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## **The shadow continuum : testing the records continuum model through the Djogdja Documenten and the migrated archives**

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## Chapter VI:

### Contextualizing the Migrated Archives

#### Introduction

This chapter will build on the introduction to the Migrated Archives as provided by the previous chapter. I will move the discussion of the Migrated Archives first to their contents and context, and then into the realm of archival science, beginning with such important elements of the archival profession as appraisal, selection and original order. I will follow this with a review of the Migrated Archives through the continuum model, as well as the role of the shadow continuum, just as was the case for the *Djogdja Documenten*. The most important outcomes of the chapter will be whether the Migrated Archives' unique situation fits in with the idea of universality in the continuum model, and whether the shadow continuum introduced in Chapter II is represented in the Migrated Archives.

Unlike the *Djogdja Documenten*, the creation (by sending to London), capture and organization dimensions (1D, 2D, 3D) for the Migrated Archives occurred amidst deep secrecy. The *Djogdja Documenten* were known to exist and therefore had traces. Hatta himself knew certain records were seized and there are records from the time documenting Republican knowledge of what was taken. Later, archivists in Indonesia made numerous contacts with colleagues in the Netherlands regarding their return. There were also traces of their existence in the NEFIS archive due to the routing slips. On the other hand, the specifics of the Migrated Archives—their content and location—were unknown outside of a select few. This chapter will therefore include a reexamination of Banton's work and a search for traces of the Migrated Archives in publically accessible records.

The Migrated Archives and the ability to analyze them with the continuum model are tied to the flaws in the model surrounding pluralization and openness. Prior to 2011 there was no possibility for analysis by the continuum model. The Migrated Archives, therefore, are a stronger test of the universality of the continuum than the *Djogdja Documenten* were.

## A. The Contents

The Colonial Office was clear as to what types of documents were not to be left for the successor governments, but within their criteria there was room for judgment made by officials in the colonies. The guidelines sent to the various colonies have already been explained.<sup>1</sup> However, specific appraisal of documents and the decision of '[h]ow to meet these criteria [set out by the Colonial Office] was largely determined at the local level'.<sup>2</sup> The use of the word 'might' in the guidelines, coupled with subjective words like embarrass and compromise can partially explain the sheer magnitude of the Migrated Archives. And, of course, this does not include the documents which were secretly destroyed—either in London or their original location—due to their compromising nature and the potential crimes they may have contained.<sup>3</sup> Their ability to be used in telling history, therefore, has been removed permanently.

The Migrated Archives are broken down by colony, and therefore those of interest in this work can be found under four different sections: Malaya, North Borneo, Sarawak and Singapore. The Malayan archives come from three original sources: The Governor/High Commissioner's Office, the Chief Secretary and the Ministry for External Defence. A large portion of their contents are in reference to the Malayan Emergency. The extremely politically sensitive nature of the documents, as in the Kenya Emergency, led to many of them being initially suppressed. Aside from the Malayan Emergency, other documents concern the development of the Malayan constitution and the structure of the independent government and finances, Malayan foreign affairs and defense, Chinese in Malaya, citizenship for non-Malays and records relating to various Malay states, many of which date back further than the rest of the documents. Contentious constitutional

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<sup>1</sup> The National Archives, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue/displaycataloguedetails.asp?CATID=69697&CATLN=3&Highlight=%2CARCHIVES%2CARCHIVES%2CARCHIVES%2CARCHIVES%2CSINGAPORE&accessmethod=0> (accessed 13 May 2014).

<sup>2</sup> Badger, 'Historians', 800.

<sup>3</sup> Ian Cobain, Owen Bowcott, and Richard Norton-Taylor, 'Britain Destroyed Records of Colonial Crimes', [http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2012/apr/18/britain-destroyed-records-colonial-crimes?CMP=tw\\_t\\_gu](http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2012/apr/18/britain-destroyed-records-colonial-crimes?CMP=tw_t_gu) (accessed 5 May 2012).

matters related to race and Malay privileges are still hotly debated in Malaysia today, which makes their inclusion in the Migrated Archives understandable.<sup>4</sup>

In the Borneo territories a large share of the records detail their merger into Malaysia. Malaya's Migrated Archive does not cover this period, instead it is related to the period surrounding its own independence. Although the Borneo archives include material from 1946 when Sarawak and North Borneo were made crown colonies following the Japanese surrender, their majority is centered on the lead up to Malaysia.<sup>5</sup> Prior to the Japanese occupation North Borneo was governed by the British North Borneo Company and not directly by the British government, which explains the lack of any records from before this period. The records of the British North Borneo Company had already been sent to the Public Record Office and are available at The National Archives.<sup>6</sup> Prior to the Japanese occupation, Sarawak was ruled by the 'White Rajah' Brooke family dynasty, and the majority of documents in the Sarawak collection are from the Governor's Office and come from the same period as those from North Borneo. The Brooke family's personal papers are held in Oxford at the Bodleian Library.<sup>7</sup>

Monthly and weekly reports, as well as the reports of various intelligence committees make up a major portion of the Malaysia Migrated Archives. The influence of communists, either locally or from Indonesia, was a major concern in both Malaya and Borneo. British reports from only ten years earlier of course made mention of the Dutch propensity for inflating the dangers of communism in Indonesia, though when it directly involves their own decolonization process the

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<sup>4</sup> For a recent example see Nigel Edgar, "Umno MP slams Obama over suggestion Putrajaya Sidelines non-Muslims," *The Malaya Mail Online*, <http://www.themalaymailonline.com/malaysia/article/umno-mp-slams-obama-over-suggestion-putrajaya-sidelines-non-muslims> (accessed 1 May 2014).

