of the Unfederated Malay States until 1948. Later Johor Tenggara became the site of a major resettlement and agricultural development project. www.hotel-map.us/Johor-Bahru in the 1970s.

This research on the trade contacts on the border (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Border>), between Malaysia and Singapore is a continuation of the

previous researches that were carried out in several border areas in Southeast Asia over four years. In the first year the research was carried out on the border areas between Thailand and Myanmar (2004). In the second year, it was carried out between Thailand and Laos (2005). In the third year the research was carried out between Thailand and Cambodia (2006) and in the fourth year the research on the trade contacts was carried out between Vietnam and Laos (2007) This year, the fifth year, (2008) the field research has been focussed on the trade contacts between Malaysia and Singapore. This research on Malaysia and Singapore is different from the previous work since it lays stress on not only two countries which are separated by the sea but also two countries as examples of balanced economic development, in which one country depends on another one.

Among the several reasons for why the issue of trade contacts between Malaysia and Singapore has been chosen as a topic for research are: Firstly, for the geographical differences in comparison with other Southeast Asian countries like Thailand, Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia, where Singapore has its own characteristics as an international transit port between India and China since a long time ago. Secondly, to understand the argument which says that whoever masters the trade and economic activities in the region of the Malacca Straits would dominate the Southeast Asian economic and trade regions. Thirdly, it would be “a lesson learnt” for Indonesia, where Singapore is an island and Indonesia an archipelago with more than 17.000 islands. Fourthly, in the context of multiculturalism, in which as an island, the Singapore state has influences from other Southeast Asian countries, like Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and other regions.

According to the history of the region, both Malaysia and Singapore have interesting factors to attract outside influences. Both the countries had become colonized by Western powers and have thus had a long relationship between those and other countries. There are some important notes that

show that there was a strong relationship between Malaysia and Singapore, due to that both regions in the past were within the British sphere of influence. If we trace back the relationship between Singapore and Malaysia it can be seen in the developments between the two countries in the building of the Johor-Singapore Causeway in 1923. The Causeway with a two-track railway, was opened to goods and passenger trains in September and October 1923. It started in 1909 as a railway link by the Johor State Railway to connect Johor Bahru to Singapore, then the administrative headquarters of British interests in Southeast Asia. Construction of the road section started in 1919 and was completed in 1923. The Causeway was first proposed by the Director of Public Works, Federated Malay States and development work began towards the end of 1919 at a cost of \$17 million. It was officially opened on 28 June 1924 by Governor Sir Laurence Guillemard, in the presence of His Royal Highness the Sultan of Johore (Thukiman 2001: xv). During the British colonial administration, the Causeway crossing was a convenient link to Malaya. There are now two connections: The Johor-Singapore Causeway and the Malaysia-Singapore Second Link. The Johor-Singapore Causeway is approximately 1038 m in length and was designed by Messrs Coode, Fizmaurice, Wilson and Mitchell of Westminster, while the construction contract was awarded to Topham, Jones & Railton Ltd of London. The second road connection, the Malaysia-Singapore Second Link, was completed in October 1997 and consists of a 1920 m twin-deck bridge supporting a dual-three lane carriageway linking Kampong Ladang in Tanjung Kupang, Johor, to Jalan Ahmad Ibrahim in Tuas, Singapore.



Plate 1.1. Map of Singapore

<http://www.malaysia-maps.com/singapore-map.htm>

Singapore is one of the world's greatest commercial centres, with a large, modern port. Trade contact in particular and commerce in general, has historically been the chief source of income for the country. It can be said that for many years the largest importer in Southeast Asia, Singapore is a free port and an entrepôt that re-exports more than half of what it imports, notably, rubber, petroleum, textiles, timber and tin. The industries that have been developed: electronics, chemicals, financial services, oil drilling equipment, petroleum refining, rubber processing and rubber products, processed food and beverages, ship repair, offshore platform construction, life sciences and entrepôt trade. In addition to this Singapore also exports locally manufactured goods such as computer and telecommunications equipment, petroleum products, oil drilling equipment, plastics, rubber products and processed food and beverages. Like other countries in Southeast Asia, Singapore imports most of its food

requirements. The country's chief trading partners are Japan, the United States, Malaysia, and Indonesia with other major trading partners Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, Thailand and South Korea (2004). The transportation system includes railways: total: 38.6 km, highways: total: 3,066 km; paved roads: total 3,066 km (including 150 km of expressways), airports: 9 (2002) and the Singapore-Johor Bahru Causeway, a 1,056 m long (3,465 ft) cross-country link over the Strait of Johor, between Singapore and Malaysia, located in the northern region of Singapore. As well as the Malaysia-Singapore Second Link.

Johor has a number of attractions, and Singaporeans take advantage of them in droves. The state offers traditional villages (both Malay and Chinese), a number of good golf resorts, waterfalls, agricultural plantations and a national park. If you tire of the concrete jungle of Singapore's business district, or the smoothed-over edges of the city's shopping and tourist sectors, a day trip into Malaysia can be refreshing. Johor is also well known in the region for the golf courses it offers. Over the last 15 years Johor has built a number of golf resorts, many around the town of Kota Tinggi, about 30 miles northeast of Singapore. There are also a few coastal beach resorts on Johor's eastern coast. Johor Bahru sits opposite Singapore on the Malaysian end of the causeway out of the city. It is well known that the local people refer to the city simple as "J. B." Jalan Ibrahim borders the old portion of the city and Chinese and Indian merchants there ply their trades in storefronts that date back several centuries. The area offers a Taoist shrine, a Hindu temple, a Catholic church and the city's old train station. Along the waterfront, the Royal Abu Bakar Museum is housed in the former residence of the Sultan of Johore. It is huge and impressive and has hosted many members of European royal families as guests since it was built in 1964. The surrounding Istana Gardens are worth a stroll. While Johor is a refreshing break from the grind of Singapore, Singapore's booming economy also makes Johor expensive compared to the rest of Malaysia. But all in all it is still cheaper than Singapore itself, and the glimpse into Malaysian life

is worth the time involved if you are in Singapore for more than a few days. To strengthen its economic development Singapore signed a free-trade agreement with the United States in 2003. With more than 300 factories and deepwater wharves, the Jurong Industrial Estate is Southeast Asia's largest industrial complex. The Changi International Airport and certain big buildings are built largely on infill of marsh and shallow waters of the Straits. The country has a number of large petroleum storage and refining facilities and Keppel Harbour is one of the world's largest container-handling facilities. Indeed, the development of the former British naval base at Sembawang on the Johor Strait as a commercial shipyard helped to enhance Singapore's status as a major centre for shipbuilding and repairs. <http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0861099.html>. However, less than 5% of Singapore's land is used for agriculture; tropical fruit and vegetables are intensively cultivated and poultry and hogs are raised. There are no exploitable natural resources in the country. Its power is produced by thermoelectricity and water is supplied by a number of reservoirs. Singapore has a fine rapid transit system, good roads, a railroad that crosses the island and a causeway, carrying road and rail traffic to the mainland. Singapore's workforce is employed primarily in manufacturing, in the service industries and in commerce, with a negligible proportion engaged in agriculture. The country has become a major centre of international finance in recent decades. The economy slowed as a result of the Asian financial crisis of 1997–98 and the 2001 recession, but unemployment and inflation remained low. The increasing importance of China in manufacturing and finance, however, is seen as a threat to Singapore's future economic growth <http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0861097.html>. There are several projects in the context of the Ninth Malaysia Plan and the economic development corridors in Malaysia including the Iskandar Development Region, the Northern Corridor Economic Region, the Eastern Corridor Economic Region and the Sabah and Sarawak Corridor. These projects are interesting not only to the Singaporean investors, but also skilled and educated Indonesian workers from Riau, West Sumatra and Batam. The total population of Johor is

around 3 million, in Johor Bahru itself around 1 million and in Singapore it is approximately 5 million. Unemployment in Malaysia is approximately 3.3% and the income for a Malaysian is around US \$ 6.477 (Kedutaan Besar Republik Indonesia, *Laporan Tahunan 2007*. Bidang Perdagangan, Kuala Lumpur).

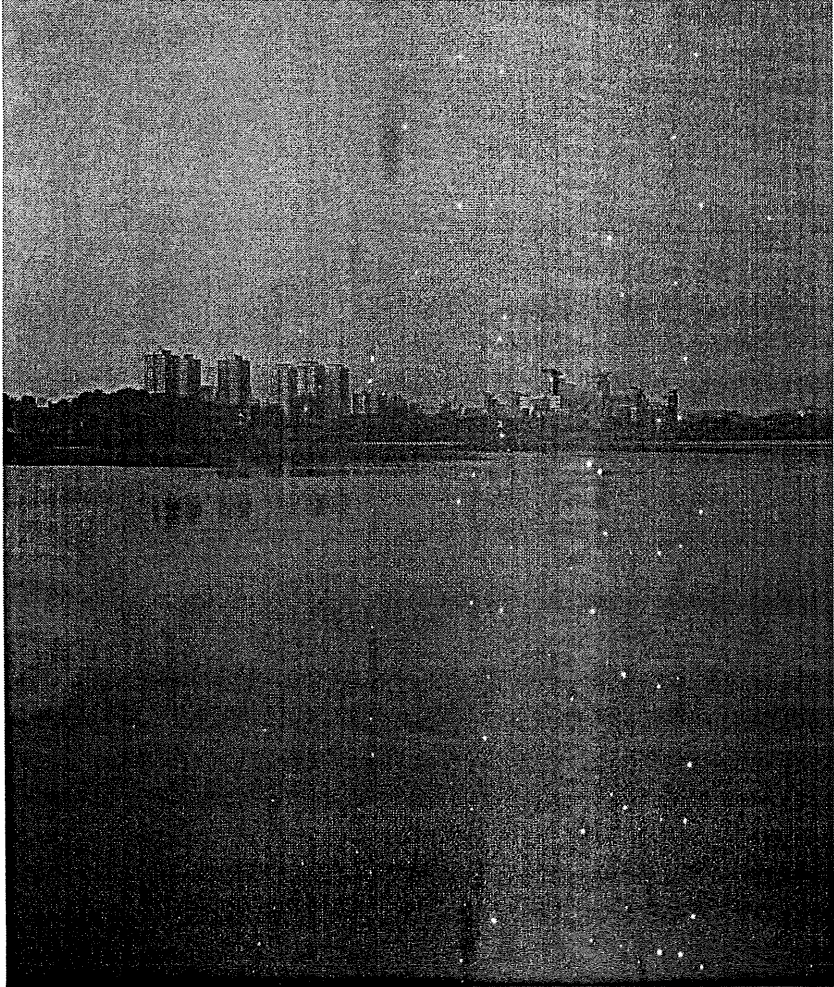


Plate 1. 2. Singapore viewed from Johor Bahru, Malaysia

Looking at the trade contacts between Malaysia and Singapore it is clear that the ways to Singapore from Indonesia and Malaysia are through Riau and Johor, which provide extra economic space including relocation of land and labour intensive industries, development of nearby recreational facilities, reinforcement of business headquarters and the regional hub role, securing future water supplies, outward expansion for GLCs and SMEs. Johor is twinning with Singapore to exploit the metropolitan spill over effects and facilitate catch-ups. Johor is one of the most developed states in peninsular Malaysia. It is important to look at the strong political support from governments, mainly bilateral until 1994, where Malaysia has different state/federal and provincial/central relations. It is important to note that the early strong commitment came from the governments of Singapore, Indonesia and Johor, while the Malaysian Federal Government support came later. The Indonesia-Singapore Ministerial Committee for Riau and the Johor-Singapore Joint Committee on Business Cooperation were established in March 1989 to coordinate ongoing cooperative efforts and three bilateral Singapore-Indonesia agreements were made in 1990 for joint development of Riau in infrastructure, industry, services, tourism and water resources. In comparison with Johor in Malaysia, Singapore has capital, expertise, world class infrastructure and markets and also geographical proximity particularly in time and cost savings, Singapore and Johor are linked by causeways, Singapore-Batam 50 km distance apart are linked by a 30 minute ferry ride and Singapore-Bintan are linked by a 45 minute ferry ride.

A Short History of the Border Issues

There has been a long relationship between local traders in the two countries, through the maritime area. In the past, they provided what was called border trade, but since Independence this is no longer border trade but export and import trade, since the border between Malaysia

and Singapore came to be an international border, bordered by the Johor Strait. Johor, a part of the Malaysian state, is located in the northern part of the border region with Singapore at the southern part. Both cities, Singapore and Johor are linked by geography, history and strong trade as well as investment and tourism relations and physically linked by 2 causeways and ferry and rail transport.

Johor is Singapore's third largest trading partner after the United States and Japan and accounts for half of Singapore's trade with and 60% of Singapore's investment in Malaysia. Singapore's investment in Johor reached RM5.85 billion for 662 manufacturing projects during 1990-96. Most of Singapore's firms are SMEs. Johor too is the main source of Singapore's land visitor arrivals from Malaysia. In 2000, over 3 million visitors entered Johor from Singapore, with Singaporeans making up nearly 70%. It is important to note that with the North-South Highway, Johor acts as the gateway for Singaporeans travelling to all parts of peninsular Malaysia. Besides that, the Johor checkpoint statistics report an average of 800,000 Singaporeans crossing the Causeway to Johor every month. With the second land link between Singapore and Johor built by the Singapore government and the Malaysian Renong Group conglomerate. The new and second checkpoint at Tuas has 196 clearance lanes and designated decks for different modes of transport. Since July 1999, new immigration clearance facilities at Woodlands Checkpoint have operated under a multi-agency team and leverages with the latest IT systems to provide effective and efficient clearance while ensuring tight border control. At the opening of the new checkpoint, the volume of people traffic was reported to reach 118,000 comprised of truck drivers, motorcyclists and other travellers. During 1967-1999, Singapore travellers across the Causeway could use either the Singapore Restricted Passport (SRP) or an international passport with the SRP discontinued after 1999. Under discussion is a "Smart Card" to replace the passport for Singapore-Johor travel. There is a Malaysian plan for the Southern International Gateway comprising a new 1.5 km bridge with capacity for 200,000

vehicles per day and connecting the expressways of Singapore to Malaysia's North-South Expressway. Johor supplies Singapore with 214 million litres of raw water a day, or more than half of Singapore's daily water needs. Singapore buys the raw water under two water agreements signed in 1961 and 1962 which will run out in 2011 and 2061. In turn, Johor buys an average of 37 million gallons per day of treated water from the Singapore treatment plant in Johor. Historical evidence shows that the Malay Peninsula – formerly known as Malaya and Singapore were a united region in terms of politics. But in the nineteenth century the British colonial power colonized Singapore and employed policies different from those in Johor, in terms of *de jure* Singapore as a sovereign state. When Singapore was united with Malaya, Sabah and Sarawak to form Malaysia in 1963, the border region became a state border. However, this lasted only a short time as Singapore separated from it in 1965 and became a state on the border. In the northern part of Singapore the people speak the Malay language particularly in the Tabrau Strait between Singapore and Johor. In the southern part of Johor the people speak the Malay language as well, as many people there are Malays originating from Indonesia. Not only the people in Johor believe that their ancestors are from Indonesia like from the Minangkabau area, but also Singaporeans believe that their ancestors came from Indonesia, particularly from Sumatra and Sulawesi. From this description, it can be said that the people in the regions are mixed one with another, but since the emergence of a modern state they are separated in terms of their citizenship.

The border issue is a significant one, which has been already paid attention to by countries in Southeast Asia. This cannot be separated from the general trends which have already occurred in Southeast Asia, particularly after the emergence of modern states. In the past, traditional states in Southeast Asia were determined by their centres and not often by their peripheries. On one hand, politically, the traditional rulers claimed border areas as a part of their region, though an exact or fixed area did not exist. On the other hand, local people who resided in the border areas depended

on the economic developments in neighbouring states. In the colonial era, no attention was paid to the border regions in terms of how the border should be developed. Later, in the process of decolonization attention began to be paid to the border area. Currently it is perceived that there is no problem, since initial social migration had already happened in the border area, which gave some opportunities for social integration among people in terms of their similar Malay ethnicity. (Kahn 2007: 16). This is not a serious problem for the local people in the region. For them the border area means nothing, since they have their own land in the neighbouring state following the emergence of land conflict in the border regions. In Malaysia itself there occurred most of the criminal actions due to the breaking of laws on Akta Kastam 1967. Over five months there were 381 cases which cost a total of RM 943,093. Of these, three cases have already been settled by the Court (Mahkamah) in 2008, in comparison to 10 cases in the same months in the last year (2007). ("Kastam Johor selesai 255 kes Seludup", in *Harian Metro*, Friday, June 6, 2008). In addition to this, Singaporean and Malaysian authorities have collaborated, for the first time, to crack down on cross border trade in pirated DVDs. Four people were arrested and 4,300 discs seized during raids in the Malaysian border town of Johor Bahru. Retail outlets and websites were believed to be supplying Singapore customers. The raids were conducted by the Intellectual Property Rights Branch of the Singapore Police Force and the Enforcement Division of Malaysia's Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs. Patrick Frater, "Cross border pirates thwarted," Wednesday, 09 July 2008. <http://www.varietyasiaonline.com/content/view/6429/53/>.

This picture will help to understand why the mobility of the people and goods is simple in terms of the cross border. In addition to this, it can be understood that some people (Singaporeans) stay in Johor and work in Singapore since it is cheaper to stay in Johor rather than in Singapore. This is easy as there is a bridge connecting Johor and Woodlands by which many people cross the border every day. Besides, there is also a railway connecting Johor Baru, Malaysia, with Woodlands, Singapore.



Plate 1.3. The border bridge between Johor Bahru, Malaysia and Woodlands, Singapore

When the racial riots broke out in 1964, the entry point between Malaysia and Singapore was closed from the 22nd to the 26th of July 1964. It is important to note that the Johor-Singapore Causeway is a land connection which was built between the Malay Peninsula and Singapore. The second development, called the Malaysia-Singapore Second Link, was completed in 1998. The Johor Strait separates Singapore and Malaysia with Singapore considered one of the "*Asian tigers*" in the economic development in the region. Johor Bahru is the second biggest city in Malaysia and Malaysia reached the peak of development since the 1980s when the development in the region was strongly influenced by development in Singapore. 25,000 people come to Johor Bahru to work in the construction industry and house building. At present, the former British colonies show independence between regions with Singapore showing amazing economic development in Southeast Asia which has

had an impact on the regional economic development. This situation has had the effect that there are many Singaporeans visiting Johor to go shopping in Malaysia at the times that the prices of the goods are decreased. The Malaysian government decided to compete with Singapore by building a new container building in Johor. Despite that, the fact is that it has built a bridge connecting the two regions in 1999. This is very useful in order to make a contribution to the acceleration of the development programs including goods and services(<http://www.filmakers.com/indivs/Singapore-Malaysia.htm>).

There are two bridges that connect the two countries, the Johor-Singapore Causeway and the Malaysia-Singapore Second Link, known as the *Tuas Second Link* in Singapore. Meanwhile, the gate point known as *the Woodlands Checkpoint*, part of which was built on reclaimed land, was opened in 1999 to accommodate the increasing economic and trade traffic close to the Customs. For the old building was built in the 1970s. The connection between the *Woodlands Road* and the *Woodlands Centre Road* was closed after the opening of the new gate point in July 1999.

As in other border regions in Southeast Asia, there emerged some conflicts between the two neighbouring states, for instance, the conflict over the Pedra Branca Island or the conflict over Pulau Batu Puteh which are still current. The conflict is about the ownership rights of the Pedra Branca Island located in the Johor Strait which is claimed by the two neighbouring states namely Malaysia and Singapore. Many Singaporeans travel to Johor Bahru in Malaysia or Batam in Indonesia, to take advantage of price differences and differing product availability. The Singaporean government has a law that requires a car leaving Singapore to have a nearly full fuel tank to prevent it from being filled with fuel from outside Singapore. However, the relationship remains healthy because of the migration of the ethnic groups to the border regions due to marriage, religion and other reasons. As in other areas, the measurement of the ethnic minority has certain meanings in Cambodia, Laos, Thailand,

Malaysia and Singapore. In each country, the number of indigenous *minorities* is less than 20% of the total population in each country (Osborne 1991: 58).

By looking at the economic and trade activities in the border regions, we cannot only look at the movement of people, but also at the movement of goods, like agricultural products and cultural activities which are different from region to region (Carl Grundy-Warr 1996). The aspect of religion can be considered as a cultural asset which creates harmony in the border region between Malaysia and Singapore, however, from this can also emerge conflicts (Diamond 1998). Indeed, it can be said that these conflicts affect social disturbances including murder.

The same does not only occur on the border between Indonesia and Malaysia, but also in several other regions in Southeast Asia. This study will show the extent of the relationship between the people in the border regions, in terms of trade contacts, between Malaysia and Singapore, which are modern countries. Though there is already much research on the border regions there are still only limited comparative studies on the border regions in Southeast Asia. Therefore, this study on the border regions, by taking an interdisciplinary approach through looking at economics, anthropology, sociology and history will contribute to better understanding the dynamics of the people in the border regions.

Based on the above explanation, there are some issues on the border regions between Malaysia and Singapore. Firstly, how can they be understood since there have been trade contacts among the people in the border regions for a long time? Secondly, how can the conflicts be explained since this issue is in fact related to other issues like economic, social and cultural aspects? Thirdly, what kinds of issues should be understood since some models can be used in explaining certain issues in the border regions in Indonesia? Therefore, there are some pertinent questions as follows: To what extent do the issues on the border regions between Malaysia

and Singapore influence events in those countries?; What kinds of factors cause an increase in issues in the border regions?; How do both of the states solve the problems in the border regions?; What can we learn from the relationship through the trade contacts in the border regions between Malaysia and Singapore?.

Aims

To discuss the trade contact between Malaysia and Singapore, it is important to look at the general issues in the border regions between the two countries. Firstly, as we have carried out our research in the border regions between Vietnam and Laos, now we would like to know better other parts of Southeast Asia; to understand the border contacts in the context of the regional economic development. As we already know, the cross border contacts in many regions cannot be ignored whether harmonious or conflicting, since they have actually lasted as long as their histories among the local people who are the ethnic minorities in the regions. This has also happened in the cross border regions between the local people in Malaysia and Singapore. Secondly, how can we understand the relations between Malaysia and Singapore regarding the trade contacts involving harmony and conflicts in the two regions and regarding the social, cultural and economic aspects? In this context, the trade contacts between Malaysia and Singapore indeed cannot be regarded as border trade, but an export/import trade. In a discussion of the border, in terms of law, for instance, under international law, each country is generally permitted to define the conditions which have to be met by a person to legally cross its borders by its own laws and to prevent persons from crossing its border when this happens in violation of those laws. On crossing the border in Johor Bahru (Malaysia) and Woodlands (Singapore), it is important to note that the presentation of passports and visas or other appropriate forms of identity documents is required by some legal orders. In addition to this, to stay or work within a country's borders, aliens

migration documents or permits that authorise them to do so. Moving goods across a border often requires the payment of excise tax, usually collected by Customs officials. In addition to this, animals (and occasionally humans) moving across borders may need to go into quarantine to prevent the spread of exotic or infectious diseases. Most countries prohibit the carrying of illegal drugs or endangered animals across their borders. Moving goods, animals or people illegally across a border, without declaring them, seeking permission or deliberately evading official inspection constitutes smuggling. Thirdly, through this study we hope to better understand the cross border relations in Southeast Asia and later on make a contribution to Indonesia, not only in anticipating some issues but also giving alternative solutions to the border regions nationally and regionally in Southeast Asia. Based on the above reasons, this study will discuss the issues on the border contacts or cross border linkages, especially by investigating the trade contacts in the border regions in Southeast Asia.

Specific aims

- To analyse the intensity of the movements of people and goods in the border regions in terms of economic and social aspects between Malaysia and Singapore;
- To investigate the negative and positive aspects regarding the economic and social aspects in the border regions between Malaysia and Singapore;
- To recommend strategic policies to improve the economic and social contacts in the border regions and create a balance between economic and environmental development.

Objectives

To elaborate the family linkages in the border regions in Malaysia and Singapore;

- To discuss the intensity of human movements and goods related to the social and economic aspects;
- To analyse the impact of the economy on the environment;
- To evaluate the social and economic relations in relation to the government policy.

Theoretical Framework

Before this study relevant research on the border regions between Indonesia and Malaysia, was done by carrying out collaborative research between Indonesian and Malaysian researchers, namely between I Ketut Ardhana (Research Center for Regional Resources) and Jayl Langub (Majlis Adat in Kuching Sarawak) and Daniel Chew (Sarawak Development Institute) funded by SEASREP - The Toyota Foundation and was called "Border of Ethnicity and Kinship: Cross Border Relations between the Kelalan Valley Sarawak and the Bawan Valley, East Kalimantan" (Ardhana, 2004a and Ardhana, 2004b). It investigated the issues on borders focussing on trade contacts, ethnicity and identity. Two groups, the Long Bawan and the Lun Dayeh, previously descended from the same ethnic group but separated by nationality after both states' independence from the western powers namely, the Dutch and the British, were looked at. Before separating they were dependent one on the other in terms of social, cultural and economic activities. As happened in other border regions, as described by I Ketut Ardhana, Yekti Maunati, Taufik Abdullah, Lamijo in *Trade Contacts in the border regions between Thailand and Burma* (2004) this shows the important role of the regions, called the 'Golden Triangle' as exchange places and for the economic trans national movement between Thailand and Burma. Regarding the

conflict issues, Fisher et al. (2000: 41) mentions that cultural aspects affect also the emergence of conflict. Similarly also John Haba (2002) shows that ethnic relations have a strong relation to the dynamics of development, and finally can trigger conflict as happened also in the Nunukan district in East Kalimantan. Therefore, someone wishing to resolve the conflicts should have an understanding of the cultural background of the people who are involved in the conflicts, to which they come from usually different cultures (Christie 1996: 53).

Concepts and Definitions

Ethnic history: the dynamic of the ethnic groups in terms of human movement and goods from a historical perspective;

Transnational trade: trade contacts between two or more countries;

Border trade: refers to the flow of goods and services across international land borders between countries. In this sense, it is a part of normal trade that flows through standard EXIM frameworks of nations. However, the economic, social and political implications of border trade are far deeper than normal trade that flows through sea and air ports. Border trade is the increased trade in areas near a national border caused by a price difference, either generally or only for particular products (especially alcohol and tobacco products), in the two countries;

Border checkpoint: a place on the land border between two states where the travellers and/or goods are inspected. Historically all borders had checkpoints (unless they were completely closed to travellers) and these were usually the only places at which it was legal to cross the border, but in modern times checkpoints have been reduced on some borders due to international and supranational arrangements (e.g. Schengen Treaty). Land border checkpoints can be contrasted with the

Customs and Immigration facilities at seaports and international airports;

Ethnicity and identity: the ethnic changes in the terms of composition, family linkage, composition of nation states in the border regions;

Movement of humans and goods: the movement of people and goods from one region to another across a border;

Regional cooperation: collaborative networks in terms of economics, social matters, culture and government.

Research Method

This research uses the analytical descriptive method and an interdisciplinary approach. This means that the problem is discussed in terms of economic, anthropological and historical issues. In the fifth year, in 2008, this research not only looks at references in the library, but also interviews people in the field: officials, bureaucrats, academics, NGOs and local people like traders both in Malaysia and Singapore. It was carried out in Kuala Lumpur, Johor Bahru and Woodlands, over approximately fourteen days in May and was funded by the Indonesian government. It is hoped that it will contribute to understanding the border issues related to the trade contacts between Malaysia and Singapore in particular, and in Southeast Asia in general. Besides the quantitative method, this research uses the qualitative method. By carrying out focus group discussion it was hoped to have more data and information from local informants in the border areas particularly on family linkages, the intensity of the trade activities, human trafficking and the local people's perception of the border issues. We interviewed people particularly in the government in Malaysia and Singapore as well as people interested in border issues. In addition to this, we collected primary and secondary data from related institutions, through the Internet, universities in Malaysia and Singapore

In addition to this, we collected primary and secondary data from related institutions, through the Internet, universities in Malaysia and Singapore and also libraries in both countries. We particularly interviewed some Malaysians in the Customs and Immigration offices in Johor Bahru. We particularly sought data from different sources, including literature on the Malaysians and the Singaporeans by western and non-western writers and in depth interviews conducted with many groups. Of the people, we were very interested in those engaged in trade in the border areas between Malaysia and Singapore, including owners of souvenir shops, the owner of a travel agency, officials and traders.

Bernard's discussion of the use of unstructured and semi structured interviewing was very useful for our research (Bernard 1995). 'Thick description', as proposed by Geertz in his research method, such as his conceptualisation of fieldwork was also very important (Geertz 1973).

Though we are aware that to gain a "thick description" needs a long period of fieldwork, the understanding of this method is very useful for any researcher carrying out empirical studies. In this fifth year (2008) we are grateful for the generosity of our informants at the Ministry of Finance Customs Department, Ministry of Commerce Department of Foreign Trade, a Civil Servant of the Foreign Relations and International Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Department of Economic Affairs in Kuala Lumpur and Johor Bahru and the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Kuala Lumpur and the people we met when we carried out research by visiting the border region in Johor Bahru and Woodlands (Singapore) to get more comprehensive views on how the trade contacts between Malaysia and Singapore are dependent on each other. The research on the border issues in Southeast Asia by the Southeast Asianists from the Research Center for Regional Resources The Indonesian Institute of Sciences has been planned to be carried out for five years from 2004-2009. In the first year (2004), the field research was on the trade contacts in the border regions between Thailand and Myanmar, in

the second year (2005) on Thailand and Laos, the third year (2006) between Cambodia and Thailand, the fourth year (2007) between Vietnam and Laos, in the fifth year (2008) between Malaysia and Singapore and finally, in the sixth year (2009) between Malaysia and the Philippines. The last study will be based on the model of the trade relationship in the border regions in Southeast Asia.

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CHAPTER 2

THE PAST RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE

I Ketut Ardhana

Introduction

Looking at the issue of border trade between Malaysia and Singapore it is important to look back at the earlier situation between the two countries. Both countries have a long history based on the developments in the surrounding regions in Southeast Asia. The current issues in both countries are part of international disputes: disputes with Malaysia over deliveries of fresh water to Singapore, Singapore's land reclamation work affecting Johor, maritime boundaries and Singapore-occupied Pedra Branca Island/Pulau Batu Putih. Saw Swee-Hock and Kesavapany (2006:xv) note that the period stretching from 1997 to 2002 under the Mahathir administration was by far the most stressful in the history of relation between Malaysia and Singapore. How can we better understand the current issues in the region? This chapter will look at, Firstly, the historical background of Singapore in going forward to take shape as a modern state. Secondly, at the kinds of external aspects affecting the development of Singapore until the beginning of the twentieth century. Thirdly, the kinds of issues that developed so that Singapore is able to successfully face many issues particularly in social, cultural and economic terms. Therefore, it will look at the general history of the countries by examining what really happened, where initially both Malaysia and Singapore were an integrated unit under the imperialist British rule.

The Geographical Background

Johor or Johore, the most southerly point of the Asian continental mainland, known as “land’s end” and now the Customs centre, called “the Harvard of Customs” (Kastam Johor Holistik, Kastam Diraja Malaysia Johor 2004: 11 and Hanum 2004: 16) is a state with a population, in 1991, of 2,074,297 and approximately 7,360 sq miles (19,062 sq km) in area located at the southern extremity of the Malay Peninsula opposite Singapore. Meanwhile, Singapore lies approximately 137 km (85 miles) north of the equator at the southernmost tip of peninsular Malaysia and is located between the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea. The country is situated at the convergence of some of the world’s major sea-lanes (Rieger, 1999: 313) and separated from Malaysia by the Strait of Johor and from the Indonesian archipelago in the south by the Straits of Singapore. The Singapore territory consists of the island of Singapore and 58 islets of which more than 20 are inhabited. It is noted that the main island of Singapore is about 42 km (26 miles) from west to east and 23 km (15 miles) from north to south.



Plate 2.1. the border map between Malaysia and Singapore

The country is low-lying and composed of a granite core at Bukit Timah, the country's highest point) surrounded by sedimentary lowlands. With its proximity to the equator, Singapore has a tropical rain-forest climate with uniformly high temperatures and rainfall throughout the year but heaviest during the northeast monsoon. This is between November and January. The driest month is July. The temperature is 31C (88 F) with a minimum of 23 C (73 F). It was once covered by rain forest, which is now limited to Bukit Timah Nature Reserve. (<http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0861095.html> and Ardhana 2007). Average humidity is approximately 85%. Between April and November thunder storms known as "Sumatra" occur three or four times a month. The land area of Singapore is 264 sq miles (683 sq km); total area: 268 sq miles (693 sq km). The total population is (2006 est.) 4,492,150 (growth rate: 1.4%); birth rate: 9.3/1000; infant mortality rate: 2.3/1000; life expectancy: 81.7; density per sq mile: 18,645. Languages: Mandarin 35%, English 23%, Malay 14.1%, Hokkien 11.4%, Cantonese 5.7%, Teochew 4.9%, Tamil 3.2%, other Chinese dialects 1.8%, other 0.9% (2000), and the literacy rate: 93% (2003 est.). Ethnicity/race: Chinese 76.8%, Malay 13.9%, Indian 7.9%, other 1.4% (2000). Religions: Buddhist 43%, Muslim 15%, Taoist 9%, Hindu 4%, Catholic 5%, other Christian 10%, none 15% (2000). The Capital and largest city (2003 est.): Singapore, 3,438,600. The monetary unit: Singapore dollar. <http://www.infoplease.com/atlas/country/singapore.html>.

