INDIAN MIGRATION AND POPULATION CHANGE IN MALAYA, c.100-1957 A.D.: A HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY

by

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ABSTRACT

The study of the historical geography of Malaya is fraught with more than the usual difficulties. Firstly, source material is scarce, often fragmentary and obscure. Secondly, documentation of the little material available has only just begun and is beset with many handicaps, not the least of which is the dearth of qualified workers. Finally, much of the information available is inaccurate and unreliable, rendering its meaningful interpretation extremely difficult. Typical though it is of many studies in Malaya, it is especially applicable to the study of the Indian immigration and population change, particularly in the initial stages. Though some progress has been made during the present century in resolving these discrepancies, omissions, at times serious, still remain in the information regarding the Indians in Malaya. For example, the tale of the evolution of the population pattern of the Indians in Malaya has yet to be told. In this study an attempt has been made to assemble the information on the Indians in Malaya and analyse the population changes among them from the beginning of their immigration, about 2,000 years ago, to 1957, the year of the last population census of Malaya and of Merdeka (Independence), which marks the end of one and the beginning of another epoch.

Indian contacts with Malaya go back to pre-historic times. The full implications of the wealth of the region were, however, not realized by them till the beginning of the Christian era. From then
on, for more than a thousand years, there was a constant movement of Hindu and Buddhist traders, adventurers, priests and literati to the veritable El Dorados of Malaya and other Southeast Asian areas. This traffic, through intermarriage and cultural assimilation, led to the foundation and growth of a number of city-states, since extinct, and the "Indianization" of the Malay way of life. This was the apogee of Indian influence in Malaya, for with the rise of the Malacca Sultanate and the arrival of European powers, particularly British, the whole position of the Indians was altered. In contrast to their earlier brethren, who represented a powerful and respected commercial and economic force, the Indians who now flocked into Malaya were chiefly illiterate labourers.

This transformation took place as British power was established in both India and Malaya and the economies of the two countries subordinated to imperial needs, which entailed the curbing of Indian enterprise and the encouragement of a flow of cheap, docile Indian labour in large numbers to work the Malayan plantations and Government projects. In their wake followed petty shop-keepers, tradesmen, clerks and professional men to cater to special needs. This latter movement continued long after the labour migration was stopped by the Indian Government in 1938 but in a gradually decreasing volume, following immigration restrictions imposed by the Malayan Government in the post-war period. It was this section of the Indian migrants which first sank its roots in Malaya, thus beginning the stabilization of the local Indian population.
The Indian population has increased steadily, through immigration until the 1930's, and later through natural increase, following the improvement in the sex-ratios and the general stabilization of the community. Most of the Indians in Malaya are now local born and are re-producing at a faster rate than the other communities. If the present trend continues their numbers are expected to pass the 1,500,000 mark by 1980. With stabilization, changes are also taking place in their occupational structure and urban-rural ratios.

Following the Indian Government's ban on unskilled labour emigration and the spread of education in Malaya the proportion of labourers in the Indian population has been steadily declining. For example, it was estimated that less than 50 per cent of the economically active Indians were labourers in 1960, compared to more than 80 per cent in the early 1920's. This trend will probably continue as the majority of the younger generation Indians appear to prefer clerical, technical, commercial and professional occupations.

