

What is “the Story”?

In a 1-2 page formal academic paper, describe the official story. Your paper must include at least 3 sources. At least one of them must be a book from the library and one of them a textbook. You need to cite in MLA style, with in-text citations. Wikipedia is not a source for this project!!!

In this paper, tell me what is the beginning, middle and end of the story. You are basically summarizing the main points.

THE FIRST BRITISH-BURMESE WAR (1924-1926)

Beginning

Burma had always been known for fertile land and rich soil, as well as having a diversity natural resources. The weather was not as hostile as India, where the British were in the midst of conquest. Acknowledging this soon enough, the British aimed to gain possession of Burma in order to exploit the country’s advantages; however, this was not the cause the war between them (Blair).

In reverse, between 1770s and 1850s, the British were experiencing the Industrial Revolution back in the Great Britain. The main income of the country has changed gradually from agricultural to industrial. Scientific inventions, technology advance, along with rapid economic growth are the factors which explain the British’s wealth at the moment (Mack).

During this time period, Burma was a wealthy nation within the region. The wealth and power of the Burmese Army was greatly contributed by various types of natural resources. Its military was powerful enough to conquer neighboring territories, such as Tenasserim, Arakan, Manipur. This made Burma a threat towards the British Empire. On September 1823, The Burmese captured the Shalpur Island near Chittagong, which was under the control of the East India Company.

Due to this aggressive move by the Burmese, the British were enraged and decided to start the war. Preparations began and the official declaration was announced on February 24th, 1824. (Somerset)

Middle

In 1823, Burmese forces once again set foot into British territory and this time the British retaliated by taking Ragoon with a seaborne operation. They wanted on surpassing the Burmese by holding the delta but the Burmese resisted. The commander in chief of the Burmese army, Maha Bandula, planned on attacking the British in Chittagong and Sylhet by sending troops through Arakan and Cachar. He leads the battle in Arakan while general Uzana commands the Carchar and Jaintia front (Richard).

In the early stages of the war, the Burmese had a substantial advantage. Battles were fought in jungles of Manipur and Assam, where the geography was familiar knowledge to the Burmese forces. They fought their way into Bengal and form a siege around Ragoon. The British were unfamiliar with this type of warfare. The British, however, slowly gained the advantage as they force the Burmese to withdraw the siege (Rickard).

The Battle of Yangon from May to December 1824 was the first major victory for the British. They gave up battling the Burmese on difficult terrain and instead took their navy to Burma. On May 11th, 1824 they arrived at Yangon and stormed the harbor. This forced the Burmese to pull all their troops back from all other theatres and meet British forces in Yangon. The army made their way in August, during the monsoon season, and set up a siege outside of Yangon. The Burmese greatly outnumbered the British with 30,000 men against 10,000. On the 30th of November, Bandula ordered a frontal attack on the British. Unfortunately, the Burmese were ill-equipped to fight the high fire powered weaponry of the British, who had just received shipment of rockets. On December 15th, the Burmese were driven off by the British (Rickard).

According to “The History of Myanmar” of Topich and Keith discussed upon the Battle of Danubyu, the Burmese fell back to Danubyu and fortified the base. On March 1825, British forces attacked Danubyu.

The first attempt failed and the Burmese launched a counter attack. This was also unsuccessful due to the British's superior artillery fire. On April 1st, 1825, British forces launched the final attack, destroying the fort with their guns and rockets. Bandula was killed and the Burmese fled. The British claimed victory to what is now the Battle of Danubyu. During this time, the British also defeated the Burmese army in Arakan and occupied the territory (Topich and Keith, 45-46).

According to macrohistorian Frank E. Smitha, on November 1825, the Burmese decided on a risking everything on one final move. The encircled Prome and tried to cut it off from Yangon but the army was eventually pushed back by British fire power. On December 5th, the Burmese fell back after their commander was slain by British fire. The defeat in the battle of Prome weakened the Burmese army both physically and psychologically and was constantly forced to retreat (Smitha).

End

In the end, the British were the winning team. Despite the glorious victory, 20,000 men from the British India Army had taken their lives in midst of the war. The estimated deaths of Burmese were definitely higher than the British's; however, up until now, there are still no numerical statistics that were published. Therefore the total Burmese deaths remained unknown (GKToday).