The Historical Backgrounds of Johor and Woodlands

In the past Johor used to be known as "land's end", referring to its location at the very edge of the Malay Peninsula (Hanum 2004: 16). He notes that early writings refer to Johor (Johore) as "Ta-na" (Gerini), "Jantan", "Jantana", "Santana". Claims have also been made that the name "Johore" was derived from the Hindi word 'Jor' meaning something that connects. In addition to this, Hanum quotes Winstedt, a former colonial administrator

and British historian who has written and researched extensively on the Malays and the history of Malaysia. He says that it has been known to employ the name “Wurawari” to refer to Johore when referring to the state. “Wurawari” is derived from Javanese and means “clean water”. It is noted that Johor’s heritage is one that appeals to special interest visitors with its collection of historical buildings, old capital or administrative sites and war relics (Johor Malaysia: 26).

As in other regions in Southeast Asia, there are many inhabitants in the Malaysian Peninsula and the Island of Singapore whose ancestors first migrated to the area between 2500 and 1500 B. C. There are not many sources on those matters. However, the history of Singapore began in the third century. At that time, a Chinese account made reference to Singapore as Pu-luo-chung, or “Island at the end of a peninsula”. Written accounts of the early history of Singapore are sketchy and the names used to refer to the country are varied. In 1320, however, the Mongol Court sent a mission to a place called Long Yamen (Dragon’s Tooth Strait) to get elephants. This probably referred to Keppel Harbour. A visitor from China, Wang Dayuan, who came in around 1330, called the main settlement Pancur (Spring) and reported that there were Chinese already living here. One of the earliest references to Singapore is as Temasek (Ismail 2002: 3) or Sea Town, found in the Javanese Nagarakretagama of 1365. The name was also mentioned in a Vietnamese source at around the same time. By the end of the 14th century, the Sanskrit name, Singapura (Lion City), became commonly used. At that time, Singapore was caught in the struggles between Siam (now Thailand) and the Java-based Majapahit Empire for control over the Malay Peninsula. It can be understood that between the 7th and the 13th centuries there was a vast trading empire, Sriwijaya, in which its hegemony embraced Malacca and the Straits (Regnier 1990: 5).

According to the Sejarah Melayu (Malay Annals), Singapore was defeated in a Majapahit attack, but Iskandar Shah, or Parameswara, a

prince of Palembang, later killed the local chieftain and installed himself as the island's new ruler. According to a Javanese poem written in 1365 by Prapanca and considered the most important work of the vernacular literature developed during the Majapahit era, venerates King Hayam Wuruk (1350-1389) and gives a detailed account of life in his kingdom. Shortly after, he was driven out, either by the Siamese or by the Javanese forces of the Majapahit Empire. He fled north to Muar on the Malay Peninsula, where he founded the Malacca Sultanate. Singapore remained an important part of the Malacca Sultanate; the fief of the admirals (laksamana), including the famous Hang Tuah. <http://inic.utexas.edu/asnic/countries/singapore/Singapore-History.html>. Hanum notes (2004: 18) that during the reign of Raja Seri Rama Wira Kerma in Singapore, a place called "Sayung" was thought to exist beside the Jorore River. The Malay Annals relate the story of Badang, retainer of the Singaporean ruler said to have hailed from "Sayung". It is said that Badang before becoming a warrior, worked as a labourer, clearing land at a place called, "Seluang" (in the upper reaches of Kota Tinggi, where there is a place known as Kampung Lukut (Thukiman 2001: 3). Sayung was located at the upper stretches of the Johore River. About the old cities it can be said that Pekan Tua (now located in Kampung Sungai Telor) and Kota Kara were the important places in Johor as the first capital of Johor in 1529—1530. This capital was established by Sultan Alauddin Riayat Syah II (Sejarah Pentadbiran Kastam Johor, Percetakan Nasional Malaysia Berhad 2003: 19).

Meanwhile regarding the Malaysian border, in Johor, Hanum mentions (2004: 16) that there exists a stone inscription written in Sanskrit and Javanese, dated 1600 CE, describing a calamity brought upon Java by Wurawari. In addition to this, a Siamese legal digest entitled Kot Mont'ien Ban (written in 1358) tells of a king in "Wurawari" who ascended the throne in 1435 when the country was under Siamese rule. The name "Johor" originated from the Arabic word *Jauhar*, 'gem/precious stone'. Before the name was adopted, the area south of the Muar River to

Singapore island was known as *Ujung Tanah* or 'land's end' in Malay, due to its location at the end of the Malay Peninsula. Johor has two ports, Pasir Gudang Port and the Port of Tanjung Pelepas. Some analysts have concluded that replacing the Causeway with a bridge would allow the creation of a comprehensive port system linking Pasir Gudang Port and Tanjung Pelepas Port; some go on to suggest that this presents a threat to Singapore's port activity, thus explaining the initial reluctance of Singapore to agree to the Causeway replacement

From the historical point of view we know that the early records of Singapore are vague. However, the region could have been a small seaport during the era of the Sriwijaya Empire. Singapore rose in importance during the fourteenth century under the rule of the Sriwijayan prince Parameswara. A Chinese account, names the area at the tip of the Malay Peninsula. <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0107963.html>. A contemporary Chinese account mentions that Singapore is a pirate island. It is important to note that Singapore was a trading centre in the Sriwijaya Empire before being destroyed, in the 14th century, by the Majapahit Empire. It was sparsely populated but Sejarah Melayu from the 16th century, for instance, notes that Temasek was a developing trading post in the 14th century. Invasions by the Thai and Javanese in the 1390s drove the raja to flee north to Melaka to found the Malay Sultanate. From the historical evidences we know that Singapore was caught in the struggles between Siam (now Thailand) and the Java-based Majapahit Empire for control over the Malay Peninsula.

Rieger (1999: 313-315) notes that Singapore has played a major role due to its geographic position and good service strategies in the context of trade in Southeast Asia since its independence. At the tip of the southern part of mainland Southeast Asia, Singapore has a good position for the Chinese boats to get water and mining equipment which the boats ship from Calcutta to Guangzhou (Canton). The opening of the Suez Canal and the use of steamships caused some changes in the international trade

routes. The transportation of oil from the Persian Gulf to Japan through Singapore affected development in the region. Singapore remained an important part of the Malacca Sultanate. When Singapore entered its modern history in 1819 when the Englishman Thomas Stamford Raffles established a British port in Singapore. British rule affected the growth and the importance of the country as a centre for both the Indian and the Chinese trade. This means that Britain's trade with China developed and expanded during the nineteenth century. This development affected the emergence of the entrepot trade in Southeast Asia and Singapore rapidly became a major port city. All involved saw the need for a port of call in this region to refit, revitalise and protect their merchant fleet, as well as to forestall any advance by the Dutch in the East Indies. As a result, there was established a trading post in Penang by Francis Light in 1786. However, Raffles recognized that a more strategically placed settlement was urgently needed. Therefore, he was given permission to establish a trading post and landed in Singapore on January 29, 1819. That was the time of the establishment of Singapore (1819) to serve along with Malacca, which the British had captured from the Dutch (1795).

We know that the British, who were extending their power in India, and whose trade with China in the second half of the 18th century was expanding, saw the need for a port of call in this a region. Therefore, in late 1818, Lord Hastings, the Governor-General of India, gave tacit approval to Sir Stamford Raffles, Lieutenant-Governor of Bencoolen, to establish a trading station at the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula where Raffles landed after having surveyed other nearby islands. He concluded a preliminary treaty with Temenggong Abdu'r Rahman to set up a trading post here and on 6 February 1819, a formal treaty was concluded with Sultan Hussein of Johor and the Temenggong, the de jure and defacto rulers of Singapore respectively. Singapore proved to be a prized settlement. It was earning revenue and its trade surpassed that of Penang by 1820. Later Singapore's status as a British possession was formalised by two new treaties. The Anglo-Dutch Treaty of March 1824

was the first, by which the Dutch withdrew all objections to the British occupation of Singapore and the second was made with Sultan Hussein and Temenggong Abdu'r Rahman in August, by which the two owners ceded the island outright to the British in return for increased cash payments and pensions. It is important to point out that Thomas Stamford Raffles saw great potential in the swamp-covered but strategically located island. It was argued that though there was skepticism in the British East India Company, the settlement and port grew rapidly as an entrepot. The networking served trade contacts between western countries and Southeast Asia and overshadowed Penang and Malacca in importance. Singapore became part of the Strait Settlements in 1826 together with Malacca and Penang. All of them were under the control of British India. This development directed that in 1832, Singapore became the centre of government for the three areas and the Straits Settlements also became a "crown colony" under the jurisdiction of the Colonial Office in London on 1 April 1867.

Social and Political Aspects in the Border Areas

After 1500 the world entered modernity. This can be particularly seen at the end of the eighteenth century when the British East India Company (EIC) felt it imperative to protect their interests in the region between China and India. As the historical evidence shows the Sunda Straits was under the control of the Dutch. At that time the British needed to have security in relation to the route through the Straits of Malacca. It is important to look at the British effort to have contacts in the region. For instance, in 1786, the British established a base in Penang. The British played a major role to control the Straits of Malacca during the Napoleonic War. The British needed to reach accommodation with the Dutch. The Anglo-Dutch Convention of 1814 returned Malacca to the Dutch but Thomas Stamford Raffles was based in Bencoolen in Sumatra.

The later development was much characterized by the advent of the steamship in the mid-1860s and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. The development of Malaya under British rule in the late 19th and early 20th centuries made Singapore one of the leading ports of the world for the export of tin and rubber. These developments caused Singapore to become a major port of call for ships plying between Europe and East Asia. In addition to this, with the development of rubber planting, especially after the 1870s, Singapore also became the main sorting and export centre in the world for rubber. It is important to look at the activity between Singapore civil society and British power that took place from 1819 to 1963. In 1819 the East India Company established a trading factory in Singapore. At that time Singapore consisted of a small Malay village resided in by a thousand inhabitants. Stamford Raffles founded the modern city of Singapore that same year. The British and Dutch interests in the region grew with the spice trade. In 1824, Singapore came under the complete control of the British and, although only a small fishing and trading village, quickly attracted Chinese and Malay merchants. The construction of a railroad through the Malay Peninsula to Bangkok swelled Singapore's trade and the building of airports affected it more than ever as a communication centre. The trading factory was based on the principles of free trade and free immigration. The latter was successful in causing an increased number of immigrant Europeans, Chinese, Malays, Indians, Arabs and Eurasians to come to the country. Its strategic position attracted merchants or traders from other countries to take advantage. By 1860 the population had grown to 80,792. The Chinese accounted for 61.9 per cent of the number; the Malays and Indians, 13.5 and 16.05 per cent respectively; and others, including Europeans, for 8.5 per cent.

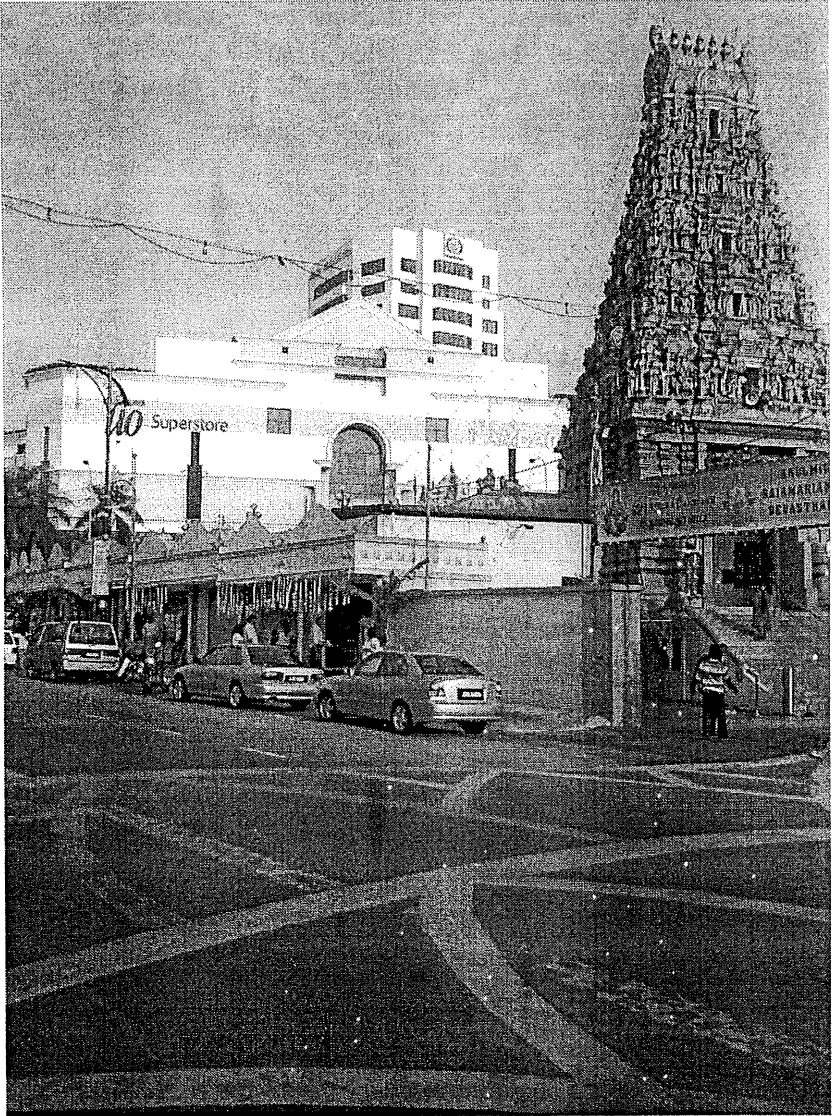


Plate 2.2. Indian Temple in Johor Bahru

The Chinese, for instance, played a major role in the growth of the new port as did foreign influence generally. Between 1819 and 1867—the formation of the colony of the Straits Settlements in 1867—there was no legislative body in Singapore. This means that the policy debates happened in either India or London. It also means that policies designed specifically for India were adopted by the British administration in Singapore. It was made a separate “Crown Colony” of Britain in 1946, when the former colony of the Straits Settlements was dissolved. The other two settlements on the peninsula—Penang and Malacca—became part of the Union of Malaya, and the small island of Labuan was transferred to North Borneo. The Cocos/Keeling Islands and Christmas Island were transferred to Australia in 1955 and in 1958, respectively. The year 1963 saw the end of the British era in Singapore. Through the whole period we can see how British public policy influenced Singapore. There were many developments which were very interesting in the case of Singapore. Due to its success in capital markets and the foreign exchange trade Singapore is considered the financial centre of the region in Southeast Asia. Until the Second World War the British used Singapore as the main strategic place prior to the Japanese occupation in 1942. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Singapore. It is important to note that the prosperity of Singapore was shattered on 8 December 1941 when Singapore was bombed by Japanese aircraft. The region was occupied by the Japanese on 15 February 1942 and renamed Syonan meaning “Light of the South”. There were some events which affected the development of Singapore. For instance, a naval base at Sembawang, begun in 1924, was completed in 1938.

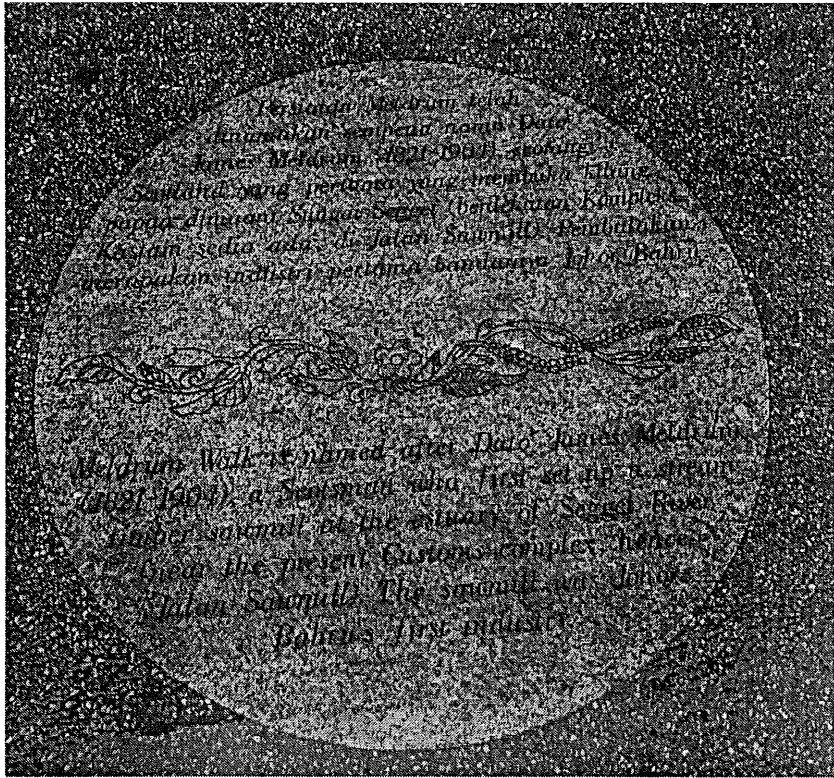


Plate 2.3. The Memory of Johor Bahru's first Industry

Furthermore, the island, sometimes called the Malta of the East, was reinforced in the early days of World War II. After the swift Japanese campaign in Malaya, however, Singapore was successfully attacked across the Johor Strait. On 15 February 1942, the British garrison surrendered. Singapore was conquered and occupied by the Japanese Empire from 1942 to 1945. When the war ended, Singapore reverted to British control, with increasing levels of self-government being granted, culminating in Singapore's merger with the Federation of Malaya to form Malaysia in 1963. However, social unrest and disputes between Singapore's ruling People's Action Party and Malaysia's Alliance Party resulted in

Singapore's expulsion from Malaysia. Singapore became an independent republic on 9 August 1965. Facing severe unemployment and a housing crisis, it embarked on a modernisation program that focused on establishing a manufacturing industry, developing large public housing estates and investing heavily on public education. Since independence, Singapore's economy has grown by an average of nine per cent each year. By the 1990s, the country had become one of the world's most prosperous nations, with a highly-developed free market economy, strong international trading links and the highest per capita gross domestic product in Asia outside of Japan. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Singapore.

After the Japanese surrendered in 1945, Singapore was taken over by the British in 1945. That meant that Singapore was under the British Military Administration until March 1945. That was the time in which the Straits Settlement comprised of Penang, Melacca and Singapore, were dissolved. Singapore became a "Crown Colony", with Christmas and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. Following a decade of Communist terrorism, Singapore separated from Christmas Island and the Cocos-Keeling Islands became a self-governing state in June 1959. The Economic Development Board, the Development Bank of Singapore, and the International Trading Company and the subsequent influx of foreign investment, Singapore's industrial base was diversified, expanded and modernized in the 1960s. This can be understood, since in the previous period particularly between the 1950s and the 1960s the Singapore economy was not very well developed. The priority of Singapore's economic development is rooted in the pragmatism of the state. This can be seen in turn from the "politics of survival" in the 1960s when the urgency of raising the social conditions of the masses was seen to justify a shift away from the socialist strategies. In addition to this, for a developmental city-state, an acceptable rational response is action which can contribute to its economic development.

When the first General Election was held, Lee Kuan Yew became the first Prime Minister of Singapore. The People's Action Party, PAP, formed

a difficult alliance with the Communists to fight the British. On 27 May 1961, the Malayan Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, proposed closer political and economic cooperation between the Federation of Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak, North Borneo and Brunei. At the time agreed on by him and Lee Kuan Yew, the central government was to have responsibility for defence, foreign affairs and internal security but there was to be local autonomy in matters pertaining to education and labour. As a result, a referendum on the terms of the merger was held in Singapore. That event shows the people's overwhelming support for PAP's plan to go ahead with the merger. Postwar Singapore was a contrast to the prewar country of transient immigrants. The people, especially the merchant class, clamoured for a say in government. Constitutional powers were initially vested in the Governor who had an Advisory Council of officials and nominated non-officials. This evolved into the separate Executive and Legislative Councils in July 1947. The Governor retained firm control over the colony but there was provision for the election of six members to the Legislative Council by popular vote. Hence, Singapore's first election was held on 20 March 1948.

When the Communist Party of Malaya tried to take over Malaya and Singapore by force, a state of emergency was declared in June 1948. The Emergency lasted for 12 years. Towards the end of 1953, the British government appointed a commission under Sir George Rendel to review Singapore's constitutional position and make recommendations for change. The Rendel proposals were accepted by the government and served as the basis for a new constitution that gave Singapore a greater measure of self-government. The 1955 election was the first lively political contest in Singapore's history. Automatic registration expanded the register of voters from 75,000 to over 300,000 and for the first time, it included large numbers of Chinese, who had manifested political apathy in previous elections. The Labour Front won 10 seats. The People's Action Party (PAP), which fielded four candidates, won three seats. David Marshall became Singapore's first Chief Minister on 6 April 1955, with a coalition

government made up of his own Labour Front, the United Malay National Organization and the Malayan Chinese Association. Marshall resigned on 6 June 1956, after the breakdown of constitutional talks in London on attaining full internal self-government. Lim Yew Hock, Marshall's Deputy and Minister for Labour became the Chief Minister. The March 1957 Constitutional Mission to London led by Lim Yew Hock was successful in negotiating the main terms of a new Singapore Constitution. On 28 May 1958, the Constitutional Agreement was signed in London and self-government was attained in 1959. In May that year Singapore's first General Election was held to choose 51 representatives to the first fully elected Legislative Assembly. The PAP won 43 seats, gleaning 53.4 per cent of the total votes. On June 3, the new Constitution confirming Singapore as a self-governing state was brought into force by the proclamation of the Governor, Sir William Goode, who became the first Yang di-Pertuan Negara (Head of State). The first government of the State of Singapore was sworn in on June 5, with Lee Kuan Yew as Singapore's first Prime Minister. The PAP had come to power in a united front with the Communists to fight British colonialism. The Communists controlled many mass organizations, especially of workers and students. It was an uneasy alliance between the PAP moderates and the pro Communists, with each side trying to use the other for its own ultimate objective—in the case of the moderates, to obtain full independence for Singapore as part of a non-communist Malaya; in the case of the Communists, to work towards a Communist take-over. The tension between the two factions worsened from 1960 and led to an open split in 1961, with the pro-Communists subsequently forming a new political party, the Barisan Sosialis. The other main players in this drama were the Malaysians, who, in 1961, agreed to Singapore's merger with Malaya as part of a larger federation. This was also to include British territories in Borneo, with the British controlling the foreign affairs, defence and internal security of Singapore.

Malaysia was formed on 16 September 1963, and consisted of the Federation of Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak and North Borneo (now Sabah). Brunei opted out. Indonesia and the Philippines opposed the merger. President Sukarno of Indonesia worked actively against it during the three years of Indonesian Confrontation. However, the conflict of ideology led to a split in 1961. The merger was for a short time, since Singapore left Malaysia to become a sovereign, democratic and independent nation on 9 August 1965. Independent Singapore was admitted to the United Nations on 21 September 1965 and became a member of the Commonwealth of Nations on 15 October 1965. It became a Republic on 22 December 1965 with Yusof bin Ishak as the Republic's first President. This meant that Singapore was an independent state. In addition to this, the British military camps, the British Far East Command withdrew from Singapore.

Since 1967 Singapore has successfully implemented an import strategy. Later, there was not only the issue of the cheap imports for consumers but also cheap raw materials for the export industry. In comparison with other Southeast Asian countries, Singapore successfully cooperated with foreign investment. In addition to this, Singapore had a very impressive political economy. This can be seen from the fact that after Japan, Singapore had the highest per person income in Asia. Besides, we can see the capacity of the Singaporeans to buy the various international currencies "purchasing power parity", in which Singapore plays a major role. The economic sector was encouraged by foreign businessmen to join the federation system. Frictions soon arose, however, and Singapore was, by mutual agreement, separated from the Federation in August 1965. The exclusion of Singapore was largely due to Malay fears of Singapore's Chinese majority and its potential economic domination in the Federation. After a period of turmoil or internal conflicts among the various populations, Singapore entered a new era of independence and development.

Thereafter commenced Singapore's struggle to survive and prosper on its own. It also had to create a sense of national identity and consciousness among a disparate population of immigrants. Singapore's strategy for survival and development was essentially to take advantage of its strategic location and the favourable world economy.

After the independence of Singapore there was the question on whether Singapore could exist in terms of economics and politics, due to the separation of Singapore from the Malaysian states. In this context this means that Singapore had to provide for the basic needs like food and goods, with both mostly imported from other countries. A need was to provide a livelihood for all of the population of around 2 million. As a result, foreign exchange was an absolute essential which could be provided through exports. At that time, the issues on housing and education systems were very complex. The population growth was 3.1 per cent. Due to the 13.5 per cent of jobless the government had to provide for them. At that time the majority of the population was Chinese. The later development shows that the population of Singapore was not only the Chinese who made up around 74% from various places, such as Hokkien, Teochew, Cantonese, Hainanese and Hakka. Chinese immigration increased in the nineteenth century (1880-1884), and the new arrivals numbered 233,357. This is known as the "coolie trade". The Malay population of around 360,000 represented about 15% of the population of Singapore. The Malays included the peninsular Malays, Javanese, Boyanese, Arabs and Jawi Peranakan. Gillis (2005) notes that around 10% of the population, in Singapore, was Indian. The Indians remained a community divided, unable to unite. It is said that the Indian people were a transient community with strong links to India. After the Malay States were opened to trade, Indian labourers sought work there in preference to Singapore. In the 1970s the Singaporean government saw the advantages of political stability. Singapore took on a parliamentary system and since 1959 has had internal self-representation, through the People's Action Party (PAP). Lee Kuan Yew who had studied Law in England, led Singapore. The

people of Singapore encouraged the policies of the government. Rieger (1999: 316) notes that the political leaders in Singapore understood very quickly that a solution for the economic problems of the country could be achieved within the growth requirements. Due to bad experiences with the neighbouring states it was tried to find social justice for the Singaporeans. This means that the government policies should look at the human attitudes particularly among some institutions related to the economic interests that take part in development.

The demonstrations and strikes against the government or businesses were considered a bad solution for the people's economy. The issue was the relations with foreign countries relating to the world economy. A high rate of economic growth was led by the PAP which rose triumphant from the 1968 General Election. Under the policies of Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's economic base was strengthened and a greater degree of social and cultural homogeneity was achieved. Lee Kwan Yew, an economic visionary with an authoritarian streak, stepped down in 1990 and Goh Chok Tong became the second Prime Minister of Singapore. Both Lee Kuan Yew and Goh Chok Tong are the great success stories of Asia in general and Southeast Asia in particular. Singapore's strategy for survival and development was essentially to take advantage of its strategic location and the favourable world economy. Facing severe unemployment and a housing crisis, Singapore embarked on a modernisation program that focused on establishing a manufacturing industry, developing large public housing estates and investing heavily in public education. Since independence, Singapore's economy has grown by an average of nine per cent each year. By the 1990s, the country had become one of the world's most prosperous nations, with a highly developed free market economy, strong international trading links and the highest per capita gross domestic product in Asia outside of Japan. The emergence of Singapore in the region of Southeast Asia can be considered as the emergence of a "new regionalism". When in 1990, Goh Chok Tong became Prime Minister, Lee retained considerable

governmental influence, staying on as Senior Minister. The former chairman of the PAP Ong Teng Cheong became Singapore's first directly elected President in 1993. Due to an economic downturn in 1998, Singapore cut wages and allowed its currency to adjust downward. Goh stepped down as Prime Minister in 2004 and was succeeded by Lee Hsien Loong, the son of Lee Kuan Yew. The elder Lee remained in the government as Minister Mentor and Goh succeeded him as Senior Minister. President Nathan was reelected in 2005. In the 2006 legislative elections more than 50% of the constituencies were contested but the PAP again gained nearly all the seats.

Towards Economic Development

Singapore is one of the world's greatest commercial centres, with a large, modern port. Commerce has historically been the chief source of its income. For many years the largest importer in Southeast Asia, Singapore is a free port and an entrepôt that re exports more than half of what it imports, notably rubber, petroleum, textiles, timber and tin. It also exports locally manufactured goods such as computer and telecommunications equipment, petroleum products, oil drilling equipment, plastics, rubber products and processed food and beverages. The country imports most of its food requirements and its chief trading partners are Japan, the United States, Malaysia and Indonesia; Singapore signed a free-trade agreement with the United States in 2003. With more than 300 factories and deepwater wharves, the Jurong Industrial Estate is Southeast Asia's largest industrial complex. It and the Changi International Airport are built largely on infill of marsh and shallow waters of the Straits. The country has a number of large petroleum storage and refining facilities and Keppel Harbour is one of the world's largest container handling facilities. The development of the former British naval base at Sembawang on the Johor Strait as a commercial shipyard helped to enhance

Singapore's status as a major centre for shipbuilding and repairs. <http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0861099.html>. Less than 5% of Singapore's land is used for agriculture; tropical fruit and vegetables are intensively cultivated and poultry and hogs are raised. There are no exploitable natural resources in the country. Its power is produced by thermoelectric plants and water is supplied by a number of reservoirs. Singapore has a fine rapid transit system, good roads, a railroad that crosses the island and a causeway carrying road and rail traffic to the mainland.

Singapore's workforce is employed primarily in manufacturing, the service industries and commerce, with a negligible proportion engaged in agriculture. The country has become a major centre of international finance in recent decades. The economy slowed as a result of the Asian financial crisis of 1997–98 and the 2001 recession but unemployment and inflation remained low. The increasing importance of China in manufacturing and finance, however, is seen as a threat to Singapore's future economic growth. <http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0861097.html>. Economic summary: GDP/PPP (2005 est.): \$132.3 billion; per capita \$29,900; real growth rate: 5.7%; inflation: 1%; unemployment: 3.3%; arable land: 2%; agriculture: rubber, copra, fruit, orchids, vegetables, poultry, eggs, fish, ornamental fish; labour force: 2.28 million (Sept. 2005 est.); manufacturing 18%; construction 6%; transportation and communication 11%; financial, business, and other services 39%; other 26% (2003); industries: electronics, chemicals, financial services, oil drilling equipment, petroleum refining, rubber processing and rubber products, processed food and beverages, ship repair, offshore platform construction, life sciences, entrepôt trade; natural resources: fish, deepwater ports. Exports: \$204.8 billion f.o.b. (2005 est.): machinery and equipment, mineral fuels, chemicals, foodstuffs. Imports: \$188.3 billion (2005 est.): machinery and equipment, mineral fuels, chemicals, foodstuffs. Major trading partners: Malaysia, U.S., Hong Kong, China, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand and South Korea (2004).

A massive industrialization program was launched with the extension of the Jurong Industrial Estate and the creation of smaller estates in Kallang Park, Tanjong Rhu, Redhill, Tiong Bahru and Tanglin Halt. The Employment Act and the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act were passed in 1968 to promote industrial peace and discipline among the workforce. The Economic Development Board was reorganized in 1968 and the Jurong Town Corporation and the Development Bank of Singapore were set up in the same year. In 1970, the Monetary Authority of Singapore was established to formulate and implement Singapore's monetary policies. In 1979, after the shock of two oil crises, the government started a program of economic restructuring. This was achieved by modifying education policies, expanding technology and computer education, offering financial incentives to industrial enterprises and launching a productivity campaign. Public housing was given top priority. New towns sprang up and Housing and Development Board apartments were sold at a low cost. To encourage home ownership, Singaporeans were allowed to use their Central Provident Fund savings to pay for these apartments. With the British government's sudden decision in 1967 to withdraw its armed forces from Singapore by the end of 1971, Singapore set out to build up its own defence forces. The Singapore Armed Forces Training Institute was established in 1966 and compulsory national service was introduced in 1967. A Singapore Air Defence Command and a Singapore Maritime Command were set up in 1969. In August 1967, Singapore joined Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand to form the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Singapore entered the 1970s as a politically stable state with a high rate of economic growth. The one-party parliament that emerged from the 1968 General Election became the pattern, with the PAP winning all seats in 1972, 1976 and 1980. In the 1984 and 1991 General Elections, the PAP won all but two and four seats respectively.

Malaysians and Singaporeans: Migration in Southeast Asia

With the advent of the steamship in the mid-1860s and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, Singapore became a major port of call for ships plying between Europe and East Asia. And with the development of rubber planting, especially after the 1870s, it also became the main sorting and export centre in the world for rubber. Before the close of the 19th century, Singapore was experiencing unprecedented prosperity and trade expanded eightfold between 1873 and 1913. The prosperity attracted immigrants from areas around the region. By 1860, the population had grown to 80,792. The Chinese accounted for 61.9 per cent of the number; the Malays and Indians 13.5 and 16.05 per cent respectively; and others, including the Europeans, 8.5 per cent.



Plate 2.4. Indian shops in Johor Bahru

Table 2.1 The entry gate point and exit via the airport in Johor 2008

	Entry LTSI	Exit LTSI
Malaysia	14345	16485
Permanent Residents	0	0
Total A	14345	16485
Singapore	563	827
Australia	149	94
New Zealand	37	27
Canada	66	67
United Kingdom & Ireland	124	132
Hong Kong	65	24
Sri Lanka	7	1
Bangladesh	2	5
Pakistan	6	5
India	63	62
Brunei	6	6
Other Commonwealth countries	28	34
Total B	1116	1284
Other non Commonwealth countries like Indonesia	4687	5837

Source: Imigresen Johor Bahru

A city-state, Singapore is one of the world's most densely populated countries with about 12,000 people per sq mile (about 4,600 people per sq km). A massive urban renewal program, begun in the 1960s, has replaced virtually all of Singapore's slums with modern housing units. As a result of family planning and a strict immigration policy, the annual rate of population increase has declined to just over 1%, down from 4.5% in the 1950s. <http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0861096.html>.

Many of us have ancestors who came from countries like Malaya, Indonesia, India and China. They were foreigners in the land years ago, but decided to sink roots here. This is how we become Singaporeans" ("Make Foreigners feel welcome", in *The Straits Times*, 7 January 2007: 9).