In 1921, less than 10 per cent of the Indians were urban dwellers but by 1957 more than half of them were living in urban centres. By 1960, the proportion of the urban dwellers in the total Indian population was estimated to be as high as 60 per cent. If this rapid rate of urbanization is maintained, and there is no reason to believe that it will not be, Indians might well challenge the Chinese as the most urbanized community of Malaya.
The author wishes to thank the Canada Council for its grant of a Non-Resident Fellowship to study in Canada and the faculty of the Geography Department, University of British Columbia, for their encouragement and assistance. In particular, the author would like to thank Professor J. Ross Mackay for his advice and guidance in all stages of this work.
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<td>P.L.C.S.S.</td>
<td>Proceedings of the Legislative Council, Straits Settlements</td>
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<td>R.L.C. 1890</td>
<td>Report of the Commissioners of Enquiry into the State of Labour in the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States, 1890 (Singapore, 1891)</td>
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<td>R.L.C. 1896</td>
<td>Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Enquire into the Question of Indian Immigration, 1896 (Singapore, 1896)</td>
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<td>S.S.</td>
<td>Straits Settlements</td>
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<td>S.S.B.B.</td>
<td>Straits Settlements Blue Book (Singapore)</td>
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<tr>
<td>T.A.P.S.</td>
<td>Transactions of the American Philosophical Society (Philadelphia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.F.M.S.</td>
<td>Unfederated Malay States</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.M.N.O.</td>
<td>United Malays National Organization</td>
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# GLOSSARY OF MALAY AND OTHER LOCAL TERMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MALAY TERMS</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>atap</td>
<td>roofing thatch, usually of palm fronds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bahar</td>
<td>local measure, the equivalent of about 400 lbs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>bahasa</td>
<td>language.</td>
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<tr>
<td>bangsal</td>
<td>estate or estate dwellings for labourers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>batik</td>
<td>Malaysian printed cloth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>bendahara</td>
<td>a palace chancellor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duli</td>
<td>Malay royal title meaning &quot;His Highness&quot; or &quot;His Excellency&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dusun</td>
<td>rural settlement; often used roughly in the sense of orchard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gharu</td>
<td>aloeswood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haji</td>
<td>a person who has made pilgrimage to Mecca.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>istana</td>
<td>sultan's palace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kampong</td>
<td>cluster of buildings making up a large homestead or a small hamlet and including the surrounding gardens; used commonly as an equivalent of &quot;village&quot;.</td>
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<tr>
<td>kathi</td>
<td>Muslim priest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kris</td>
<td>Malay dagger with a wavy blade.</td>
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<tr>
<td>lalang</td>
<td>coarse perennial grass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laut</td>
<td>sea.</td>
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<tr>
<td>lebai</td>
<td>mosque official.</td>
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<tr>
<td>mantri</td>
<td>minister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melayu</td>
<td>Malay.</td>
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<tr>
<td>mufti</td>
<td>learned man, especially in theology; mosque official.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

XVIII
mukim - political subdivision for purposes of administration and collection of land revenue.

Maha Mulia - Malay royal title meaning "His Illustrious (Glorious) Highness".

Orang Laut - Sea-gypsies.

Padaka Sri - Malay royal title meaning "His Highness".

Padi - rice (i) as a plant (ii) in the ear (iii) as unhusked grain.

Prahu - Malay boat.

Parit - ditch or drain.

Penghulu - headman.

Permatang - abandoned beach ridges.

Persekutuan Tanah Melayu - Malay and constitutional name of the Federation of Malaya.

Sawah - wet padi field.

Shabandar - municipal-cum-port officer of the Malacca Sultanate.

Sungai - (abbreviated to S. in place names) river or stream.

Temenggong - Regent or Minister.

OTHER TERMS

Bharata(s) - Hindu deities.

Bazaar - market.

Bengali(s) - In actuality this term applies to natives or the language of the Bengal Province of India; locally, it is a term that has been erroneously but traditionally used, principally by Asians, to denote all Indians who are not South Indians (Kling(s)).

Bodhisattva(s) - Hindu deities.
Chettiar(s) - Tamil Hindu merchant caste.

coolie (coolly, cooly) - properly spelt "kuli", is probably derived from the Tamil kuli (wages; pay; fare; hire; freight) and kuli-v-yal (hired labourer), and in the East Asian countries is used to denote a porter or carrier or, in the derogatory sense, a person of low up-bringing. This term has also been extended, by Europeans, to include all hired labourers, but particularly, Indian and Chinese labourers, who emigrated under contract to places like Southeast Asia, West Indies, Africa and North America. The labourer of to-day resents being addressed as a "coolie", and in Asia the term is gradually falling into disuse.

Chuliah(s) - Tamil Muslim trader(s).

Dharmasastra(s) - Hindu ethical laws.

godown - store or warehouse.

kangany - A Tamil term meaning overseer or supervisor of labourers (coolies) on plantations. Kanganies are also known as tindals or mandors, which mean the same thing.

Kapitan - chief or headman.

Kling(s) - like "Bengali", an ubiquitous local term, used to denote all South Indians; probably derived from the ancient Indian empire of KALINGA (which comprised the country covered by modern Orissa and Ganjam), whose people were among the earliest Indian visitors to the Malayan shores. To-day Indians resent being referred to as Klinga, for the term has since taken on a contemptuous meaning.

labour lines - barrack-like, elongated many-roomed dwellings of labourers.

Malay - native of Malaya; the mother tongue of the Malays.

