港腳商人與鴉片經濟

Dr Alexander Ressos, TEP
Attorney-at-Law (Switzerland and Germany),
Solicitor (England & Wales and Hong Kong)
Of Counsel, KGP Legal LLC
alexander.ressos@kgplegal.com.sg
www.ressos.com.sg

鴉片：群島的通貨

任何關於轉口港經濟的論述，都不能略去鴉片。在東南亞各港口，印度鴉片既是貿易商品，也是交易媒介和政府收入來源。港腳商人（country traders）——持英國東印度公司牌照經營的英國及印度私商——將鴉片從加爾各答和孟買運往群島各港口及中國沿岸。在新加坡，鴉片由華人商販購入，重新包裝後轉銷至區內較小的港口、錫礦和種植園。[1]

鴉片在群島流通之規律，幾乎使之成為一種貨幣。商人樂意以鴉片收取貨款，因為它到處都能轉售，而且按重量計價值高，便於運輸。上文引述的武吉士貨物清單中，鴉片就是他們帶回家鄉的貨品之一。對種植園和礦場的勞工（大多是華人移民）而言，鴉片是一種消費品，購買鴉片耗去他們大部分工資。因此，這項貿易的利潤回流至供應鴉片的商人和向其徵稅的政府。

© 2026 Dr Alexander Ressos. General information only, not legal, tax or investment advice. No client relationship is created. All Singapore law advice is provided by a duly licensed and regulated firm of Singapore advocates and solicitors only on the basis of an express written letter of engagement. More information at SingaporeIQ.com and ressos.com.sg.

新加坡與對華鴉片貿易

最大的鴉片市場在中國。當時中國禁止輸入鴉片，但沿岸走私猖獗。廣州以至後來香港的大型代理行，以船隻將鴉片從印度運往停泊在中國沿岸的躉船。這項貿易從印度直達中國，新加坡並非主要航線，但它是停靠港、補給站，也是部分貨物的銷售市場。[2]1842年後通商口岸開放，香港亦在同一時期開埠，確立了這種分工：香港成為對華鴉片貿易的中心，新加坡則仍是東南亞分銷網絡的中心。

收入與責任

正如第II章所述，鴉片餉碼成為殖民地新加坡政府最重要的收入來源。餉碼以拍賣方式批予華商集團，他們向政府付款，換取在殖民地加工和銷售鴉片的專營權。由於餉碼利潤成就了19世紀若干最龐大的華人財富，控制餉碼成為敵對集團之間激烈爭奪的目標。[3]殖民地的財政、主要商人的財富以及勞工的工資，就這樣被單一商品捆綁在一起。

現代讀者看待這套制度，難免感到不安。自由港的繁榮，部分建基於一項損害許多消費者健康、而且在中國銷售屬違反中國法律的貿易。研究金融中心歷史的人，必須如實記錄這種依賴，既不為其開脫，也不以今日標準予以譴責。這與本書探討的其他事例屬同一類別，由殖民地商品貿易，以至20世紀利用銀行保密制度逃稅皆然。每個事例都顯示，金融中心可以從一些其後備受質疑的活動中獲利。第E部分和第H部分探討的聲譽風險與合規教訓，正是由此開始。

© 2026 Dr Alexander Ressos. General information only, not legal, tax or investment advice. No client relationship is created. All Singapore law advice is provided by a duly licensed and regulated firm of Singapore advocates and solicitors only on the basis of an express written letter of engagement. More information at SingaporeIQ.com and ressos.com.sg.

常見誤解

有人以為新加坡早期的繁榮主要建基於對華鴉片貿易。事實上，鴉片的直接航線由印度通往中國沿岸，1842年後則經由香港。新加坡的角色主要是東南亞的區域分銷中心，鴉片在持牌的餉碼制度下售予華人勞工和商人。餉碼收入為殖民地政府提供了大部分經費。港口的整體貿易範圍遠為廣泛，涵蓋紡織品、錫、胡椒、甘蜜、海產和製成品。

註釋

1. 關於新加坡在東南亞轉銷印度鴉片的角色，參見Carl A. Trocki, *Opium and Empire: Chinese Society in Colonial Singapore, 1800–1910*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1990，以及Carl A. Trocki, *Opium, Empire and the Global Political Economy*, London, Routledge, 1999。 ↩
2. 關於新加坡在對華鴉片貿易中相對於由印度直達中國沿岸航線的次要角色，參見Michael Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800–42*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1951，以及Trocki, *Opium and Empire*。 ↩
3. 關於鴉片餉碼集團及爭奪餉碼控制權，參見Trocki, *Opium and Empire*，第4–6章。 ↩

Disclaimer

This article is provided for general information only. It is based on publicly available sources as at its date of publication. These sources have not been independently verified against licences, regulatory registers or the records of the entities concerned. It is not legal, tax, financial or investment advice. Nor is it a recommendation to invest in, transact with or use the services of any entity mentioned. Law and regulation change frequently, so the content may be incomplete or outdated. To the fullest extent permitted by law, Dr Alexander Ressos and the publisher of SingaporeIQ exclude all liability for loss or damage arising from the use of or reliance on this article. Readers should obtain advice on their specific circumstances before acting or refraining from action.

© 2026 Dr Alexander Ressos. General information only, not legal, tax or investment advice. No client relationship is created. All Singapore law advice is provided by a duly licensed and regulated firm of Singapore advocates and solicitors only on the basis of an express written letter of engagement. More information at SingaporeIQ.com and ressos.com.sg.

Names and trademarks of the entities discussed belong to their owners and are used for identification only. Their mention implies no endorsement, affiliation or allegation of wrongdoing. All Singapore law advice is provided by a duly licensed and regulated firm of Singapore advocates and solicitors only on the basis of an express written letter of engagement. Corrections and updates: contact@ressos.com.

© 2026 Dr Alexander Ressos. This article may be quoted with attribution to SingaporeIQ (SingaporeIQ.com). Reproduction in full and any commercial use require prior written consent. The Legal Terms at https://singaporeiq.com/legal-terms apply.

Author contact: Dr Alexander Ressos, TEP · contact@ressos.com

© 2026 Dr Alexander Ressos. General information only, not legal, tax or investment advice. No client relationship is created. All Singapore law advice is provided by a duly licensed and regulated firm of Singapore advocates and solicitors only on the basis of an express written letter of engagement. More information at SingaporeIQ.com and ressos.com.sg.