

By Dr Sivachandralingam Sundara Raja

First published in Sun2Surf

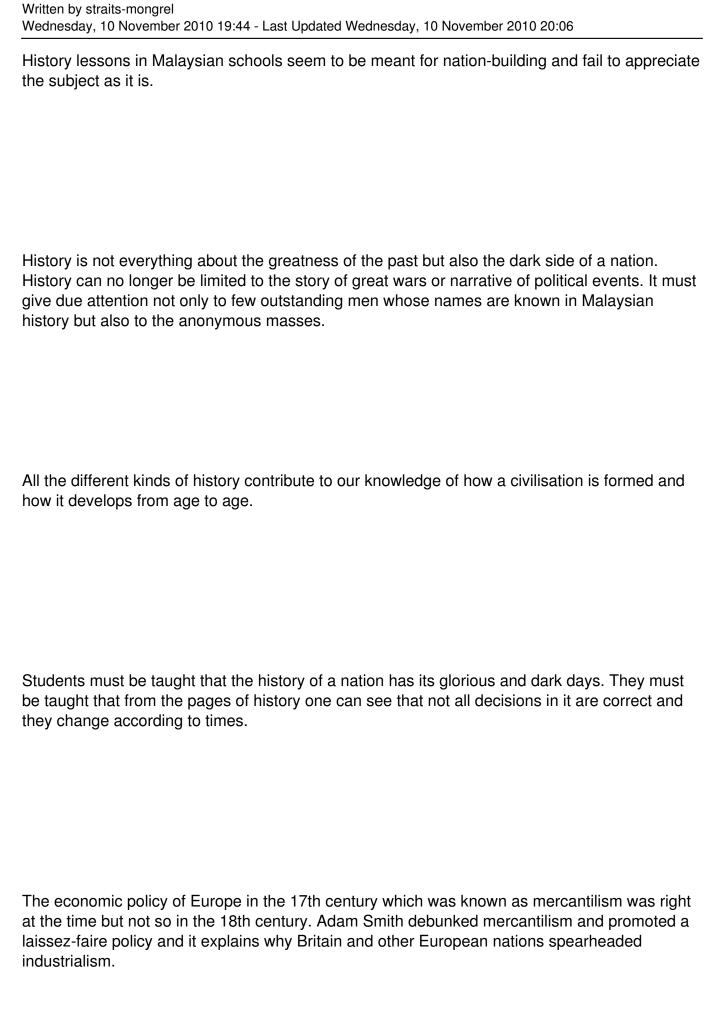
Written by straits-mongrel Wednesday, 10 November 2010 19:44 - Last Updated Wednesday, 10 November 2010 20:06

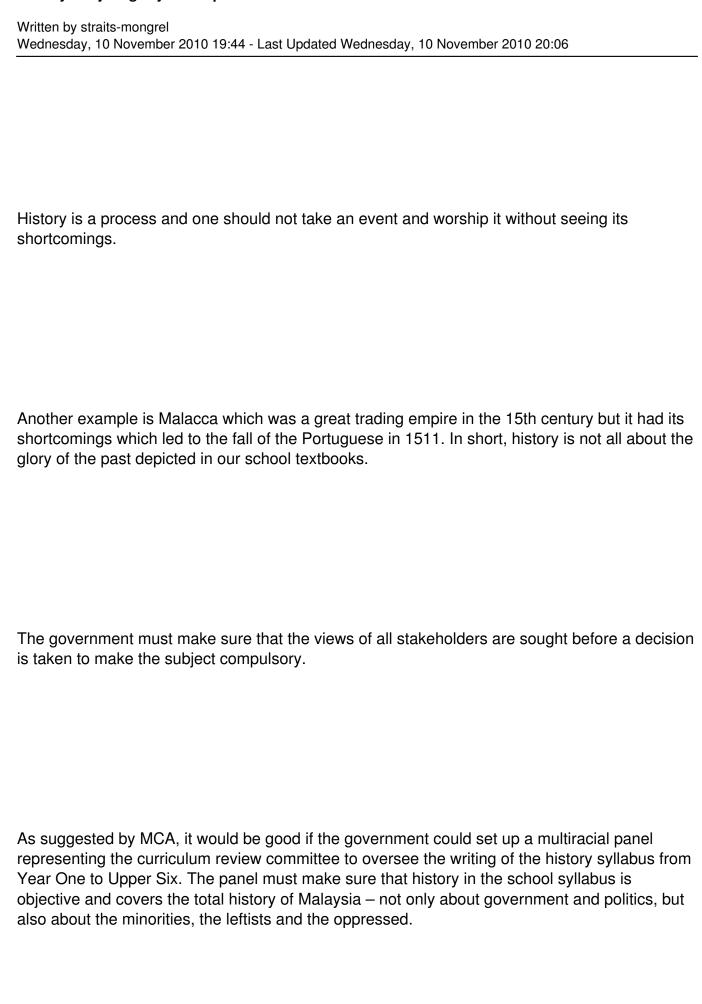
THE announcement by the government to make history a must-pass subject in the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) from 2013 seems to have received indifferent responses from many quarters. Although the majority agreed history is important for nation building some have warned that one has to be cautious before implementing the policy.