Malayan - a person domiciled in Malaya, irrespective of whether he be Chinese, Malay, Indian, etc.; things pertaining to Malaya.

Malaysians - Malays and other Muslims of Malay stock; also indiscriminately used to denote all native peoples of "Malaysia" (Malaya, Southern Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia and British Borneo).
Malayali - native of Kerala (Travancore), India.

Merdeka - independence or freedom; of Sanskrit origin via bahasa Indonesia (the Indonesian language = Malay) and used as a rallying slogan in the post-war movement for self-government in Malaya and Indonesia.

mullah - Muslim religious teacher.

Mussulman - Punjabi Muslim.

munsif - sub-collector of revenue in India.

purdah - Indian system of excluding women of rank.

sepoi - Hindustani for soldier or armed policeman.

Tamil - native of the Madras Province of India; language of the Tamils.

Telegu - native of the Andhra Province of India; language of the Telugus.
LOCAL MEASURES OF WEIGHT, CAPACITY AND AREA

The principal local measures of weight, capacity and area, together with their English equivalents, are as follows:

The **chupak** = 1 quart
The **gantang** = 1 Imperial gallon
The **tahil** = 1 1/3 ozs.
The **kati** (16 tahils) = 1 1/3 lbs.
The **pikul** (100 katis) = 133 1/3 lbs.
The **kovan** (40 pikuls) = 5,333 1/3 lbs.
One **jemba** = 64 sq. feet.
One **relong** = 484 jembas
One **acre** = 1.40525 relongs

Other weights in common use are:

10 **huns** = 1 **chi**
10 **chi** = 1 **tahil** (1 1/3 ozs.)
1 **bahar** (3 pikuls) = 400 lbs.
1 **kuncha** = approximately 160 **gantang**
1 **nalih** = 16 **gantang**
1 **gantang** of padi = 5 lbs. approximately
1 **gantang** of rice (milled) = 8 lbs. approximately
EXCHANGE RATES

One Malayan (or Straits) $ = 2s. 4d. sterling
= U.S. $0.33
= Indian Rps. 1.55 = 1 Rp. 55 Nps.

£1 sterling = M$8.75
One U.S. $ = M$3.06
One Indian Rupee = M$0.65

Unless otherwise indicated all financial rates and data in the text are in Malayan or Straits dollars.
Fig. 1. Indians in Malaya.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Malaya has a multi-racial population, including Malays, Chinese, Indians, Europeans, Eurasians, Sinhalese, Arabs, Jews, Siamese, Aborigines and others. The first three communities, however, are the dominant groups, forming 98 per cent of the total population. Apart

1. Unless otherwise stated, the term "Malaya" or "British Malaya" as it was called before independence, is used throughout the text to include both the Federation of Malaya and the State of Singapore. These two territories have traditionally functioned together and have been separated, politically, only recently. This separation is perhaps temporary for the movement to re-merge the two units as before, is gaining in strength in both areas. Singapore, though politically separate, still retains most of its traditional functions as the primary city and the chief port of Malaya.

2. An actual Malay is of Mongloid stock but for political, legal and census purposes, a Malay in Malaya is defined as "a person who professes the Muslim religion, habitually speaks the Malay language, conforms to Malay customs and (a) was before Merdeka Day (31st August, 1957) born in the Federation or born of parents one of whom was born in the Federation, or is on that day domiciled in the Federation; or (b) is the issue of such a person." (Malayan Constitutional Documents (Kuala Lumpur, 1960), p.108).

Incidentally it might be noted here that the term "Malayan" refers not only to Malays but also to the other communities, like the Indians, Chinese, etc., living in Malaya. It is also used in the sense of things pertaining to Malaya, the country, as a whole, like "Canadian" for Canada, and "British" for Great Britain. It should not be confused with the term "Malay" which is used specifically to denote either the indigenous people or/ and their language.

3. The term "Indian" is used in the text to denote all persons of Indian origin, including Pakistanis and Ceylon Tamils.
from the Aborigines\(^1\), the population is essentially "alien" in character, being composed predominantly of Malay, Chinese and Indian immigrants\(^2\), who moved into Malaya consequent upon the establishment of British rule and the opening up of the country during the last one hundred years.

The advent of the British, Chinese and Indians led to sweeping changes in the traditional patterns of the human geography of Malaya. For example, the influx of Chinese and Indian immigrants has substantially changed the demographic structure of Malaya. As early as 1921 "alien immigrants"\(^3\) already outnumbered the Malays, making the latter a minority

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1. There are an estimated 100,000 Aborigines in Malaya to-day, mainly in the forested interior of the country. They are still very primitive but being indigenous, they have been traditionally classified as "Malays" for legal, political and census purposes.