<sup>5</sup> Jones, *Conflict and Confrontation in South East Asia*, gives a good background to the correspondence regarding the creation of Malaysia from both the perspective of Malaya, Britain, and the Borneo territories.

<sup>6</sup> The National Archives, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/nra/searches/subjectView.asp?ID=P3669> (accessed 13 May 2014).

<sup>7</sup> Bodleian Library, <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/wmss/online/blcas/brooke-sarawak-2.html> (accessed 13 May 2014).

British are much more interested in communist activities.

While the Malaysian archives do not appear to reveal anything as politically damning as the Kenya Emergency records, they nevertheless detail the behind-the-scenes work leading to independence. Records detailing the writing of the Malayan constitution, the Malayan Emergency, and negotiations with different Malay sultans all eventually found the same fate of being sent to London. The records from Singapore date from the period before self-government, which occurred in 1959. While the British still controlled foreign affairs in Singapore, what was sent back to London is from a time before major discussion on Singapore joining Malaysia. Most Singapore records are in the form of intelligence on political activities in Singapore, as well as in Malaya and Indonesia.

The creation of Malaysia led to two different yet connected phenomena relating to documents. The first was the vast amount of records created regarding the unification of the peninsula and the Borneo territories. Officials in Malaya, Singapore, Borneo, Australia and Britain were in correspondence to make Malaysia a reality and to have it exist in a way most beneficial to the various actors involved.<sup>8</sup> The second was the on-the-ground destruction and hiding of records. Malaysia meant decolonization for three further territories, and records that officials did not want passed on to the new state or federal governments in Malaysia were dealt with. This official policy led to the creation of the Malaysia section of the Migrated Archives.

What the Migrated Archives show is the heavy role the British administration played in the two major events covered in the records: the Malayan Emergency and the creation of Malaysia. British involvement in the creation of Malaysia was a major reason Indonesia was against it, and why some people in the Borneo territories were against it as well. Hiding the archives may have been an attempt to hide how involved Britain was so that after independence groups from outside Malaya would not be as capable to call the new federal state a neo-colonial

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8 Jones, *Conflict and Confrontation in South East Asia*. It should be noted that all of Jones' archival sources come from either Britain (mostly from The National Archives) or the US.

invention. As T.N. Harper states:

‘The dialectic of late colonialism was that the satisfactory conclusion of the business of empire demanded its transfer into trustworthy hands; the need to keep it in those hands made the transfer of power a much swifter process than it was intended to be. Once this dialectic was acknowledged and accepted as unstoppable all the British could do was make the government as pro-western, capitalist and clean as it could.’<sup>9</sup>

This is exactly what can be seen in the Migrated Archives. They show how ‘the need to keep it in those hands’ and out of the power of the communists of the MCP accelerated the process of Malaysia. Records show the British working with the Tunku on how to approach the idea of an amnesty offer to surrendering communists. When an article in the *Singapore Standard* reported that the Tunku would legalize the MCP, the British High Commissioner contacted the Tunku to ensure there would be a refutation of this claim. The Tunku promised the High Commissioner that he ‘had spoken entirely in a personal capacity and would make this clear in his correction’.<sup>10</sup> All along, leading to independence, the British administration was making sure their print would be left on Malaysia.

## **B. Role in Malayan Emergency**

The Migrated Archives include records related to a court case involving the ‘Semenyih Incident’ from early 1956, which would fall under the ‘embarrassing’ heading in the decision making rubric. Chinese rubber tree tappers in the area made claims of mistreatment by British and Malay soldiers. Women reported being kicked by soldiers, having clothing removed while being searched in the jungle, and being forced to walk naked through the jungle to retrieve clothes while soldiers and

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<sup>9</sup> Harper, *The End of Empire and the Making of Malaya*, 362.

<sup>10</sup> The National Archives (TNA): FCO 141/7286: Malaya: Communist offer to negotiate, and offer of amnesty by the Government of the Federation of Malaya.

police—both Malay and British—watched. But this is not a completely secret incident. It was discussed in UK Parliament and is even mentioned by Harper in *The End of Empire and the Making of Malaya*.<sup>11</sup> Harper mentions that the court inquiry was made to ‘appease Chinese opinion’ and makes little other mention of it in his discussion of the counter-insurgency. However, showing some of the overlap in the Migrated Archives, his citation comes from Colonial Office records previously made public at The National Archives.<sup>12</sup>

The searching of Chinese rubber tappers was only one part of a ‘Food Denial Scheme’, headed by an ‘Emergency Food Denial Organisation’, on which the Migrated Archives gives more information. The hope was the end the distribution of food to Communist insurgents hiding in the jungle, including the area around where the ‘Semenyih Incident’ took place.<sup>13</sup> Communists killed or fleeing due to raids left behind large quantities of rice and other foodstuff, as well as other supplies most likely acquired from local villagers. Communist tracks were found around the perimeter wire of New Villages—‘protected areas’ where rural Chinese rubber-tapping communities were resettled in order to stop the local support of Communist fighters.<sup>14</sup> A major type of food denial came in the form of central cooking of rice in New Villages and Rubber Estates, which was both the most effective way at keeping food from insurgents—or ‘CTs’ (Communist Terrorists) as they were called—and least difficult on the public as the villagers were able to eat all the rice they wanted and had no uncooked rice leftover to give to communists. From October 1956 to March 1957 fifty such central rice cooking schemes were set up in four provinces of Malaya. The schemes were so successful that 113 more were planned by May 1957.<sup>15</sup>

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11 The National Archives (TNA): FCO 141/7475: Malaya: Commission of Enquiry into the Semenyih incident; allegations concerning searches.