Looking back to the past it can be said that most of the Malays in Johor acknowledge that their ancestors came from West Sumatra or South Sulawesi. The aim is to strengthen the Malay ethnic groups in the region. The Central Government in Kuala Lumpur pays more attention to Johor. In comparison to the situation in the 1970s, it can be said that Johor is still undeveloped. There was a change due to the policies of the Malaysian government in the 1980s. Much infrastructure has been built so the trade and economic links are built very well from the northern part of Malaysia to the southern part, which is called the Southern Corridor (“*Gerbang Selatan*”). Not only is there a good relationship between the Indonesians in Malaysia and in Indonesia itself but also, there are still many cases of illegal movement of goods and people to Malaysia. It is calculated, that there are more than 600,000 Indonesian illegal workers in Malaysia. The formal figure is only 450,000 Indonesian workers, only in four provinces in Malaysia including Johor Bahru, Negeri Sembilan, Pahang and Malaka. However, many illegal workers are deported from Malaysia; most of them workers in the *kelapa sawit* plantations. On one day more than 100,000 to 200,000 Indonesian illegal workers were captured in their houses at around 2 or 3 o’clock in the early morning and transported to Pasir Gudang and directly deported to Indonesia. In comparison to the situation on the other borders between Malaysia and Indonesia, the situation on the border between Sarawak and East Kalimantan and Sabah is easier for the illegal workers, since there are many “mouse roads”, “*jalan tikus*” in the region. But, what is important to note here is that if all the Indonesian workers were deported, Malaysia would be bankrupt. The reason is that there are many Indonesians working in all of the *kelapa sawit* plantations and the building constructions. Besides that, there are some Filipinos working in better positions like hospitals, malls and other places mostly as skilled and well-educated workers.

There is often worry about the increasing number of Indians causing the establishment of an Indian organization, called *Persatuan Pedagang India Islam* in Johor. From the TV news and newspapers we know that in Kuala Lumpur the Indian people protested against the government

policies on the privileges that have been prioritized for the Malays as *Pribumi (Orang Bumi Putera)*. Not only Indians come increasingly to Johor but also Bangladeshis, Tamils from Ceylon, Javanese, Filipinos and other people from Southeast Asian regions. Indians, Tamils and Bangladeshis also work in the road and building construction. The Chinese are one of the major ethnic groups in Malaysia with most of them traders in the textile business or restaurants. The Chinese have particular businesses as investors not only develop their businesses in Malaysia but also in Singapore. The Malays are the ruling-class with most of them in bureaucratic positions.

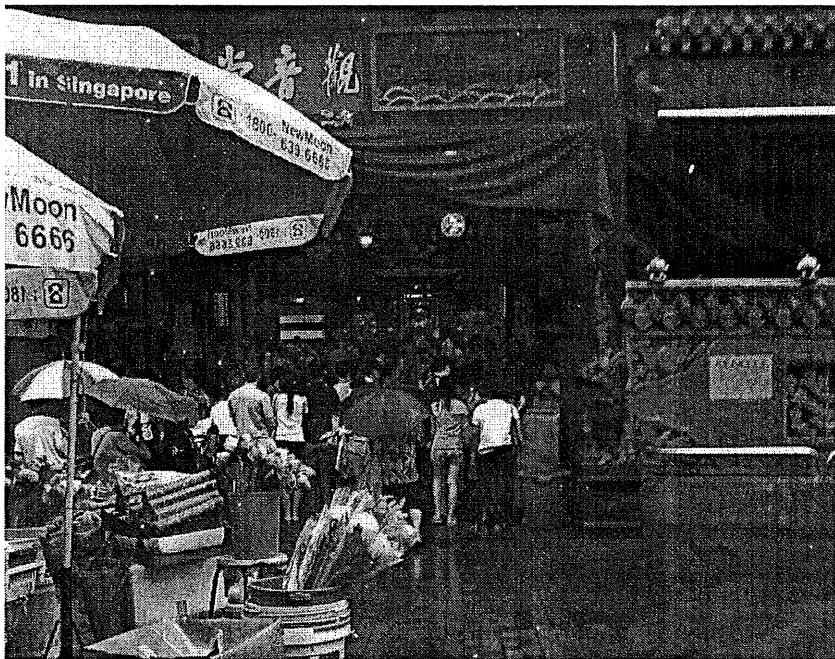


Plate 2.5 The Chinese shops in Singapore

This is different in the cross border regions among underdeveloped countries or in terms of an unbalanced relationship, namely between Myanmar, which is underdeveloped and Thailand which is already well

developed. In addition to this, we can see the border picture between East Kalimantan in Indonesia and Sarawak in East Malaysia, where the trade relationship is through ethnic linkages. What we can learn from the two countries' experiences is that both Malaysia and Singapore, apart from in geographic terms, are trying to form a closer relationship based on their historical past and also as Commonwealth states. In other words, both states have inherited from the period of British imperialism a well-structured Customs administration shared over a long period. Regnier (1990: 41) argues that five – sixths of mutual trade is concentrated on the west coast of the Peninsula, apart from the trade with East Malaysia (Sarawak and Sabah). He mentions that this lessens the temptation of large-scale smuggling or undocumented movement of people and goods and the protection of Malaysia's international market, which is less significant than for Indonesia and Thailand. In the meantime, both Malaysia and Singapore operate different systems of Custom classification (Regnier 1990: 41).

Singapore is a modern state, with the country created by various cultural traditions and promoted as "Uniquely Singapore". Along with its history Singapore has a strategic place in terms of economic and trade activities. It has grown into an internationally important centre for trade, communications and tourism. Talking about tourism, Singapore is one of the states in Southeast Asia which provides many opportunities to develop the tourism industry with hallmarks of great holiday destinations, matchless tourist facilities, excellent transportation systems and a melee of cultures. In addition to this, the strategic position determines the success of the history of tourism of the country. This can be understood since Singapore has played an important role in the international sea traffic, as well as the modern air traffic in Southeast Asia. Communication plays a major role in contacting the international markets and networking. In the past as at present, Singapore has been the centre for transportation from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Persian Gulf and the main place for the goods for industry. Now the people of Singapore have begun realizing their status

as Singaporeans. The total population is 4.49 million including Buddhist 42.5%; Muslim: 14.9%; Taoist: 8.5%; Hindu: 4%; Christian, 14.6%; Other: 0.7%; and none: 14.8% (*Singapore Tourism Board*). It is said that Singapore needs to sustain growth of its population. That means that Singapore needs the coming of foreigners to the country. But it is important to note that in order to make Singapore an attractive destination for migrants foreigners should feel welcome. The Singaporeans should help them integrate into the community and sink roots in Singapore. ("Make Foreigners feel welcome", in *The Straits Times*, 7 January 2007: 9).

Conclusion

It can be concluded that Singapore has learnt many lessons from its neighbouring countries in the context of positive and negative aspects of western influences in the region. It can be said that the Singaporeans recognized the existence of the various ethnic groups, religions, languages and traditions of their people. However, those differences should be a potential to develop a modern state. This means that a sense of national identity and consciousness among a disparate population of immigrants has been implemented. Although Singapore is a small country among the countries in Southeast Asia, its leaders thought fast, particularly after independence, about how to solve the issues of the jobless and the economy. The main and most important strategies of the Singapore government, were to get a new way to increase foreign exchange which was absolutely necessary. This could be provided through exports. At that time, the issues of housing and education systems were very complex. As a result, by the 1990s, Singapore had become one of the world's most prosperous nations, with a highly developed free market economy, strong international trading links and the highest per capita gross domestic product in Asia outside of Japan. The emergence of Singapore in the region of Southeast Asia can be considered as the emergence of a "new regionalism".

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CHAPTER 3

ETHNICITY IN THE BORDER AREAS BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE

Yekti Maunati

The Construction of Ethnic Identity

It is widely argued that cultural identity is constructed (King 1982; Vickers 1989; Hall 1992; Eriksen 1993; Kipp 1993; Kahn 1993; Kahn 1995; Picard 1997; Wood 1998; and King and Wilder 2003). King and Wilder further explain:

Ethnicity is obviously expressed as a product of the past, evoking common origins, social linkages and shared cultural values and traits like language and religion. However, the historical dimension of identity also demonstrates that rather than identities being fixed, constant and immutable, they frequently change and can be acquired (2003:198).

When we talk about ethnicity, we relate it to culture, but the relation between culture and ethnicity is somewhat unfixed. For instance, Eller argues: 'not all culturally distinct groups are ethnic groups precisely, and (in an odd paradox) not all ethnic groups are culturally distinct groups' (1999:8). It is in this instance that Eller suggests that ethnicity and 'culture' are not always in an ideal relationship (*ibid.*). If we look at the Malays in Kalimantan, today, they may share a culture similar to that of the Dayak groups because many Dayak who converted to Islam are considered 'Malay' (Coomans 1987). The criteria by which individuals are nominated Dayak or Malay may shift over time (Maunati 2000). Citing DeVos, Eller explains that 'ethnicity is a symbolic use of any aspect of culture to differentiate between them and other groups (*ibid.*). To Eller, 'ethnicity

is consciousness of difference and the subjective salience of that difference' (1999:9). Eller, further, notes that even when ethnicity is associated with, refers to, or evokes 'objectives' or shared cultural or historical markers, it is subjective (*ibid.*). Ethnic groups usually do not utilise all aspects of their culture or history as markers of their identities. Besides, some elements of their culture may be shared by other groups which will cause difficulty in distinguishing them from others (*ibid.*). Indeed, grey areas have been reported by many experts concerned with cultural identity (Kahn 1995).

The use of certain markers of identity selected from a group's culture is subject to change. For instance, Eller notes that an ethnic group which chose religion at one stage, may change to class or another aspect of its culture (1999: 9). Another important feature is that to a certain extent ethnicity is a label which can be made and remade (Eller 1999:10). Eller provides an example of the shifting of identity from *Black* to *African American* in the United States. This basically does not change the membership much but transforms the marker of ethnicity from 'skin colour to ancestral origin in the broadest sense' (1999:10-11).

Likewise, King and Wilder argue that to study ethnicity is to deal with the social and cultural processes and aspects that affect similarity and difference and understand the construction and transformation of social and cultural identities by groupings of people (2003: 196-197). In the context of construction, many experts argue that boundaries are constructed (King and Wilder 2003; Kahn 1995; etc.). Barth (1969) argues that the formation of ethnic groups involves social processes of exclusion and incorporation and the selection of social and cultural aspects which are considered relevant to the construction of identity and boundaries. Scholars differ on the degree to which the construction of cultural identity is linked to particular processes and different historical experiences.

The idea of cultural identity as constructed is obviously connected to a related set of beliefs around the concept of culture. In particular, as Kahn (1995) and others argue, culture is less organic and bounded than has often been claimed. In discussing cultural difference Kahn argues that culture itself is a cultural construct. He suggests that:

There are, in fact, two problems with the image of a culturally diverse world that lead us to its discursive dimensions. The first, on which most attention has focused, arises from the fact that the project of, variously, describing, translating or interpreting 'other cultures' contains a fatal flaw in so far as it can never genuinely succeed in locating these cultures except in relation to, and hence within the culture of, the person doing the interpreting. The argument that the Western texts that purport to describe the 'culture' of this or that group of people are cultural artefacts of 'the West' and hence have little to do with otherness at all is by now a relatively standard one - in part a consequence of a poststructuralist revolution in the treatment of anthropological texts, and in part the result of a postcolonial critique of Western discourses (1995:128).

In Kahn's opinion the voice of 'the other' is the voice of the author (1995:129). He also outlines a further problem, saying:

But there is here a second problem, less often discussed in current debates over who is and should be authorised to speak about other cultures, for it will be noted that the conclusion about post modern poetics does little to undermine the assumption that these other cultures are still 'out there', that the modern world is still a cultural mosaic - it is only that now individuals can never hope to escape the boundaries of their own particular corner of it (1995: 129).

Kahn points out that 'this language of differentiation is artificial'. Using the image of a television picture as a metaphor, he writes: 'the cultural imaginary takes the dots for something more than technique, as though the dots of colour represented reality itself' (Kahn 1995:129). Kahn also points out how intellectuals have contributed a great deal to the processes of cultural construction. Western scholars have contributed a great deal

to the process of identity formation in many regions, especially through their writing.

Today, Western power remains important in the formation of identity and this can be seen in the roles of Western social scientists and missionaries amongst others. The power of Western representation, however, is not the only force in the formation of identity in places like Thailand or Cambodia. There are also a number of powerful constructions and representations that derive from the elite groups. In particular, state agencies, intellectuals and ruling and elite groups, have added to the complexity of representation and identity formation. Indeed, anthropologists and other observers have noted the role played by the nation state (Eriksen 1993) and a complex array of 'authorities' (Barth 1989) in the representation of ethnic groups across Southeast Asia.

Culture is best seen as the product of earlier processes and as open to reinterpretation and new ideas as well as the shedding of old components. It is in relation to this conceptualisation of culture, Kahn argues, that cultural identity is equally constructed and contextual.

Similarly, concepts of identity and indeed identity itself are increasingly viewed as the result of a dynamic interplay between context (and history) and construct. Eriksen (1993) has demonstrated some of the processes involved in the historical construction of ethnic identity in the case of Indians who migrated to Mauritius and Trinidad. In each case, the subsequent identity was different and thus works against the notion of an 'essential' form of Indianness.

...it would be misleading to start from an assumption of 'primordial characteristics' of groups or categories. The formation of different categories of 'Indians' in Mauritius and Trinidad, respectively, clearly shows this. Not only are the ethnic subdivisions within the 'Indian' category different in the two societies, but so are the stereotypical assumptions about 'Indian culture'. Indians in Mauritius, where they are in a majority and dominate the state bureaucracy, often complain that they are good politicians but

'have no talent for business'. In Trinidad, Indians have a smaller stake in the state bureaucracy and many Indians have gone into business (Eriksen 1993: 84-85).

Similarly, the dynamic nature of the construction of cultural identity is evident in the case of Indonesia (Vickers 1989; Picard 1997; Kahn 1993; Kipp 1993; and Maunati 2000). In the case of Bali, Vickers (1989) illustrates the way in which Dutch colonialists redefined the image of Bali from one of a savage place to that of a paradise:

There is much that has been forgotten in the world's image of Bali. Early European writers once saw it as full of menace, an island of theft and murder, symbolised by the wavy dagger of the Malay world, the kris. Although the twentieth-century image of the island as lush paradise drew on the earlier writings about Bali, these were only selectively referred to, when they did not contradict the idea of the island Eden. The overall negative intent of most of the earlier Western writings about Bali has been discarded (Vickers 1989:11).

Vickers' argument is also evident in Picard's work (1997) when he describes the involvement of Dutch colonial officials, early Balinese intellectuals and Indonesian government officials in the construction of an 'authorized' view of Balinese identity. Picard argues that contemporary Balinese identity is a construct which draws on colonial, Indonesian and tourist images. Picard's project is 'to deconstruct the contemporary expression of Balinese identity by retracing the history of its construction' (1997:184). In a similar vein Rita Kipp (1993) and Kahn (1993) investigated identity construction in other parts of Indonesia. Maunati (2000) studied identity construction of the Dayak in East Kalimantan. Picard's aim 'relates to ethnic consciousness rather than cultural history' (1997:184). As he argues, he is not concerned with the evolution of what has been called 'Balinese culture' by anthropologists and travel writers alike but with the dialogical fashion in which a certain image of Balinese culture came to be used self consciously as a mark of identity (Picard 1997:184-185).

Like Kahn, Picard treats Balinese culture as a cultural artefact. In this respect he argues:

...the allegedly immutable and primordial unity of religion, custom, and art/culture, through which the Balinese presently define their identity, is the outcome of a process of semantic borrowings and of conceptual reframing in response to the colonization, the Indonesianization, and the touristification of their island. (Picard 1997: 185).

According to Picard, the Dutch greatly shaped Balinese identity. In particular their orientalist vision of Bali 'as a Hindu island surrounded by a sea of Islam' (1997: 186) had two long-term consequences:

On the one hand, by looking for the singularity of Bali in its Hindu heritage, and by conceiving of Balinese religious identity as formed through opposition to Islam, the Dutch set the framework with which the Balinese were going to define themselves (Picard 1997:186).

The New Order Government also contributed to Balinese identity formation. Picard elaborates on the ways in which it domesticated ethnic identities in order to accommodate these identities within the nation building processes (1997:197). To achieve this, the New Order Government promoted a homogenous provincial identity in disregard of the ethnic diversity within each province. Consequently, 'Bali' now points to three references - one geographic, one ethnic and one administrative (Picard 1997:198-9).

Other means by which cultural identity can be seen as a construct are in the ways identities may be strengthened when a group is under threat (Eriksen 1993). Hall (1992) in his discussion of the processes of globalization concurs with this argument. He notes the rise of particular or local cultures as a response to globalization that also, paradoxically, is seen to usher in cultural homogeneization. The studies of identity and boundary maintenance, therefore, tend to be directed at 'minorities' or otherwise 'threatened' or 'weak' groups, or in situations of rapid social

change' (Eriksen 1993: 113). King (1982:35), for instance, drawing upon Rousseau, points out that the Kajang tend to identify themselves in opposition to the Kayan as a form of 'defence mechanism against the politically dominant and aggressive Kayan'. Additionally, the construction of an identity which is 'Pan-Dayak' is related to the ethnic conflicts between the Dayak and the Madurese (Peluso and Harwell, forthcoming). This, however, does not mean that dominant groups do not also have problems in 'identity processes and the maintenance of identity' (Eriksen 1993:113). Globalization has widely affected various ethnic groups, including the dominant groups in some countries. In Indonesia, for instance, the attempt of the state to reduce Westernization can be seen through TV programs about provincial cultures, which are hoped to generate pride in those cultures.

The apparently arbitrary way in which cultural markers are selected and the importance of the context in determining which elements are selected is further evidence of the constructedness of cultural identities. Eriksen stresses that:

From the Barthian emphasis on boundary processes and later studies of identity boundaries, we also know that the selection of boundary markers is arbitrary in the sense that only some features of culture are singled out and defined as crucial in boundary processes (1993: 117).

He goes on to argue that '...ideologists always select and reinterpret aspects of culture and history which fit into the legitimization of a particular power constellation' (1993:118). Similarly Winzeler (1997) notes that in order to lessen the unity of powerless groups, governments often manipulate cultural identity. Eriksen (1993), Kahn (1995) as well as Picard (1997) similarly argue that ethnic identity is constructed according to the situation. Eriksen points out: 'identities are negotiable and situational' (1993: 117). He also argues that ethnic identities are composed in relation to others (1993: 111), noting:

Groups and collectivities are always constituted in relation to *others*. A shared European identity, for example, would have to define itself in contrast to Muslim, Middle Eastern or Arab identity, possibly also in relation to African, East Asian and North American identities - depending on the social situation (1993:62).

This negotiable and situational quality of identity markers is clear in the way religious differences have been incorporated into identity formation. Picard points out the way in which Balinese define themselves with reference to a religious identity in opposition to Islam (1997: 186). Dayakness similarly is linked to Christianity and opposed to Islam, the dominant religion in Indonesia. If a Dayak converts to Islam, he is no longer considered Dayak, becoming instead 'Malay' (Coomans 1987). In similar vein, Winzeler finds that among the Bidayuh Dayak 'usually to become a Muslim is to cease to be a Bidayuh' (1997:219). Correspondingly, King points out that, pagans who convert to Islam become 'Malay' (1982: 27). Furthermore, this process of shifting identity/ethnicity has a long historical pedigree. As King found, as early as the 1890s, European observers noted that many of the approximately 400 'Malays' in the Putus Sibau and Mandai areas were ethnic Taman (Maloh) who had converted to Islam (King 1982:38). To pinpoint the boundary between the Malay and the Dayak in certain areas of Kalimantan is not surprisingly, somewhat problematic, due to this means of shifting from Dayak to Malay. Therefore, the Dayak are not necessarily distinctively different from neighbouring 'ethnic' groups, although they are constructed as such. This intermingling of cultures is perhaps the order of the day rather than the exception. For, as Said (1993: xxix) argues: 'Partly because of empire, all cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated and non monolithic

The markers of cultural identity may originate in a presumed distinctiveness of religion, language and custom. However, overlapping may occur among different ethnic groups. In the grey areas where markers of identity overlap, the existence of cultural difference is particularly problematic

(Kahn 1995). Such grey areas and difficulties in delimiting distinct ethnic groups often colour the process of identity formation. There is the possibility of the mixture or ethnic group change over time. Barth illustrates identity changes, for instance, with reference to the Yao of northern Thailand, Laos and Burma (1969: 22). The incorporation of non Yao to become Yao also took place individually. Another example Barth draws on is the process of becoming Baluch experienced by Southern Pathans:

Southern Pathans become Baluch and not vice versa; this transformation can take place with individuals but more readily with whole households or small groups of households; it involves loss of position in the rigid genealogical and territorial segmentary system of Pathans and incorporation through clientage contract into the hierarchical, centralized system of the Baluch. Acceptance in the receiving group is conditional on the ambition and opportunism of Baluch political leaders (1969: 22).

King (1982: 25) also provides an example of the process of delimiting distinct ethnic groups by exploring the concept of ethnicity in Borneo, pointing out that it is complicated and raises several problems. He found that: 'many people who had been classified as 'Maloh' in the past had, over time, become something else and the forbears of some people categorized as 'Maloh' in 1972-3 had come from other ethnic groupings'.

Moreover, King notes that processes of cultural exchange or, in the longer term, a process of assimilation, occurred between neighbouring ethnic groups (1982: 25). The construction of cultural identity is complex partly because it is a product of history. Cultural identity itself is changeable depending on the context and on the power and vested interests at play. In Thailand, many people who used to be included in the ethnic minorities have become Thai through a historical process (Bradley 1983). However, ethnic minorities are still in existence and mostly reside in the mountainous border areas. The process of an ethnic minority person becoming Thai can happen because young people of certain ethnic minorities have the opportunity to attend school and obtain Thai citizenship. In Cambodia,

certain ethnic groups are believed to have the same ancestors as the Thai people who live in the border areas between Thailand and Cambodia. People in the border areas between Malaysia and Singapore may share similar experiences, especially because Singapore used to be part of Malaysia so that people may have the same ancestors as well.

A similar situation may occur in the border areas between Malaysia and Singapore where it is common for people to cross the border from time to time, especially for economic purposes. Before going into detail of the situation of the border areas, I will briefly describe ethnicity in Malaysia

Ethnicity in Malaysia

Malaysia and Singapore share a background in terms of ethnicity since the two countries used to be one. Three ethnic groups, Malay, Chinese and Indian have been the most important groups in both countries though each country has its own majority group. In Singapore, the Chinese are the majority, while in Malaysia the Malay are the majority group. Apart from the Malays, the Malaysian Peninsula is constituted of other ethnic groups, especially Chinese and Indian who have resided in the area for centuries. In 1991 the Malays consisted of 58.3 per cent of Peninsular Malaysia's population, while the Chinese were about 29.4 per cent and Indians (including those of Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Sri Lankan origin) were around 9.5 per cent (Andaya and Andaya, 2001). In 2008, ethnic groups in Malaysia can be described as follows: Malay 53.3%; Chinese 26.0%; indigenous 11.8%; Indian 7.7%; other 1.2%.

While in terms of religion they are: Islam 60.4%; Buddhism 19.2%; Christianity 9.1%; Hinduism 6.3%; other/none 5.0%.

In terms of languages there are: Bahasa Melayu (official), Chinese (various dialects), English, Tamil and indigenous (<http://www.state.gov/>

r/pa/ei/bgn/2777.htm). It is further noted that the Malays usually worked in the government services, the army and the police force though now they have started to occupy many different sectors. The proportion of ethnic groups has changed, though there have been no dramatic changes. Recently, Musa (2000) reported that Malaysia is a multi racial country, consisting of 59.0 per cent Malay and other indigenous people, 32.1 per cent of Chinese, 8.2 per cent of Indians and 0.7 per cent of other groups (2000:144)¹. The Malays have remained the majority among the ethnic groups in Malaysia. Identification as being Malay may be different to that of Malays in other countries like Indonesia. In Malaysia, being Malay is being Muslim:

“To be Malay is to be Muslim”. Although Malaysia itself is home to many other religions, including Buddhism and Hinduism, it is against the law to evangelize a Muslim. And more than 99 per cent of the ethnic Malays of Malaysia are Muslim.

In fact, the Malaysian Constitution states that to be a Malay, one must be Muslim. So religion is a major source of ethnic identity. The tight community life of the kampungs also makes it difficult for a Malay to become a Christian, because he or she would probably be forced to leave the village and family (<http://www.churchbenefits.org/Global%20Missions/UPG/Malay%20of%20Malaysia.icm>)

The Malays, being the majority on the Peninsula, have largely engaged in government offices. They in fact have dominated those jobs (Andaya and Andaya, 2001). They reside both in the urban and rural areas. The Malay is defined as a Muslim, meaning being Malay is being Muslim (Andaya and Andaya, 2001)².

¹ Citing from Information Malaysia (1998), *Year Book*. Berita Publishing Sdn.Bhd. Malaysia, 1998.

² Our interview with many Malaysians are also supported this notion in which Malays must be Muslim. If people identified as Malays, convert to other religions, such as Christianity, they will have no facilities which are offered to Malays and *bumiputera* (son of soil).

In interviews, some Malay informants agreed that Malays must be Muslim. On the Malaysian Peninsula as in Kuala Lumpur and Johor, Muslims must respect Islamic rules. For example, during Ramadhan (fasting month), every Muslim must obey religious rules by not having any food in open areas though they may not be fasting for certain reasons, including having a period/menstruating for women, being ill and so forth. Based on my observation and experience, during fieldwork during Ramadhan, women cannot eat in restaurants even though they were not fasting. The restaurant keepers will ask you whether you are Muslim since if they serve a Muslim they will be fined RM 10,000, while the Muslim people who are eating will be fined as well. There is a body in the Islamic Religious Affairs Group in charge of this issue. According to a Malay man, any Muslim who breaks the law by eating in an open area during the fasting month, will be fined and taken into a car to be driven around the city. In Malaysia, obeying Islamic rules is indeed crucial for the Malays while the Chinese can eat out in the daytime.

The Chinese have resided on the Malaysian Peninsula since the mid nineteenth century when migration of Chinese occurred to fulfil the needs of the colonial period. Today the Chinese are mainly the descendants of that generation. Andaya and Andaya (2001), for instance, pinpoint that the Chinese are often associated with urban dwelling but there are some Chinese who reside in the rural areas. The Chinese have engaged in business and professional jobs. The connection between the Chinese and business is not a new phenomenon, since this has occurred in many countries, including Indonesia³.

Like the Chinese, the Indians are mostly the descendants of 'migrants who came to Malaysia during the mid nineteenth century to work in the

³ It has been widely argued that in Indonesia only a few people have power in economic matters (Young, 1990; McIntyre, 1990; etc.) and patronage is widespread, involving the ruling group, bureaucrats and businessmen, especially Chinese (Budiman, 1990; MacIntyre, 1990).

colonial economy (Andaya and Andaya 2001:4). Indians worked in the rubber estates on the Malaysian Peninsula. Today, many reside in cities, like Kuala Lumpur. A number of young Indians have also received higher education and work in the bureaucracy, professions and the railways (ibid.) but many Indians remain working in non-formal jobs. The closing of plantations over the last 30 years has brought about the movement of the poor and unskilled Indians to urban areas (ibid.). In our observations, in Kuala Lumpur we could easily find Indians working as taxi drivers, in cleaning services and as waiters. In the Merdeka Square shopping Mall, we could also find a large number of Indians. A theatre that shows Indian movies, is also located in this Mall. Indian taxi drivers told me that being Indian they do not get benefits as gained by Malays though the Indians have been here for a long time too.

The existence of the three ethnic groups in Malaysia is indeed reflected within the selection of promoting the Malay, Chinese and Indian cultures through the theme of '*Malaysia Truly Asia*'. In other words, they are the main ethnic groups in the area.

In Malaysia, the promotion of the cultural aspects of the three ethnic groups within the context of tourism has been seen as a way to establish unity in Malaysia, especially after the racial riots in 1969 (Musa 2000:145). In this case, tourism is seen as a starting point to promote mutual and better understanding of the multi ethnic society because people will know and understand other cultures and life styles (ibid.). Since the 1980s greater participation of native Malays has been supported by the government (ibid.).

Tourism can also show the identity and existence of these groups; with a few aspects of ethnic lives selected to respect those groups as well as to promote tourism. Religious rituals have been opened to the public with at least two purposes: to attract tourists as well as to show the identity of the believers. Musa (2000) points out that the products for tourism in

Malaysia include diverse religious events, ranging through Islamic, Hindu and Confucion festivals. Islamic representations can be seen in many different elements, either in the celebrations themselves or in the mosques. For instance, after the month of fasting, Ramadhan, the Muslims celebrate Eid Ul Fitr (*Idul Fitri*). On this occasion, there is an open day during which visitors can enjoy meals and artistic performances. Tour operators are invited to bring their guests to join the celebrations. Often, these celebrations are attended by well-known politicians, including the leaders of UMNO⁴.

We can also find postcards with religious elements, including the mosques, in different places on the Malaysian Peninsula, including Jamek of Kuala Lumpur, Ubudiah of Kuala Kangsar – Perak, Ehsanniah Iskandariah of Padang Rengas – Perak, Zahir of Alor Star – Kedah and Jamek Sultan Ibrahim of Johore. The mosques of Malaysia are promoted to attract tourists. In Kuala Lumpur, the Jamek Mosque which is located in the middle of the capital city, is being promoted in many different ways, including tourist brochures. In *Passport to Kuala Lumpur 2001-2002*, for instance, the Jamek Mosque is promoted as a part of a historic trail.

Sited at the confluence of the Gombak and Klang Rivers, Masjid Jamek was built in 1909 and is the city's oldest mosque. Designed by government architect A.B. Hubbock, it incorporates North Indian Muslim elements in its design. Its main dome is flanked by two smaller domes together with cupolas and minarets topping the brick walls and arched colonnades (2001-2002: 69)

Based on our own experience in visiting the Jamek Mosque, we saw something very interesting as women entering a mosque should wear veils (*kerudung*). Here, the mosque attendants supply many different colours of veils. Entering the gate of the Jamek Mosque, one will see a small building on the left hand side. In this building, there are a few people in charge of distributing veils and sandals to visitors. During our

⁴ Based on interviews in Kuala Lumpur.

visit we saw many Western women asked to wear veils. This phenomenon is not new in the world of tourism. In Bali, for instance, if tourists intend to enter a temple they should wear a *selendang* tied around their waists. Women who are menstruating cannot enter the temple. The notion of respecting religious matters is applicable here but apart from this notion it is also a strategy to experience the difference or uniqueness. There were tourists who visited the Jamek to enjoy its beauty, since it is beautifully constructed of reddish materials and surrounded by many different trees, including palm trees. Behind the Mosque, one can see a river. People often take photographs here from many different angles to show the different aspects. Apart from promoting the mosque, it also shows a marker of the Muslim identity of the Malays.

Apart from the Jamek of Kuala Lumpur, we can also observe another mosque in the Putrajaya area⁵, the Putra Mosque. If we look at the promotion in the brochures (including *Passport to Kuala Lumpur 2001-2002*; *Malaysian Tourist Pages 2002/2003*), the Putra Mosque is an important part of the Putrajaya promotion.

Facing the scenic Putrajaya Lake, the desert pink Putra Mosque inspired by Persian architecture of the Safavid period has three main function areas which are the Prayer Hall, Sahn or courtyard and learning facilities. Twelve columns in the Prayer Hall support the main dome that measures 36m in diameter. The *mimbar* (pulpit) and *mehrab* (niche denoting the direction of Mecca) are adorned with *khat* (Islamic calligraphy). The Sahn or paved courtyard contains several decorative water features and is dominated by a 116m high minaret divided into five tiers to represent the Five Pillars of

⁵ Putrajaya is the new Federal government administrative Centre of Malaysia. Named in honour of Malaysia's first Prime Minister, the late Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, Putrajaya is an oil palm plantation transformed into a beautiful and meticulously planned city. Covering 4931 ha, the city emphasizes harmony with nature and intensive use of information technology and is scheduled for completion by 2010. Situated just 25 km south of the capital city and 20 km from the Kuala Lumpur International Airport, Putrajaya is easily accessible via a number of highways and is fast becoming a major tourist attraction (*Passport to Kuala Lumpur 2001-2002*: 35).

Islam. A manuscript room, library, auditorium and seminar rooms comprise the learning facilities on the basement floors. The Putra Mosque can accommodate a total of 15,000 people at any one time (*Passport to Kuala Lumpur 2001-2002*: 36).

Based on our observations, tourists are visiting Putrajaya. Apart from the Perdana Putra, which is the Prime Minister's Office Complex, visitors tend to head for the Putra Mosque. Besides, the Putra Mosque is open to people while the Perdana Putra is restricted to those who work there or have a permit to enter the building. Visitors do not only enjoy the beauty of the design of the Mosque but many also pray.

It is not only Malay cultures that are being promoted, but also other groups like Chinese and Indian and apart from mosques, many places for religious purposes are also being promoted. For instance, the Batu Caves in which a Hindu temple is located. The Batu Caves themselves as well as the temple are also promoted within the scheme of tourism.

During the annual Thaipusam festival, thousands of *kavadi* carrying devotees climb 272 steps up to the main cavern of the Batu Caves to pay homage to Lord Subramaniam. The limestone walls, overgrown with ferns, loom 20m high with rays of light piercing from the gaps above. Another cavern, the 'Art Gallery', contains colourful images from Hindu mythology. In the temple grounds, monkeys roam freely around the souvenir stalls (*Passport to Kuala Lumpur 2001-2002*: 110-111).