2. Though Malays have been settled in the country since before the beginning of the Christian era the majority of the present day Malay population is descended from emigrants, from Sumatra, Java, Borneo and other Indonesian islands, who entered Malaya during the medieval and modern times.


3. All non-Malay immigrants into Malaya were regarded as "alien immigrants" and were generally denied most of the citizenship privileges enjoyed by the Malays till after the Second World War.
in their own country. By 1957 the Chinese alone outnumbered the Malays in Malaya.

A remarkable transformation has also taken place in the development of the country. A century ago the settled parts of Malaya consisted merely of a few clearings and settlements along the coast, up rivers and isolated patches in the forests and swamps. Production was restricted to some foodstuffs and jungle items. Yet today it is one of the richest and best developed countries in Asia, producing more than a third of the world's supply of tin and natural rubber, as well as large quantities of palm oil, copra and pineapples.

The Malay population has taken little part in this modern development, present day Malaya being, mainly, the joint creation of British, Chinese and Indian enterprise. The Malays have largely remained tied to their traditional self-sufficient agricultural economy based on tiny land-holdings.

A number of books and articles have been written on Malaya and its people and their economy. The Malays have been particularly well-documented while the characteristics and contributions of the

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1. Though being also immigrants, perhaps of a little longer standing than the Indians and Chinese, the Malays have been habitually and in constitutional theory and political practice, accepted as "natives of the country" and "owners of the soil".

2. See, for example, T.E. Smith, Population Growth in Malaya: An Analysis of Recent Trends (London, 1952), and B.W. Hodder, Man in Malaya (London, 1959), which are well documented with the latter containing an exhaustive bibliography.

British and Chinese in Malaya have also been the subject of numerous studies.¹ In the building of modern Malaya the role and contribution of the Indians has also won high praise:

With little exaggeration it has been said of Europe that it owes its theology, its literature, its science and its arts to Greece; with no greater exaggeration it may be said of the Malayan races that till the nineteenth century they owed everything to India: religion, a political system, medieval astrology and medicine, literature, arts and crafts .... India found the Malay a peasant of the late stone age, a 'frog under a coconut shell' and it left him a citizen of the world.²

Indigenous Political Systems of Western Malaya (London, 1958), and E.H.G. Dobby and Others, "Padi Landscapes of Malaya", M.J.T.G., Vol.6 (1955) and Vol.10 (1957), are some of the more prominent works on the Malays of Malaya.


Few people have sufficiently bothered about the subject to realize what the people of India and Ceylon did in the early days of the country. When British officers came into the country they numbered four or five in one state and perhaps three or four in another, but they had devoted staffs mainly composed of the people of India and Ceylon.

At that time the Malays did not know the English language and were therefore unable to take their share in the administration of the government. The devoted services of the people from India and Ceylon would never be forgotten. They did not know the customs of the people of the country, but they were sent out to the wilds to do their work and they did it with unswerving loyalty (and) everyone would always be grateful to the people of India and Ceylon for being the pioneers of the work of those days.

The Indian labourers were the creators of Malaya's potential rubber wealth (and) were called the 'life blood of the colony'.

It was the Indian labourers who laid the foundation for Malaya's prosperity ... (while in postwar Malaya) ... Indian tappers and subordinate staff have carried on despite (Communist) terrorist attacks. The number of Indians in (Communist) bandit gangs is exceedingly small. Indian engine drivers defy bullets and bombs to keep Malaya's trains moving. Indian police have covered themselves with glory in many parts of our swirling(jungle battleground).*

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Many of the Indians who came here long ago have now already lost their desire to go back to India. Their children feel themselves to be very much more the citizens of this country than the children of their father's or grandfather's village in India ... and would far rather settle down in Malaya permanently if they had a reasonable chance to own their own land.

Yet, except for numerous scattered references in publications dealing with India or Malaya or Southeast Asia, as a whole, and a few books and articles, mostly politically biased, on certain aspects of the community, there has, to the best of the writer's knowledge, so far been no comprehensive study of any kind, much less a geographical one, covering the whole of the long period of Indian settlement in Malaya.


3. Unless otherwise stated the terms "India" and the "Indian Sub-Continent", include both the present India and Pakistan.