12 Harper, *The End of Empire and the Making of Malaya*, 156.

13 Lee, Singapore: *The Unexpected Nation*, 99.

14 TNA: FCO 141/7475: Malaya: Commission of Enquiry into the Semenyih incident; allegations concerning searches. James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998, 188.

15 The National Archives (TNA): FCO 141/7422: Malaya: Emergency Operations Council.

Records also document British policy-making behind amnesty and surrender plans with the MCP, attempting to influence the Tunku Abdul Rahman and H.S. Lee—of the Malayan Chinese Association—and mould their attitudes. A meeting of the Director of Operations Committee with leaders of Malayan parties and British officials in January 1955 concludes that ‘Abdul Rahman and Lee were not aware of the full implications of an amnesty, or negotiated cessation of armed revolt’ after local press had been giving attention to the possibility of amnesty based on the alliance's proposals. The matter was discussed in the House of Commons, where it was made clear that ‘no general amnesty should be offered’ and that British officials were looking for a certain line of thinking from the Tunku before sovereignty would be handed over.<sup>16</sup> Nonetheless, ‘[e]nding the Emergency, and offering a new amnesty, had been a vital part of the Alliance's election platform, and one reason for the enthusiasm which swept it to victory’ later in the general elections of 1955.<sup>17</sup> Despite the initial British disagreement with amnesty, the Tunku continued to push the idea, and in December of 1955 engaged in talks with the MCP regarding amnesty and surrender. In the end, it was a fear that the Tunku would give too much away to the communists that resulted in the British government promising, before the talks even took place, ‘self-government to Malaya whether or not the Emergency ended’.<sup>18</sup> The Tunku would not disappoint at the talks, refusing to succumb to MCP demands, leaving the British more confident in their ability to grant Malaya independence.<sup>19</sup>

A letter was also written regarding the attitudes of Chinese in Southeast Asia and Hong Kong in the event of war, with a country by country analysis concluding that the Chinese lack a sense of loyalty to the country in which they live. It details the size and distribution of Chinese populations throughout the area, extending beyond only areas of British control, as well as their economic power and political activities, including ‘fifth column activities’.<sup>20</sup> The British hoped that the

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<sup>16</sup> The National Archives (TNA): FCO 141/7521: Malaya: possible amnesty offer to Communist terrorist forces.

<sup>17</sup> Hack, *Defence and Decolonisation*, 222.

<sup>18</sup> Edwin Lee, *Singapore*, 100.

<sup>19</sup> Hack, *Defence and Decolonisation*, 224.

<sup>20</sup> The National Archives (TNA): FCO 141/7463: Malaya: papers for the Joint

independence of Malaya would act as a 'psychological weapon' against the communists.<sup>21</sup> The Malayan Communist Party (MCP) was 95% Chinese. At the same time, only 5% of the Malayan Federation Military Forces were Chinese. This fact greatly worried the British as to where the Chinese in Malaya would keep their loyalties.<sup>22</sup>

The Migrated Archives show the way the British administration used a planned independence and structured decolonization process as an attempt to end fighting with the MCP. While this was a fact that was previously known, the Migrated Archives once again give new information, more specifics, and more anecdotal evidence supporting positions of previous historians and previously held notions on the Emergency. The fight against the communists and the ability to join together a diverse colony into a single state is part of what has made Malaya appear, to the British, as 'a model of successful decolonisation'.<sup>23</sup> While the actual events were not as smooth as the British vision of decolonization may have been, to even attempt such a feat would require a massive amount of information and document-creation due to the direct influence the British held in the decolonization process.

This can be seen in the British role in joining the major racial groups of Malaya (Malay, Chinese and Indian) into a unified country. A major Malay grievance was what they saw as 'half-hearted support given by the Chinese to the prosecution of the Emergency'. The Chinese, for their part, saw 'few (...) reasons for rejoicing' at the idea of an independent Malaya, though the British hoped their spirits would be raised when it is discovered that an independent Constitutional Commission was to devise the plan on nationality and citizenship, and that H.S. Lee of the MCA would become Minister of Finance rather than a Malay as some in the press had misleadingly reported. Citizenship was a major concern of the Chinese in Malaya, and it was therefore a major concern of the British in their attempts to keep the

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Intelligence Committee (Far East): Attitudes of Chinese Populations.

<sup>21</sup> TNA: FCO 141/7422: Malaya: Emergency Operations Council.

<sup>22</sup> TNA: FCO 141/7463: Malaya: papers for the Joint Intelligence Committee (Far East): Attitudes of Chinese Populations.

<sup>23</sup> Harper, *The End of Empire and the Making of Malaya*, 2

Chinese communities happy and accepting of an independent Malaya.<sup>24</sup>

Connected with the Emergency was the writing of the post-independence Malayan Constitution. The constitution helped solidify the compromises and agreements made between the UMNO-MCA-MIC (Malaysian Indian Congress) alliance. The Reid Commission, the independent Constitutional Commission chaired by British Judge Lord Reid which included justices from Pakistan, India and Australia, was tasked with writing the new constitution after meetings between the Secretary of State, the political alliance and the Malay Sultans.<sup>25</sup> It was within the Reid Commission that important constitutional matters such as the special protection of Malay rights, citizenship for non-Malays and state language and religion would be debated. After the Reid Commission was finished with their recommendations, further discussions were held between the Sultans, the political alliance and the British government, which is reflected in the Migrated Archives.

### **C. Role in Creation of Malaysia**

British officials took just as an important role in discussions regarding the creation of Malaysia. It was, after all, three British territories that were to join with Malaya, so their role is perhaps to be expected. However, it could be considered embarrassing in the future if it was known just how much Malaysia was made through British intervention and in a British mould. As the constitution of Malaysia was to be a modified version of the Malayan Constitution, constitutional questions and others like federal education, and the redistribution of representation in a Malaysian parliament are all discussed between various officials in Borneo and London and it is clear they want to make the decisions at the expense of the Tunku in Malaya.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> The National Archives (TNA): FCO 141/7459: Malaya: Miscellaneous Political Reports.

