



Singapore Spotlight

Tom Benner

毎月第1週掲載



ああああああああああああ(写真は筆者提供)

30) Happy anniversary?

シンガポールの建設者、トーマス・ラッフルズ

■ あああああ

The year 2019 will mark the 200th anniversary of what is considered the founding of modern-day Singapore.

Sir Stamford Raffles arrived on the island in 1819 and saw the potential for a bustling port city. He envisioned what would become one of the busiest ports in the world.

Singapore is planning for ceremonies and events commemorating the bicentennial, honoring the memory of Raffles.

In years gone by, there was a widely accepted view that Raffles was an unquestioned hero.

Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's founding prime minister, expressed that flattering view when he said in a 1969 speech: "When Stamford Raffles came here 150 years ago, there was no organized human society in Singapore, unless a fishing village can be called a society."

It is true that Singapore never

tried to erase its British past, and has held a somewhat romanticised view of the English.

For example, other former British colonies such as India, upon achieving independence, replaced anglicized names that its British occupiers left behind. So Bombay became Mumbai, Calcutta became Kolkata.

Not Singapore. Once it became a self-ruling nation in 1965, Singapore kept the signs of its colonial past. While the country's population is primarily made up of Chinese, Malay and Indian immigrants, British-sounding names like Victoria Street, Butterworth Lane, and Fort Canning Park remain today. Singapore is filled with streets, schools, hospitals and businesses named Stamford or Raffles, too.

■ あああああ

But Singapore already had a rich history as a seaport harking back to the 14th century. So it's far from accurate to say a British



ビクトリアシアター&コンサートホールの前に立つ、トーマス・ラッフルズ像

colonizer got the place started. In truth, Singapore's history goes back many hundreds of years, and the arrival of Raffles was one turning point.

In addition, today's historians paint a picture of Raffles that is far from the high-minded English gentleman and heroic figure of popular conception.

A book that came out a few years ago cast a new light on the man and his exalted place in history. British historian Tim Hannigan described Raffles as something of a rogue, willing to do anything in order to establish British supremacy.

Hannigan told me in an interview that he found materials in the British Library that hadn't been used for earlier, more positive portrayals of Raffles.

"Most people setting out to write a book about Raffles begin with the ones that have already

been written, so they end up with an affection for him before they ever do any primary research," Hannigan said.

In private conversations and in letters to newspapers, Singaporeans have been debating whether Raffles deserved to be seen in a more critical light.

One elderly man wrote that Singaporeans felt like second-class citizens when they lived in a British colony. He wrote, "Raffles did not come to improve our lives per se, but to colonise us for the cause of the erstwhile British Empire."

Raffles' exalted place in history is being reconsidered by Singaporeans. Many people have mixed feelings about Raffles and the role he played. Raffles is sure to get a sizing-up by modern standards. Now, it will be interesting to see how Singapore celebrates the memory of Raffles.

Tom Benner is a freelance journalist who moved to Singapore from Boston, U.S., in fall 2012. His recent journalism has appeared in Al Jazeera English, Global Post and Nikkei Asian Review.

KEYWORDS

Stamford Raffles 英植民地行政官(1781~1826年)
bustling 活気であふれる
port city 港市(後出 sea-port は港湾都市)

envision 想像する
commemorate 記念する
bicentennial 200年記念日
honor ~ ~を称賛する
flattering お世辞の
fishing village 漁村
romanticize 美化する

colony 植民地(後出 colonial は植民地の、colonizer は入植者、colonize は植民地化する)
achieve independence 独立を果たす
anglicize 英語化する

occupier 占領者
self-ruling nation (ここでは)独立国家
primarily 主に
immigrant 移民
(be) filled with ~ ~でいっぱいである

hark back to ~ ~にさかのぼる
accurate 正確な
high-minded 気高い
conception 理解
cast a light on ~ ~を浮き彫りにする

exalted 高位な
rogue 悪党、ならず者
supremacy 支配権
positive portrayal 確かな描写
affection for ~ ~に対する愛着

多読チャレンジ もんだい

[本文 - 508 words]

MACHIGAI!

© Tim Young

毎週掲載



by Tim Young

うちには牛乳が少ししかない。

✗ We have a little milk left.

If you have "a little" of something, that's 「少しある」. It has a more positive feeling. But when you say 「少ししかない」, it's more negative; the milk is almost gone! In English, we express this by simply using "little" (or "few," if the noun is countable) without "a."

○ We have little milk left.

米アイオワ州出身。イリノイ州オーガスタナ大学で英文学士号取得。1989年から日本在住。現在はスカイプでマンツーマンの英語レッスンをするほか、高校でのALT(外国人英語指導助手)やポッドキャストの製作など幅広く活躍。Twitter(@machigai)でも日々つぶやいている。著書「I can't eat natto!」がアマゾンで発売中。



MACHIGAI Meter

How many of Tim's students made this mistake?



Visit <http://www.machigai.com> for podcast, online quiz, and more!

© Tominaga Yoshiko