4. Southeast Asia is used here as the collective regional name for the area bounded by and composed of Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Vietminh (North Vietnam), Indonesia, British Borneo (North Borneo, Brunei and Sarawak), Philippines and Malaya.

5. Nearly all of this literature, listed below, is written by journalists or leaders of the Indian community in Malaya or some other persons, and has a definite political bias. For the most part these writings are subjective panegyrics of Indian achievement in Malaya and condemnations of their poor treatment by the British Government. They all appear to have the same singular motive: to eulogise and publicise the position of the Indians as a whole or their particular sector of interest, probably, in the hope of
A. **Scope and Aims**

Bearing in mind the facts discussed above, it is the intention here to make a historical geographical study of the Indian migration and population change in Malaya from its beginnings, about 2,000 years ago,

- improving their status. This is amply illustrated by an examination of the texts listed below:

1. **A.V. Moothedeen, Our Countrymen in Malaya** (Trivandrum, India, 1932). A Malayali's (native of the Kerala Province of India) general eulogistic account of the Indians' role in Malaya and their ill-treatment by the British. Neither his accusations nor his praise are substantiated with factual examples.

2. **N. Raghavan, India and Malaya: A study** (Bombay, 1954). Written by a former official of the politically militant Central Indian Association of Malaya, this work, though less subjective and written with much more flourish and poise, is nevertheless, basically similar to the account above.

3. **V.S. Sastri, Report on the Conditions of Indian Labour in Malaya** (New Delhi, 1937). The author was a leader of the Moderates in the Indian National Congress and his Report, though factual, is also mantled in political overtones.

4. **S. Nanjudan, Indians in Malayan Economy** (Office of the Economic Advisor, New Delhi, 1950). This is similar to Sastri's Report, being written by an Indian Government official.

5. **K.A. Neelakanda Aiyer, Indian Problems in Malaya** (Kuala Lumpur, 1938). The author was Secretary of the C.I.A.M. during the time of the publication of his book. This is a well executed exposition of the discriminations against the Indians in Malaya by the British Government, and consequently was promptly banned immediately after its publication.

6. **R.B. Krishnan, op.cit.** An Indian leader's highly coloured 'Pageant' of Indian achievements in Malaya. Compiled at a time when the pro-Malay policy of the Government was being intensified, this work was probably aimed at safeguarding the position of the Indians through publicising their achievements in Malaya.

7. **M.N. Nair, The Indians in Malaya** (Kodnayar Printing Works, India, n.d.). This is a general journalistic account on the lines of Moothedeen, op.cit.
to 1957, the year of Malaya's independence from British rule. It was decided to end the study at 1957 since this date marks the end of one -- colonial -- and the beginning -- independence -- of another era in Malaya's history and development. Furthermore, 1957 also serves as a bench-mark for comparative purposes, as it was also the year of the latest population census in the Federation and Singapore.

Many of these have been written by former members of the I.N.A. or the Indian Independence League in Malaya or the Indian National Congress. For example, Shah Nawaz Khan, *I.N.A. and its Netaji* (Delhi, 1946), was an officer in the I.N.A., while B.J. Desai, *I.N.A. Defence* (Delhi, 1947), who defended the I.N.A. officers, at their trial for treason in New Delhi, was a member of the Indian National Congress.


(x) P. Kodanda Rao, "Indians Overseas: The Position in Malaya", *India Quarterly*, II, (April-June, 1946), pp.150-62. This is a general account of the Indians in Malaya on the same lines as Aiyer's, *op.cit.*, work. The author was a former Indian official in Malaya and member of the C.I.A.M.

(xi) S. Durai Raja Singam, *India and Malaya Through the Ages* (Singapore, 1954). This falls in the same category as Kanwar's, *op.cit.*, work, the difference being that this is a pictorial survey of similar Malay and Indian customs, in an effort to show India's contributions to Malaya.

In these circumstances the above works, though they contain valuable information, some of the comments and descriptions being by keen observers, are of limited research value.
This work makes no pretence to be definitive or complete as there have been limitations of time, source material available, and also limitations imposed by the historical span and scope of the subject which stretches over some 2,000 years. But in the absence of any detailed and comprehensive account, it is hoped that this study will serve to fill in some of the gaping voids in the vast subject of Indian migration, settlement and assimilation in Malaya. More important, it is the hope that it will serve as a forerunner and an introduction to more detailed research on particular aspects of the Indian community, not only in Malaya, but also in the rest of Southeast Asia and other tropical and non-tropical areas like Africa and Anglo-America, where more than three million persons of Indian origin are to be found. (Appendix A and Fig.2).^1

B. Sources of Information

Sources of information available and used have been grouped under four main categories:

1. Published materials.
3. Government officials and members of the public.
4. Field work.

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Fig. 2. World: Distribution of Indian Immigrants, 1957.