<sup>25</sup> Joseph M. Fernando, *The Making of the Malayan Constitution*, Kuala Lumpur: MBRAS, 2002, 95.

<sup>26</sup> The National Archives (TNA): FCO 141/12809: North Borneo: Malaysia; departmental papers and notes: Creation of Malaysia, Planning and Implementation.

Independence led to the politicization of ethnic societies on Borneo, such as the United National Kadazan Organisation (UNKO) founded by Donald Stephens as a successor to the Society of Kadazans, the pre-political society of which he was president.<sup>27</sup> 'Kadazan' was used by the group as the name of the indigenous groups to North Borneo, as opposed to the British-used term 'Dusun'.<sup>28</sup> The UNKO was formed as a way of establishing indigenous power in Malaysia against Chinese and Malay/Muslim economic and political power.<sup>29</sup> Within the Migrated Archives an entire folder is dedicated to the UNKO and its formation. The Commissioner of Labour and Welfare sees problems with the 'loaded politically' terms 'Kadazan' and 'Sabah' as used by Stephens. Also included in the file is a letter from the office of the Commissioner of Police to the Chief Secretary of North Borneo regarding the crest of the UNKO and its meaning.<sup>30</sup>

The creation of Malaysia and the reaction to *Konfrontasi* are intertwined, as can be gleaned from the Migrated Archives. Sukarno was against the idea of having what he perceived as a British neo-colony on his border, and following the West Irian dispute, 'Indonesia was [...] freed of one international dispute, but Sukarno was also deprived of a unifying national cause', which was crucial to this presidency during the Guided Democracy period.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, as Hack states:

'Given Britain's record, Sukarno could hardly fail to be suspicious. Britain had not supported Indonesia's claim to West New Guinea. Britain had tolerated both rebel sympathizers based in Singapore and large-scale rubber smuggling from Indonesia. It was a major cold war player and SEATO member, while Indonesia sought to organize Afro-Asian diplomacy. There were also fears that the Malays on Sumatra could gravitate towards Malaya. The proposed Malaysian federation seemed to threaten Indonesia with the creation of a large-pro-British and intentionally anti-Indonesian state. In addition, there seemed good reason for Sukarno to suppose he

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<sup>27</sup> Reid, *Imperial Alchemy*, 194.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 192.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 195.

<sup>30</sup> The National Archives (TNA): FCO 141/13005: North Borneo: activities of the United National Kadazan Organisation (UNKO).

<sup>31</sup> Hack, *Defence and Decolonisation*, 278.

could frustrate the proposed merger. All he had to do was to threaten to move closer to communist countries, and to use confrontation tactics—low-level harassment combined with high-level diplomacy—in order to invoke the sort of American support which persuaded Holland to compromise in 1962'.<sup>32</sup>

Skirmishes between Indonesian raiders and British and colonial soldiers were becoming more common after the start of *Konfrontasi*. This is shown to be a major concern of the British, who were trying to unite a multi-racial society into one country and had the added pressure of belligerent opposition groups in Borneo and across the border in Indonesia.<sup>33</sup> Indonesia helped recruit and train groups like the TNKU (*Tentera Nasional Kalimantan Utara*, National Army of North Kalimantan), while the Clandestine Communist Organisation (CCO) and the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) were predominantly Chinese communists similarly against the creation of Malaysia.<sup>34</sup>

Even prior to *Konfrontasi* the border between Sarawak and Indonesian Kalimantan on Borneo was a contentious area. In December of 1957 'distant ripples' based on conversations held between the British Embassy in Indonesia and the Indonesian government turned into multiple reports in the Indonesian press regarding a proposed meeting between officials of Sarawak and West Kalimantan, the Indonesian province it borders. Such a meeting was something the British government was hoping to delay by using vague responses to any Indonesian question into the matter. The British government (in both the embassy in Jakarta and on Borneo) wished to avoid 'unnecessary contacts with the Indonesians across the Kalimantan border', which was made difficult a few months later in February 1958 with the arrest of Mr. B.W. Sandilands of the Colonial Survey Department after crossing into Indonesia to request permission to travel through Indonesian territory on official surveying business. R.N. Turner, Chief Secretary of Sarawak, was against informing the British Embassy in Jakarta of the incident in order to stop it

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 274

<sup>33</sup> The National Archives (TNA): FCO 141/12692: Sarawak: Monthly Intelligence Telegrams.

<sup>34</sup> The National Archives (TNA): FCO 141/12629: Monthly Intelligence Reports; Attorney General's Copy.

from re-igniting talks of cross-border discussions, which were 'best left dormant',<sup>35</sup>

These stories all show a strong British involvement in creating Malaysia. Records revealing just what went on behind the scenes were sent to London where they were intentionally held from public view. If not for the discovery and disclosure of the Migrated Archives it is impossible to know when these records would have ever otherwise been made accessible.

#### **D. Appraisal and Selection**

Moving now from the historical context to the archival science context, the following sections will cover the concepts of appraisal and selection and original order, and how they related to the Migrated Archives. The final parts of the chapter will focus on the continuum model. Appraisal and selection determines what records become part of an archive, and in the case of the Migrated Archive it happened twice. Once by officials like O'Brien and MacMullen, and again when they were being released to the public at The National Archives.