The Chinese temples are promoted as well. In Kuala Lumpur, for instance, we can find many Chinese temples like the Chan See Shu Yuen Temple, the Kwang Siu Temple and the Thean Hou Temple. The Chan See Shu Yuen Temple is a Buddhist temple which was built in 1906. The location of this temple is at the southern end of Petaling Street. 'Terracotta figurines of Chinese mythology adorn the eaves of its roof. In the main hall, images of deities and paintings of fabled animals add an air of mysticism' (*ibid.*: 101). *Imlek*, the Chinese New Year celebration has also been promoted for international tourism, including the selling of Chinese cultural icons to celebrate this event.

Additionally, *Malaysia Truly Asia* is also symbolized within the promotion of different religious festivities which are often affiliated with certain ethnic groups. For instance, Islam is associated with the Malays, while Hinduism is allied with Indians and Sri Lankans and Buddhism and Confucianism are associated with the Chinese.

The development of tourism can also be linked to other developments. Kahn (1997) gives the example of the development of a particular street in Georgetown, Malaysia, which has less to do with the tourism industry or the encounter between the West and the East, and more with economic, political and cultural developments in Malaysia. In this case, the state government's efforts to conserve important heritage sites was directly linked to the government's intention to show the international community that Malaysia was a developed and attractive country. In the context of Malaysia's economic development, this image was important in terms of attracting professional and skilled labour (ibid.). The using of ethnic cultures within tourism could be important for competing with Singapore which has similar groups of people in different proportions.

Ethnicity in Malaysia/Johor and Singapore Borders

As in Malaysia, the three groups, Malay, Indian and Chinese are important in Johor. The majority also is the Malay as in Malaysia in general. Johor's population is around 2.7 million people comprising an ethnic mix of Malays, Chinese, Indians and other groups (<http://www.johor-net.com/johor-fact.html>).

- **Malay**

The Malays or Bumiputra make up the largest ethnic group in Johor State and can be found everywhere in the State. Most of the community works in the cities while there are still some who still live in 'kampung' or villages with agriculture as their source of livelihood.

Islam is their common faith and binds them together in unity as foreigners are apt to comment.

- **Chinese**

The Chinese make up the second largest ethnic group in Johor State. Most of them are descended from the labourers and traders from China who came to Malaya to seek a better livelihood. This put most of them in the business sector. The majority of Chinese are Taoist Buddhists and their faith is evident in the numerous temples around the State, such as the Tian Hou Kong, the temple of Da Pei Kong, etc.

- **Indian**

The Indians in Johor State make up only a small ethnic group of the total population but their sense of culture is deeply rooted in tradition. A large number of them are Hindus and Tamils. In the Indian community, religion is a way of life. It is an integral part of the entire Indian tradition. For the majority of Indians, religion permeates every aspect of life, from commonplace daily chores to education and politics. Hinduism is the dominant faith, practiced by over 80% of the Indian population(<http://www.johornet.com/johor-fact.html>).

In similar vein, according to interviews with informants in Johor, the Chinese are the second largest group, while the Indians are the third largest group. People are defined as Malays as those who are Muslim, follow Malay customs and speak Malay. Buginese, Banjarese, Minang and Javanese to mention a few, are all categorized into one box, the Malay. Chinese who convert to Islam are considered as Melayu Cina and have rights similar to those of other Malays. This is applicable to Indians as well who are entitled to the rights given to the Malays.

From the beginning, ethnic separation is clearly happening here for certain reasons. For example, from childhood, Malays, Indians and Chinese go

to different schools. Malays go to the Sekolah Kebangsaan; the Chinese go to the Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina and the Indians go to the Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Tamil. This happens from primary school to senior high school. Only at university, do they start to mix with different ethnic groups.

According to interviews, there is a hot issue regarding scholarships that are given mostly to Malays with Indians and Chinese not happy with this condition. However, Malays face a dilemma because many Chinese send their children overseas to study and the Indians who are wealthy, do that as well. In the end many Chinese and Indians are better educated than the Malays. In competition, the Malays may be less competitive, so in order to manage this issue, jobs are targeted to Malays, especially in government occupations, while Chinese and some Indians go into business.

Though there has been this kind of separation, people, admitted informants, Malays, Chinese and Indians, live in harmony in Johor. The Chinese informant told us that the Malays have a good life as well so that is why they are not '*gaduh*' (complaining). In the past, in terms of economic conditions, the Malays were not so well off but today their conditions are good. Basically, he agreed that strengthening economic conditions of people could reduce tensions in society. Job opportunities are also opened up quite widely in Johor. The Chinese usually go into business and do not work for the government. Indians who are stereotyped as working in rubber plantations, now have moved to various jobs, including law, medicine and business as well.

Johor Bahru, the capital of Johor, on the border between Malaysia and Singapore, has been very attractive for people to move to, partly because of the attraction of working in Singapore where the salaries are higher. For example, in an interview a Malay informant told us that many Malaysians (Malays, Chinese and Indians) work in Singapore and commute from Johor. It is cheaper to live in Johor and it is good to earn

in Singapore. 1 Singapore dollar is equivalent to 2.36 Ringgit Malaysia. People work in many types of jobs in Singapore like in kilang (factories), shops and so forth. In the late afternoon, at about 5 p.m we observed people returning from Singapore. We could see many motorbikes and cars during morning and late afternoon rush hours. During these rush hours the causeway is packed with vehicles causing heavy traffic jams. We experienced a heavy traffic jam during the rush hour when we were about to get back to our accommodation which was near the causeway terminal. Traffic stops or moves slowly for more than 45 minutes, especially in the afternoons. Apart from this, people also commute by bus, including the Causeway and SBT Transit (belonging to Singapore). If you catch the SBT Transit you could pay in Singapore dollars or use the ezlink⁶.

According to another informant, many Chinese work in Singapore because it is easier for them to get jobs where the majority of people are Chinese and the Chinese of Singapore may prefer to hire them.

Intermarriage between Johorians and Singaporeans among Malays, Indians and Chinese is very common. According to informants, it is said that people will be proud to marry Singaporeans because by doing so they could earn a higher salary. Economic reasons could be important considerations in marrying Singaporeans. This is quite a phenomenon in Johor. The place to stay after marriage may be either Singapore or Johor. Many people stay in Johor because it is less expensive than staying in Singapore but they still work in Singapore. The sense of pride could be observed in each group, Malay, Chinese and Indian if they marry Singaporeans.

⁶ Ezlink card is used for public transports like buses and trains in Singapore where people buy this card and fill with funding so when they take buses or trains they just touch it to machine provided and it will reduce in accordance to the cost of the trip, but people have to touch it before getting off the buses. Otherwise it will be charged the most expensive cost of the trip.

A Malay Singaporean told us that he could observe the differences between Singaporeans and Johorians by looking at the way they behave; clothes they wear; or the way they speak. According to him, Singaporeans in general behave as if they were superior because their currency is of a higher value than the Malaysian currency. Further, it is mentioned that this kind of attitude could also be perceived by people in Johor Bahru since they could find Singaporeans shopping there during weekends.

In Johor, during fasting time, Muslims could not eat out even though they are not fasting like women menstruating. There is a kind of Islamic police who will check now and then to keep order in society. As mentioned previously, this is applicable in Kuala Lumpur as well. It is understandable because the identity of Malays is clearly associated with Islam. There are no such strong restrictions on the Indians and Chinese. If they cross to Singapore, the rules do not apply. We could observe many Chinese and Indians eating at the downtown restaurants. The downtown is mostly occupied by Chinese and a few Indian restaurants.

Based on observation, downtown of Johor Bahru is never dark because life there can be found for 24 hours. Many restaurants are open for 24 hours, including Indian and Chinese ones.. At night, many street vendors selling various foods start to operate too, making this area busier than in the daytime. Indian restaurants, which belong to middle class Indians, open for 24 hours. These are often crowded by people who have just come from Singapore since the Immigration Checkpoint is located very near this area. We could observe Indian restaurants continue to be visited by people who are eating or drinking *teh tarik* and eating *roti canai*. Downtown Chinese restaurants are also crowded with visitors. They sell duck, chicken and so forth and people can drink beer in these Chinese restaurants. Downtown is basically home to many different ethnic groups. Other areas may be different from this downtown area. In an interview with an official at a government office, we were informed that Malays who are the majority of Johor Bahru, mostly reside in Malay

neighbourhoods. Only in certain areas, could we find mixed groups. However, many informants told us that there is no conflict on ethnic issues. It was admitted by several people that Indians in Malaysia expect to be treated in a similar way to the Malays. Nevertheless, the situation in Johor is controllable. Economic issues are often a problem but people in Johor Bahru have the opportunity to work both in Singapore and Johor. Johor Bahru is a fast developing city as well so that job opportunities are wide open. Work in restaurants or shops, for instance, is indeed developing there along with the development of the city with a huge mall opening. If Johor Bahru had shopping places with cheaper prices people would cross to Johor from Singapore. This kind of idea could be heard from both the Malaysian and Singaporean sides, especially with the on-going building of a huge shopping area in Johor Bahru.

One time, we could hear people fighting, shouting in the middle of the night and see them from the hotel window. In the morning we found out that those who were fighting were Indians drinking alcohol. The hotel official told us that often Indians fight each other when they drink alcohol. The hard life of the Indians was also told about by a Chinese trader, saying: 'many Indians face difficulty in getting jobs because the Chinese choose Chinese, Malays or Indonesians to work for them rather than Indians who have just moved here'. She, who has hired Indonesian women to work with her for several years already⁷, further explained that was because they could speak Malay and could communicate easily while Indians newcomers could not communicate easily because they might not speak either English or Malay but only Tamil. She concluded that some Indians could find difficulty in getting jobs.

⁷ She has hired the Indonesian woman for a long time since she had a baby. She told us that it is not easy to get servant if you are not having baby or elderly people to be looked after. She could keep hiring her because she has done so. This Indonesian woman is servant/domestic helper, but she is often asked to her the land lady to be shopkeeper with S\$ 20 per day. Her own wage is RM 500 per month.

Based on our observations and interviews, certain Indian restaurants hire Indonesian ladies. One of the Indonesian women has worked for more than one year in an Indian restaurant. She earned RM 1000 per month and told us that she had just had a holiday at home in East Java. She took a Ferry from the Ferry Terminal to Batam and from Batam she flew with Lion Air as this way, was cheaper than flying from Johor to Indonesia.

Crossing the border is very commonly conducted by both people in different countries. Rich Johorians go to Singapore to buy clothes, handbags and electronic goods. While Singaporeans go to Johor to buy groceries. They carry trolleys full of goods, driving to Johor or catching buses. There is no need to pay for the border crossing. When we crossed the border, we had to pay RM 5 for two people to the person in charge of filling in the immigration forms. Actually, there is no rule for paying but this is the fee for filling in the forms. Basically, people need only pay the bus fare. From Johor to Singapore it costs RM 2 and from Singapore Woodlands Checkpoint to Woodland costs \$S 0.95 or RM 2 if you pay in RM. From Woodland, people can go anywhere they want to because there are connecting transport systems like at the MRT station and buses. Woodland itself has a mall, the Causeway Mall where people can purchase a lot of goods. People could also go to Orchard Road which is famous with its Malls like the Thakasimaya, Tang, Isetan, and so forth. According to our informant, Johorians cross the border to buy clothes, bags and other branded goods when there is a Sale in Singapore because the prices are good or cheaper than those in Malaysia. Meanwhile, Singaporeans go to Johor to buy groceries, including vegetables. Some Singaporeans also buy petrol in Malaysia.

The Malays in Singapore feel marginalized so that is why they have organizations to strengthen their position. According to Baker (1999), after the separation of Singapore from Malaysia, the Malays were not the majority group any longer but had become a minority and they could not get the benefits that were obtained by Malays in Malaysia. Some

Malays have moved to Malaysia, but many stayed in Singapore. In Singapore, the multicultural society seems to be supported by the government. For instance, no single ethnic group can occupy an apartment block; which should be occupied by different groups, the Chinese, Malay and Indian. Many informants told us that Johor is the chosen destination for Malays of Singapore who want to move back to Malaysia. This is because then they can continue working in Singapore if they want to do so.

People living on the border between Malaysia-Singapore seem to be different from those who live in the border areas of mainland Southeast Asia like Cambodia-Thailand, Vietnam-Laos and Thailand-Myanmar. Historically, Singapore and Malaysia used to be the same country so that the main ethnic groups are similar. Meanwhile, other border areas do not have a similar history although people who were mostly from minority groups crossed the borders back and forth in the past because border areas used to be remote areas before developing into cities.

Our study on the border between Thailand and Myanmar shows this. If we look at the historical accounts, we can find that ethnic minorities on the Myanmar-Thai border had migrated from neighbouring countries. This process of migration is a common issue for ethnic minorities who used to be 'stateless' people. Tapp et al. (2004: xiv) note that historically the Hmong had migrated from China to many countries in northern Indo-China. Culas and Michaud (2004:61) report that:

There are dozens of mountain peoples inhabiting the northern parts of Burma, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam, as well as southwest China. The whole of this region forms a geographical entity generally known as the Southeast Asian Massif. Its highland plains and mountains for centuries have provided a refuge for relatively small societies trying to keep out of lowland disputes and the fierce competition between powerful foes fighting for control over fertile land and vital trading routes. For centuries the Lolo, or Yi, the Miao and the Chung-chia, or Pu-yi, to name but the most numerous of these groups, criss-crossed the massif, fleeing from stronger aggressors or simply

seeking better opportunities elsewhere; their settlements today are scattered all over these remote mountain ranges (Culas and Michaud 2004:61)

The hill tribe of Padaung, also known as 'long necks', residing on the border areas of Myanmar-Thailand, migrated from Myanmar due to political instability. The fights between ethnic minorities and the Myanmar army in the western part of Thailand have occurred for decades (Chantanawat 2004:32) and ethnic minorities moved to northern Thailand as refugees. The Thai government has looked after them and assisted them, especially in economic and health terms. Those people often move around and even cross the border. This kind of movement was very common amongst the hill tribes. However, the Thai government has decided that they should not be allowed to cross and re-cross the border any longer. According to interviews with Thai people, this rule is to prevent the minority people from becoming involved in opium production or trading. Drawing on his own experiences of working in the tribal communities, Chantanawat (2004) illustrates the migration process of the Kulo Lahu, one of up to 23 Lahu ethnic groups, who reside in northern Thailand on the Thai-Myanmar border. The routine fights in Myanmar have affected the minorities a great deal. For instance, in 1993, the fights between the Burmese army and Khun Sah's armed forces, a powerful group which resides on the opposite northwest border of Thailand, have affected a large evacuation of the Yai, the Lisu and other tribal groups to Thailand. They were sent back to the original ground later on but many sneaked back to Thailand to be safe (2004:32-33).

In 1997, it was reported from Thailand that around two thousand villagers from Myanmar, predominantly ethnic Karens, escaped to north Thailand, into areas like the Tak Province where there were already thousands of Karens in camps. 'The Thai authorities are said to consider them economic migrants, rather than people who have been displaced by fighting' ([Http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/world/foreast/20735.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/world/foreast/20735.stm)). The hill tribe or ethnic minorities who reside in the border areas between Thailand-Myanmar have not always shared the same experiences in terms of receiving

treatment from the Thai government agencies or in other matters. Some hill tribes have been residing in the areas for generations, while others have recently moved to the border areas. The people who have resided there for a long time often hold hill tribe identity cards, which the newcomers may not have.

Additionally, our study in border areas between Cambodia and Thailand shows that people along the border between Thailand and Cambodia have experienced political fractionation in the country. Gottesman (2002:xiv), for example, reports the situation from 1979 to 1991 when geopolitical standoffs coloured the fragmented nation with people on the border between Thailand and Cambodia controlled by resistance groups, including exiled royalists, republicans and the Khmer Rouge who opposed the Vietnamese occupation.

During fieldwork we were told that the majority of the people who reside along the border between Cambodia and Thailand are Khmer. Apart from this ethnic group, there are other groups: Vietnamese, Cham and Chinese to mention a few. The Khmer have engaged in several activities, including agriculture, labouring and as employees of casinos, hotels and restaurants in the border areas. The better economic conditions of neighbouring countries, especially Thailand have often affected the process of movement of people. Information gathered from informants, indicates that many people, especially the Khmer, from the border area on the Cambodian side have migrated to Thailand to get jobs, others work as labourers on a daily basis and go back to their homes in Cambodia in the late afternoons before the closing of the pass. As the pass is open from 7a.m. to 5p.m. they can only work during the time the pass is open.



Plate 3.1. Causeway of Woodlands, Singapore



Plate 3.2. The Zon, Free tax shop in Johor

Conclusion

It is clear that movement of people in the border areas seems to be very common. If on the Thai-Myanmar border minorities used to cross through the mountains, now they still do so but there is also the formal border which has been developing rapidly as a place for people of Thailand to shop at cheap prices. On the Cambodia-Thai border, economic reasons seem to be behind such movements and ethnic relations seem to be important factors for both the Thai-Myanmar and Cambodia-Thai borders because of a long history of movement prior to the developing of formal borders. On the Malaysia and Singapore borders, ethnicity in a certain way is also important as in Chinese of Singapore employing Chinese of Johor rather than Indians. However, on the Malaysian-Singapore border for trading, this ethnicity seems to be not very important because trade is formal and on a large scale.

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CHAPTER 4

“SIJORI” AND THE CREATION OF A PARADISE FOR JOB-SEEKERS: The Trade Contacts on the Cross-border between Malaysia and Singapore

“Pulau Pisang memang hak kita, tetapi jika hanya ada rumah api saja dan tiada pembangunan lain, kita bimbang Singapura akan mendakwa ia milik mereka pada masa depan”,
Ahmad Maslan, Ahli Parlemen Pontian,
in *Berita Harian*, June 9, 2008.

I Ketut Ardhana

Malaysia and Singapore in the Era of Competitiveness in the Regional Context

In comparison with other border regions in Southeast Asia, it can be said that the border between Malaysia and Singapore is a modern one, as can be seen in the border area in Johor, Malaysia and Woodlands in Singapore, where Singapore is a major crossroad of international trade. In this context, Malaysia has always been strongly dependent on its external trade, a fact which was even more striking when Singapore was part of the Federation. Both countries have had the same experiences in their history as both were colonized by the British over more than 140 years. At that time, the people from both sides found it very easy to go to and fro, for instance, to visit each other and they did

not need to have passports, since they had the same citizenship. According to the local perspective in Johor, at that time, the number of Malays in Singapore was bigger than of the Chinese. There are many ways to go to Singapore from Johor across the sea. However, this did not continue after the political separation in 1965 (Regnier 1990: 27).⁸

Most Malays in Johor acknowledge that their ancestors came from West Sumatra or South Sulawesi. The aim was to strengthen the Malay ethnic group in the region. The Central Government in Kuala Lumpur pays more attention to Johor. In comparison to the situation in the 1970s, when it could be said that Johor was still undeveloped, there was a change due to the policies of the Malaysian government in the 1980s. Much infrastructure has been built and trade and economic links are maintained very well from the northern part of Malaysia to the southern part, which is called the Southern Corridor ("*Gerbang Selatan*"). Not only is there a good relationship between the Indonesians in Malaysia and in Indonesia itself but also, there are still many cases of illegal movement of goods and people to Malaysia. It is calculated, that there are more than 600,000 Indonesian illegal workers in Malaysia. The official figure is only 450,000 Indonesian workers in only four provinces in Malaysia, including Johor Bahru, Negeri Sembilan, Pahang and Malaka. However, due to the illegal workers many of the Indonesian workers are deported from Malaysia, most of them workers in the *kelapa sawit* plantations. On one day there were more than 100,000 to 200,000 Indonesian illegal workers captured in their houses at around 2 or 3 o'clock in the early morning, transported to Pasir Gudang and deported to Indonesia. In comparison to the situation on the other borders between Malaysia and Indonesia, it can be said that

⁸ After 1967, there was a great change after the separation between Malaysia and Singapore. The impact of this separation was that not only the Malaysians or Singaporeans needed to have passports but also the Indonesians who lived in Malaysia needed passports or other identity cards (IC) or *Surat Aturan Perjalanan*. Initially the price of a passport was RM 20. After some years the cost of a passport increased to RM 50 and then to RM 150. Since 2007, the Indonesians must have an international passport instead of the *Surat Aturan Perjalanan* (SAP) and the cost is RM 300.

the situation on the border between Sarawak and East Kalimantan and Sabah is easier for the illegal workers, since there are many “mouse roads”, “*jalan tikus*” in the region. But, what is important to note here is that, if all of the Indonesian workers were deported, Malaysia would be bankrupt. The reason is that there are many Indonesians working in almost all of the *kelapa sawit* plantations and on building and construction in Malaysia. There are also some Filipinos working in better positions in hospitals or malls as skilled and well-educated workers.

There is often worry about the increasing number of Indians causing the establishment of the Indian organization, Persatuan Pedagang India Islam in Johor. From TV news and newspapers we know that in Kuala Lumpur Indian people protested against the government policies on the privileges that have been prioritized for the Malays as *Pribumi (Orang Bumi Putera)*. Not only Indians come increasingly to Johor but also Bangladeshis, Tamils from Ceylon, Javanese, Filipinos and other people from Southeast Asian regions. Indians, Tamils and Bangladeshis work also in road and building construction. The Chinese, one of the major ethnic groups in Malaysia, are mostly traders in textile businesses or restaurants. The Chinese have particular businesses as investors not only to develop their businesses in Malaysia but also in Singapore. The Malays are the ruling-class with most of them in bureaucratic positions.

This differs from the cross border regions among underdeveloped countries or in terms of unbalanced relationships, namely between Myanmar, which is underdeveloped and Thailand which is already well developed. In addition to this, we can see the border between East Kalimantan in Indonesia and Sarawak in East Malaysia, where the trade relationships are through ethnic linkages. What we can learn from the two countries’ experiences is that both Malaysia and Singapore, besides their geographic advantages, are trying to establish a closer relationship, due to their past experiences and also as Commonwealth states. In other words, both states have inherited from the period of British imperialism a

well-structured Customs administration. Regnier (1990: 41) argues that a fifth – sixths of mutual trade is concentrated on the west coast of the peninsula apart from the trade with East Malaysia (Sarawak and Sabah). He mentions that this lessens the temptation for large-scale smuggling or undocumented movement of people and goods and the protection of Malaysia's international market, which is less significant than for Indonesia and Thailand, another factor which has a similar effect. In the meantime, both Malaysia and Singapore operate different systems of Customs classification (Regnier 1990: 41).

When we carried out our research in Johor Bahru, Malaysia and in Singapore in June 2008, we interviewed many people and looked at the daily life in the border regions between Malaysia and Singapore to gain the following impression: Along the way from Kuala Lumpur to Johor Bahru there is very good infrastructure like good roads and toll buildings and beside the roads we can see many *sawit* plantations. It takes four hours from Kuala Lumpur to Johor Bahru. There is a bus every hour both ways. The road is not only good from Kuala Lumpur to Johor Bahru but from the southern part of Malaysia to the northern parts. As well, the roads starting from the causeway on the Malaysian border to Woodlands on the Singapore border are very good. Therefore, it can be said that both Malaysia and Singapore have a very good infrastructure.

Since the 1990s, for instance, the local government in Johor, in cooperation with the Central Government in Kuala Lumpur, has built infrastructure for economic development. The development has been concentrated in the southern part of Johor, in terms of the development of the coastal regions in Teluk Danga (Danga Bay), the improvement of Sanai Airport, the building of the *Pelabuhan Tanjung Pelepas* (PTP) and Pasir Gudang and the building of an integrated Customs complex, Customs Immigration Quarantine (CIQ) in Tanjung Putri, later called *Wilayah Pembangunan Iskandar* (WPI) or the Iskandar Development Region (IDR). From a global perspective, the development of Iskandar is viewed in the context

of the challenges presented by trade and service liberalization which has had a tremendous impact on the movement of capital and the skilled workforce, ICT development and flow of information. From a regional perspective, the development of Iskandar will give a greater competitive edge to the region and will benefit significantly from the air and sea linkages within Asia-Pacific countries and Malaysia's membership in the Indonesia-Malaysia-Singapore Growth Triangle (IMS-GT). http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/882887/background_information_on_iskandar.html.

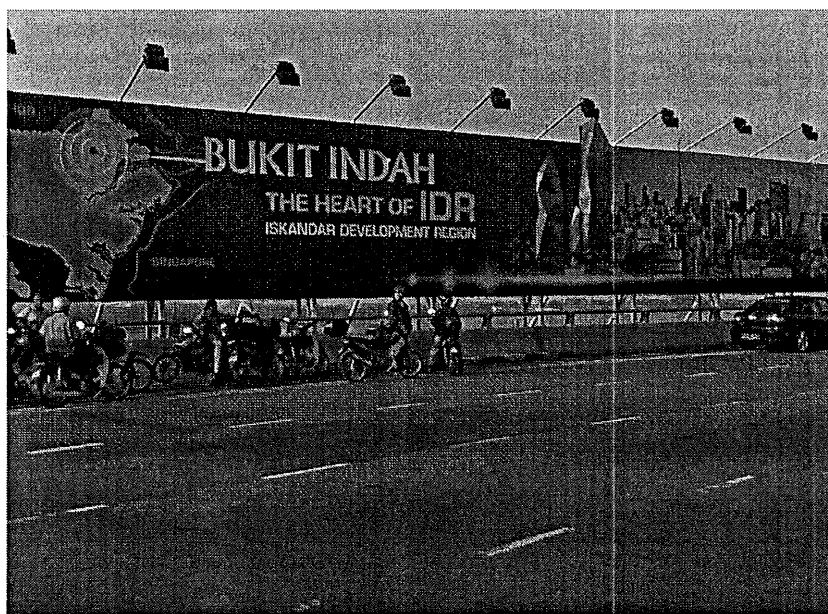


Plate 4.1. The promotion of Iskandar Development Region in Johor Bahru

The increasing contribution of the service sector in Malaysia is inherent with the Malaysian economic growth through encouraging the concept of “Moving up the Value Chain”. This is possible by encouraging the competitiveness among the cheap labour countries, namely China, Vietnam and Indonesia. This policy has strongly addressed intensive capital sectors,

in which the service sector is a fundamental base for the economic transformation of Malaysia. Inflation in Malaysia is low, namely 2% in 2007. This was caused by the strong control of prices and basic needs supplies based on the Price Control Act 1946 and Supplies Control Act 1961. The fuel price hike on June 5, 2008, which was announced by Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, reached US \$135 (RM 430). (1 Sing \$= RM. 2.40). In Malaysia the price of petrol has increased by 78 cents and caused the price for 1 litre to be RM 2,70/ litre in comparison to RM 1,92/ litre previously. The price for diesel is RM 2.85 per litre which has increased by RM 1, from only RM 1.58/ litre. Meanwhile, in Singapore the price of petrol reaches RM 5.20 per litre, diesel RM 4.22 per litre. In Thailand the price of petrol is RM 3.90 per litre and RM 3.50 per litre for diesel, in India for petrol RM 4 and for diesel RM 2.74 per litre (Tan Sri Ramon Navaratnam, “Kenaikan Harga Petrol, diesel: Sukar Bendung Inflasi”, in *Harian Metro*, Friday, June 6, 2008). It is hard for the government to avoid the issue of inflation. So the Malaysian government has agreed to subsidies in cash of RM 625 a year, for cars up to 2000cc and also for trucks, jeeps, to 2.500cc and motorcycle to 250cc the tax will be reduced by RM 50. (“Susulan Kenaikan harga petrol, diesel: Kadar Baru Cukai Jalan Ogos”, in *Harian Metro*, Friday, June 6, 2008).

Today, the movement of people and the movement of goods work as usual as we see in the daily life in the border region. The relationship between Malaysia and Singapore in terms of trade contacts can be described as follows: The border is open for twenty-four hours, which is quite different from the border between Vietnam and Laos. for example, which is open from 07.00 am until 17.00 pm. On the border of Malaysia (Johor Bahru) and Singapore (Woodlands) there is the possibility for both people to work in Singapore or Malaysia and stay in Malaysia or Singapore.

Johor Bahru (Malaysia) and Woodlands (Singapore): The Places for the Creation of a “Paradise” for Job Seekers

Malaysia and Singapore have similar policies on how to manage the border regions. It can be said that the people of Malaysia and Singapore are multi-racial. In terms of the ethnic groups of the countries, they both have the same important ethnic groups. The population in Malaysia at present is 27.1 million consisting of 66.1% Malays; 25.3% Chinese; 7.4% Indian; and 1.2% other. 32.2% of them are under 15 years of age; 63.4% are 15-64 years old; and 4.4% are above 65 years old. In Johor, it is around 40% Malays; 30% Chinese; 10% Indian; and 20% other. The Malays form the majority with other main races the Chinese and Indian. There is a worry in Malaysia about the increasing number of Chinese and Indians in the region with the Malaysian government particularly about the increasing number of Chinese in Penang. However, the Malaysian government does not discourage the social, cultural and economic development of the Chinese. This can be seen in that there are some Chinese schools in Johor. In the past the Chinese schools were closed to the Malays but at present the Malays, who are Muslim and wearing *jilbab* or *bertudung* may also go to the Chinese schools. This may be in terms of “Malaysia truly Asia”.

It is generally said that Malaysia is able to compete in terms of economic fundamental issues though the country has been influenced by the impact of the *Subprime Mortgage* crisis in the United States, the issues on food production and the fuel price hikes recently. Johor as the second big city in Malaysia has the possibility of better economic development in the near future. In terms of the trade and economic development, Johor has a strategic place. There are 11 entry points: Johor Causeway, Johor Bahru Railway Station, Tanjung Puteri, Johor Bahru International Ferry Terminal, Pasir Gudang Ferry Terminal, The 2nd Link, Sultan Ismail Airport, Kukup Ferry Terminal, Muar Ferry Terminal, Tanjung Belungkor Ferry Terminal and Tanjung Pengelih Ferry Terminal. This can also be seen in the industrial

development namely in the modern container business. This region has high business intensity and good infrastructure in terms of physical and non physical aspects, which play a major role in collaborative cooperation not only in terms of traditional but also modern ways. Banks and authorized moneychangers as well as reputable hotels accept foreign currency for bill settlement. Visa, Master Card, American Express, Diners Club and others are generally accepted at airports, hotels, restaurants, shopping malls, tour and travel companies, fuel stations and other establishments. The intensity of the movement of people and goods is quite high, with the border between Malaysia and Singapore located at the direct border, connected by causeway which is around 500 km long. The causeway is built very well and there are three sections for motorcycles, cars and buses. A valid passport or travel document with at least six months validity and a visa (unless exempted) are required.



Plate 4.2. Bus terminal in Singapore

Despite, the Malaysians and the Singaporeans having the same ethnic groups, this does not mean that the ethnic groups play a major role in terms of trade or economic activities in the cross border regions but in fact, since the emergence of the modern states, Malaysia and Singapore, they organize and maintain the trade relationships in professional ways. Due to this, if a state develops more dynamic and modern ways, it can be said that the role of the ethnic relationships becomes less necessary. The reason is that the trade contact in the border region is already in terms of export/import relationships and not in terms of border trade relationships. However, the government does not provide many workers so that it cannot be ignored that Johor has become a paradise for job seekers from neighbouring countries, particularly from Indonesia, both legally and illegally or *Pendatang Tanpa Izin* (PATI). However, the Malaysian government under Mahathir Mohammad prevented the issues of 3D namely “difficult, dirty and dangerous”. Under the administration of Prime Minister Mahathir, anti-Singapore propaganda was moderated. Since the beginning of 1985, the former Minister of Commerce and Industry, Mr Razaleigh stated that Malaysia had no intention of cutting its exports routed via Singapore. It is preferred to encourage direct dealings with the outside world only when it is proved to be more rational economically. Therefore, both states could simply be viewed as one market. Meanwhile, the Malaysians remain the chief market for re-exported goods, transport equipment, manufactured goods and chemical products, to which the domestic export of transformed energy has been added. It is said that these bilateral exchanges show a modest deficit in Malaysia’s favour (Regnier 1990: 42—43).



Plate 4.3. The border in Johor Bahru, Malaysia

Table 4.1. Entry gate point via the sea in Johor in 2007

	Tg Pgliah	Tg Bglkor	Kukup	Muar	St. Laut	P. Gudang	PTP
Malaysia	14382	4936	65420	224	59712	2369	1396
Permanent Residents	103	35	2373	103	4272	1889	13
Total A	14485	4971	67793	327	63984	4258	1409
Singapore	23312	14677	449	2	1892	58	1208
Australia	109	475	5	0	127	14	12
New Zealand	20	75	1	0	14	7	29
Canada	25	115	2	0	28	39	14
United Kingdom & Ireland	112	575	3	0	249	20	1008
Hong Kong	2	68	1	0	4	1	3
Sri Lanka	5	21	0	0	11	0	396
Bangladesh	3	0	1	0	17	36	691
Pakistan	3	5	1	0	42	0	1907
India	49	702	131	0	740	24	1823
Brunei	3	6	13	0	46	0	33
Other Commonwealth countries	27	85	0	0	46	39	2722
Total B	23670	16804	607	2	3216	238	9846
Other non Commonwealth countries like Indonesia	9384	19292	134.472	1884	229445	23360	22381

The role of investors is very important in encouraging the economic and trade development in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, however, this does not happen in Jakarta, Indonesia. In addition to this, the government invites also the Javanese or Balinese crafts people to produce crafts to attract more tourist visits to Malaysia and Singapore. Therefore, it is significant for both the countries to maintain the peaceful and secure situation. It is not surprising that the governments of Malaysia and Singapore believe that security issues, well-built infrastructure and skilled workers are important aspects in encouraging the countries' development. This can be understood also in why investors do not want to invest in countries where they have troubles like burning, floods, extremists and other non-secure situations.