Source: Based on statistical data given in Appendix A.
(1) **Publications:**

These are primarily of six types:

(a)(i) Malayan Government publications such as Census Reports, Annual Reports of the two territories and their various departments, Reports of Commissions appointed by the Government, and the Proceedings of Legislative Councils and other similar bodies.


(a)(iii) British Parliamentary Command Papers and Reports of Commissions appointed by the Government.

(b) Journals and memoranda of Learned Societies and other such organisations.

(c) Articles in journals, essay collections or in newspapers, concerning Indians in Malaya, written largely by journalists, politicians, government officers or scholars.

(d) Books and periodicals on the Indians in Malaya and those, though not strictly written on the Indians in Malaya, containing reference to them.
(e) Charts, diagrams, photographs and maps, one going back to 1613 A.D., containing land-use information and the sites of the earlier and later Indian settlement in Malaya.

(f) Scattered references and reports in both the vernacular and the English language newspapers in Malaya.

(2) Unpublished materials:

This includes theses, mimeographed memoranda, records and documents.

(a) The theses are mainly those completed in the University of Malaya, Singapore, but also include a few from other institutions, principally by the members of the academic staff of the University of Malaya. Some of these theses deal specifically with certain aspects of the Indian community while others only contain references to them.

(b) Mimeographed memoranda include minutes and reports of meetings and discussions, and Government and private press releases.

(c) Records and documents, mainly of Government origin, the principal ones available being the Selangor Records, within which, in addition, are also enclosed a number of private documents.
(3) **Government Officials and Members of the Public:**

(a) Government officials directly concerned with the Indians were at times a valuable source of information and usually ready to co-operate.

(b) Indian community leaders in Malaya were another source of information. This was mainly obtained through letters and in a few cases by means of personal interviews.

(c) The academic people concerned with the Indians in one way or another, besides being sources of information — obtained through informal discussions as during "coffee-breaks" — were also valuable in that they provided the means whereby certain items could be checked for authenticity and accuracy.

(4) **Field Work:**

In addition to the fact that the writer has travelled extensively in India and Malaya since his childhood days, actual planned field work was also undertaken in the latter country during July-August, 1958, and December-January, 1959/60, to supplement and illustrate the source materials listed above.

**C. Limitations**

The above list of sources of information looks impressive and it would appear at first sight that the embarrassment in materials would be in riches and the problem one of selection. But in actual fact, one of the main set-backs has been the paucity of materials available and accessible.
The prime difficulty facing the historical geographer of early Malaya is the complete lack of indigenous literary sources before the sixteenth century. Malaya has no Domesday Book or Rig-Veda. The earliest extant indigenous work in Malaya, the Sejarah Melayu, (The Malay Annals), a panegyric of considerable interest to the antiquarian but of little practical value to the historical geographer, is attributed to a date no earlier than the middle of that century. The first description of any part of Malaya from the pen of an alien even temporarily resident -- the Suma Oriental of the Portuguese apothecary, Tome Pires -- was written only a few years earlier in 1512-5. In Malaya, too, the face of the country is a far less valuable document than in temperate lands such as Europe or North India. The ravages of climate, insects, moulds and the erosive and phenomenally rapid depositional power of equatorial rainfall and streams combine to obliterate the imprint of man's occupancy almost as soon as he relinquishes tenure of the land and go far to thwart even the subtlest probings of the archeologist. There are no features in the Malayan landscape comparable, for example, with the remains of the Indus Valley city-states of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, the lynchets of the European chalklands, the 'lost' villages and fossilized remains of the English midlands or the abandoned structures of Angor Vat, while there are no ecclesiastical or administrative units from this early period to manifest man's preoccupation with soil and landforms such as is betrayed by the shape of the English parish or, from a later date, the seigniories of Lower Canada. Anyway, the study of archaeology in
Malaya is still in the infant stage and besides the physical difficulties enumerated above, no less a handicap is the dearth of qualified workers. In these circumstances, foreign literary and epigraphic records are of paramount importance. But these may be in any one of the Indian, Chinese, Arab, Siamese, Indonesian or European languages, and often, in more than one, which introduces the problems of translation and transliteration. Then the evidence of these different sources is often contradictory, a problem complicated further by the frequency with which place-names are changed and are duplicated.\(^1\) In this connection it should be noted that so wide is the gulf between the geography of ancient and modern Malaya that there has been no continuity of place names in the country from the early times to the present. The versions that are included in the earlier chapters of this study, are chiefly the contemporary Chinese forms of local names long since fallen into disuse. For the resurrection of the early Malayan place-names, the location and identification of many of which is still a matter of debate, we owe a tremendous debt to scholars like P. Pelliot\(^2\), G.H. Luce\(^3\), Sir Ronald Braddell\(^4\), Sylvian Levi\(^5\), R.C. Majumdar\(^6\),