The decision of what gets preserved is critical to the way future researchers remember and reconstruct times and events. Ketelaar's claim that '[r]ecords embody the nexus between evidence, accountability, and memory' reminds archivists and historians alike that appraisal and selection are what determine how we see our past, and in turn, our future.<sup>36</sup> The acts of appraisal and selection are sometimes the work of archivists, and at other times of the creating institution, or a combination of the two. For the Migrated Archives, the decision of what to send to London, what to keep in the colonies, and what to destroy was made in the lead-up to independence between those in the colonies and those in the Colonial Office. Given the role of people like O'Brien and MacMullen, Richard Cox's argument that 'the archivist must be involved with the records creator as far up the life cycle of

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<sup>35</sup> The National Archives (TNA): FCO 141/13055: North Borneo: Indonesian Borneo (Kalimantan) - North Borneo / Sarawak contacts and problems; visits and reports by staff of HM Ambassador, Jakarta.

<sup>36</sup> Eric Ketelaar, 'Time Future Contained in Time Past: Archival Science in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century', *Journal of the Japan Society for Archival Science* (2004), 25.

records as possible' is wishful thinking in such situations, as only colonial officials were making the final decisions.<sup>37</sup> The work of O'Brien and MacMullen re-created the records they appraised (1D, according to the continuum model), and began the process of unifying them into a separate archival group.

Appraisal and selection also played a role when releasing documents to the public. The stated goal was to release every document of the Migrated Archives by the end of 2013. Part of meeting that goal meant that appraisal would be bypassed and all documents would be made public—after, of course, the standard review for exemptions based on legal reasons. As Badger says regarding this fact, '[t]his will have both advantages and disadvantages for the historian, but it inevitably means that there will be duplication not only of materials already held at the Archives but duplications within the collections'.<sup>38</sup> In Malaysia this can be seen in the monthly intelligence reports on the Chinese in Malaya that are duplicated within the collection, as copies belonging to various officials all became part of the Migrated Archives. Monthly reports from Sarawak during *Konfrontasi* with Indonesia are duplicated with documents already at The National Archives.

Even if the idea that the extensive period spent hidden was the result of a 'bureaucratic bungle' is correct, the role of O'Brien and MacMullen highlights the intentional archival silencing that took place. These two men were literally choosing what could be seen in the future National Archives of Malaysia. In one final statement before the United Kingdom transferred sovereignty, these decisions left a lasting imprint of the colonial past on how history would be remembered in Malaysia.

### **E. Provenance, Original Order and Custodial History**

Upon receipt, the Migrated Archives are being kept in the same order as they are received by The National Archives. This means that 'records from each individual

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37 Richard J. Cox, 'The Documentation Strategy and Archival Appraisal Principles: A Different Perspective', *Archivaria*, no. 38 (Fall 1994), 15.

38 Badger, 'Historians', 802.

territory of origin may not be listed together'.<sup>39</sup> To put it in the simplest terms possible, the FCO has decided the order the records will be kept should be based on how they sent them to The National Archives. All records are being held as one collection, and are not separated by colony. The National Archives will use this order rather than rearrange records into the pre-existing collections of Foreign and Commonwealth Office records related to those countries. Archivists involved in this decision are therefore taking an active role in determining how researchers will find, read and use these documents. It will be nearly impossible to read these documents and not think about deeper subjects such as why they were hidden and what information lies beneath of the surface of the record. The reasoning behind The National Archives' decision to keep the entire collection as one series was to 'help readers to search the records, regardless of their level of expertise and ensures that the history of the collection is clear to all'.<sup>40</sup> The 'history of the collection' is made clear to researchers in the reading room of The National Archives whenever they do a search of records and request something from the Migrated Archives. On the website of the National Archives any record that is part of the Migrated Archives will be noted in its description under the heading 'context of this record'. This is similar to the idea put forth by Tom Nesmith that that 'in place of original order, we should speak of the received order of the records, which would refer to the order the records are in when they are received by an archives'.<sup>41</sup>

Making the decision that they did, The National Archives accurately draws attention to the Migrated Archives' period when it was unknown to outsiders. It is important to note the phrase 'the history of the collection'. It does not refer to the history of the documents as it relates to their creation in the colonies and the role they would have played in colonial administration. Rather it refers to what Laura Millar refers to as their custodial history between initial creation and being found

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39 'Migrated Archives: Frequently Asked Questions', The National Archives, London, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/migrated-archives-faq.pdf> (accessed 24 April 2012).

40 *Ibid.*

41 Tom Nesmith, "Reopening Archives: Bringing New Contextualities into Archival Theory and Practice," *Archivaria*, 60 (Fall 2005), 264.

at Hanslope Park.<sup>42</sup> The Migrated Archives are being re-read and re-interpreted and its complete story is taken into account. The history of the collection relates to its post-appraisal history. The documents would have been archived in Malaya, but that is not what The National Archives means by its history. It instead refers to the period before being made accessible.

The decision to keep the documents in the order that they were sent to The National Archives, however, is in direct disagreement with the Cary Report, which recommended that the records 'should be re-attached, physically, to the main FCO archive, together with any other original records'.<sup>43</sup> Instead, every document has been given the new reference number of FCO 141. While it goes against the Cary Report, it must be remembered that the report was not written by an archivist, but by the former British High Commissioner to Canada, Anthony Cary.<sup>44</sup>

Cary's suggestion betrays a difference in understanding of provenance and original order compared to The National Archives' final decision. Returning missing records to their 'original' location is a concept that was presented in the 1898 'Dutch Manual', the first major published work on provenance and the arrangement of records. The book states that '[i]t is desirable to complete the archival collection again with missing documents' and that '[d]ocuments which after having once disappeared from an archival collection are again returned to it by gift or purchase may resume their place in it if it is perfectly clear that they originated in that collection'.<sup>45</sup> Changes in archival theory have led to the context of the records, its complete history, taking the place of original order.