Singapore-Malaysia Cross Border Public Sector Investment, 2004-05

Year	Company	Acquisition/ Investment
2004	Temasek Holdings	Paid RM 2.9 billion for 5 % stake in Telekom Malaysia
2004	Temasek Holdings	Paid RM 550 million for 14.7% stake in Malaysian Plantations, which owns Alliance Bank
2004	GIC Real Estate	Paid RM 123 million for 100% stake in Johore Bahru City Square Mall
2004	GIC	Paid RM 53 million for 5% stake in Gamuda
2004	GIC	Paid 28 million for 5 % stake in Shell Refining
2004	Temasek-owned Mapletree Investment	Invested RM 132 million in partnership with CMBC to form
2005	Temasek owned Aranda	Acquired 4.36% stake in Southern Bank
2005	Keppel Energy	About S\$3 billion deal with Petronas to supply gas
2005	Sunshare investments, jointly owned by Khazanah National (20%) and Telekom Malaysia (80%)	Paid S\$ 260.8 million for 12.06% stake in MobileOne, and subsequently raised to 24.04%

(Source: Saw Swee-Hock2006: 33)

Singapore-Malaysia Cross-Border Private Sector Investments, 2004-05

Year	Company	Acquisition/Investment
2004	Sime Darby	Paid S\$223 million for 29.9% stake in Jaya Holdings
2004	MISC	Acquired NOL's American Eagle Tankers for S \$662 million
2004	Berjaya	
2004	Star Cruise	
2005	CIMB	
2005	AMMB Holdings	
2005	Habib Corporation	
2005	OSK Holdings	
2005	MCL Land	
2005	Parkway	
2005	Ascendas	
2005	United Overseas Land	
2005	GIC Real Estate and Lum Chang	
2005	Genting International, Capital Land and Hotel Properties	

(Source: Saw Swee-Hock 2006: 42)

The construction sector also developed and reached 4.6% after the negative growth in 2005 and 2006 which was -1.8% and -0.5%. The positive growth was influenced by the investment of foreign consortium capital for many projects in the corridors of the Malaysian borders, particularly in the surroundings of the Iskandar Development Region. However, in dealing with the construction sector it can be said that the lack of workers was due to the development in Malaysia. The Singaporeans do not want to work at these unskilled jobs either. Both the Malaysians and Singaporeans feel humiliated to work at this kind of work. The Malaysians usually work in restaurants, in bureaucratic and administrative matters, while the Singaporeans work in business activities, like banks, investments and other skilled work (interview with a taxi driver in Johor Bahru on June 9, 2008). Singapore lacks people. Due to its small population, Singapore's development has also benefited Johor Baru in terms of employment and business opportunities, as well as investment with Singapore investors Johor's key investors - more than 60 per cent of Singapore's investments in Malaysia is concentrated in Johor. "Between 1995 and 2000, Singapore invested RM5.7 billion (S\$2.5 billion) in Johor, accounting for more than 50 per cent of the state's total foreign investments." Singaporeans also make more than 10 million trips to Malaysia every year, with ties between the two governments a business "indicator". When both governments get along well with each other, the Causeway, restaurants and retail stores are crowded on holidays. The governments are therefore urged to discard their political prejudices and step up exchanges to iron out differences. "Don't let KL-S'pore rows affect the people" <http://www.sammyboyforum.com/malaysian-commercial-sex-scene/49912-anything-everything-about-malaysia-johor-jb.html>.

This situation gives more chances to other ethnic groups like the Indonesians. Like the Bangladeshi, the Indonesians do not have a good reputation, particularly as illegal workers, who lost their passports or overstay in Johor Bahru. Most of them do not have an exit permit and

due to this they usually report to the Consulate General of Indonesia in Johor Bahru.

In addition to this, there are some cases of illegal goods with 255 cases found by the Bahagian Pencegahan Kastam Diraja Malaysia (KDRM), the Johor Customs, worth RM 32.4 million. This number had decreased from 263 cases worth RM 30.6 million. The first cases of illegal cigarette smuggling involved 75 cases worth of RM 5.8 million. The second regarded illegal drugs of 26 cases and was worth RM 1.4 million, there were 5 cases of illegal imported cars, worth RM 332.265, 3 cases regarded iron goods worth RM 10.299, fireworks worth RM 481, 625, paper materials worth RM 61.100, telephone equipment worth RM 178.871 and optics worth around RM 48.907. Most of the criminal actions were due to the breakdown in the laws on Akta Kastam 1967. Over five months there were 381 cases worth RM 943.093. Three cases have already been taken over by the Court (Mahkamah) in 2008, in comparison to 10 cases in the same months in 2007. ("Kastam Johor selesai 255 kes Seludup", in *Harian Metro*, Friday, June 6, 2008). Not only Indonesians were involved in the illegal cases mentioned above, besides the cases of illegal cigarettes, there were also some cases supposedly conducted by Singaporeans who had problems with illegal meat, worth RM 113.020. Besides Indonesians, many people from Bangladesh and Tamils work in the building constructions and in the plantations. In order to maintain the competitiveness of Malaysia and Singapore, investors from the Middle East have been invited to invest in the countries.

Table 4.2 The exit gate point via the sea in Johor 2007

	Tg Pglh	Tg Bglkor	Kukup	Muar	St. Laut	P. Gudang	PTP
Malaysia	14373	4590	62744	183	60672	2561	1047
Permanent residents	86	30	2258	81	1313	1565	5
Total A	14459	4620	65002	264	61985	4116	1052
Singapore	22898	14411	665	6	1752	59	1119
Australia	77	464	7	0	125	14	7
New Zealand	14	72	0	0	31	4	16
Canada	20	134	1	0	29	20	38
United Kingdom & Ireland	87	555	8	0	198	10	811
Hong Kong	0	71	1	0	11	4	7
Sri Lanka	5	9	0	0	16	0	319
Bangladesh	3	0	1	0	21	0	585
Pakistan	0	9	1	0	104	0	1693
India	19	642	158	0	785	66	1293
Brunei	2	2	2	0	31	0	62
Other Commonwealth countries	22	78	0	0	55	2	2255
Total B	23147	16447	844	6	3158	179	8205
Other non Commonwealth countries like Indonesia	623	850	114687	1952	168801	43701	20306

The economic growth rate of Malaysia is 6.3% which has increased from 5.9% in 2006. The reason was due to the increasing consumption in the private sector, the better situation of the service sector and the increasing number of construction and mining sectors. The service sector increased 9.1% due to the high sale to domestic and foreign consumers during the Visit Malaysia Year 2007, when the total number of tourist visits reached 21 million. In addition to this, there were increasing imports of consumption goods and the sale of credit cards, banking systems and insurances.

Goods and People Movements on the Border between Malaysia and Singapore

The Malaysian government has been successful in providing a good infrastructure, so that the economic and trade traffic flows very well from the southern to the northern parts of Malaysia. Regnier (1990: 43) notes that the trade statistics show that Malaysia, despite official statements to the contrary over fifteen years and efforts to modernize its harbour infrastructure, never weakened its ties of commercial interdependence with Singapore. In addition to this, the reverse was also true. It is said that complementarity became deeper: in trade contacts which were increasingly diversified and the overlapping of markets with privileged partners. This caused the province of Johor at the southern end of the Malay Peninsula, Penang and East Malaysia to become much more important.

In comparison with the situation on the Malaysian side, the Singaporean side has been built very well. From the Malaysian side we can see a tall building as a gate point called Woodlands, which the people who want to cross to Singapore must enter. Both of the borders are very clear and clean. The employees on both sides very kindly help people if they do not know the mechanisms at the border region. This policy mechanism works similarly at other borders along the border of Malaysia and Singapore. What is important to say here, is that the employees both at the Customs and in the Immigration offices at the border are really committed and responsible in their job. As a result, it is not surprising, if some of them still work for five or even more years due to their good performance and reputation. Indeed, if any of them are involved in a scandal, within only six months he or she will be moved to another position or even punished. Therefore, it can be said that the Malaysian government very consistently implements the rules and regulations. For instance, a very serious offence carries a mandatory death sentence. From this experience, it can be said that one needs to learn how to maintain a better mechanism on the border issues particularly in the underdeveloped countries.

Table 4.3. Singapore's Trade with Malaysia (Value in S\$ Thousand)

Trade	2005	2006	2007
Total Trade	96,138,894	105,852,962	109,908,416
Imports	45,526,605	49,480,818	51,808,830
Exports	50,612,289	56,372,144	58,099,586
Domestic Exports	20,478,036	22,742,111	23,129,929
Re-Exports	30,134,252	33,630,033	34,969,657

Source: IE Singapore

<http://www.iesingapore.gov.sg/wps/portal/!ut/p/kcxml/04>

Table 4.4. The Malaysian economic sector growth 2005—2007

No	Economic sector	2005	2006	2007
1	Agriculture	2.5%	6.4%	6/9%
2	Mining and gas	0.8%	-0.2%	7.2%
3	Industry, manufacturing	5.1%	7.0%	5.6%
4	Construction	-1.6%	-0.5%	4.7%
5	Service	6.5%	6.5%	9.1%

Source: Bank Negara Malaysia, 2006—2009.

Table 4.5. Malaysia's Top 10 Trade Statistics for the Year 2007

1. Malaysia's Top 10 Trading Partners

COUNTRY	2007 (RM Billion)	Share (%)
United States Of America	149.21	13.4
Singapore	146.46	13.2
Japan	120.78	10.9
People's Republic Of China	117.94	10.6
Thailand	56.99	5.1
Republic Of Korea	47.97	4.3
Taiwan	45.17	4.1
Hong Kong	42.65	3.8
Indonesia	39.13	3.5
Germany	38.25	3.4
Others	305.42	27.5
TOTAL TRADE	1109.97	100.0

2. Malaysia's Top 10 Export Markets

COUNTRY	2007 (RM Billion)	Share (%)
United States Of America	94.52	15.6
Singapore	88.51	14.6
Japan	55.24	9.1
People's Republic Of China,	53.04	8.8
Thailand	29.98	5.0
Hong Kong	27.97	4.6
Netherlands	23.60	3.9
Republic Of Korea	23.03	3.8
Australia	20.40	3.4
India	20.20	3.3
Others	168.66	27.9
TOTAL TRADE	1109.97	100.0

http://www.matrade.gov.my/cms/content.jsp?id=com.tms.cms.article.Article_hide_Malaysia'a%20Top%2010%20Trade%20Statistics%20for%20the%20Year%202007

Table 4.6. Imports between Malaysia and Singapore

No	Singapore as country of origin	2005	2006	Percentage
1.	Electronic integrated circuits and micro assemblies	333,877,801	384,063,886	15%
2.	Parts and accessories suitable for machines of 84.69 to 84.72	63,650,528	65,852,640	51%
3.	Automatic data processing machines	31,075,341	27,999,034	-10%
4.	Diodes, transistors, photosensitive devices	16,176,354	12,270,435	-24%
5.	Cruise ships, excursion boats for transport of people or goods	-	5,295,322	100%
6.	Printed circuits	35,508,600	30,189,600	-15%
7.	Gold, unwrought or in semi-manufactured form or in powder form	27,633,357	22,085,355	-20%
8.	Parts suitable for use with the apparatus of 85.25 to 85.28.	4,702,285	9,139,690	94%
9.	Ferrous waste and scrap, re smelting scrap ingots and iron or steel	5,279,103	7,797,394	48%
10.	Refined copper and copper alloys, unwrought	9,791	288,128	3516%
11.	Machines and mechanical appliances, having individual function, NES	12,685,544	12,535,288	-1%
12.	Electrical apparatus for switching	22,025,861	19,195,121	-13%
13.	Natural rubber	-	-	-
14.	Electric sound or visual signaling apparatus NES (alarms)	1,128,846	2,070,085	83%
15.	Parts and accessories of motor vehicles	417,956	29,637	-93%
16.	Motor cars and other motor vehicles	81,043	57,754	-29%
17.	Radio-communication/television transmission apparatus	14,067,510	1,678,104	-88%
18.	Turbo-jets, turbo propellers	41,004	178,829	336%
19.	Flat rolled products	2,905,061	409,227	-86%
20.	Electrical transformers	5,946,556	6,294,291	6%
21.	Polymers of ethylene	28,861,858	33,646,190	22%
22.	Electrical capacitors	27,778,731	20,879,521	-25%
23.	Instruments for measuring electrical quantities	4,497,033	7,310,293	63%

Source: *Laporan Tahunan 2007*.

Neither of the countries is an agricultural country since they already import rice from other Southeast Asian regions like Thailand, as well as other countries in Southeast Asia like Indonesia or Vietnam. In Malaysia the agricultural sector reached a growth of around 6.9% and that was the peak of its growth since 1992.

The expansion of agricultural production in Malaysia in 2007 shows a balanced development between the cash crop plantations like *kelapa sawit*, *getah* and food crops like vegetables and fruit. In addition to this, the increasing main agricultural world commodity has strengthened the betterment of the agricultural sector.

Table 4.7. The entry gate via bridge in Johor (from January to December 2007)

No	Singapore as country of origin	2005	2006	Percentage
26	Electric motors	3,172,933	4,188,014	32%
27	Hot rolled iron	1,327,677	1,962,559	48%
28	Palm oil and its fractions	826,684	938,819	14%
29	Tubes, pipes and hollow profiles	445,887	2,984,643	569%
30	Measuring or checking instruments	7,360,779	9,455,619	28%
31	Mineral or chemical fertilizers	6,064	-	-100%
32	Unwrought aluminium	-	460,688	100%
33	Other articles or plastics	12,642,559	10,389,691	-18%
34	Milk and cream	194,755	212,822	9%
35	Insulated wire	6,161,894	4,692,246	-24%
36	Maize (corn)	7,549,513	-	-100%
37	Cyclic hydrocarbons	15,610,599	12,554,670	-20%
38	Medicaments	5,486,129	2,037,840	-63%
39	Heading NOS	2,798,841	1,361,213	-32%
40	Taps, cocks	1,518,271	2,469,361	63%
41	Primary cells and batteries	703,806	750,372	7%
42	Oil-cake	-	-	0%
43	Electrical machines	2,293,399	1,284,901	-44%
44	Electrical apparatus for telephony or telegraphy	1,037,445	821,012	-21%
45	Cocoa beans	-	-	0%
46	Ofiron	10,700	74,184	593%
47	Instruments used in medical, surgical sciences	3,196,306	3,610,390	13%
48	Parts of goods of 88.01 or 88.02	3,882,056	7,584,437	94%
49	Rolled iron	43,629	56,416	29%
50	Aluminium plates	331,907	342,254	3%

In the local people's perception, it can also be said that both the governments have been successful in maintaining a good border relationship, which can be seen in the increasing number of people from both sides, visiting each others' countries, people visiting Johor from Singapore due to economic reasons and also Johor people visiting Singapore. In Johor one of the favourite activities is shopping. This can

be seen in internationally famous designer merchandise as well as in local talent, from fabulous malls to colourful market stalls, selling fresh produce, specialty shops and craft shops. Most of the plantation products in Johor are oil products like from the *kelapa sawit* plantations. Besides that there are also produced pineapples (*nanas*), natural rubber, timber and other products. The Singaporeans, come every weekend particularly to buy some daily needs like rice, fish and vegetables. However, in both Malaysia and Singapore in comparison with Indonesia, there is still a lack of crafts, since the crafts usually come from Indonesia. It can be said that both Malaysians and Singaporeans, some of whom are tourists, find it easy to go to each others' country. They usually need to spend only three hours to come and return from Singapore to Johor in Malaysia and vice versa. Even, from "Gerbang Selatan" (the Southern Corridor) going on foot across to Woodlands needs only half an hour, therefore this gate is always busy in comparison with other gates between Malaysia and Singapore (interview with Johari bin Yusof).

Table 4.8. The exit gate via bridge in Johor in 2007

	T. Johor	KSAB	Tg Puri	KTM, TgPg
Malaysia	19.066.753	6.274.935	161.612	157.639
Permanent residents	33.127	4473	1313	1838
Total A	31.794.829	6279408	162925	159.477
Singapore	19.066.753	2747659	109.375	94.564
Australia	10.676	27.729	5421	3657
New Zealand	4.625	4.753	1304	805
Canada	5.356	7.800	1107	1568
United Kingdom & Ireland	7.924	31.596	3322	8070
Hong Kong	41	1304	430	27
Sri Lanka	4412	5863	235	781
Bangladesh	4519	3315	82	296
Pakistan	4237	2315	88	643
India	30.572	46.737	2096	18335
Brunei	2427	1258	39	585
Other Commonwealth countries	5740	19617	896	859
Total B	19.147.382	2899946	124.396	130180
Other non Commonwealth countries like Indonesia	89871	123.374	5239	10959

Since two sharp rises after 1982, goods like crude oil, natural rubber, foodstuffs, clothing, vegetable oils and electrical equipment have become Singapore's important imports.

The entry gate point via airport in Johor 2007

Table 4.9. Entry gate point via the airport

Entry gate point via the airport	LTSI (InI	LTSI (Out)
Malaysia	16823	14757
Permanent residents	78	46
Total A	16901	14803
Singapore	819	815
Australia	68	64
New Zealand	10	13
Canada	34	33
United Kingdom & Ireland	125	110
Hong Kong	20	5
Sri Lanka	6	5
Bangladesh	8	4
Pakistan	3	4
India	60	75
Brunei	11	16
Other Commonwealth countries	25	14
Total B	1189	1158
Other non Commonwealth countries like Indonesia	7049	7557

Besides the Gerbang Selatan there is also another connection between Malaysia and Singapore called the Second Link. This is not as heavily used as the Gerbang Selatan. In addition to this, there is an alternative route namely in Tanjung Pelepas. The fast development of Tanjung Pelapas and other places like Pasir Gudang causes Johor to have a high intensity of economic growth. In the past, Malaysia prohibited the export of timber via Singapore and urged local business circles to use the new installation at the port of Pasir Gudang in south Johor instead of Singapore. However, there were immediate protests from the Malay Timber Industry Board in Kuala Lumpur, denouncing the lack of realism of these measures. Therefore, the Malaysian government was obliged to backtrack, at least in part (Regnier 1990: 43).

Due to its being far away not many people come to this Second Link and the Chinese believe it lacks “*hokkies*” (meaning fortune), besides being

more expensive due to the increasing fuel prices. Singaporean cars are not allowed to buy petrol in Johor, since the Central Government in Kuala Lumpur subsidizes the people in Johor by around RM 40 billion since the increase in oil prices. The Singaporean cars are allowed to buy oil, if the distance they travel is at least 50 km from the city of Johor. This of course, becomes a problem since not all Singaporean cars belong to Singaporeans, but to Malaysians living in Johor Bahru and in its surrounding areas (interview with Norwin Anwar June 6, 2008).

It is believed that the fuel price hikes, have not much influenced the economic activities in the region (“Elak kesan Rantaian harga Minyak Naik”, in *Harian Metro*, Friday, June 6, 2008), and the development continues though the government warns the people to use the budget carefully. Johor, for instance, is an ideal venue for meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE), when it comes to commerce, manufacturing and industry. In addition to this Johor has a wide selection of physical structures, state of the art equipment, good transportation and excellent support services. There is a good selection of hotels and other accommodation facilities and a long list of tour and travel companies ready to serve. Therefore, there are Singaporeans everywhere enjoying their travel to Malaysia, in the Kotaraya Mall, Jasco Mall, Meldrum Street, City Square, Tebrau and other places.

Regnier (1990) says that Malaysia whose exports to Japan are routed via Singapore, considers Japan as the final destination of these sales. On the other hand, Singapore counts them as imports from Malaysia and as exports (re-export since 1976) to Japan. Conversely, Malaysia classes all its imports by their country of origin, whether or not they have been routed via Singapore. It is said that since 1987 the re-exports declared by Singapore included, 60% of its total exports to Malaysia. Therefore, it is not surprising that Singapore’s overall figures for the bilateral trade of the two countries sometimes differ from those of Kuala Lumpur by as much as 50%. Regnier also notes that Malaysia represented 19% of

Singapore's external trade in 1970, however, ten years later, in 1980 this had fallen to 13.5%, rising to 16% in 1984 but dropping back to 14% in 1987. Malaysia ceased to be Singapore's premier trading partner in 1982, when the United States overtook it. It is said that Japan recently has done so too (Regnier 1990: 41).

In addition to this, the position of Johor as the main gate point for the incomers from Indonesia to Malaysia, caused the fast economic development in the region. This can be seen in the Malaysian government policy which has strongly addressed intensive capital sectors, where the service sector is a fundamental basis of the economic transformation of Malaysia. For example, some manufacturing industries using cheap labour (labour intensive) are directed to relocate to countries which have cheaper labour. However, the activities which have surplus high intensity like design, programming, finance and investment remain in Malaysia. (Kedutaan Besar Republik Indonesia, *Laporan Tahunan 2007*. Kuala Lumpur: Bidang Perdagangan, 2007).

The Concept of “*Sijori*”:

The Impact of Trade Contacts in the Border Regions between the Southern Corridor (Malaysia) and Woodlands (Singapore)

There is increasing investment not only in Singapore but also in Malaysia. Even it is said, there would be set up *Sijori* (Singapore, Johor and Riau (in this context the Kepulauan Riau) as a Golden Triangle for development in the region. In this context the development of WPI as Gerbang Selatan “the Southern Corridor” is very significant in developing the regional development. This is based on several project-plans in the context of the Ninth Malaysia Plan and the economic development corridors in Malaysia including the Iskandar Development Region, the Northern Corridor Economic Region, the Eastern Corridor Economic Region and the Sabah and Sarawak Corridor. These projects were interesting not only

to the Singaporean investors but also to the skilled and educated Indonesian workers from Riau, West Sumatra and Batam who utilized these opportunities. The total number of people in Johor is around 3 million, in Johor Bahru itself it is around 1 million and in Singapore it is approximately 5 million. Unemployment in Malaysia is approximately 3.3% and the income for a Malaysian is around US \$ 6,477 (Kedutaan Besar Republik Indonesia, *Laporan Tahunan 2007*. Kuala Lumpur: Bidang Perdagangan, 2007).

Even though Malaysia and Singapore have a similar perception on political issues in the region of Southeast Asia, in fact, they have also some problems on the border issues like the taking over of the small Island Batu Puteh by Singapore, where the state is able to show some evidence of how the Island has been maintained for a long time. If we look at the distance it seems that the issue on Batu Puteh actually is a border problem between Malaysia and Indonesia, since the location of the Batu Puteh is closer to the Indonesian border than to the Singaporean border. However, in this case, the Singaporean investors are able to show evidence on the Island like a lighthouse (*Mercusuar*). This shows that Johor wishes to compete against Singapore. In the issue on Batu Puteh Island, in fact the Malaysian government has been successful in tackling the problem, though some protests emerged from the fishers along the coast of the Malaysian Peninsula against the government policies, particularly in the regions located close to Batu Puteh Island. Apart from the issue on Batu Puteh, there is the issue on the small Island of Merambong. A Malaysian newspaper in an article on "Singapura Halau Nelayan Hampiri Pulau Merambong", in *Berita Harian*, (June 11, 2008: 4) notes that the Singaporean polices have asked the Malaysian fishers not to come too close to the Island of Merambong. This means that though the Malaysian government claims that the Island is a part of the Malaysian area, in fact, the Singaporean police do not want the Malaysian fishers in the surroundings of the Island. The Merambong Island is located only 1.5 km from Singapore and only around 3 km from Tanjung Kupang in Malaysia. But, the Malaysian fishers reported to the Malaysian police in

relation to their cases. Therefore, the Malaysian government wishes to develop the region in parallel with the development in Pelabuhan Tanjung Pelepas and Nusajaya Laluan Kedua in Malaysia and Singapore.



Plate 4.4. The promotion of Nusa Jaya in Johor Bahru, Malaysia

In order to avoid similar problems, the Malaysian government has tried to build infrastructure in several islands in the region, namely on the small island, Pulau Pisang. Therefore, the Malaysian government not only wants to build the “*rumah api*” or lighthouse on Pulau Pisang (Pisang island) but also has maintained and built infrastructure on the island, where there already exists the Singaporean *rumah api*. This, of course, cannot be separated from the history of the British, the Malaysian and the Singaporean governments. In this context, Singapore is more aware of its environment and also the country is small in comparison with the other countries in Southeast Asia. Based on the conflict experienced in the past between Indonesia and Malaysia about two small islands Sipadan and Ligitan, to which according to the International Court, Malaysia won the rights, it can be said that Malaysia does not wish to repeat the Indonesian experience and does not want to repeat its defeat against Singapore regarding the Island of Batu Puteh. Therefore, the Malaysian government not only has established a *rumah api*, but also another building, through which the *rumah api* is not relevant any longer, since ships and boats already use GPS (*Sistem Pengesanan Global*). The government provided funding of around RM 50,000 for the building of a prayer house (*surau*) and jetty on the lands belonging to 72 year-old Amin Dalik for the residents living there. Cooperation is to be built between the government and the *Pihak Berkuasa Wilayah Pembangunan Iskandar* (IRDA). Therefore, Malaysia should take over the authority of the Island for the certainty of the Island in order to prevent the cases against the Singaporean government (Ahmad Maslan, “Ambil Alih Rumah Api Pulau Pisang”, in *Berita Harian*, June 9, 2008). Despite the conflict about the small islands in the surrounding region, in fact, both of the countries are dependent on each another. Singapore, on the one hand, for instance, is really dependent on the water supply from Malaysia, where the water price is relatively cheap (1 Gallon water= RM 5 cents). Malaysia, on the other hand, is strongly dependent on the trade opportunities offered by the economic and trade situation through the border between Malaysia and Singapore. There are many islands that have historical and cultural assets in the

region. The Pulau Pinang, for instance, has rich and various historical heritages for the Malays that will be developed in the near future in the context of the competitiveness between Malaysia and Singapore in the regional context (“Tingkat Pengetahuan Pengunjung mengenai tempat bersejarah di Pulau Pinang”, in *Harian Metro*, Friday, June 6, 2008).

This shows that both the countries actually need to maintain a good neighbour relationship and continue the peaceful situation in the region. From the above description, it can be said that both countries still look at the possibility of integrating their trade and economic relationship, since the economic and trade activities are already in place as we can see in the relationship of the two countries through the Southern Corridor “*Gerbang Selatan*” in Johor Bahru (Malaysia) to Woodlands (Singapore). When we interviewed some people they even said that there is the possibility that the countries will be integrated. But, nobody knows about it. Now, the reciprocal mutual relations already exist and a stable economic development has already been created, so that there is no longer a gap in terms of economic growth between the two countries. If we look at the present trade contacts in the cross border region they show good development. Due to the policies of the Malaysian government on the fuel price hikes some people protested about the fuel price hikes already in several parts of Malaysia. However, the government is trying to solve the problem peacefully not through response to the demonstrations. (“Demonstrasi tak selesai masalah”, in *Harian Metro*, Friday, June 6, 2008).

It is important to note, that due to the fuel price hikes, this policy not only affects the Malaysians but also the Singaporeans. The fuel price hike in Malaysia has made the price RM 1.29/ per litre but in Singapore it has already increased twice and in Thailand it has even become RM 5/ per litre. In the past before the oil price increase, the Singaporeans might buy oil everywhere in the Malaysian regions but now there were many limitations on them, they had to be at least 50 km from the Johor region.

However, this regulation is no longer in force, since the Central Government has already changed it. The reason is that it costs the Singaporeans more. However, in general, there was no influential impact on the trade and economic development of either Malaysia or Singapore. For the Singaporeans, come and visit Johor not only to buy oil but also for other business activities in relation to trade and tourist visits (interview with Laila Machfrida on June 10, 2008). Therefore, very often we see in Johor many cars and motorcycles with Singaporean number plates parked in the morning. This is caused by the living costs in Johor being lower than in Singapore.

Table 4.10. The entry gate point via the causeway in Johor 2008 (until April)

	Johor	KSAB	Tg Putri	KTM, TgPg
Malaysia	10923880	2205436	41778	42022
Permanent residents	10245	1856	228	563
Total A	10934125	2207282	42006	42585
Singapore	310404	747050	19641	16942
Australia	4992	11651	1224	1117
New Zealand	2716	2068	165	177
Canada	2888	3174	401	378
United Kingdom & Ireland	3327	12988	794	2323
Hong Kong	17	369	38	15
Sri Lanka	2612	2441	50	253
Bangladesh	2592	1500	27	37
Pakistan	2648	858	4	76
India	6258	20237	506	3911
Brunei	1194	369	13	71
Other Commonwealth countries	2624	8250	216	228
Total B	342372	810910	23279	25528
Other non Commonwealth countries like Indonesia	11547	41783	1473	1903

The above Table shows that the number of PR (Permanent Residents) in Johor was 10,245 until April 2008 in comparison with 33,127 in 2007 (see the previous Table for 2007). It is important to note here the hard discussion regarding permanent residence issues when Malaysia was under Datuk Musa Hitam in the 1970s against Mahathir Mohammad. Datuk Musa Hitam had specific recommendations based on his policy, with many Indonesians having easier access to PR. Due to his policy, Mahathir Mohammad urged also that the people from India could also more easily become Malaysians. This happened due to that Datuk Musa Hitam, was believed to have an Indonesian heritage and Mahathir Mohammad to have an Indian heritage.

Table 4.11. The exit gate point via the causeway in Johor 2008

	Johor	KSAB	Tg Putri	KTM, TgPg
Malaysia	7775052	2015504	64838	37026
Permanent residents	22050	1836	1664	126
Total A	7797102	2017340	66502	37152
Singapore	329106	706214	446	17539
Australia	5332	9639	1	840
New Zealand	3352	1865	0	122
Canada	3624	2782	0	287
United Kingdom & Ireland	3748	11028	0	1208
Hong Kong	5	404	0	66
Sri Lanka	3136	1751	0	356
Bangladesh	3104	948	0	227
Pakistan	3148	648	0	219
India	26735	21827	0	6418
Brunei	2364	320	0	85
Other Commonwealth countries	3008	6079	0	229
Total B	386662	753505	447	27596
Other non Commonwealth countries like Indonesia	13353	31588	131	2550

Therefore, since the 1980s there has been no easy way to obtain permanent residence in Malaysia. This can be seen as the success of the Malaysian government to reduce the number of newcomers from Indonesia, India, Vietnam and other regions in Southeast Asia to Malaysia. Since that time, there has been a decreasing number of Indonesians, Indians and Vietnamese who have permanent residence. Even in some cases it can be seen that in a family it is only the parents (father and mother) who have permanent residence and as Indonesians are called “*Indon*” (acronym from Indonesian people), while their four children have Malaysian citizenship. They chose this way so that their children will have access to schools in Malaysia as well as other Malaysian citizenship benefits. While their parents still have permanent residence they will not be able to buy land or house in Malaysia. Due to this, not long in terms of time, the number of permanent residents will be reduced (Interview with Trin, who is a local employee).

Table 4.12. The entry gate point via the sea in Johor 2008

	Tg pghl	Tg bgklor	Kukup	Muar	St.laut	Pgudang	PTP	Sebana Cove	Minyak Beku
Malaysia	5207	1831	26153	0	21776	1524	621	1482	2
Permanent Residents	2	38	179	0	1506	905	0	0	0
Total A	5209	1869	26332	0	23282	2429	621	1482	0
Singapore	8683	3155	132	0	606	115	357	5924	0
Australia	16	170	1	0	65	76	6	209	0
New Zealand	2	31	0	0	6	3	6	51	0
Canada	11	46	1	0	8	13	0	35	0
United Kingdom & Ireland	44	207	0	0	54	10	295	300	0
Hong Kong	10	14	0	0	8	1	10	15	0
Sri Lanka	12	5	0	0	5	55	40	0	0
Bangladesh	4	0	0	0	8	65	36	0	0
Pakistan	4	3	0	0	13	21	925	0	0
India	15	330	57	0	278	140	351	96	2
Brunei	0	1	0	0	7	0	0	0	0
Other Commonwealth countries	9	21	0	0	35	265	1191	14	0
Total B	8810	3983	191	0	1093	1084	3218	6644	4
Other non Commonwealth countries like Indonesia	1201	12118	55177	0	80800	18089	7487	183	2568

Due to this, some Malaysian and Singaporean people get married to each other and many of them live in Malaysia or Singapore. The Singaporeans, for instance, come in the morning on Sunday after arriving to shop in Johor and spend their time in Johor Malaysia and then go back to Singapore later on Sunday or even on Monday, to work.



Plate 4.5. The gate in Johor Bahru, Malaysia

In the morning we can see many Singaporeans coming back to Singapore to work. Meanwhile, most of the Malaysians who work in Singapore come in the morning and return in the afternoon. The busiest time in the checkpoint at Woodlands is from 06.00 to 07.00 am and from 17.00 to 24.00 pm. In comparing workdays with holidays there are differences. On Saturdays, for instance, it is very crowded with traffic jams everywhere. Most of them are young people and teenagers who catch the bus from Johor to Singapore.

Table 4.13. The exit gate point via the sea in Johor 2008

	Tg pghih	Tg bglkor	Kukup	Muar	St.laut	Pgudang	PTP	Sebana Cove	Minyak Beku
Malaysia	3489	1354	19815	0	16787	645	330	1087	164
Permanent Residents	7	9	523	0	288	413	0	0	56
Total A	3496	1363	20338	0	17075	1058	330	1087	219
Singapore	5254	2659	178	0	486	38	307	6145	2
Australia	10	144	0	0	49	22	15	132	0
New Zealand	2	27	0	0	5	1	15	34	0
Canada	6	180	1	0	5	22	6	14	0
United Kingdom & Ireland	24	14	3	0	32	1	76	196	0
Hong Kong	0	5	1	0	1	0	6	8	0
Sri Lanka	2	5	0	0	4	16	28	0	0
Bangladesh	1	0	0	0	6	67	15	0	0
Pakistan	1	312	0	0	31	3	388	0	0
India	12	0	64	0	229	86	591	78	2
Brunei	0	16	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
Other Commonwealth countries	5	3389	1	0	42	46	921	8	0
Total B	5317	151	248	0	895	302	2488	6615	4
Other non Commonwealth countries like Indonesia	79		32983	0	46903	11961	5781	165	1690

The mining sector increased from negative growth and reached the significant figure of around 7.2%. This was caused by the increasing oil production particularly on the Kikeh coast. In addition, this was caused also by the production of natural gas and the demand for domestic and international electricity for the LNG particularly from Japan and Korea.