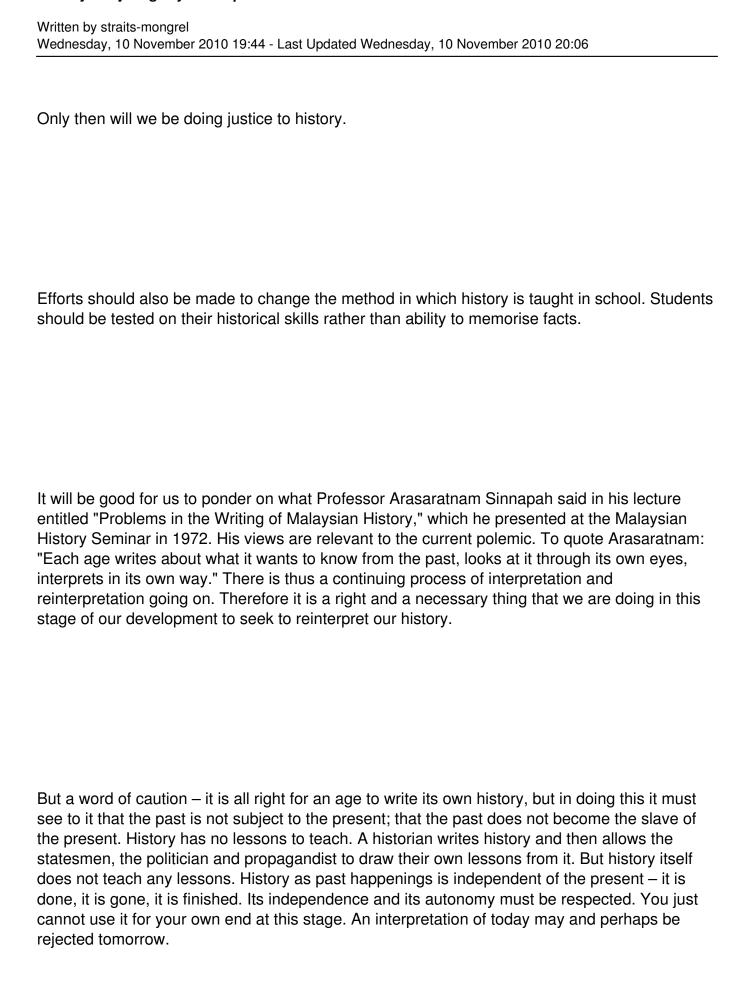
As a historian I would like to state my view on the matter. It is a known fact that the subject of history in school doesn't attract the interest of students and this view would be shared by teachers too.

The common grouses are that the subject is boring, syllabus is too wide, politically aligned, favours a particular race, the focus is on one main religious civilisation, memorising of dates and personalities, hero worshipping certain events in history and moral lessons for every historical event. History then is memorised for the sake of passing exams.

The emphasis of Form Five syllabus which draw moral lessons from historical events is indeed true in the exam questions. The exam papers are filled with questions relating to the morals of a particular historical occurrence.







Written by straits-mongrel Wednesday, 10 November 2010 19:44 - Last Updated Wednesday, 10 November 2010 20:06

Dr Sivachandralingam Sundara Raja is an associate professor with the History Department University of Malaya.