In the post-custodial view of archives, the principle of original order in a physical sense becomes secondary to the idea of properly contextualizing records. Cary's recommendation to re-fit the Migrated Archives back into a pre-existing

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<sup>42</sup> Laura Millar, 'The Death of the Fonds and the Resurrection of Provenance: Archival Context in Space and Time', *Archivaria*, no. 53 (Spring 2002), 13.

<sup>43</sup> Cary, *The Migrated Archives*, 18.

<sup>44</sup> 'Colonial Administration Records', <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/colonial-administration-records.htm>, (accessed 6 August 2012).

<sup>45</sup> Samuel Muller, Johan Feith and Robert Fruin, *Manual For the Arrangement and Description of Archives*, Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2003, 97-98.

collection as if that is its 'home' is the kind of thinking Nesmith was reacting against when he asked, 'Can anyone really be in a position to know whether the order of the records on arrival at an archives is the original one, or know whether, even in archives, the order has never been changed?'<sup>46</sup> Cary's author-centric view of how to re-integrate newly discovered records into a collection shows how a non-archivist, and non-historian, sees the way in which records should be kept. If The National Archives had followed Cary's advice, the fact that these were special records specifically chosen to be hidden, for reasons based on their content, could eventually be lost to time as they would be mixed in with records that were made public under the normal thirty year timetable.

As Anne Gilliland-Swetland observes that the concept of provenance has two parts: records of the same provenance should not be mixed with those of a different provenance, and the archivist should maintain the original order in which the records were created and kept.<sup>47</sup> In the cases of both the *Djogdja Documenten* and the Migrated Archives, 'history of the collection' has taken precedence over the original order. The documents of the Migrated Archives have different creating bodies, though the Foreign and Commonwealth Office can be seen as the top of the pyramid, so putting them within the FCO archive is not unusual. Putting them together as record series FCO 141 is purely based on their unique post-creation history and would not otherwise have been done. Like the *Djogdja Documenten* they form one 'archive' because of outside forces affecting them after they were created and even initially ordered by the creating body.

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<sup>46</sup> Tom Nesmith, 'Reopening Archives: Bringing New Contextualities into Archival Theory and Practice', *Archivaria*, no. 60 (Fall 2005), 264.

<sup>47</sup> Anne Gilliland-Swetland, *Enduring Paradigm, New Opportunities: The Value of the Archival Perspective in the Digital Environment*, Washington, DC: Council on Library and Information Resources, February 2000.

## **F. The Migrated Archives through the Continuum Model**

To understand the Migrated Archives in the continuum model it is imperative to first have a clear picture of two things: the general disposition towards secrecy which permeated the Colonial Office, and—for this case study—the specifics regarding the records from Malaysia and Singapore. Now that this has been presented it is possible to move to looking at these records through the continuum model. Knowing them and the context in which they were initially created we can see whether the actions that took place during their existence coincide with continuum thinking.

I pointed out in Chapter II that a major flaw I see in the continuum model is that it is reliant on pluralization. I use the confusion of whether records are in all dimensions at once or not as a way to point out this problem. To say that the Migrated Archives were always in all dimensions of the continuum model is a difficult statement to prove. When Reed makes the claims that records exist in all dimensions simultaneously she takes the continuum model too far while failing to keep exceptions in mind.<sup>48</sup> As it relates to the Migrated Archives, it is nearly impossible to say that there was pluralization during the period they were secretly hidden at Hanslope Park. Analysis of the Migrated Archives using the continuum model was impossible before they were discovered in 2011—their pluralization.

Upward, et al, try to negate this problem in the Wikileaks example by stating that future archivists and historians will look back and only see '[r]efracted reflections of the records, seen from differing time periods, differing polities, different roles, all simultaneously co-exist as actual or potential interpretations of records, each valid in its own discrete or overlapping frame of reference'.<sup>49</sup> It is true that once hidden archives like the Migrated Archives become known to the public their complete history can be interpreted by the continuum model, but this interpretation overlooks the period while they were hidden. Nevertheless, since pluralization has now occurred, I will offer an analysis of the records.

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<sup>48</sup> Reed, 'Reading the Records Continuum', 20.

<sup>49</sup> Upward, et. al., 'Archivists and Changing Social and Information Spaces', 222-3.

I have previously mentioned the idea of ‘initial creation’ to differentiate it from the continuum model use of the word creation. In this case the records that make up the Migrated Archives were initially created by British colonial government departments (1D). This would be the various government departments creating records, such as intelligence reports, or the report on the Semenyih Incident case prepared by the presiding judge.

These records, and many others, were then captured by colonial recordkeeping systems (2D). They were turned from documents into accessible and useful records of the colonial administration beyond the point of creation. Metadata would have been created and individual records were linked to other records held by the administration. They could now be, as Reed says, ‘accessed and understood by others involved in undertaking business activities’.<sup>50</sup>

After being evaluated by people like O’Brien and MacMullen they were re-created as a new collection (1D), similar to the *Djogdja Documenten* being re-created by NEFIS. Prior to the work of these decision makers records from North Borneo and Sarawak would not belong to the same collection. Since some records were also sent to Kuala Lumpur to become part of the National Archives of Malaysia, these too underwent re-creation.

The political situation surrounding these records can also be seen when describing the records in continuum model terms. Records went from being in the possession of a colonial government department to another—for instance from the Colony of North Borneo Office of Police to the Chief Secretary of North Borneo. From here, in North Borneo, O’Brien would determine where records could be moved—either the state government (which would now be Sabah), the federal government in Kuala Lumpur, the Colonial Office in London, or destroyed. Each decision involved a re-creation in the continuum model sense.

