State Papers Online Colonial:

Asia, Part I: Far East, Hong Kong, and Wei-Hai-Wei

The first part of a major new digitization program that brings British Colonial Office files to a global audience.

CO 1069/494: Malaysia HE Sir John Anderson HH The Sultan of Tringganu and Parties at the Tringganu Istana. Courtesy of The National Archives image library.

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ARCHIVE SNAPSHOT

Number of Pages:
Approximately 390,000 across 3,700 volumes

Date Range:
1570–1967 (80% of which covers the twentieth century)

Source Library:
The National Archives, UK

VALUE OF THE COLLECTION:

- **Supports Researchers**: Contains mainly English-language documents on a major sector of Southeast Asia.

- **Unique Content**: Features newly digitized materials with minimal overlap with existing products—the first collection within the *State Papers Online* series to chronicle British colonialism in this region.

- **Scholarly Appeal**: Includes colonial maps to support studies in the religion, politics, agriculture, and trade of Southeast Asia from the mid-eighteenth to mid-twentieth centuries.

- **Greater Perspective and Representation**: Chronicles changing demographics and the daily life of colonial inhabitants.

- **Refined Search**: Includes search limiters for both country and region.

- **Handwritten Text Recognition**: Benefits from HTR technology—the latest *Gale Primary Sources* archive to have fully searchable handwritten text along with optical character recognition (OCR) output.

The inaugural collection in this new archive offers researchers and students multiple subjects and angles for new research topics in Asian and colonial studies. Whether users benefit from the country limiters and searchable printed, typed, or handwritten documents, or they browse through individual files and volumes, some of these documents will be read for the first time since release into the public domain, and all will be viewed with fresh eyes and new perspectives.

The earliest documents are comprised of the British government's correspondence with the East India Company about trade in Asia, rivalry with the Dutch, the Opium trade, and the first British embassy to China of 1793 to 1794. Later documents, many formerly confidential, cover the development of trade and administration of the Far East territories. Subjects include control of opium trafficking, rubber production, Kuomintang activities, military administration after World War II, reconstruction in the Far Eastern colonies (Borneo, Hong Kong, and Malaya), constitutional reform of Hong Kong, and the effect of the closure of British firms in China.

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