

**The Growth of the Intra-Southeast Asian Trade
in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century**
—— through the Trade of Singapore ——

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Background and objectives of my research

In the study of the modern Asian Trade, the discontinuity by the advance of the Western Colonization in the middle of the nineteenth century has been focused on, and the Asian autonomous movements have been neglected. However, the new studies began to appear recently, and they showed the growth of Asian trade in the first half of the nineteenth century, and it was brought by the response of Asian merchants to the advance of the Western Colonization. This research movement brought the new perspective that the modern Asian trade experienced not the discontinuity but the transformation through the interaction of the Western Colonization and Asia.

Under this circumstance, although the growth of long-distance trade in Southeast Asia in this period was indicated, it has not yet been made clear that the local trade dynamism which was arena of trade activities for Southeast Asian traders. Therefore, my research objective is examining the movement of the Intra-Southeast Asian trade in the first half of the nineteenth century through the trade of Singapore.

In my field-work, I have got trade statistics of Singapore, Penang, Malacca, and Java, or Western Colonies, and those sources indicate that these colonial ports were trading with various parts of Southeast Asia, and such a trade, or Intra-Southeast Asian trade's value has been increasing in the first half of the nineteenth century. In addition, the trade structure of Singapore in this period has been based on the Intra-Southeast Asian trade, and Asian merchants have been re-exporting British cotton piece goods and importing the Southeast Asian products in return at Singapore.

In short, there was a growth of Intra-Southeast Asian Trade in the first half of the nineteenth century, and the development of Singapore trade has been based on Asian traders' activities as well as western merchants.



Local Market — You can purchase local products at here.



Tea plantation and Slash and burn field — Tea is being produced by Chinese inhabitants and Slash and burn field is by local mountainous people.



Mekong River dividing Thai, Myanmar, and Laos — This picture was taken from the side of Thailand, and left side is Myanmar, right side is Laos.