The shipment to London can also be considered a further re-creation (1D), as the records changed physical spaces and took on completely new contexts away from their place of origin. It was at Hanslope Park that various collections from

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<sup>50</sup> Reed, ‘Reading the Records Continuum’, 20.

around the world were joined together into a new group called the Migrated Archives. It was their removal from the initial context that created the Migrated Archives as a separate entity. The discovery of the Migrated Archives during the Mau Mau court case and their movement to The National Archives is one more re-creation (1D). Here they were also captured, organized and pluralized by The National Archives (2D, 3D, 4D).

Capture (2D) is the dimension of records management. In this case it took place behind the scenes at The National Archives. This would be the creation of metadata, and bringing the Migrated Archives under the jurisdiction of The National Archives—‘capturing’ them within their system.

The Migrated Archives were organized (3D) by The National Archives in a quite obvious way. Organization is the dimension of the archive; turning records into something larger when they are together. Decisions were made, such as the one that put the entirety of the Migrated Archives into FCO 141. Having them exist as a single archive was an organizational decision made by The National Archives after the records were under their control.

Pluralization (4D) began in April 2012 when the first batch of records was opened to the public. The records could now be used by historians to reevaluate previous histories of the decolonization process. This is why I claim that the continuum model is reliant on pluralization and an open society. The period before pluralization, at Hanslope Park, existed in secrecy. If no trace exists of the records, then this would be an example where the shadow continuum would be applicable.

After pluralization records related to Singapore and Malaysia became of interest to the National Archives of Singapore. Through a project begun in the 1990s, the National Archives of Singapore has been purchasing copies of records related to its colonial past from institutions such as The National Archives in London. When the Migrated Archives were discovered it was decided that these records fit into what the National Archives of Singapore was interested in having. The copies in Singapore were thus re-created, captured, organized and pluralized

(1D, 2D, 3D, 4D) at the National Archives there.<sup>51</sup>

Furthermore, a new process begins at pluralization (4D). Since the discovery of the Migrated Archives an unknown number of records have been created about them (1D). These include the Cary Report, but also all the records that went in to the creation of the Cary Report that were then captured and organized (2D, 3D). Cary, while writing his report, would have re-created records that helped him in his research (1D). The Cary report has also been pluralized and made accessible (4D). The FCO has also created, captured, organized and pluralized records related to the transfer of the Migrated Archives from the FCO to The National Archives.

Records creation associated with the Migrated Archives therefore pertains to more than just the Migrated Archives alone. The re-creation of the Migrated Archives as a single entity (1D) was a spark that led to the creation of numerous other records that we do not yet know the entire scope of. What was just shown above connects the Migrated Archives to the continuum model. This, however, was only possible since their discovery in 2011. The next section will look for traces before 2011 to see if at any time the shadow continuum may have been at work in the history of the Migrated Archives.

## **G. The Migrated Archives and the Shadow Continuum**

In Chapter II I made it clear that the shadow continuum is only relevant when no trace is left by a record. To see if the shadow continuum is applicable to the Migrated Archives case then we must determine if there were traces of the Migrated Archives available prior to their disclosure. For this the work by Banton is most important. Banton's work shows that there were records accessible in The National Archives in London prior to the release of the Migrated Archives detailing the extent of colonial-era records that were destroyed. Elkins, meanwhile, commented in her article that evidence of torture during the Kenyan emergency had already existed in The National Archives.

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<sup>51</sup> Kwa Chong Guan and Leong Weng Kee, National Library Board, Singapore (personal communication, 5 March, 2015)

However, it is harder to determine the location of those records that were sent to London in order to not have them land in the hands of the successor governments. We know that they were shipped away from their original location, but specifics after that are harder to gather. The extent of traces of the Migrated Archives in The National Archives is debatable, but it is my belief that what was available prior to 2011 would not be enough to understand the content and context of the Migrated Archives. It was especially unknown just how vast the Migrated Archives would be. Therefore, while at Hanslope Park, the records would be considered under the description of the shadow continuum. No continuum model analysis of these records could have taken place prior to 2011, as there were no sufficient traces to carry out this work. The fact that Banton, an archivist with an expertise in colonial records was unaware of their existence should make this point clear.

For instance, Banton writes of records ‘relating to Kenya [that] are stated as being “on the public record”, but assumed to be either “closed”, “retained” or “missing” until located with the migrated archives’.<sup>52</sup> Until they were known to be part of the Migrated Archives, the references to them in publically accessible archives were not enough to completely contextualize them. Banton’s work illustrates that the idea that records were destroyed or sent to London was known. The extent, and which records met which end, however, was only known within the creating organization and its successor.

Looking at specific mentions makes it clear that, while destruction and hiding were known, traces as defined in Chapter II were inaccessible. In 1958 A.M. Mackintosh, from the Office of the Commissioner-General for the United Kingdom in South East Asia, located in Singapore, wrote to W.I.J. Wallace of the Colonial Office in London about archives that belonged to the Governor-General of the Malayan Union. His letter stated that his office was ‘hard pressed for space in our strong room, the U.K. Commission will have plenty on their hands when they begin to operate, and it would therefore be a great relief to us both, if you would agree to the transfer to London. I am also concerned about the propriety of this Office

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<sup>52</sup> Banton, ‘Destroy? “Migrate”? Conceal?’, 324.

continuing to retain material belonging to the Governor-General'. A later letter from August 1959 informs the Colonial Office that six crates of records have left Singapore bound for London on a Navy boat.<sup>53</sup>