Table 4.14. The entry gate point and exit via the airport in Johor 2008

	Entry LTSI	Exit LTSI
Malaysia	14345	16485
Permanent Residents	0	0
Total A	14345	16485
Singapore	563	827
Australia	149	94
New Zealand	37	27
Canada	66	67
United Kingdom & Ireland	124	132
Hong Kong	65	24
Sri Lanka	7	1
Bangladesh	2	5
Pakistan	6	5
India	63	62
Brunei	6	6
Other Commonwealth countries	28	34
Total B	1116	1284
Other non Commonwealth countries like Indonesia	4687	5837

Source: Imigresen Johor Bahru

WPI is located at the front of the Singapore border its 2,127 km², covers the Triangle Area namely the Airport Senai in the north, Pelabuhan Tanjung Pelepas in the west and Pelabuhan Pasir Gudang in the east. In managing the WPI, there has been established an authority called Iskandar Regional Development Authority (IRDA). The president is the Malaysian Prime Minister and the *Menteri Besar* (Chief of Minister) (interview with Pradnyawati, Economic and Trade Attaché). In the next five years, it is believed that the development of WPI, which is 2.5 times the Singaporean area, will be targeted to attract investment of around RM 47 billion. From 2011 to 2025 it will be targeted to reach investment of approximately RM 335 billion. Over more than twenty years, the WPI project will create eight hundred thousand to one million new job opportunities, particularly in the context of physical construction of the WPI (Konsulat Jenderal

Republik Indonesia di Johor Bahru, *Keterangan Dasar Wilayah Kerja*, 2007: 4). Malaysia had enough foreign currency of around US \$ 101.3 billion in 2007. That was enough to cover 9.2 months of imports and was equivalent to 6.5 to pay off debts in a short time. (Kedutaan Besar Republik Indonesia, *Laporan Tahunan 2007*. Kuala Lumpur: Bidang Perdagangan, 2007).

Conclusion

The trade contact between Malaysia and Singapore is a unique one, since while both countries are bordered by sea, in fact they have a close relationship, by being connected by a causeway and there is an increasingly close relationship not only in terms of social and cultural aspects, but also through mutual economic interests. The relationship is showcased in the two immigration offices, at Gerbang Selatan in Johor Bahru, the gate point of Malaysia, and Woodlands, the gate point of Singapore. These immigration offices are unique if compared with other border regions in Southeast Asian countries. Despite being separated from each other since the emergence of the modern states of Malaysia and Singapore, in fact, since their independence from British rule, there has been dynamic economic development in the region.

In comparison to the areas which still have unbalanced economic development in their border regions like those of Sarawak, Sabah and East Kalimantan where ethnicity plays a major role in the trade contacts in the cross-border regions and is called "border trade". Meanwhile, in the trade contacts through the balanced trade and economic development on the border between Malaysia and Singapore, it seems that ethnicity does not play a major role, since the trade and economic contacts are based on greater professionalism and called export and import trade. Today, the Malaysians who work daily in Singapore, go in the early morning to work then return to Johor in the afternoon or later since the border

gate is open for twenty four hours. Some of the Singaporeans stay in Johor and have houses there. Even, some Singaporeans who live in Singapore come to Johor to shop for their daily needs in the border region of Malaysia particularly at the weekends. Johor Bahru is considered to be the second biggest city in Malaysia.

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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In Southeast Asia the border is considered a window of opportunity for a country to develop its region. The border defines geographic boundaries of political entities or legal jurisdictions, such as governments, states or sub-national administrative divisions. In addition to this, the border may foster the setting up of buffer zones. While in some countries there are policies by which borders are fully or partially controlled and may be crossed legally only at designated crossing points. Most countries have some form of border control to restrict or limit the movement of people, animals, plants and goods into or out of the country.

The trade contact between Malaysia and Singapore is a unique one, since while both countries are bordered by sea, in fact they have a close relationship, by being connected by a causeway and there is an increasingly close relationship not only in terms of social and cultural aspects but also through mutual economic interests. The relationship is showcased in the two immigration offices, at Gerbang Selatan in Johor Bahru, the gate point of Malaysia and Woodlands, the gate point of Singapore. These immigration offices are unique if compared with other border regions in Southeast Asian countries. Despite being separated from each other since the emergence of the modern states of Malaysia and Singapore, in fact, since their independence from British rule, there has been dynamic economic development in the region.

In comparison to the areas which still have unbalanced economic development in their border regions like those of Sarawak, Sabah and East Kalimantan where ethnicity plays a major role in the trade contacts in the cross border regions and is called 'border trade'. Meanwhile, in

the trade contacts through the balanced trade and economic development on the border between Malaysia and Singapore, it seems that ethnicity does not play a major role, since the trade and economic contacts are based on greater professionalism and called export and import trade. Today, the Malaysians who work daily in Singapore, go in the early morning to work then return to Johor in the afternoon or later since the border gate is open for twenty four hours. Some of the Singaporeans stay in Johor and have houses there. Even, some Singaporeans who live in Singapore come to Johor to shop for their daily needs in the border region of Malaysia particularly at the weekends. Johor Bahru is considered to be the second biggest city in Malaysia.

It can be concluded that Singapore has learnt many lessons from its neighbours, in the context of positive and negative aspects of Western influences in the region. Singaporeans recognized the existence of the various ethnic groups, religions, languages and traditions of their people and utilized the differences to develop a modern state. This means that a sense of national identity and consciousness among a disparate population of immigrants has been implemented. Although Singapore is a small country among the countries in Southeast Asia, its leaders thought fast, particularly after independence, about how to solve the issues of the jobless and the economy. The main and most important strategies of the Singapore government were to get a new way to increase foreign exchange which was absolutely necessary. This could be provided through exports. At that time, the issues of housing and education systems were very complex. As a result, by the 1990s, Singapore had become one of the world's most prosperous nations, with a highly developed free market economy, strong international trading links and the highest per capita gross domestic product in Asia outside of Japan. The emergence of Singapore in the region of Southeast Asia can be considered as the emergence of a 'new regionalism'.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KONTAK-KONTAK PERDAGANGAN DI WILAYAH PERBATASAN ANTARA MALAYSIA DAN SINGAPURA

I Ketut Ardhana

“Pulau Pisang memang hak kita, tetapi jika hanya ada rumah api saja dan tiada pembangunan lain, kita bimbang Singapura akan mendakwa ia milik mereka pada masa depan”,
Ahmad Maslan, Ahli Parlemen Pontian,
dalam *Berita Harian*, 9 Juni 2008.

Abstrak

Pada umumnya dikenal ada dua jenis hubungan perdagangan di wilayah perbatasan. Yang pertama dikenal dengan perdagangan perbatasan *border trade* yang terutama terjadi di wilayah perbatasan yang perkembangan ekonominya tidak seimbang. Yang kedua dikenal dengan perdagangan bebas atau *free trade*, dimana hubungan perdagangan dikelola secara profesional. Tidak demikian halnya dengan hubungan kontak perdagangan antara Malaysia dan Indonesia di Pulau Kalimantan yang dilaksanakan dengan konsep perdagangan perbatasan, maka kontak perdagangan di wilayah perbatasan antara Malaysia dan Singapura dilaksanakan secara *free trade* atau profesional, karena terdapat keseimbangan perkembangan perekonomian dan perdagangan antara kedua negara itu. Apabila dikaji lebih mendalam tampaknya pada hubungan jenis yang pertama, hubungan antar etnis memainkan peranan penting, sementara pada jenis yang kedua hubungan etnis tidak memainkan

peranan signifikan, karena kontak perdagangan dan ekonomi dikelola secara profesional atau dikenal dengan istilah perdagangan *export and import trade*. Namun, perlu dicatat bahwa meskipun terdapat dua jenis hubungan itu, namun karena tinggal di Malaysia dalam hal ini Johor lebih murah menyebabkan para pebisnis dan pekerja tidak tinggal di Singapura melainkan mereka melaju setiap harinya. Bahkan untuk keperluan barang sehari-hari orang Singapura lebih senang berbelanja di Johor Malaysia karena harganya lebih murah. Selain itu, berbeda dengan waktu buka yang terbatas, hubungan di wilayah perbatasan ini dibuka 24 jam yang menunjukkan intensitas yang kuat antara kontak perdagangan antara Malaysia dan Singapura.

Kajian ini mengelaborasi seberapa jauh hubungan antara Malaysia dan Singapura dan manfaat apa yang dapat dijadikan pelajaran dalam memahami kontak-kontak perdagangan antara Malaysia dan Singapura, yang diintegrasikan melalui hubungan jembatan. Oleh karena itu, wilayah pembangunan di kawasan Malaysia bagian selatan ini dikenal dengan *the southern part bersepadu (integrated southern Malaysia)*. Oleh karena itu, bagian ini menganalisis pertama: faktor-faktor apa yang menyebabkan kedua negara saling tergantung antara satu dengan yang lainnya? Kedua: seberapa jauh hubungan yang dilakukan antara Malaysia dan Singapore dalam kaitannya dengan pergerakan manusia dan barang? Ketiga, dampak apa ditimbulkan terhadap perkembangan kontak-kontak perdagangan antara Malaysia dan Singapura yang tidak hanya untuk perkembangan di negara itu, tetapi juga berdampak terhadap negara-negara di sekitarnya seperti Indonesia dalam konteks “*Sijori*” atau the golden triangle yang menghubungkan antara Singapura, Johor (Malaysia) dan Riau atau Kepulauan Riau (Indonesia). Melalui persoalan ini, bagian ini berupaya memahami kontak perdagangan antara Malaysia dan Singapura untuk masa depan yang lebih baik di Asia Tenggara.

Kata Kunci: perbatasan, perdagangan perbatasan, perdagangan ekspor dan impor, Johor Bahru, Woodlands, dan “*Sijori*”.

I. Pendahuluan

Penelitian tentang kontak-kontak perdagangan di daerah perbatasan antara Malaysia dan Singapura ini merupakan kelanjutan program penelitian mengenai persoalan perbatasan di Asia Tenggara. Penelitian yang diajukan ini merupakan penelitian berlanjut direncanakan beberapa tahun. Tahun pertama telah dilaksanakan penelitian perbatasan yang mengambil kajian antara Thailand dan Birma. Tahun kedua mengambil wilayah penelitiannya di perbatasan antara Thailand dan Laos. Untuk tahun ketiga kajian penelitian dipusatkan di wilayah perbatasan antara Thailand dan Kamboja. Tahun keempat penelitian kontak perdagangan dilakukan di perbatasan antara Vietnam dan Laos dan tahun ini penelitian dilakukan di perbatasan antara Malaysia dan Singapura.

Ada alasan utama mengapa wilayah perbatasan antara Malaysia dan Singapura ini diangkat sebagai bidang kajian. Pertama, berdasarkan hasil penelitian yang dilakukan terhadap negara-negara itu seperti Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Kamboja, posisi Singapura secara geografis memiliki lingkungan yang berbeda dibandingkan dengan wilayah daratan di Asia Tenggara itu. Kedua, dicoba memahami bagaimana pandangan yang melihat arti penting kawasan ini sebagaimana dikatakan bahwa siapa yang menguasai Selat Malaka akan menguasai jalur perdagangan dan perekonomian di kawasan itu. Ketiga, penelitian ini akan sangat bernilai dan bermanfaat bagi pengelolaan wilayah perbatasan Indonesia, karena dapat dianggap sebagai sebuah pembelajaran bagi Indonesia karena Singapura berupa pulau dan Indonesia sendiri sebagai negara kepulauan yang memiliki pulau lebih dari 17.000 pulau. Keempat, dilihat konteks multietnis yang terjadi karena sebagai negara pulau tentu mempunyai pengaruh dari daratan Asia Tenggara lainnya.

Dalam perjalanan sejarahnya, wilayah Malaysia dan Singapura menjadi tarik menarik dari berbagai kekuatan di luar negeri itu, namun kedua negeri itu pernah mengalami pengaruh ekspansi kekuasaan Inggris di

Asia Tenggara. Ada beberapa catatan penting yang perlu dikemukakan berkaitan dengan dinamika yang panjang perjalanan sejarah hubungan Malaysia dan Singapura, meskipun pada awalnya diketahui bahwa kedua wilayah itu berada di bawah pengaruh kekuasaan Inggris. Sejak awal, kontak perdagangan di perbatasan antara Malaysia dan Singapura sudah berlangsung meskipun itu dilakukan mulai perairan laut yang banyak dilakukan oleh para pedagang kedua wilayah itu. Wilayah perbatasan Malaysia dan Singapura yang dikenal dengan *The Malaysia-Singapore Border* adalah perbatasan internasional. Ini dibentuk dengan adanya Selat Johor atau *Johor Strait*, sehingga air merupakan mata dagangan yang penting ke Singapura dan mempunyai aspek politis. Selat Johor sendiri merupakan tempat bermuaranya bagi sekurang-kurangnya 18 sungai, yaitu sungai Tebrau, sungai Tegget, sungai Johor, sungai Sengkuang, sungai Haji Rahmat, sungai Kempas, sungai Sri Buntan, sungai Abdul Samad, sungai Air Molek, sungai Setulang, sungai Setanggong, sungai Tampoi, sungai Sebulong, sungai Bala, sungai Pandan, sungai Tengkokak, sungai Plentong, dan sungai Senibong.⁹ Johor sebagai negara bagian Malaysia di Semenanjung Malaysia terletak di sebelah utara dari perbatasan, sementara Singapura berada di sebelah selatan dari perbatasan itu.

Semenanjung Malaysia (dulunya yang juga dikenal sebagai Malaya) dan Singapura sebelumnya di masa yang lalu merupakan satu kesatuan wilayah. Akan tetapi, pada abad ke-19 pemerintah kolonial Inggris mengkolonisasi Singapura dan ini menjadi berbeda dengan dari Johor, yang tetap secara *de jure* sebuah negara berdaulat (*a sovereign state*). Ketika Singapura bersatu bersama-sama dengan Malaya, Sabah dan Sarawak membentuk Malaysia pada tahun 1963, wilayah perbatasan itu menjadi batas suatu negara (*a state border*), akan tetapi ketika Singapura melepaskan diri pada tahun 1965, ini menjadi suatu batas internasional kembali. Di bagian utara Selat Singapura dipergunakan bahasa Malaysia khususnya di Selat Tabrau antara Republik Singapura dan daerah Johor di bagian selatan Semenanjung Malaysia. Ini disebrangi oleh kereta api dan jalan atau *road*

⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Straits_of_Johor.

causeway yang menghubungkan Johor Baru, Malaysia, dengan Woodlands, Singapura. Semula di bawah jembatan dapat dilalui oleh boat. Akan tetapi, Singapura bersikukuh menutup lalu lintas air di selat tersebut dengan tembok. Selat itu mempunyai potensi konflik berbagai kepentingan misalnya pada bulan Februari 1942 selama pendudukan Jepang yang berusaha menyerang Singapura kemudian menjadi koloni Inggris. Di bagian timur Singapura terdapat pulau-pulau Ubin dan Tekong Besar dan mempunyai akses perairan yang dalam ke kamp angkatan laut Changi di pantai tenggara Singapura.¹⁰ Namun demikian, apabila dilihat dinamika historis perkembangan hubungan antara kedua negara dapat dilacak kembali berdasarkan data temuan sejarah di masa lalu. Hubungan antara Malaysia dan Singapura dalam wujud dibangunnya *the Johor-Singapore* dilaksanakan pada tahun 1923 yang berlangsung selama empat tahun lamanya. Namun demikian ketika datangnya okupasi Jepang pada tahun 1942, pembangunan mengalami hambatan-hambatan. Saat itu berbagai upaya dilakukan untuk mencegah adanya invasi Singapura. Namun demikian, ini dibangun kembali manakala Jepang menguasai Singapura.

Ketika berlangsungnya pembontakan ras pada tahun 1964, pintu masuk itu ditutup dari 22 sampai 26 Juli 1964. Perlu dicatat, bahwa *the Johor-Singapore Causeway* adalah hubungan daratan yang dibangun pertama kali antara Semenanjung Malaysia dan Singapura. Pembangunan yang kedua yang disebut *Malaysia-Singapore Second Link*, diselesaikan pada tahun 1998. Selat Johor, yang dikenal sebagai *the Johore Strait* memisahkan Negara kota yang makmur Singapura dengan Malaysia yang dianggap sebagai macan “*tiger*” dalam perkembangan ekonomi negeri itu. Ada anggapan bahwa wilayah itu belum pernah independen secara ekstrim, Johor Baru yang merupakan kota besar kedua di Malaysia mengalami perkembangan dan perubahan secara drastis terutama sejak tahun 1980-an ketika pertumbuhan wilayah itu dirangsang secara kuat oleh pertumbuhan dan ekspansi yang terjadi di Singapura. Ribuan orang Malaysia berlayar dari provinsi seperti Zacaria Bin Samion yang bergerak

¹⁰ <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9043887/Johore-Strait>.

ke Johor Baru dengan keluarganya sehingga dapat bekerja di perusahaan konstruksi atau bangunan. Noriah Tahir adalah salah satu contoh seorang diantara 25.000 pekerja Malaysia yang menyeberang ke Singapura setiap harinya. Ia hanya memulainya dengan usaha yang sangat sederhana dalam pabrik elektronik dan ia sekarang sebagai pekerja yang terampil yang bertugas dalam kualitas kontrol seperti dalam *microprocessors* di Malaysia. Dewasa ini sejarah bekas koloni Inggris ini menunjukkan ketergantungan antara satu dengan yang lainnya. Singapura dianggap mengalami sebuah keajaiban dalam perkembangan ekonomi negerinya di Asia Tenggara. Sekarang ini banyak orang Singapura datang ke Johor untuk pergi berbelanja di Malaysia ketika harga-harga barang mengalami penurunan. Malaysia pun membuat keputusan untuk dapat bersaing dengan Singapura dan bahkan telah membangun sebuah pelabuhan container yang baru di Johor. Meskipun ada kecenderungan persaingan yang terjadi antara yang satu dengan yang lainnya, sebuah jembatan perbatasan kedua telah dibangun tahun 1999. Ini sangat bermanfaat dalam memberikan kontribusi bagi percepatan dan pendukung pertukaran barang dan jasa termasuk pula persoalan potensi lalu lintas air di selat ini antara kedua negara itu.¹¹

Lokasi penyeberangan perbatasan terdapat dua bagian di sepanjang perbatasan kedua negara itu. Yang pertama adalah *the Johor-Singapore Causeway* atau lebih dikenal dengan *The Causeway* yang menghubungkan Johor Bahru dan Woodlands di Singapura. Yang kedua adalah sebuah jembatan dikenal dengan nama *the Malaysia-Singapore Second Link* yang menghubungkan Gelang Patah di Johor dan Tuas di Singapura. Sementara itu, pintu masuk, yang dikenal dengan *the Woodlands Checkpoint*, dibangun secara sebagian pada batas tanah urugan yang direklamasi *reclaimed land*, yang dibuka pada tahun 1999 untuk mengakomodasikan pada aliran lalu lintas yang meningkat yang berada dekat beacukai yang lama bertahun-tahun lamanya. Kompleks

¹¹ <http://www.filmakers.com/indivs/Singapore-Malaysia.htm>.

bangunan yang lama itu dibangun pada tahun 1970-an. Yang menghubungkan antara *Woodlands Road* dan *Woodlands Centre Road* ditutup setelah dibukanya pintu masuk yang baru pada bulan Juli 1999, meskipun sepeda motor untuk jalan kecil pedesaan sampai tahun 2001.

Daerah-daerah perbatasan lainnya di Asia Tenggara seringkali muncul rasa pertikaian atau konflik. Sengketa tentang Pedra Branca atau Sengketa Pulau Batu Puteh masing berlangsung hingga sekarang ini. Hal ini menyangkut masalah kepemilikan pulau Pedra Branca yang terletak di Selat Johor (*Johor Strait*) yang telah diklaim oleh keduanya yaitu antara Malaysia dan Singapura. Disharmoni antara Malaysia dan Singapura juga sempat terjadi ketika pada tahun 2003 Malaysia berencana membangun jembatan penyebrangan menggantikan Causeway tetapi negosiasi itu ditolak oleh Singapura. Malaysia bersikeras tetap hendak membangun jembatan pengganti Causeway dengan alasan jembatan itu akan memperlancar pergerakan orang di kedua perbatasan dan akan sangat membantu dalam mengurangi kemacetan di perbatasan Johor Bahru. Namun, karena Singapura tetap tidak menyetujuinya, maka rencana itu dibatalkan pada tahun 2006.¹² Sampai sekarang pun masih ada satu sumber pertentangan antara Malaysia dan Singapura, yaitu di pulau-pulau sebelah tenggara Singapura di mana di sini Singapura menjalankan proyek reklamasi pantai. Proyek reklamasi Singapura ini akan berakibat pada perubahan batas maritim, jalur kapal dan ekologi perairan Malaysia. Reklamasi ini pun dianggap mengancam habitat dan kelestarian Dugong, binatang endemik yang hanya ada di Selat Johor. Selain itu, konflik etnis misalnya tetap berkembang di daerah perbatasan itu (Christie, 1996: 53). Padahal sebetulnya, perpindahan etnis sering terjadi di Asia karena alasan perkawinan, migrasi, perpindahan agama, atau lainnya (lihat misalnya, Barth, 1969; Sellato, 1994).

Berdasarkan atas pemaparan tersebut di atas tampak bahwa terdapat isu yang menarik dari persoalan-persoalan antar perbatasan di kawasan

¹² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Straits_of_Johor.

tersebut. Pertama misalnya bagaimana dapat memahami adanya hubungan antar perbatasan yang berlangsung cukup lama antara Malaysia dan Singapura terutama dengan mengkajinya dari aspek sejarahnya. Kedua, membahas kontak-kontak perdagangan dan pasang surut hubungan yang terjadi antar ke dua wilayah itu terutama ditinjau dari aspek ekonomi, keamanan dan kebudayaannya. Ketiga, mengangkat persoalan-persoalan di atas dalam upaya memahami daya saing usaha dalam kerangka untuk memahami konflik-konflik yang terjadi juga di Indonesia dalam skala nasional dan di kawasan Asia Tenggara dalam skala regional. Dengan demikian, pertanyaan penelitian ini adalah: seberapa jauh masalah-masalah perbatasan antara Malaysia dan Singapura?; Faktor-faktor apa yang menyebabkan terjadinya masalah perbatasan?; Sejauh mana masalah perbatasan itu berimbas pada hubungan kontak-kontak perdagangan di perbatasan?; Seberapa besar manfaat yang dapat diambil Indonesia dalam menyelesaikan masalah-masalah perbatasan dengan negeri lain. Misalnya saja dalam upaya pemahaman terhadap persoalan perbatasan yang terjadi di beberapa negara dewasa ini.

II. Kerangka Teoritis

Persoalan-persoalan perbatasan (*cross border issues*) antar negara akhir-akhir ini semakin mendapat sorotan yang sangat tajam, ketika suatu negara mulai mengklaim suatu wilayah berkaitan dengan interest ekonomi dan politik (*sovereignty*). Dalam hal ini dapat dilihat mengenai nasib dua pulau kecil yang bernama Sipadan dan Ligitan yang dipersengketakan antar Malaysia dan Indonesia. Berdasarkan penilaian Mahkamah Internasional pada akhir tahun 2002 kedua pulau itu dimenangkan oleh Malaysia, dengan alasan bahwa berdasarkan pembangunan fisik yang dilakukan oleh pemerintah Malaysia pihak Mahkamah Internasional berkesimpulan bahwa Malaysia lebih berhak daripada tuntutan Indonesia itu. Sebenarnya persoalan-persoalan perbatasan kadangkala membawa

manfaat positif, namun di pihak lain dapat menimbulkan persoalan negatif. Hal ini tergantung dari bagaimana strategi suatu negara dapat mengatur wilayah daerah yang bersangkutan.

Masih banyak terdapat persoalan selain yang terjadi di kedua pulau itu, yang menurut catatan Departemen Dalam Negeri Republik Indonesia terdapat lebih dari 80 pulau yang akan mengalami nasib yang sama, apabila kasusnya sama seperti Sipadan dan Ligitan itu. Itulah sebabnya mengapa Malaysia mengambil suatu kebijakan tentang persoalan kedua pulau itu tidak diselesaikan di tingkat ASEAN, karena pada kenyataannya Malaysia sendiri masih mempunyai persoalan perbatasan yang sama dengan negara-negara ASEAN lainnya seperti dengan Singapura, Filipina dan negara tetangga lainnya. Apabila persoalan itu diselesaikan di tingkat ASEAN, dapat saja kasus seperti Sipadan dan Ligitan itu mengalami nasib yang lain. Akan tetapi, ketika persoalan itu diselesaikan di Mahkamah Internasional dan hasilnya Sipadan dan Ligitan dimenangkan oleh Malaysia. Melihat kenyataan ini kita mulai menyadari betapa pentingnya pemahaman secara lebih komprehensif tentang persoalan-persoalan pembangunan perbatasan, dalam upaya untuk mempertahankan kedaulatan Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia. Persoalan-persoalan seperti di atas merupakan wacana yang hangat dewasa ini, terutama di kalangan departemen luar negeri yang mempunyai wewenang untuk mengatur bagaimana hubungan yang sifatnya bilateral dan multilateral berjalan baik. Namun demikian, pemahaman yang lebih komprehensif perlu terus ditingkatkan dengan melihat latar belakang sosial, ekonomi, dan budaya masyarakat perbatasan. Penyelesaian persoalan-persoalan perbatasan dalam upaya untuk mempertahankan batas-batas negara yang sah dan yang telah diakui dunia internasional. Untuk memahami persoalan-persoalan perbatasan ini, perlu dikaji persoalan-persoalan perbatasan apa saja yang mencuat ke permukaan yang dapat menimbulkan perselisihan atau konflik antar negara di Asia Tenggara, khususnya dengan memusatkan perhatian pada permasalahan perbatasan yang terjadi di Malaysia dan Singapura. Dalam hal ini penelitian ini akan mengangkat persoalan kontak

perdagangan, penyelundupan (*smuggling*), gerakan atau mobilitas manusia yang ilegal di perbatasan (*human trafficking*), pertikaian etnis antar perbatasan yang sering menyebabkan permasalahan konflik sebagaimana terjadi sekarang di kawasan Asia Tenggara. Persoalan penyelundupan misalnya telah meluas tidak hanya di negara-negara Asia Tenggara namun mempunyai akar sejarah yang panjang di daerah perbatasan lainnya seperti dengan India, Cina, Bangladesh dan juga Australia (Tagliacozzo, 2002: 194).

Dari deskripsi ini dapat dilihat betapa rawannya persoalan-persoalan di daerah perbatasan. Adanya pemerintahan yang benar perhatian terhadap daerah perbatasan, akan menyebabkan daerah-daerah itu tidak dilalaikan oleh pemerintah pusat. Dengan perhatian yang serius dan meningkatkan daerah perbatasan seperti yang dilakukan pemerintah Thailand misalnya niscaya persoalan-persoalan perbatasan seperti hilangnya pulau-pulau kecil tidak akan terulang kembali di masa depan. Dengan demikian penelitian ini diharapkan akan dapat memberikan kontribusi penting bagi pemahaman persoalan perbatasan antar negara dalam upaya menciptakan stabilitas di kawasan di Asia Tenggara pada umumnya dan Indonesia pada khususnya. Adanya kontak-kontak antar daerah perbatasan ini kita dapat melihat adanya intensitas pergerakan manusia yang tidak hanya menyangkut manusia sendiri tetapi juga barang-barang sebagai produk pertanian, dan sekaligus pula kebudayaannya yang sudah tentu berbeda antara negara yang satu dengan negara yang lainnya (Carl Grundy-Warr, 1996). Kadangkala situasi harmoni tercipta karena adanya kondisi agama yang sama namun kadang-kadang muncul persoalan konflik antar mereka. Persoalan-persoalan perbatasan itu menjadi meningkat bahkan tidak jarang menimbulkan konflik sosial yang berkepanjangan sampai terjadinya kekerasan dan pembunuhan.

Karya Riwanto (2002) memusatkan pada persoalan sosial dan ekonomi di daerah perbatasan di Kalimantan Timur dan Sabah. Dinamika di kedua wilayah itu menghadirkan jawaban-jawaban di tingkat lokal pada tantangan-tantangan dan peluang-peluang baru yang berkaitan dengan persoalan reformasi kebijakan di antara kedua negara. Sebagaimana terjadi di daerah perbatasan jawaban-jawaban itu juga merefleksikan peranan krusial di wilayah yang dianggap sebagai tempat pertukaran dan gerakan transnasional ekonomi antara Indonesia dan Malaysia. Berkaitan dengan persoalan konflik (Christie, 1996) misalnya menyebutkan bahwa budaya berpengaruh pula terhadap munculnya konflik. Oleh karena itu, setiap orang yang ingin menangani masalah konflik harus memiliki pengertian mengenai konteks budaya pihak-pihak yang terlibat, khususnya pada kasus dimana pihak-pihak yang berkonflik berasal dari budaya yang berbeda. Ardhana, Yekti Maunati, Sri Sunarti Purwaningsih dan Dundin Zaenuddin (2006) dalam studinya di perbatasan Kalimantan Timur, Indonesia dan Sabah, Malaysia, memusatkan perhatiannya pada persoalan kekerabatan kaitannya dengan hubungan dagang. Pada dasarnya etnis yang menghuni di daerah perbatasan tersebut sama. Negara, baik Malaysia maupun Inonesia, yang membuat mereka menjadi berbeda identitasnya. Akan tetapi, mereka masih tetap melakukan hubungan perdagangan dan ikatan kekerabatan yang tampaknya tetap berpengaruh terhadap hubungan ekonomi ini.

Meskipun sudah ada penelitian-penelitian di daerah perbatasan, tetapi penelitian yang mendalam tentang daerah perbatasan di Asia Tenggara melalui pendekatan interdisipliner belum banyak dilakukan. Oleh karena itu, penelitian tentang kontak-kontak perdagangan yang dilihat dari berbagai perspektif, terutama perspektif sejarah, antropologi, sosiologi, ekonomi dan keamanan akan sangat berguna tidak hanya memberikan kontribusi dalam hal pemahaman tentang konsep-konsep yang terkait tetapi juga sebagai pelajaran bagi pengambil kebijakan pada isu-isu perbatasan.

III. Konsep dan Definisi

Border trade: perdagangan lintas batas yang dikelola belum secara maksimal karena volume barang yang diperdagangkan belum terlalu banyak, namun cenderung terjadi perdagangan yang ilegal.

Kerjasama kawasan regional: kerjasama kolaboratif dalam masalah ekonomi, sosial, budaya, dan pemerintahan di daerah perbatasan.

Kontak-kontak Perdagangan: perdagangan lintas batas yang melibatkan dua negara atau lebih dalam konteks free trade dan bukan *border trade*.

Perbatasan: wilayah yang terdapat garis demarkasi antar dua negara yang didalamnya terkandung makna tidak hanya sebagai ancaman karena masalah keamanan, namun juga sebagai peluang atau kesempatan untuk mengembangkan kemajuan dalam meningkatkan daya saing bagi masyarakat yang mendiami wilayah perbatasan itu.

Perdagangan impor dan ekspor: adalah perdagangan yang dikelola secara profesional dan jarang dilakukan secara ilegal, meskipun dalam beberapa kasus juga terjadi.

IV. Pasang Surut Hubungan Malaysia dan Singapura dalam Konteks Kontak-kontak Perdagangan di Wilayah Perbatasan.

Penting melihat kembali perkembangan yang lebih awal mengenai hubungan antara Malaysia dan Singapura dalam membahas masalah perbatasan antara Malaysia dan Singapura. Kedua negeri itu memiliki hubungan sejarah yang cukup panjang dalam kaitannya dengan dinamika di wilayah regional di Asia Tenggara. Dalam kaitan ini misalnya adanya pertikaian internasional yang masih berlanjut seperti dalam masalah air, reklamasi Singapura yang mempengaruhi lingkungan Johor, masalah pebatasan laut, dan status pulau Batu Putih. Saw Swee-Hock dan

Kesavapany (2006: xv) mencatat bahwa periode antara 1997 hingga 2002 adalah periode di bawah pemeritahan Mahathir yang berada dalam keadaan berbagai tekanan dalam hubungan sejarah Malaysia dan Singapura. Bagaimana dapat dimengerti persoalan-persoalan dalam hubungan kedua negara di masa kini? Bagian dari tulisan ini akan membahas pertama, latar belakang sejarah kedua negara yang mengambil bentuk sebagai sebuah negara modern. Kedua, dilihat aspek eksternal antara perkembangan kedua negara. Ketiga, keberhasilan kedua negara pada akhirnya dalam mengatasi persoalan yang berkembang dalam mengatasi berbagai persoalan dalam aspek sosial, politik, ekonomi dan sebagainya.