On the 24th of February in 1826, Britain and Burma together signed the "Treaty of Yandaboo," also called the "Yandaboo Accord," with the purpose to return peace between the two countries, however under certain conditions. The most notable conditions were that the Burmese have to pay 1,000,000 Pound Sterling to the British as reparations for the war and give up previously conquered Assam, Manipur, Arakan, and Taninthai which now will be territories of the British Empire. Also, both sides were to keep their military forces from crossing each other's borders. (Assam Times)

How Well Does "Geographic Luck" Explain Colonization & Conquest (When We Test It, Not the Author)

In this case study we will be looking at the interaction between **Britain** (Group A) and **Burma** (Group B)

1) Plants

Explain (Storage, Easy Harvest, Nutrition, Ect):

<u>Group A</u>	<u>Group B</u>
Wheat and barley, according to <i>Guns, Germs and Steel</i> , are the best crops for farming because they are durable, easy to domesticate as well as having high nutritious value (Diamond).	Rice is also known as a good crop for farming because it is very similar to the British's wheat and barley in terms of durability, nutrition and simplicity in domestication (New Agriculturist).

Does one group have more "Geographic Luck" than the other in this category? Explain:

The Burmese and British have equivalent geographic luck because they both have similar crops and equally fertile land to farm on

2) Animals

Explain (Muscle Power, Meat, Fur, Milk, Ect.):

<u>Group A</u>	<u>Group B</u>
In Britain, people farmed and raised cattle as food source for the community as well as for the military army (Diamond).	The Burmese used battle elephants to fight, as well as as their weapons, somewhat. They also had cattle like the British did as food source to support the army (New Agriculturist).

Does one group have more “Geographic Luck” than the other in this category? Explain:

The Burmese and British have equivalent geographic luck, because they both have cattle, used for similar purposes. However, the Burmese battle elephants seem to fail in this conquest due to the advanced military technology of the British. The British could have simply used their guns to shoot down the elephants.

3) N/S Travel of Goods/Info

E/W Travel of Goods/Info

<u>Group A</u>	<u>Group B</u>
<p>Throughout history, British Empire was well-known as “the empire on which the sun never sets”. The explanation to this quote is that since the British territories were scattered everywhere across the globe, when the night arrives at a British colony in the West, the day already approached a British colony in the East (Ross).</p> <p>An examination was processed to find out which colonies were ruled over the British Empire by 1842. According to the observation, British Empire has arrived at neighboring countries of Burma, such as India, Ceylon (nowadays Sri Lanka), Siam (nowadays Thailand), and Hong Kong (nowadays part of China PRC), etc. According to the world map, the travel direction from the mentioned areas to Burma is East-West direction (Alcock)</p>	<p>Since the formation of the Silk Road in the early 13th century, Burma and China had good trading relationship with each other. Furthermore, because Burma was located at the south of China, there would be constant trading of goods between China and Burma in the 1800s. Burma’s diverse natural resources came from these neighboring countries, and partly from the places where it had conquered as well (Anderson).</p> <p>According to the map, we can tell that the direction from China to Burma is North-South direction (Alcock).</p>

Does one group have more “Geographic Luck” than the other in this category? Explain:

The British had more geographic luck than the Burmese because they were able to travel from various directions into Burma. The Burmese could only travel North to South without any obstacles, meanwhile the British could travel all the way from East to West to attack.

4) How advanced were the British people? (Group A. Explain what they had, and what they didn’t have. How advanced were the Burmese people? (Group B) Explain what they had, and what they didn’t have.

<u>Group A</u>	<u>Group B</u>
<p>Weapons: Guns, heavy artillery like machine guns. Congreve rockets designed in 1805 and first according to the Encyclopedia Britannica, first documental used in 1806 (Britannica) (Potts).</p>	<p>Weapons: In the 1200s, when China's military technology was developed, muskets were invented (Hopstarr). Due to the good trading relationship between Burma and China, muskets soon appeared on the land of Burma. Burma also had non-gun powdered weapons, such as swords, spears, etc. Furthermore, they also had lots of elephants that can fight during war (Dunn).</p>
<p>Trade: The British traded with other European nations, and the country’s resources came from the British Empire’s conquered territories (Britannica).</p>	<p>Trade: Burma has established a trading system with China since the formation of the Silk Road in the early 13th century (Anderson).</p>
<p>Written Language: English is a language derived from Latin, and was developed by two tribes Anglo and Saxon. Throughout</p>	<p>Written Language: The Burmese Script was the official writing system of Burma. It was developed through the combination of</p>