This letter shows that initially there was a more wide-ranging definition of what documents should be sent back to the Colonial Office. It is not until 1961 that the office writes a memorandum describing which documents should not fall into the hands of successor states. Aside from the aforementioned embarrassment and ethical issues, it also stated '[t]here would be little object in handing over documents which would patently be of no value to the successor Government'.<sup>54</sup>

The records which were sent in August of 1959, are 'presumably in the migrated archive' from Hanslope Park according to Banton, though at the time of her writing it could not have been known for sure.<sup>55</sup> What is known is that further shipments were sent to London of archives relating to Singapore and Malaysia in 1961 and 1964. In 1961 it was decided to send all documents from Government House in Singapore to the Colonial Office in London, but in 1963 David Lee of the Office of the United Kingdom Higher Commissioner writes to the Colonial Office claiming to be pressured into destroying records from 1947-1958 due to space issues. W.E. Musgrove, Chief Register of the Colonial Office responds that he had believed all records should have been sent in 1961 and tells Lee to make arrangements with the Royal Navy to send them by ship to London as soon as possible, which Lee does in January of 1964. All copies of telegrams are ordered to be destroyed 'by means of shredding (...) packing in suitably weighted crates and dumped at sea at the maximum practicable distance from the coast in current free deep water (...) [or] by fire'.<sup>56</sup> Men like Musgrove, Lee, Wallace and Mackintosh are similar to O'Brien and MacMullen. They are the people who decided which records will be seen in the future.

The fact that Malaysia and Singapore would experience missing archives was

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53 The National Archives (TNA): CO 1030/691: Disposal of archives of former Governor-General of the Malayan Union.

54 Cary, *The Migrated Archives*, 1.

55 Banton, 'Destroy? Migrate? Conceal?', 327.

56 The National Archives (TNA): CO 1030/1595: Disposal of Singapore Archives.

well known from the time of independence, even if the specifics were not. The work of F.R.J. Verhoeven details the gaps in both countries' national archives. He makes reference to a clause in Singapore's National Archives and Records Centre Bill that states that 'the Director shall demand in writing and take steps for the return of any public records belonging to the Government, that have been illegally removed from official custody, [which] appears to provide a basis for the replevin of historical material abroad'.<sup>57</sup> Actually following through on this proved rather difficult, and Verhoeven notes this and the fact that the more generally accepted way of getting these documents back would be through purchasing, which is the course Singapore took.

The shadow continuum highlights the decisions regarding security and successor state access to information made by officials like O'Brien and MacMullen. It also focuses on the lack of access to the records in the period at Hanslope Park and the culture of secrecy at the FCO. Finally, the Kenyan court case, the Cary Report, and the transfer of records to The National Archives are all made notable as the moments where the records were taken out of the shadows.

In a situation where government openness and the availability of records were not priorities, it is possible to see the flaws in the continuum model that I proposed in Chapter II. The Migrated Archives only became interpretable by the continuum model once they were discovered and pluralized. Without this act no analysis could ever have taken place. The universality of the continuum model hinges on societies and situations where access to information is ensured. In other situations, such as the Migrated Archives prior to 2011, the continuum model is ill-equipped to analyze what is unknown—even when it exists. The model can only be used after the record has become pluralized, thus drawing attention to the fact that existent but unknown records cannot be analyzed through the continuum model.

The shadow continuum is in no way a new model—it is no replacement for the continuum model. It is a descriptive term used to show that the Migrated Archives can be depicted through continuum model dimensions, but that prior to their

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<sup>57</sup> NL-HaNA, ARA, 2.14.03, inv.nr 1320.

pluralization in 2011 no trace of them was publically available. The shadow continuum does not, in the end, answer any questions regarding the universal applicability of the continuum model. It does, however, express a unique feature of the record's history. The shadow continuum contextualizes the unique custodial history of these records.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter was meant to put the Migrated Archives in both a historical and archival context. Certain records were chosen to be sent to London and out of public knowledge for a reason. Major historical events covered in the records—the Malayan Emergency and the creation of Malaysia—were discussed. The highly hands-on role of the British in each situation was clear in the records, and could help explain why so many were kept hidden. The decisions made by O'Brien and MacMullen were then re-examined through the concepts of appraisal and selection. The concepts of original order and provenance explored how The National Archives would keep the Migrated Archives as its own collection rather than organize each countries' documents with others from that country, a decision that succeeds at reflecting the unique history of the records.

This was followed by an attempt to interpret the Migrated Archives using the continuum model. Most actions could still fit into continuum model dimensions, though the period at Hanslope Park left me with a problem that had to be discussed further. While the dimensions of the continuum model were applicable, in that the records were re-created by being sent to Hanslope Park and organized, they did so outside of the public realm. Without evidence of their existence during this period, the shadow continuum needed to be mentioned as a possible supplement.

I postulated that no traces were left behind that would accurately give a clue to the content and context of the Migrated Archives. Allusions to records being destroyed were numerous, and hints that not all was available were there, but nothing could pinpoint the location of the Migrated Archives or what they were. There was no equivalent to the routing slips of NEFIS. Unlike the *Djogdja*

*Documenten*, in this case, it was unknown that records were removed, since they were created by the British colonial administration. For this reason I found that the shadow continuum would be necessary for a complete interpretation of the Migrated Archives during their period at Hanslope Park. They were still captured and organized (2D, 3D), but sufficient traces of this period were not available.

The Migrated Archives make for a good example of what I already outlined as the major problems with the continuum model. Mainly that it is dependent on pluralization and a culture of openness and access. Without these the continuum model cannot be used in any analysis because it would be impossible to know of these records. By saying that the Migrated Archives, while at Hanslope Park, functioned within the shadow continuum, I am drawing attention to their unique history and allowing for the continuum model to continue to be used to analyze that history.