Dilihat pula dinamika sejarah kedua negara dengan menguji apa yang terjadi dimana pada awalnya Malaysia dan Singapura sebagai unit negara yang terintegrasi di bawah pengaruh kekuasaan Inggris.¹³ Namun demikian terdapat catatan awal yang menyebutkan bahwa wilayah Johor Malaysia dimana penelitian ini dilakukan pada awalnya dikenal sebagai *land's end*, menunjuk pada lokasi wilayah pinggiran Semenanjung Malaysia (Hanum 2004: 16). Ia menyebutkan bahwa tulisan awal menunjuk pada Johor (Johore) seperti "*Ta-na*" (*Gerini*), "*Jantan*", "*Jantana*",

¹³ Johor atau Johore, daerah yang terletak paling selatan dari daratan Asia dikenal sebagai *land's end* dan sekarang merupakan pusat beacukai yang disebut dengan *the Harvard of Customs*" (Kastam Johor Holistik, Kastam Diraja Malaysia Johor 2004: 11 dan Hanum 2004: 16). Johor sebuah bagian negeri Malaysia dengan penduduk pada tahun 1991 berjumlah 2.074.297 dengan luas sekitar 19.062 km persegi di daerah yang berseberangan dengan Singapura. Sementara itu Singapura terletak 137 km (85 miles) dari sebelah utara katulistiwa di bagian paling selatan Semenanjung Malaysia terletak diantara Samudra Hindia dan Laut Cina Selatan. Singapura terletak diantara garis laut yang luas dunia dan terpisah dari Malaysia oleh Selat Johor dan kepulauan Indonesia dari Selat Singapura. Wilayah Singapura terdiri dari pulau Singapura dan 58 pulau-pulau kecil lebih dari 20 yang dihuni (Rieger, 1999: 313).

“*Santana*”¹⁴. Seperti wilayah-wilayah lainnya di Asia Tenggara, terdapat banyak penduduk di Semenanjung Malaysia dan pulau Singapura yang memiliki hubungan nenek moyang yang pertama bermigrasi antara tahun 2500 dan 1500 B. C. Tidak banyak sumber mengenai proses migrasi yang terjadi itu. Namun demikian, sejarah Singapura misalnya dianggap dimulai pada abad ke-3. Saat itu, catatan Cina yang merujuk Singapura Pu-luo-chung, atau *Island at the end of a peninsula*. Selain itu, disebutkan tentang kerajaan Mongol yang mengirim misi yang disebut Long Yamen (*Dragon's Tooth Strait*) untuk memperoleh gajah pada tahun 1320.

Ini kemungkinan menunjuk pada Keppel Harbour. Seorang pengunjung Cina yang bernama Wang Dayuan, yang datang tahun 1330 menyebut adanya tempat hunian Pancur (Spring) dan melaporkan orang Cina sudah bertempat tinggal di sana. Satu dari sumber yang paling awal menyebut tentang Singapura adalah Temasek (Ismail 2002: 3) atau kota laut, yang ditemukan dalam Nagarakretagama tahun 1365. Nama itu juga ditemukan dalam sumber-sumber Cina sekitar tahun yang hampir sama. Pada akhir abad ke-14, nama dalam bahasa Sanskerta, Singapura (*Lion City*), menjadi biasa dipergunakan. Pada saat itu, Singapura berada dalam jebakan rebutan pengaruh antara Siam (Thailand) dan kerajaan Majapahit yang berbasis di Jawa yang mengontrol Semenanjung Malaysia. Dapat dimengerti bahwa antara abad ke-7 dan ke 13 terdapat perkembangan kerajaan yang pesat, seperti Sriwijaya, yang mana

¹⁴ Ada pendapat yang menyebutkan bahwa nama Johor berasal dari bahasa Hindi yang berarti “sesuatu yang menghubungkan”. Sementara itu sebagaimana dinyatakan oleh Hanum yang mengutip pendapat Winstedt, seorang mantan pegawai kolonial dan sejarawan Inggris yang meneliti dan menulis tentang orang Melayu dan sejarah Malaysia. Ia mengatakan bahwa telah dikenal untuk mengkaitkan nama Wurawari yang merujuk nama Johor yang berarti negara. Wurawari dipercaya berasal dari bahasa Jawa yang berarti air bersih. Dicatat bahwa warisan Johor adalah satu yang mempunyai daya tarik bagi pengunjung (Johor Malaysia: 26).

hegemoninya mencakup Selat Malakka dan perairan sekitarnya (Regnier 1990: 5).¹⁵

Hanum (2004: 18) mencatat bahwa Raja Seri Rama Wira Kerma di Singapura. Sebuah tempat yang dikenal dengan nama *Sayung* dipercaya berada di pinggiran Sungai Johor. Sebuah sumber yang bernama *the Malay Annals* mengkaitkan kisah ini dengan cerita tentang tokoh Badang. Disebutkan bahwa Badang sebelum menjadi seorang pahlawan, bekerja sebagai pekerja membersihkan sebuah tempat yang disebut *Seluang* (berada di dataran tinggi di sekitar Kota Tinggi, dimana terdapat sebuah tempat yang bernama Kampung Lukut (Thukiman 2001: 3). Ada dua tempat yang dikenal Pekan Tua (sekarang lokasinya di Kampung Sungai Telor) dan Kota Kara sebagai tempat penting di Johor antara tahun 1529—1530. Kota ini didirikan oleh Sultan Alauddin Riayat Syah II (Sejarah Pentadbiran Kastam Johor, Percetakan Nasional Malaysia Berhad 2003: 19). Sementara itu, berkaitan dengan wilayah perbatasan Johor, Hanum menyebutkan adanya sebuah prasasti batu yang ditulis dalam bahasa Sanskerta dan Jawa Kuna tertanggal 1600 yang menggambarkan sebuah malapetaka yang terjadi pada masa Wurawari.¹⁶

¹⁵ Menurut *Sejarah Melayu (Malay Annals)*, Singapura dikalahkan oleh serangan Majapahit, tetapi Iskandar Shah atau Parameswara seorang pangeran dari Palembang kemudian membunuh seorang penguasa lokal dan menunjuk dia menjadi penguasa lokal. Menurut sumber Jawa pada tahun 1365 yang ditulis oleh Prapanca menyebutkan bahwa karya sastra penting berkembang pada masa Majaphir seperti pada masa raja Hayam Wuruk (1350-1389) dan memberikan pertanggungjawaban yang mendetail tentang kehidupan di istananya. Singalkt setelah itu ia dipecat oleh kekuatan Jawa (kerajaan Majapahit). Ia melarikan diri ke utara (Muar) di Semenanjung Malaysia dimana ia mendirikan Kesultanan Malakka. <http://inic.utexas.edu/asnic/countries/singapore/Singapore-History.html>.

¹⁶ Tambahan pula, sumber Siam yang berjudul *Kot Mont'ien Ban* yang ditulis tahun 1358 menceritakan tentang raja Wurawari yang menerima mahkota tahun 1435 ketika begeri itu berada di bawah kekuasaan Siam. Nama Johor dikatakan berasal dari bahasa Arab *Jauhar*, yang berarti batu. Sebelum nama itu dikenal secara umum, daerah selatan dari Sungai Muar ke pulau Singapura dikenal sebagai *Ujung Tanah* dalam bahasa Melayu, karena lokasinya di akhir Semenanjung Melayu. Johor mempunyai dua pelabuhan Pasir Gudang dan Pelabuhan Tanjung Pelepas.

Rieger (1999: 313-315) mencatat bahwa peranan besar berkaitan dengan posisi geografis dan strategi pelayanan barang dalam konteks perdagangan di Asia Tenggara sejak kemerdekaannya.

Di ujung bagian selatan Asia Tenggara, Singapura memiliki posisi yang baik bagi pedagang-pedagang Cina untuk memperoleh air dan perlengkapan batubara yang mana kapal-kapal itu berangkat dari Calcutta ke Guangzhou (Kanton). Pembukaan terusan Suez (the Suez Canal) dan penggunaan kapal uap menyebabkan beberapa perubahan dalam rute-rute perdagangan internasional. Transportasi minyak dari Teluk Persia ke Jepang melalui Singapura mempengaruhi perkembangan di wilayah itu. Singapura tetap sebagai sebuah bagian penting kesultanan Malakka dalam perkembangan di kawasan regional itu. Ketika Singapura memasuki sejarah modernnya pada tahun 1819 yaitu ketika seorang Inggris bernama Thomas Stamford Raffles mendirikan sebuah pelabuhan Inggris di Singapura. Kekuasaan Inggris mempengaruhi pertumbuhan dan kepentingan negara itu sebagai pusat perkembangan perdagangan antara India dan Cina pada abad ke-19. Ini berarti bahwa perdagangan antara Inggris dan Cina berkembang dan meluas selama abad itu di Asia Tenggara dan Singapura berkembang menjadi kota pelabuhan yang besar.

V. Aspek Sosial dan Politik di Wilayah Perbatasan

Penting untuk mengkaji perkembangan antara masyarakat sipil Singapura dan kekuasaan Inggris yang terjadi antara tahun 1819 sampai tahun 1963. Tahun 1819, sebuah perusahaan yang bernama *the East India Company* mendirikan sebuah perusahaan dagang di Singapura. Pada saat itu, Singapura terdiri dari sebuah desa kecil yang dihuni oleh ribuan penduduk. Stamford Raffles mendirikan kota modern pada saat itu dan berkembang menjadi pusat komunikasi. Perusahaan dagang yang didasari atas prinsip perdagangan dan imigrasi bebas. Ini menyebabkan perkembangan yang berhasil dan menyebabkan jumlah imigran yang meningkat seperti

ketangan orang Eropa, Cina, Melayu, India dan Arab. Posisi yang setrategis menarik pedagang dari negeri lain untuk memperoleh keuntungan. Pada tahun 1860 jumlah penduduk meningkat menjadi 80.792. Jumlah orang Cina mencapai 61.9 per cen; the Malays and Indians, 13.5 dan 16.05 per cen; yang lainnya adalah orang Eropa sekitar 8.5 persen. Pedagang Cina memainkan peranan penting dalam pertumbuhan pelabuhan baru sebagaimana halnya dengan pengaruh asing lainnya.

Antara tahun 1819 dan 1867 – formasi koloni *the Straits Settlements* tahun 1867—tidak adanya badan legislatif di Singapura. Ini berarti bahwa perdebatan kebijakan terjadi di India atau London. Ini berarti bahwa kebijakan khususnya direncanakan secara khusus untuk India diadopsi oleh pemerintah Inggris di Singapura. Ini dibuat sebuah koloni yang terpisah *Crown Colony* Inggris pada tahun 1946, ketika koloni sebelumnya dari the Straits Settlements dibubarkan. Dua settlements yang lainnya di Semenanjung Melayu yaitu —Penang dan Malacca—menjadi bagian the Union of Malaya, dan pulau kecil lainnya seperti Labuan dimasukkan ke Kalimantan Utara (*North Borneo*). Sementara itu, kepulauan Cocos/Keeling Islands dan Christmas Island dimasukkan ke wilayah administrasi Australia pada tahun 1955 dan 1958.¹⁷ Tahun 1963 tampak perhatian Inggris terhadap Singapura mulai berkurang. Namun melalui keseluruhan periode itu dapat dilihat bagaimana kebijakan publik Inggris berpengaruh

¹⁷ Setelah Jepang menyerah pada tahun 1945, Singapura diambil alih oleh Inggris pada tahun 1945. Itu berarti bahwa Singapura di bawah kontrol pemerintahan militer Inggris sampai Maret 1945. Itu adalah saat ketika wilayah yang disebut Straits Settlement terdiri dari Penang, Malakka dan Malakka dibubarkan. Singapura kemudian menjadi *Crown Colony*, dengan Pulau Christmas dan Pulau Cocos (Keeling), menjadi negara dengan pemerintahan sendiri pada Juni 1959. Perkembangan yang semakin meluas terjadi sejak tahun 1960 terhadap *The Economic Development Board, the Development Bank of Singapore, the International Trading Company* dan investasi asing. Ini dapat dimengerti karena sejak periode sebelumnya antara tahun 1950 sampai 1960-an yang mana pada periode itu perkembangan ekonomi Singapura belum berkembang dengan baik. Dikatakan bahwa prioritas pengembangan ekonomi Singapura berakar dari paham pragmatisme negara. Sementara itu, Malaysia dibentuk tahun 1963 terdiri dari Federasi Malaysia, Singapura, Sarawak dan Kalimantan Utara (sekarang Sabah).

di Singapura. Banyak perkembangan yang terjadi yang menarik dalam kaitannya dengan Singapura. Berkaitan dengan keberhasilan dengan pasar kapital dan nilai tukar asing perdagangan di Singapura dipertimbangkan sebagai pusat finansial di kawasan Asia Tenggara. Sejak tahun 1967 Singapura berhasil menerapkan strategi yang penting. Kemudian muncul persoalan tidak hanya dalam kaitannya dengan impor murah untuk konsumen tetapi juga bahan mentah untuk industri ekspor.

Dalam perbandingan dengan negara-negara Asia Tenggara lainnya, Singapura berhasil mengintegrasikannya dengan investasi asing. Tambahan pula, Singapura memiliki ekonomi politik yang sangat impresif. Ini dapat dilihat dari adanya kenyataan bahwa setelah Jepang, Singapura memiliki pendapatan tertinggi di Asia. Selain itu, dapat dilihat kapasitas Singapura untuk membeli kurensi internasional yang mana Singapura berhasil memainkan peranan penting.

VI. Ke Arah Pembangunan Ekonomi Regional dan Internasional

Singapura adalah salah satu pusat perdagangan internasional paling besar. Perdagangan bagi Singapura memiliki sejarah penting dan telah menjadi sumber pendapatan. Untuk bertahun-tahun telah menjadi importer paling besar di Asia Tenggara, Singapura sebagai pelabuhan bebas dan *entrepôt* yang mengekspor kembali lebih dari setengah dari impor terutama karet, minyak, tekstil, dan timah. Ini juga mengekspor barang-barang industri yang diolah secara lokal seperti komputer, perlengkapan telekomunikasi, produk minyak, plastik, karet, makanan olahan, dan minuman. Negeri itu mengimpor kebanyakan keperluan makanan dan partner perdagangan utamanya adalah Amerika, Malaysia dan Indonesia. Singapura menandatangani perjanjian perdagangan bebas dengan Amerika Serikat pada tahun 2003. Dengan lebih dari 300 perusahaan di daerah kawasan industri, *the Jurong Industrial Estate* adalah kompleks industri paling besar di Asia Tenggara. *The Changi International Airport* yang dibangun

memainkan peranan penting di sekitar perkembangan perdagangan di sekitar wilayah Selat Malakka. Singapura menyediakan minyak dalam jumlah yang besar yang dikenal menjadi salah satu pelabuhan kontainer terbesar di dunia. Perkembangan angkatan laut Inggris Sembawang di Selat Johor sebagai sebuah galangan kapal komersial untuk membantu meningkatkan status Singapura sebagai sebuah pusat perkembangan untuk pembuatan dan renovasi kapal.¹⁸ Tenaga pekerja Singapura terutama dikonsentrasikan dalam bidang pabrik, industri pelayanan dan perdagangan dengan tidak mengabaikan bidang pertanian. Negeri itu menjadi pusat keuangan internasional di era sekarang ini. Namun demikian negeri itu mengalami kelambatan sebagai hasil krisis keuangan Asia tahun 1997–98 dan resesi tahun 2001 tetapi pengangguran dan inflasi tetap rendah. Peningkatan inudstri pabrik dan keuangan menjadi ancaman bagi Singapura bagi perkembangan ekonomi negi itu di masa depan.¹⁹

Dapat digambarkan perkembangan ekonomi negeri itu sebagai berikut: GDP/PPP (diperkirakan pada tahun 2005): \$132.3 milyar; per capita \$29,900; rata-rata pertumbuhan riil: 5.7%; inflasi: 1%; pengangguran: 3.3%; tanah yang subur: 2%; pertanian: karet, kopra, buah-buahan, angrek, sayur sayuran, tenaga kerja: 2.28 juta (perkiraan bulan September 2005); pabrik 18%; konstruksi 6%; transportasi dan komunikasi 11%; fiannsial, bisnis dan pelayanan lainnya 39%; yang lainnya 26% (2003); industry: elektronik, bahan kimia, dan perdagangan *entreport*. Ekspor: \$204.8 milyar. Imports: \$188.3 milyar (perkiraan 2005). Partner perdagangan utama terutama dengan: Malaysia, Amerika Serikat, Hong Kong, Cina, Jepang, Taiwan, Thailand dan Korea Selatan (2004). Program perdagangan yang sangat luas dikembangkan oleh *the Jurong Industrial Estate* dan usaha yang lebih kecil di Kallang Park, Tanjong Rhu, Redhill, Tiong Bahru dan Tanglin Halt. *The Employment Act and the Industrial*

¹⁸ Kurang dari 5% dari tanah Singapura yang dimanfaatkan untuk lapangan pertanian. Selain buah-buahan tropis, dikembangkan juga sayur-sayuran <http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0861099.html>.

¹⁹ <http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0861097.html>.

Relations (Amendment) Act diimplementasikan untuk mempromosikan perdamaian industri dan disiplin diantara kekuatan usaha. *The Economic Development Board* digerakkan pada tahun 1968 kemudian *the Jurong Town Corporation and the Development Bank of Singapore* didirikan pula pada tahun yang sama. Tahun 1970 *the Monetary Authority of Singapore* didirikan untuk merumuskan dan menerapkan kebijakan ekonomi keuangan negeri itu. Kemudian tahun 1979, setelah dua kali krisis minyak, pemerintah memulai program restrukturisasi ekonomi. Ini dicapai dengan kebijakan modifikasi ekonomi, perluasan teknologi dan pendidikan dan memulai program kampanye produktifitas. Demikian juga rumah untuk umum diprioritaskan. Orang Singapura diberikan izin untuk menggunakan tabungan *the Central Provident Fund* untuk membayar apartemen ini.

VII. Perkembangan Malaysia dan Singapura: Tantangan Migrasi

Dengan kemajuan perusahaan kapal tahun 1860 dan dibukanya Terusan Suez pada tahun 1869, Singapura menjadi pelabuhan besar antara Eropa dan Asia Tenggara. Dengan penanaman karet terutama setelah tahun 1870, ini menjadi pusat ekspor terbesar. Sebelum akhir abad ke-19, Singapura mengalami kemakmuran dan perkembangan perdagangan yang meluas antara 1873 dan 1913. Kemakmuran itu telah menarik datangnya para imigran dari berbagai daerah sekitar perkembangan negeri itu. Pada tahun 1860 jumlah penduduk hanya 80.792. Jumlah etnis Cina sekitar 61.9 persen, etnis Melayu dan India 13.5 dan 16.05 persen; yang lainnya orang Eropa sekitar 8.5 persen. Singapura menjadi salah satu neggeri berpenduduk terpadat di dunia yaitu 12.000 people setiap 1 mil atau sekitar 4.600 orang setiap 1 km²). Program pembangunan perkotaan yang luar biasa dimulai tahun 1960-an, yang menggantikan semua perkampungan yang miskin dan kotor dengan unit rumah. Sebagai hasil perencanaan

keluarga dan kebijakan imigrasi yang ketat rata-rata peningkatan penduduk mencapai 1%, turun dari 4.5% dari tahun 1850-an.²⁰

Many of us have ancestors who came from countries like Malaya, Indonesia, India and China. They were foreigners in the land years ago, but decided to sink roots here. This is how we become Singaporeans”.²¹

Meninjau dinamika sejarah di masa lalu, dapat dikatakan bahwa orang Melayu di Johor mengakui bahwa nenek moyang mereka berasal dari Sumatra Barat atau Sulawesi Selatan. Tujuannya adalah untuk memperkuat kelompok etnis Melayu dan hal ini dapat dilihat dengan adanya perhatian besar yang diberikan pemerintah di Kuala Lumpur terhadap masyarakat Melayu di Johor. Dibandingkan dengan dengan kondisi sebelumnya terutama pada perkembangan tahun 1970-an dapat dikatakan terjadi stagnasi. Selanjutnya di tahun berikutnya terdapat perubahan terutama sejak tahun 1980-an. Infrastruktur banyak dibangun dengan melihat hubungan ekonomi dan perdagangan yang dibangun dengan baik di bagian utara dan bagian selatan Malaysia, yang dikenal dengan *the Southern Corridor* (Gerbang Selatan). Tidak hanya terdapat hubungan baik antara Indonesia dan Malaysia, namun kasus pergerakan illegal manusia dan barang ke Malaysia dalam beberapa kasus terjadi meskipun tidak sebanyak dengan yang menerapkan *border trade*, sebagaimana yang terjadi antara wilayah perbatasan di Kalimantan Timur dan Sabah-Malaysia. Dibandingkan dengan wilayah Malaysia dan Indonesia, situasi di perbatasan antara Sabah dan Sarawak dan Kalimantan Timur lebih mudah bagi pekerja illegal karena terdapat banyak jalan tikus. Hingga saat ini diperkirakan terdapat 600.000 pekerja ilegal Indonesia di Malaysia. Angka resmi hanya mencapai 450.000 pekerja Indonesia, yang mana hanya terdapat di empat provinsi di Malaysia termasuk Johor Bahru, Negeri Sembilan, Pahang dan Malaka. Namun demikian dengan adanya kebijakan imigrasi yang kuat, tampak banyak pekerja itu yang dideportasi

²⁰ <http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0861096.html>.

²¹ “Make Foreigners feel welcome”, dalam *The Straits Times*, 7 Januari 2007: 9.

dari negeri itu. Kebanyakan para pekerja Indonesia itu bekerja di perkebunan kelapa sawit. Diperkirakan setiap harinya terdapat antara 100.000 dan 200.000 orang Indonesia yang bekerja ilegal ditangkap. Sekitar jam 2 atau 3 pagi mereka diangkut ke Pasir Gudang dan dideportasi langsung ke Indonesia. Akan tetapi, apa yang terjadi apabila sebagian besar tenaga kerja Indonesia dideportasi maka diprediksi Malaysia akan mengalami kebangkrutan, karena banyaknya sektor di lapangan pekerjaan kasar yang dilakukan oleh orang Indonesia di Malaysia, misalnya di perkebunan kelapa sawit. Dibandingkan dengan mereka itu, tampak pekerja Filipina menempati posisi kerja yang lebih baik di rumah sakit, mall dan tempat lainnya yang memerlukan pekerja memiliki pendidikan yang lebih baik.

Tambahan pula karena adanya kebijakan imigrasi yang kuat ini tidak hanya mengkhawatirkan keberadaan pekerja Indonesia, tetapi juga ada kekhawatiran tentang meningkatnya jumlah orang India yang menyebabkan berdirinya sebuah organisasi India yang disebut Persatuan Pedagang India Islam di Johor. Dari media dapat diketahui bahwa di Kuala Lumpur orang India memprotes terhadap kebijakan pemerintah yang memberikan hak istimewa kepada orang Melayu sebagai Pribumi atau Orang Bumi Putera. Tidak hanya orang India yang datang secara meningkat namun juga orang Banglades, Tamil dari Sri Lanka, orang Jawa, Filipina dan dari daerah Asia Tenggara lainnya. Orang India, Tamil dan Banglades bekerja di sektor pembangunan jalan dan konstruksi bangunan. Sementara itu, orang Cina sebagai salah satu etnis di Malaysia yang mana mereka kebanyakan bergerak di lapangan usaha tekstil dan restoran. Orang Cina mempunyai peran penting dalam mengembangkan bisnis tidak hanya di Singapura tetapi juga di Malaysia. Sementara orang Melayu sebagai *the ruling-class* tampak kebanyakan dari mereka berada di posisi birokrasi.

Ini adalah berbeda dengan situasi perbatasan di negara yang wilayah perbatasannya belum berkembang dengan baik, terutama dalam kaitannya

dengan hubungan yang tidak seimbang misalnya antara Thailand dan Malaysia. Demikian juga halnya antara Malaysia dan Kalimantan Timur dimana hubungan perdagangan dilakukan melalui hubungan antar etnis. Apa yang dapat dipelajari dari pengalaman antara Malaysia dan Singapura yaitu terpisah dari adanya lokasi geografi itu, dicoba untuk melihat hubungan di masa lalu yang telah terjalin sebagai negara yang berada di bawah naungan *the Commonwealth States*. Dengan kata lain, kedua negara merupakan warisan dari periode imperialisme Inggris yang memiliki administrasi kepabeanaan yang baik melalui periode yang sangat panjang. Regnier (1990) berpendapat bahwa hubungan mutual perdagangan dikonsentrasikan di pantai barat Semenanjung terpisah dari Sarawak dan Sabah (Regnier 1990: 41).

VIII. Malaysia dan Singapura di Era Persaingan Global

Dibandingkan dengan negara lainnya di perbatasan Asia Tenggara dapat dikatakan bahwa wilayah perbatasan antara Malaysia dan Singapura dikelola secara modern dan profesional. Sebagaimana dapat disaksikan di perbatasan di Johor, Malaysia dan Woodlands di Singapura, yang mana Singapura sebagai "*a major crossroads*" dari perdagangan internasional telah memiliki tempat strategis dalam kaitannya dengan aktifitas ekonomi dan perdagangan (Ardhana, 2007). Dalam kaitan ini, Malaysia secara kuat tergantung dengan perdagangan eksternalnya terutama dengan Singapura. Kedua negara memiliki pengalaman sejarah yang sama di masa lalu, yang dikoloni oleh Inggris lebih dari 140 tahun dalam pengalaman sejarah yang sama. Saat itu, kedua masyarakat dari kedua negeri itu mudah berkunjung ke Singapura dan tidak membutuhkan sebuah passpor karena mereka masih memiliki kewarganegaraan yang sama. Menurut perspektif lokal di Johor jumlah orang Melayu lebih besar daripada jumlah orang Cina. Banyak jalan yang dapat ditempuh dari Johor menyeberang ke laut menuju ke Singapura. Namun demikian, ini tidak dapat berlanjut

terutama setelah pemisahan politik yang terjadi tahun 1965 (Regnier, 1990: 27). Setelah tahun 1967, terdapat perubahan terutama setelah pemisahan Malaysia dan Singapura. Dampak pemisahan ini adalah tidak hanya warga Malaysia dan Singapura yang memutuhkan untuk memiliki passpor, tetapi juga bagi orang Indonesia yang tinggal di Malaysia perlu memiliki passpor atau kartu identitas lainnya ((IC) atau *Surat Aturan Perjalanan*. Pada awalnya biaya untuk memiliki sebuah passpor sebesar RM 50, kemudian naik menjadi RM 150. Sejak tahun 2007, orang Indonesian harus mempunyai sebuah passpor internasional sebagai ganti *Surat Aturan Perjalanan* (SAP) dan biayanya sebesar RM 300.

Ketika riset lapangan dilaksanakan di Johor Bahru, Malaysia dan Woodlans, Singapura bulan Juni 2008, telah diwawancarai beberapa orang lokal dan dapat dilihat bagaimana aktifitas perdagangan dan kehidupan mereka sehari-hari di wilayah perbatasan antara Malaysia dan Singapura. Sepanjang perjalanan dari Kuala Lumpur ke Johor Bahru dapat disaksikan adanya sarana infrastruktur dan jalan tol, dimana di sepanjang jalan ditanami tanaman kelapa sawit yang membuat hijau wilayah sekitarnya. Ini memerlukan waktu sekitar empat jam dengan menumpang bus. Sementara itu, jalan mulai dari jembatan di Malaysia ke perbatasan Singapura di Woodland. Sejak tahun 1990-an, masyarakat lokal di Johor bekerjasama sama dengan pemerintah pusat di Kuala Lumpur dalam pembangunan infrastruktur untuk pembangunan ekonomi. Pembangunan itu dikonsentrasikan di bagian selatan Johor dalam kaitannya dengan pembangunan daerah-daerah pantai di Teluk Danga (Danga Bay), peningkatan Sanai Airport, pembangunan Pelabuhan Tanjung Pelepas (PTP) dan Pasir Gudang dan pembangunan kompleks beacukai *integrated customs-complex*, *Custom Immigration Quarantine* (CIQ) di Tanjung Putri, yang dikenal dengan Wilayah Pembangunan Iskandar (WPI) atau Iskandar Development Region (IDR).

Peningkatan kontribusi sektor pelayanan di Malaysia sebagai contohnya berjalan seirama dengan pertumbuhan ekonomi Malaysia dengan

mendukung konsep *Moving up the Value Chain*. Ini dimungkinkan dengan mendukung semangat kompetitif diantara negar yang menyediakan upah buruh yang rendah seperti Cina, Vietnam dan Indonesia. Kebijakan ini secara kuat mengarah pada sektor kapital yang intensif yang mana sektor pelayanan ini sebagai dasar fundamental transformasi ekonomi di Malaysia. Inflasi di Malaysia sangat rendah yaitu sekitar 2% tahun 2007. Ini disebabkan denan kontrol yang kuat masalah harga dan penyediaan kebutuhan dasar yang didasari pada “Price Control Act 1946 and Supplies Control Act 1961”. Kenaikan harga minyak yang terjadi tahun pada tanggal 5 Juni 2008, yang diumumkan oleh Perdana Menteri Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, mencapai harga US \$135 (RM 430). (1 Sing \$= RM. 2.40). Di Malaysia harga minyak telah meningkat 78 cent dan menyebabkan harga untuk 1 liter RM 2,70/ liter dibandingkan dengan RM 1,92/ liter pada saat sebelumnya. Harga untuk minyak diesel adalah RM 2.85 per liter yang meningkat RM 1, dan itu sebelumnya adalah hanya RM 1.58/ liter. Sementara di Singapura harga minya mencapai RM 5.20 per liter, diesel RM 4.22 per liter. Di Thailand harga minyak RM 3.90 per liter, dan RM 3.50 per liter untuk diesel, di India untuk minyak RM 4 dan untuk diesel RM 2.74 per liter.²² Sulit bagi pemerintah untuk menghindari persoalan inflasi. Untuk ini pemerintah Malaysia telah menyetujui subsidi (*in cash*) RM 625 setiap tahunnya, untuk kendaraan yang mesinnya 2000cc dan juga untuk kendaraan truk, jeeps, sampai 2.500cc dan kendaraan motor roda dua 250cc pajak akan dikurangi hingga RM 50. Ini adalah cara yang ditempuh untuk meminimkan beban Malaysia berkaitan dengan kenaikan harga minyak.²³

Bahkan sekarang, pergerakan manusia dan barang sebagaimana dapat disaksikan dalam kehidupan setiap hari di wilayah perbatasan. Seberapa jauh hubungan antara Malaysia dan Singapore dalam kaitannya dengan

²² Lihat: Tan Sri Ramon Navaratnam, “Kenaikan Harga Petrol, diesel: Sukar Bendung Inflasi”, dalam *Harian Metro*, Jumat 6 Juni 2008.

²³ Lihat: “Susulan Kenaikan harga petrol, diesel: Kadar Baru Cukai Jalan Ogos”, dalam *Harian Metro*, Jumat 6 Juni 2008.

kontak perdagangan dapat dideskripsikan sebagai berikut. Wilayah perbatasan dibuka untuk 24 jam setiap harinya. Berkaitan dengan situasi perbatasan ini yang cukup berbeda dengan wilayah perbatasan antara Vietnam dan Laos sebagai contohnya dibuka pada pukul 07.00 sampai 17.00 setiap harinya. Untuk prbatasn wilayah Malaysia (Johor Bahru) dan Singapura (Woodlands) ada kemungkinan untuk kedua masyarakat bekerja di Singapura di Malaysia atau orang Malaysia yang tinggal di Singapura.

IX. Johor Bahru dan Woodlands: Tempat Terciptanya “Surga” Bagi Pencari Kerja

Malaysia dan Singapura memiliki kebijakan yang sama tentang bagaimana wilayah perbatasan sebaiknya dikelola. Dapat dikatakan bahwa orang Malaysia dan Singapura yang memiliki keragaman etnis. Dalam kaitannya dengan kelompok etnis di negeri itu, mereka memilki kelompok etnis yang sama. Penduduk di Malaysia pada saat sekarang berjumlah 27.1 juta terdiri dari etnis Melayu (66.1%), Cina (25.3%), India (7.4%) dan yang lainnya (1.2%). 32.2% dari mereka berusia di bawah 15 tahun, 63.4% adalah 15-64 tahun dan 4.4% dari mereka di atas 65 tahun. Di Johor misalnya jumlah orang Melayu 40%, Cina 30% dan India 10%, dan yang lainnya 20%. Dapat dikatakan bahwa orang Melayu membentuk mayoritas dan etnis utama adalah Cina dan India. Ada kekhawatiran di Malaysia tentang meningkatnya jumlah orang Cina dan India di negeri itu. Bahkan pemerintah Malaysi sedikit khawatir tentang meningkatnya jumlah orang Cina sebagaimana yang terjadi di Penang. Namun demikian, pemerintah Malaysia tidak mendukung perkembangan ekonomi, sosial dan budaya Cina. Ini dapat dilihat dari meningkatnya jumlah sekolah Cina di Johor. Di masa lalu, sekolah Cina bahkan ditutup bagi orang Melayu. Namun demikian, perkembangan masa kini menunjukkan bahwa orang Melayu yang menggunakan jilbab atau *bertudung* ada yang bersekolah

di sekolah Cina. Ini dapat dilihat bagaimana ide tentang *Malaysia is truly Asia* dapat diwujudkan dalam masyarakat yang multi kultural.

Umumnya dapat dikatakan bahwa Malaysia mampu berkokurensi dengan perkembangan ekonomi dalam kaitannya dengan persoalan yang mendasar yang meskipun dipengaruhi oleh krisis di Amerika Serikat sebagaimana terjadi akhir-akhir ini. Johor sebagai contohnya, sebagai kota terbesar kedua di Malaysia memiliki perkembangan ekonomi yang baik di masa depan. Dalam konteks perdagangan dan perkembangan ekonomi, Johor memang memiliki tempat yang strategis. Terdapat sekitar 11 pintu masuk yaitu Johor Causeway, Johor Bahru Railway Station, Tanjung Puteri, Johor Bahru International Ferry Terminal, Pasir Gudang Ferry Terminal, 2nd Link, Sultan Ismail Airport, Kukup Fery terminal, Muar Ferry Terminal, Tanjung Belungkor Ferry Terminal, dan Tanjung Pengelih Ferry Terminal.