the history, the English language has gradually changed. However, at each time period, the communicative and written English language was kept the same across Great Britain. This also means that if we were to focus on a specific period of time, we would find out that the English language had less variations compared to the Burmese Script. The simplicity in language made it easier for the British to learn and comprehend (LoupGarou55).	different local scripts, such as the Mon. To date back, the first Burmese script appeared since the 8 th century (Omniglot). However, because Burma consisted of people from many distinct origins, one would need to be able to comprehend around 120 languages and dialects in order to communicate among the others (Blair).
Resistance to Disease: Since the number of British soldiers were up to 25% of the world's population back then, not all of them could have been British. It turned out that there were some soldiers from Europe and also from conquered territories like India. Therefore, some may have resistances to local diseases and some may not (Summers).	Resistance to Disease: Burmese lacked resistance to spontaneous diseases, such as leprosy During the 1800s, leprosy spread. There were two Asian countries with the greatest number of cases of leprosy: India came first, and Burma was third (Cathy).

5) **Why was this colonization/conquest successful?** (What is the most essential aspect of this conquest?)

Explain:

Britain succeeded in conquering Burma because they forced Burma to sign the Treaty of Yandaboo. As a result, the British gained access to a big chunk of land that was previously Burma's conquest territories. Within the previous information, it seems like the British were more advanced in terms of military technologies than the Burmese. This was also the main reason that led to the British victory. Jared Diamond's "Geographic Luck Theory" came down to three different categories: guns, germs, and steel. The British military technologies lies under the guns category. Once again, due to this advancement, the British were able to win over the Burmese; and it also proved that geographic luck theory did work in this conquest.

X

Other Factors (Not Geography)

Geographic Luck

Other Factors that led to colonization/conquest that have nothing to do with farming, animals, travel of information or related to "Geographic Luck"	Geographic Luck caused colonization/conquest (explain the connection to the specifics of your case)
<p><u>Politics</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The life-long good relationship between China and Burma led to trading of weapons between the two countries. Burma could depend on this trade relationship to get more weapons for the war. - Wide range of colonies of British Empire spreads all over the Asia-Pacific Region was an advantage for the British forces. 	<p><u>Guns</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - British possessed advanced weapons, such as machine guns, rockets, etc. - Burmese owned less-advanced weapons, such as battle elephants, muskets, etc. <p><u>Steel</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - British had rockets. - Burmese had nothing but simple weapons from China.

6) **Effects of colonization/conquest today?** (Is there a connection between the interaction you studied and the relations in the country/countries today?) Explain:

1./ Due to the war, Burma's economy is still emerging. Firstly, it is due to the British conquest and over-exploitation of resources. Moreover, once the war was over, Britain took back most of its teak wood from Burma. The teak were, then, exported to other countries as a strategy for the British to gain more cash (Bryant 7). When British gave Burma its independence in 1947, Burma became one of the colonies of Japan and had to supply Japan with teak for World War II. Japan had also exploited the country's teak, leading to the decline of

teak in Burma (Bryant 18). Nowadays, Burmese is ranked 69th in the world in terms of world's richest countries. This is the direct result of the decline of teak exportation. (World's Richest Countries).

2./ Due to the British colonization, most Burmese nowadays, who reside at Yangon, Mandalay and other big cities, could speak fluent English due to the British culture that was left by the Empire. Their English skills are rather considered extraordinary compared to other countries in the region. According to the statistic distributed by Educational Testing Service, the average TOEFL score of a Burmese is 79 (ETS 14).

3./ During the colonial period, the British left huge cultural impacts in Burma. They attempted to blend the British culture altogether with the Burmese traditions. Furthermore, governmental offices, which were built in the British architectural style back then, are scattering all over Burma (McLeod). In Yangon and many other large cities of Burma, constructions are mostly done in the British architectural style, in terms of quantity (Hossainy).

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