Ini dapat dilihat pada perkembangan industri misalnya bisnis kontainer modern. Daerah ini memiliki intensitas bisnis yang tinggi dan infrastruktur yang modern dalam kaitannya dengan aspek fisik dan non fisik yang memainkan peranan besar dalam kerjasama kolaboratif tidak hanya dalam kaitannya dengan cara-cara tradisional tetapi juga dengan yang modern. Bank dan penukar uang atau *authorized money-changers* sebagaimana dengan hotel yang modern lainnya menerima kurensi asing untuk *bill settlement*. Visa, Master, American Express, diners, dan yang lainnya. Intensitas pergerakan manusia dan barang cukup tinggi yang mana wilayah perbatasan antara Malaysia dan Singapore terletak di wilayah perbatatan langsung berhubungan dengan sebuah jembatan yang panjangnya sekitar 500 m. Jembatan itu dibangun dengan baik yang memisahkan tiga jalur kendaraan roda dua, mobil dan bus. Sebuah paspor yang berlaku tentang dokumen perjalanan berlaku setidaknya enam bulan.

Meskipun Malaysia dan Singapura memiliki etnis yang sama ini tidaklah berarti bahwa etnis itu mempunyai peranan penting dalam kaitannya

dengan kontak-kontak perdagangan di perbatasan antara Malaysia dan Singapura seperti dalam pengertian perdagangan di perbatasan atau *border trade* yang terjadi antara Sabah atau Sarawak dengan wilayah perbatasan di Kalimantan Timur. Akan tetapi, hubungan kontak perdagangan di perbatasan antara Malaysia dan Singapura itu dikelola secara modern dan profesional. Oleh karena itu, hubungan ekonomi itu dikelola secara profesional. Kemajuan yang dicapai ini menjadi daya tarik seperti dapat dilihat di perbatasan antara Malaysia dan Singapura yaitu di Johor. Banyaknya pencari kerja yang datang ke wilayah ini membuktikan bahwa wilayah ini memberikan masa depan yang lebih baik bagi pencari kerja di sekitar wilayah itu. Namun demikian tidaklah mengherankan apabila yang datang itu tidak hanya pencari kerja yang legal namun juga ilegal yang dikenal dengan *Pendatang Tanpa Izin* (PATI). Di saat Malaysia berada di bawah pemerintahan Mahathir Mohammad tampak rejim ini mencegah secara kuat persoalan 3D yaitu “*difficult, dirty and dangerous*”. Di bawah pemerintahannya pula semangat anti-Singapore propaganda yang sebelumnya mulai dinetralkan. Dapat dikatakan bahwa sejak tahun 1985, Menteri Perdagangan dan Industri Mr. Razaleigh menyatakan bahwa Malaysia tidak mempunyai tujuan untuk mengurangi expornya yang melalui Singapura. Itu menunjukkan bahwa upaya mendukung secara langsung dengan dunia luar menjadi semakin nyata, apabila dibuktikan dengan adanya hubungan kontak perdagangan yang dapat dibuktikan secara ekonomi adalah rasional. Oleh karena itu, kedua negara dapat dipandang sebagai sebuah pasar. Sementara orang Malaysia tetap pula mengupayakan pasar utama untuk reekspor barang, perlengkapan transportasi, barang-barang olahan, produk kimia yang mana ekspor domestik dari energi transoformasi ditambahkan pula. Dapat dikatakan bahwa pertukaran bilateral menunjukkan “*a modest deficit in Malaysia's favor*” (Regnier, 1990: 42—43). Peranan investor penting untuk meningkatkan perkembangan ekonomi dan perdagangan di Kuala Lumpur dan Singapura. Tambahan pula, pemerintah mengundang juga orang Jawa atau seniman Bali untuk mengembangkan agar dapat menarik jumlah kunjungan wisatawan ke Malaysia dan Singapura. Oleh karena

itu, penting untuk kedua negara untuk mempertahankan suasana damai dan aman. Tidaklah mengejutkan bahwa kedua pemerintahan mempercayai persoalan keamanan, infrastruktur yang baik dan pekerja yang dididik secara berpendidikan penting dalam aspek untuk mendukung hubungan ekonomi dan perdagangan antar dua negara.

Sektor bangunan juga berkembang dan mencapai 4.6% setelah terjadinya pertumbuhan negatif tahun 2005 dan 2006 dan itu adalah 1.8% dan -0.5%. Pertumbuhan positif dipengaruhi dengan adanya investment dari *foreign consortium capital* untuk berbagai proyek di wilayah corridors perbatasan Malaysia dengan Singapura khususnya di sekitar Iskandar Development Region. Namun demikian, berkaitan dengan sektor bangunan gedung dapat dikatakan bahwa baik orang Malaysia dan orang Singapura merasa malu melakukan pekerjaan kasar di sektor bangunan itu. Porsi pekerjaan bagi orang Malaysia pada umumnya di restoran, administrasi dan birokrasi. Sementara bagi orang Singapura melakukan kegiatan di sektor bisnis, perbankan, investasi (wawancara dengan sopir taxi di Johor Bahru pada tanggal 9 Juni 2008). Situasi ini memberikan kesempatan bagi kelompok etnis yang lainnya untuk memperoleh kesempatan di sektor yang tidak diminati seperti dalam pembuatan gedung dan jalan seperti tenaga kerja dari Indonesia. Seperti halnya dengan norang Bangladesh, orang Indonesia memiliki kesan yang tidak baik khususnya sebagai tenaga kerja yang ilegal. Kebanyakan tenaga kerja yang ilegal ini tidak memiliki exit permit dan karena itu mereka melaporkan ke konsulatnya masing-masing, seperti tenaga kerja ilegal Indonesia yang melapor ke *the General Consulate of Indonesia (the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia)* di Johor Bahru.

Tambahan pula, dalam beberapa kasus selain pergerakan manusia yang ilegal terdapat pergerakan barang yang ilegal yaitu 255 kasus ditemukan oleh Bahagian Pencegahan Kastam Diraja Malaysia (KDRM), beacukai di Johor yang berjumlah sekitar RM 32.4 juta. Jumlah ini telah menurun dari 263 kasus dengan jumlahnya RM 30.6 juta. Kasus yang pertama

tentang penyelundupan rokok yaitu 75 kasus dan jumlahnya RM 5.8 juta. Kasus yang kedua berkaitan dengan obat terlarang mencapai 26 kasus dengan jumlah RM 1.4 juta, 5 kasus tentang kendaraan selundupan dengan jumlah RM 332.265, 3 kasus berkaitan tentang barang dari besi dengan jumlah RM 10.299, mercon dan senjata api RM 481.625, bahan kertas mencapai RM RM 61.100, alat telephone sekitar RM 178.871 dan alat optik RM 48.907. Most of the criminal actions due to the break of law on Akta Kastam 1967. Dalam jangka lima bulan terdapat 381 kasus dengan jumlah mencapai RM 943.093. Tiga kasus telah diambil alih oleh Mahkamah tahun 2008, dibandingkan dengan 10 kasus pada bulan yang sama tahun 2007.²⁴ Tidak hanya terjadi dengan orang Indonesia yang memiliki kasus ilegal sebagaimana halnya disebutkan di atas dengan penyelundupan rokok. Ada juga kasus yang dilakukan oleh orang Singapura yang memiliki masalah berkaitan dengan produk makanan ilegal yang berjumlah RM 113.020. Selain orang Indonesia, Singapura, terdapat orang Bangladesh, atau Tamil yang bekerja di sektor bangunan, dalam perkebunan atau pekerja buruh. Untuk mengupayakan persaingan yang sehat di Malaysia dan Singapura, diundanglah pula investor dari Timur Tengah untuk beinvestasi di negeri itu.

X. Pergerakan Manusia dan Barang di Wilayah Perbatasan

Pemerintah Malaysia telah berhasil menupayakan infrastruktur yang baik sehingga lalu lintas perdagangan dan ekonomi mengalir secara sehat dari bagian selatan ke bagian utara Malaysia. Regnier (1990: 43) mencatat dari statistik perdagangan menunjukkan bahwa Malaysia, meskipun pernyataan resmi berbalikan dengan kondisi lima belas tahun kemudian telah muncul upaya memodernkan infrastruktur. Dibandingkan dengan situasi di sebelah Malaysia, dapat dikatakan bahwa di sisi negeri Singapura telah dibangun secara modern. Sementara dari sisi Malaysia pemandangan

²⁴ Lihat: "Kastam Johor selesai 255 kes Seludup", dalam *Harian Metro*, Jumat 6 Juni 2008.

di Singapura ini dapat dilihat jelas dengan adanya bangunan tinggi sebagai pintu masuk yang disebut dengan Woodlands, yang mana orang menyeberang ke Singapura harus masuk melalui pintu itu. Pekerja di kedua belah pihak dengan ramah telah membantu mengenai mekanisme masuk di wilayah perbatasan. Mekanisme kebijakan ini bekerja dengan baik di perbatasan Malaysia dan Singapura. Apa yang penting untuk dicatat adalah bahwa mereka mempunyai komitmen dan tanggung jawab atas pekerjaannya. Sebagai akibatnya, tidaklah mengejutkan bahwa beberapa dari mereka masih bekerja dan bahkan untuk bertahun-tahun untuk menunjukkan performance yang reputasi yang baik. Akan tetapi kenyataannya, beberapa mereka ada pula yang mempunyai skandal mereka dipindahkan untuk enam bulan sebagai ganjaran. Oleh karena itu, pemerintah Malaysia secara konsisten menerapkan peraturan dan regulasi.

Statistik Perdagangan Top 10 Malaysia Tahun 2007²⁵

1. Partner Perdagangan Top 10 Malaysia

Negara	2007 (RM Milyar)	%
Amerika Serikat	149.21	13.4
Singapura	146.46	13.2
Jepang	120.78	10.9
Cina	117.94	10.6
Thailand	56.99	5.1
Korea	47.97	4.3
Taiwan	45.17	4.1
Hong Kong	42.65	3.8
Indonesia	39.13	3.5
Jerman	38.25	3.4
Lainnya	305.42	27.5
Jumlah Perdagangan	1109.97	100.0

²⁵[http://www.matrade.gov.my/cms/content.jsp?id=com.tms.cms.article.Article_hide_Malaysia'a%20 Top%2010%20Trade%20Statistics%20for%20 the%20Year%202007](http://www.matrade.gov.my/cms/content.jsp?id=com.tms.cms.article.Article_hide_Malaysia%20Top%2010%20Trade%20Statistics%20for%20the%20Year%202007)

2. Top 10 Pasar Expor Malaysia

Negara	2007 (RM Milyar)	%
Amerika Serikat	94.52	15.6
Singapura	88.51	14.6
Jepang	55.24	9.1
Cina,	53.04	8.8
Thailand	29.98	5.0
Hong Kong	27.97	4.6
Belanda	23.60	3.9
Korea	23.03	3.8
Australia	20.40	3.4
India	20.20	3.3
Lainnya	168.66	27.9
Jumlah Ekspor	605.15	100.0

Dari sudut persepsi masyarakat lokal dapat dikatakan bahwa pemerintah telah berhasil mengupayakan tentang jumlah yang semakin meningkat mengenai jumlah kunjungan antar kedua negara itu. Ini bisa dilihat dari jumlah kunjungan ke Johor dari Singapura berkaitan dengan alasan ekonomi dan juga untuk orang Johor yang pergi ke Singapura untuk shopping. Dapat dikatakan semakin berkembangnya designer dalam sektor perdagangan, produksi ikan segar, dan toko kerajinan. Dikenal pula semakin berkembangnya produk minyak lokal dari tanaman kelapa sawit. Selain itu juga dihasilkan nanas, karet alam, kayu dan produksi lokal lainnya.

Perdagangan Singapura dengan Malaysia²⁶

(Nilai dalam S\$ Ribuan)

Perdagangan	2005	2006	2007
Jumlah	96.138.894	105.852.962	109.908.416
Impor	45.526.605	49.480.818	51.808.830
Expор	50.612.289	56.372.144	58.099.586
Ekspor Domesrtik	20.478.036	22.742.111	23.129.929
Re-Expор	30.134.252	33.630.033	34.969.657

Sumber: IE Singapore

Orang Singapura datang setiap akhir minggu untuk pergi berbelanja memenuhi kebutuhan sehari-harinya di Johor, Malaysia. Namun demikian, dibandingkan dengan Indonesia, tampak Malaysian dan Singapura masih kurang dalam hal kreasi kerajinan. Dapat dikatakan bahwa Malaysia dan Singapura yang kebanyakan diantara mereka sebagai turis memiliki cara yang mudah untuk berkunjung. Mereka biasanya membutuhkan tiga jam untuk datang dan pergi kembali dari Singapura ke Johor Malaysia. Bahkan dari *the Southern Corridor* dapat ditempuh dengan berjalan kaki menyeberang ke Woodlands dengan membutuhkan waktu setengah jam. Oleh karena itu, setiap harinya jalur ini sangat ramai. Selain, the Southern Corridor atau *Gerbang Selatan* terdapat juga jembatan yang lainnya yang menghubungkan Malaysia dan Singapura adalah yang dikenal dengan *the Secondlink*. Jembatan ini tidaklah macet dibandingkan dengan *the Southern Corridor*. Tambahan pula, terdapat juga rute alternatif

²⁶http://www.iesingapore.gov.sg/wps/portal!/ut/p/kcxm1/04_Sj9SPykssy0xPLMnMz0vMOY_QjzKLt4z3cQLJmMUbxDvqRyILAFloIgbxxqZwEV-P_NxU_SB9b_0A_YLc0NCIckdFAJQyo70!!delta/base64xm1/L0lDU0IKQ1RPN29na21BISEvb0VvUUFBSVFnakZJQUFRaENFSVFqR0VBLzRKRmIDbzBladFpY29uUVZHaGQtc0IRIS83XzlfMTM2LzM!/?WCM_PORTLET=PC_7_9_136_WCM&WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/wps/wcm/connect/My+Portal/Venturing+Overseas/Market+Information/South+East+Asia/Malaysia/About+Malaysia/Bilateral+Trade

lainnya yaitu dari Tanjung Pelepas, dengan panjang sekitar 30 km. Perkembangan yang cepat di Tanjung Pelepas dan tempat lainnya seperti Pasir Gudang menyebabkan Johor memiliki intensitas yang tinggi dalam konteks pertumbuhan ekonomi. Di masa lalu, Malaysia melarang ekspor kayu melalui Singapura dan mendesak lingkaran bisnis lokal menggunakan instalasi baru di pelabuhan Pasir Gudang di selatan Johor sebagai pengganti Singapura. Namun demikian, reaksinya adalah ada gerakan protes dari *the Malay Timber Industry Board* di Kuala Lumpur (Regnier, 1990: 43). Berkaitan dengan jarak yang panjang menyebabkan banyak orang tidak mengunjungi tempat ini sebagaimana orang Cina menyebutkan bahwa tempat ini tidak memberikan keberuntungan, rejeki atau *hokkies*. Oleh karena itu, kendaraan yang berasal dari Singapura tidak diizinkan membeli minyak di Johor, karena pemerintah pusat di Kuala Lumpur mensubsidi masyarakat di Johor sekitar RM 40 milyar sejak meningkatnya harga minyak. Kendaraan itu dibolehkan membeli minyak, apabila jaraknya sekitar 50 km jauhnya dari kota Johor. Ini sudah tentu menjadi masalah tidak hanya bagi kendaraan yang dimiliki oleh orang Singapura, tetapi juga bagi orang Malaysia yang juga memiliki kendaraan yang berasal dari Singapura, dimana mereka bertempat tinggal di Johor Bahru dan tempat sekitarnya.

Meskipun terjadi kenaikan harga minyak, tetapi tampaknya ini mempengaruhi aktifitas ekonomi di daerah itu. Itulah sebabnya kebijakan itu tampaknya mulai dicabut yang tidak hanya merugikan bagi orang Malaysia tetapi juga bagi orang Singapura.²⁷ Perkembangan itu berlanjut meskipun pemerintah memberi peringatan untuk menggunakan anggaran secara hati-hati. Johor, misalnya adalah sebuah wilayah yang memiliki makna ideal bagi pengembangan rapat yang bertaraf internasional, kawasan wisaya, konferensi, pameran dan sebagainya ketika ini menjadi kawasan industri, pengolahan dan sebagainya. Selain itu, Johor juga memiliki struktur fisik, perlengkapan, transportasi barang dan pelayanan yang mendukung lainnya. Oleh karena itu dapat dilihat fasilitas akomodasi

²⁷ "Elak kesan Rantaian harga Minyak Naik", dalam *Harian Metro*, Jumat 6 Juni 2008.

yang mendukung dan daftar panjang tentang perusahaan travel atau biro perjalanan dan sebagainya. Dapat disaksikan adanya dimana orang Singapura yang menikmati berbelanja di di Malaysia seperti di Kotaraya Mall, the Zon, Jasco Mall, Meldrum Street, City Square, Tebrau sebagai kawasan industri dan tempat lainnya.

Regnier (1990) menyatakan bahwa orang Malaysia yang mengeksport ke Jepang via Singapura, mempertimbangkan Jepang sebagai tujuan akhir dari penjualan barang itu. Di sisi yang lain, Singapura memperhitungkan mereka sebagai impor dari Malaysia dan sebagai ekspor (dire-eksport kembali sejak tahun 1976) ke Jepang. Sebaliknya, Malaysia mengelompokkan semua semua impornya dengan negara asal barang ituapakah atau tidak telah dilalui melalui Singapura. Dikatakan bahwa sejak tahun 1987 re-eksport itu dinyatakan oleh Singapura termasuk 60% dari total ekspor ke Malaysia. Oleh karena itu, tidaklah mengejutkan bahwa angka keseluruhan Singapura untuk perdagangan bilateral dari kedua negara berbeda dari yang berasal dari Kuala Lumpur sebanyak 50%. Regnier mencatat juga bahwa Malaysia menghadirkan 19% dari perdagangan eksternal Singapura tahun 1970, namun 10 tahun kemudian tahun 1980 ini mengalami penurunan hingga 13.5%, naik 16% pada tahun 1984 tetapi turun lagi 14% tahun 1987 (Regnier, 1990: 41).

Tambahan pula, posisi Johor sebagai pintu utama untuk pendatang dari Indonesia ke Malaysia, menyebabkan perkembangan ekonomi yang cepat di kawasan itu. Ini dapat dilihat dari kebijakan pemerintah Malaysia yang secara kuat mengarah pada sektor modal intensif yang mana sektor pelayanan menjadi dasar fundamental transformasi ekonomi di Malaysia. Sebagai contohnya beberapa industri pengolahan menggunakan tenaga kerja murah (*labor intensive*) diarahkan pada relokasi untuk beberapa negara yang mempunyai tenaga kerja yang lebih murah. Namun demikian, aktifitas yang memiliki intensitas surplus yang lebih tinggi seperti design, programming, finance, dan investor tetap tinggal di Malaysia.²⁸

²⁸ Lihat: Kedutaan Besar Republik Indonesia, *Laporan Tahunan 2007*. Kuala Lumpur: Bidang Perdagangan, 2007.

XI. Konsep “Sijori”: Dampaknya Terhadap Perkembangan Perdagangan dan Ekonomi di Wilayah Perbatasan

Terdapat sejumlah peningkatan investasi tidak hanya di Singapura tetapi juga di Malaysia. Bahkan dikatakan, akan dibangun sebuah konsep *Sijori* (Singapore, Johor dan Riau dalam konteks dengan perkembangan Kepulauan Riau) sebagai *Golden Triangle* pusat pertumbuhan di wilayah itu. Dalam kaitan ini perkembangan WIP sebagai koridor bagian selatan sangat signifikan dalam pengembangan kawasan itu. WIP terletak di depan perbatasan Singapura yang memiliki luas 2.127 km². Daerah ini mencakup the Triangle Area yaitu the Airport Senai di sebelah utara, Pelabuhan Tanjung Pelepas di barat, Pelabuhan Pasir Gudang di timur. Dalam mengelola WIP telah dibentuk sebuah badan disebut Iskandar Regional Development Authority (IRDA). Ketuanya adalah Perdana Menteri dan Menteri Besar (*Chief of Ministry*, Gubernur). Ini berarti Johor secara otomatis ketua dan wakil ketua IRDA. Diperkirakan dalam lima tahun yang akan datang perkembangan WPI, yang mencapai 2.5 kali dari luas daratan Singapura. Ini menjadi target untuk menarik investasi asing sekitar RM 47 milyar. Dari tahun 2011 sampai 2025 ini akan mencapai target investasi sekitar RM 335 milyar. Lebih dari 20 tahun proyek WPI akan menciptakan 800.000 sampai 1000.000 lapangan pekerjaan baru khususnya dalam kaitannya dengan pembangunan WPI.²⁹ Malaysia memiliki cukup devisa yaitu sekitar US \$ 101.3 milyar pada tahun 2007. Itu adalah mencukupi untuk menutupi 9.2 impor bulanan dan nilainya sama dengan 6.5 untuk membayar hutang dalam waktu yang singkat.³⁰

Keberhasilan itu tampaknya didasari pada perencanaan beberapa proyek dalam kaitannya dengan program Ninth Malaysia Plan dan perkembangan koridor ekonomi di Malaysia termasuk Iskandar Development Region,

²⁹ Lihat: Konsulat Jenderal Republik Indonesia di Johor Bahru, *Keterangan Dasar Wilayah Kerja*, 2007: 4.

³⁰ Lihat: Kedutaan Besar Republik Indonesia, *Laporan Tahunan 2007*. Kuala Lumpur: Bidang Perdagangan, 2007.

Northern Corridor Economic Region, Eastern Corridor Economic Region, dan Sabah dan Sarawak Corridor. Berkaitan dengan proyek itu, penting tidak hanya bagi investor Singapura, tetapi juga bagi pekerja atau buruh Indonesia yang berasal dari Riau, Sumatra Barat, Batam dalam memanfaatkan kesempatan itu. Jumlah penduduk Johor diperkirakan berjumlah 3 juta, di Johor Bahru sendiri berjumlah sekitar satu juta orang sementara Singapura jumlah penduduknya lima juta orang. Pengangguran di Malaysia berjumlah sekitar 3.3% dan pendapatan seorang warga Malaysia sekitar US \$ 6.477.³¹

Meskipun Malaysia dan Singapore memiliki perspetif yang sama tentang persoalan politik di wilayah Asia, tetapi kenyataannya, mereka memiliki juga beberapa permasalahan tentang persoalan perbatasan seperti pengambil-alihan Pulau Batu Puteh oleh Singapura, yang mana negara itu mampu menunjukkan bukti bagaimana pulau itu dipertahankan untuk beberapa waktu yang cukup lama. Kalau diperhatikan jaraknya ini tampak bahwa persoalan Batu Puteh sebenarnya persoalan perbatasan antara Malaysia dan Indonesia, karena lokasi Batu Puteh lebih dekat dengan perbatasan Indonesia daripada dengan perbatasan Singapura. Namun demikian dalam hal ini, investor Singapura mampu menunjukkan bukti-bukti mereka tentang pulau itu yang dipergunakan sebagai sebuah *Mercusuar*. Karena perkembangan ini pula akhirnya Johor ingin bersaing pula dengan Singapura. Meskipun persoalan Pulau Batu Puteh, akan tetapi kenyataannya pemerintah Malaysia telah berhasil mengatasi permasalahan itu, melalui beberapa protes yang muncul dari para nelayan sepanjang pantai Semenanjung Malaysia terhadap kebijakan pemerintah khususnya daerah-daerah yang lokasinya dekat dengan Pulau Batu Puteh. Tidak hanya persoalan Batu Puteh, terdapat pula persoalan lain tentang pulau kecil Merambong. Sebuah surat kabar Malaysia berjudul "Singapura Halau Nelayan Hampiri Pulau Merambong", dalam *Berita Harian*, 11

³¹ Lihat: Kedutaan Besar Republik Indonesia, *Laporan Tahunan 2007*. Kuala Lumpur: Bidang Perdagangan, 2007.

Juni 2008: 4) mencatat bahwa kebijakan orang Singapura meminta para nelayan Malaysia untuk tidak mendekati perairan Pulau Merambong itu. Ini berarti bahwa meskipun pemerintah Malaysia mengklaim Pulau Merambong sebagai bagian wilayah Malaysia, tetapi kenyataannya kebijakan Singapura tidak menginginkan, nelayan Malaysia berada di sekitar kawasan pulau itu. Pulau Merambong terletak 1.5 km dari Singapura dan sekitar 3 km dari Tanjung Kupang Malaysia. Akan tetapi, nelayan Malaysia melaporkan kebijakan Malaysia dalam kaitannya dengan kasus ini. Oleh karena itu, pemerintah Malaysia ingin mengembangkan kawasan itu paralel dengan perkembangan di Pelabuhan Tanjung Pelepas dan Nusajaya Laluan Kedua Malaysia dan Singapura.

Untuk menghindari kasus yang sama, pemerintah Malaysia membangun infrastruktur di beberapa bagian dalam hal ini Pulau Pisang. Pemerintah tidak hanya membangun "*rumah api*" atau mercusuar di sana, tetapi juga mempertahankan infrastrukturnya. Ini sudah tentu tidak dapat dipisahkan dari sejarah masa lalu negeri-negeri itu antara bekas pemerintahan kolonialnya seperti Inggris dengan Malaysia dan Singapura. Dalam kaitan ini Singapura lebih sadar tentang lingkungan mereka dan juga negeri itu kecil dibandingkan dengan negara-negara lainnya di Asia Tenggara. Sebagaimana halnya Indonesia dan Malaysia yang mengalami persoalan terhadap dua pulau yaitu Pulau Sipadan dan Pulau Ligitan, yang mana menurut Mahkamah Internasional, Malaysia memenangkan kedua pulau itu. Karena kekalahan ini, pemerintah Indonesia tidak ingin mengulangi lagi pengalaman tentang tersebut dengan Malaysia. Malaysia pun berupaya melawan Singapura berkaitan tentang keberadaan Pulau Batu Puteh. Oleh karena itu, pemerintah Malaysia tidak hanya membuat rumah api dan bangunan lainnya, karena kapal-kapal sudah menggunakan GPS (*Sistem Pengesanan Global*). Dalam mengantisipasi masalah ini pemerintah Malaysia menyediakan dana sekitar RM 50.000 untuk pembangunan surau dan jeti di tanah yang dimiliki Amin Dalik, yang berumur 72 tahun. Alasannya adalah untuk membuat penduduk hidup di sana bersembahyang di surau atau jeti itu. Kerjasama dibangun antara pemerintah dan *Pihak Berkuasa Wilayah Pembangunan Iskandar*

(IRDA). Oleh karena itu, Malaysia akan mengambil alih wewenang pulau dan tentang kepastian itu untuk mencegah kasus kedua terhadap pemerintah Singapura.³²

Meskipun konflik tentang pulau kecil, tetapi kenyataannya kedua negara tergantung secara ekonomi dan perdagangan antara yang satu dengan yang lainnya. Singapura di satu pihak sangat tergantung mengenai masalah air dari Malaysia, yang mana harga air relatif murah (1 Gallon air seharga RM 5 Sen). Malaysia di pihak yang lainnya tergantung dengan kesempatan perdagangan yang ditawarkan melalui perbatasan antara Malaysia dan Singapura. Dalam pengembangan wilayah ini memang terdapat banyak pulau yang mempunyai aset sejarah dan kebudayaan di kawasan itu yang dapat dikembangkan untuk dunia kepariwisataan. Pulau Pinang, misalnya memiliki warisan sejarah untuk orang Melayu di masa lalu yang dikembangkan di masa depan dalam konteks persaingan antara Malaysia dan Singapura dalam konteks regional.³³

Ini menunjukkan bahwa kedua negara perlu mempertahankan hubungan tetangga yang baik dan ingin mempertahankan hubungan itu di kawasan itu. Dari deskripsi di atas dapat dikatakan bahwa kedua negara mencari berbagai kemungkinan untuk mengintegrasikan hubungan ekonomi dan perdagangan mereka di wilayah perbatasan sebagaimana telah diupayakan melalui *the Southern Corridor* di Johor Bahru (Malaysia) dan di Woodlands, Singapura. Bahkan menurut informasi masyarakat setempat bahwa hubungan kedua negara yang bertetangga itu tampaknya telah berhasil diwujudkan ke arah yang lebih baik, dibandingkan pada masa Mahathir Muhammad memerintah Malaysia. Sampai sekarang hubungan resiprokal sebenarnya sudah ada atau perkembangan ekonomi yang stabil sudah diciptakan, sehingga tidak tampak lagi kesenjangan yang jauh di antara mereka.³⁴

³² Lihat: Ahmad Maslan, "Ambil Alih Rumah Api Pulau Pisang", dalam *Berita Harian*, 9 Juni 2008.

³³ Lihat: "Tingkat Pengetahuan Pengunjung mengenai tempat bersejarah di Pulau Pinang", dalam *Harian Metro*, 6 Juni 2008.

³⁴ Lihat: "Demonstrasi tak selesai masalah", dalam *Harian Metro*, 6 Juni 2008.

XII. Simpulan

Dari uraian di atas dapat disimpulkan bahwa terdapat perbedaan pola pengelolaan pada kontak-kontak perdagangan di wilayah perbatasan. Hal ini disebabkan adanya perkembangan perdagangan dan ekonomi antara dua negara atau lebih antara yang seimbang dan tidak seimbang. Pada wilayah-wilayah di perbatasan yang mengalami perkembangan perdagangan yang seimbang tampaknya mengimplementasikan sistem perdagangan bebas atau *free trade* dan dikelola secara profesional. Umumnya sistem yang diterapkan dalam konteks ini adalah sistem perdagangan bersifat *import and export trade*. Lain halnya pada wilayah perbatasan yang tidak mengalami perkembangan yang tidak seimbang tampaknya lebih menerapkan sistem *border trade* (perdagangan perbatasan) dan tampak tidak dikelola secara profesional.

Akibatnya adalah bahwa pada jenis yang pertama, tampak hubungan etnisitas itu tidak memainkan peranan penting karena sudah dikelola secara profesional. Oleh karena itu umumnya tingkat ilegalitasnya pergerakan manusia dan barang masih di bawah kontrol. Kontak-kontak perdagangan seperti inilah yang terjadi antara kontak-kontak perdagangan di wilayah perbatasan antara Malaysia dan Singapura. Sementara pada jenis yang kedua, tampak relasi etnisitas dalam kontak-kontak perdagangan dapat dikatakan memainkan peranan penting. Tambahan pula, pergerakan manusia dan barang yang illegal cenderung terjadi dan berbagai pungutan tidak resmi tampak masih mewarnai hubungan kontak-kontak perdagangan di wilayah perbatasan itu, sebagaimana yang terjadi di wilayah perbatasan

Kamboja dan Vietnam. Meskipun Singapura sebagai negara yang kecil di antara negara-negara di Asia Tenggara dalam arti geografis, namun Singapura tampak berhasil dalam mengelola potensi dan situasi geografis yang dimilikinya itu. Memang sejak zaman penjajahan Inggris, Singapura sudah mulai diarahkan untuk memanfaatkan potensi-potensi regional yang menghubungkan antara India dan Cina. Dewasa ini tampaknya “Negeri Singa” ini pun telah berhasil menjadi pusat pengembangan di kawasan regional terutama dalam aspek ekonomi dan perdagangan. Negeri ini telah mampu memahami potensi regional negeri-negeri sekitarnya. Para pemimpin negeri itu telah mampu mengarahkan perkembangan perdagangan masyarakatnya dan mengimplementasikan strategi yang penting dalam menempuh cara baru untuk meningkatkan foreign exchange yang diperlukan secara mutlak. Ini telah dibuktikan melalui ekspor. Sebagai akibatnya pada tahun 1990-an, Singapura telah menjadi salah satu bangsa yang paling makmur di dunia dengan ekonomi pasar bebas yang dikembangkan secara membanggakan, jaringan perdagangan internasional yang kuat dan perkapita yang tinggi di Asia selain Jepang.

Kemunculan Singapura di Asia Tenggara dapat dipertimbangkan sebagai kemunculan regionalisme baru *new regionalism*. Kontak perdagangan antara Singapura dan Malaysia adalah sesuatu yang unik, karena kedua negara dibatasi oleh laut, akan tetapi telah dihubungkan dengan jembatan yang mampu mengkolaborasikan kekuatan perdagangan dan ekonomi di kawasan perbatasan itu. Kontak-kontak perdagangan yang terbangun itu dihubungkan oleh dua kantor imigrasi yang resmi di Woodlands Singapura dan koridor bagian selatan di Johor Bahru Malaysia. Ini adalah sesuatu yang khusus dibandingkan dengan daerah-daerah perbatasan lainnya di Asia Tenggara. Meskipun mereka karena dinamika yang berkembang memisahkan mereka satu dengan yang lain sejak kemerdekaan dari kekuasaan imperialisme Inggris, tampak telah muncul perkembangan ekonomi di kawasan itu. Hasil penelitian ini telah menunjukkan seberapa jauh pergerakan manusia dan barang di wilayah perbatasan antara Malaysia dan Singapura yang dikelola secara

profesional yang patut menjadi pelajaran bagi negara lainnya di Asia Tenggara. Perkembangan kontak perdagangan yang stabil dan dinamis di wilayah perbatasan itu telah memberi dampak pada perkembangan perdagangan di kawasan Asia Tenggara lainnya seperti Indonesia dalam kaitannya dengan konsep “Sijori” atau segitiga emas yang menghubungkan antara Singapura, Johor-Malaysia, dan Riau atau Kepulauan Riau-Indonesia.

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