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1. See, for example, *J.T.C.*, Vol.9 (1956), pp.1-78. This whole volume is a special issue on the source material for the historical geography of ancient Malaya.


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2. *op. cit*.
7. *Notes on the Malay Archipelago and Malacca Compiled from Chinese Sources* (Batavia, 1876).
For modern Malaya, too, in almost every instance the materials accessible, from the listed sources, are fragmentary. No one place in Malaya possesses a complete set of even such basic printed records as, for example, the Proceedings of the Federal Council of the Federated Malay States and the Population Census Reports. Similarly, many of the records published for restricted circulation, also, show wide gaps. Pre-war Labour Department records, for example, are virtually non-existent, while many numbers of the Annual Reports of the Agent of India in British Malaya, and those of the F.M.S., Straits Settlements and the Unfederated Malay States are also not available in Malaya.

The reasons for the incomplete records are losses suffered in the Japanese Occupation and during the post-war British Military Administration and by sheer neglect, disinterest in and maladministration of public records on the part of the Government and individuals.

Much material was lost during the Malayan campaign, following the Japanese invasion, through bombing, fire, looting and general vandalism. The small Federal Museum at Kuala Lumpur, for example, was bombed out and much of the material never recovered.

1. Unless otherwise indicated the terms "pre-war" and "post-war" refer to the period before and after, respectively, of the Second World War (1939-1945).

2. In Malaya, the period of the Japanese occupation of the country, from 1942 to 1945, is usually referred to as the "Japanese Occupation".
The Japanese soldiers showed little respect for things English and in many places they made huge bonfires with Government files, records and books in addition to urging the people to discard all books in the English language. Many were the people who destroyed their libraries for fear of Japanese reprisals. The more enterprising ones not only sold their own collections as paper weight to shop-keepers, junk dealers, and vendors but also the old Government records and files in the offices where they worked. It was not an uncommon sight, during and immediately after the Japanese Occupation, to see food pedlars serving their peanuts, fried bananas, curry-puffs and other similar delicacies, on memoranda of the Indian Immigration Committee or on papers from the Annual Reports of the Labour Department or the Proceedings of the Federal Council or some other such records!

The British Military Administration which replaced the Japanese, upon the latter's surrender in 1945, and ruled Malaya till the return of civil rule in 1946, did little to salvage the old records. In fact, in some cases more destruction was done during this short period than during the whole of the Japanese Occupation. Pilfering and black-marketing in Government property was a profitable business while many valuable materials found their way out of the country in the possession of officials and other individuals as private property to, perhaps, adorn family or alma mater libraries or become collectors' items.

Finally some of the materials that were salvaged have been either misplaced or lost through neglect or are unavailable through maladministration. Until a couple of years ago, when the post of
'Keeper of the Public Records' was created, there was no central place for keeping public records. They were to be found dumped in all sorts of places like Public Works Department garages, Education Department store-rooms and the basement of the State Secretariat in Kuala Lumpur. Even today, though most of the materials available have been collected and crated, no effort has been made to catalogue or arrange them, and they continue to rot in crates adorning the steps and the bottom of the new Museum Negara (National Museum), Kuala Lumpur, in which is located the office of the Keeper of Public Records.

In Singapore, the situation is somewhat better, the available records being housed in the Raffles National Museum and Library. But even here the organisation is chaotic and what older records were salvaged have only just been saved from complete destruction, through mould, by the installation of an air-conditioning unit.

It is possible that much of the material non-existent in Malaya might be available in India or at least in London, which is easily the best centre in the world of codified material on Malaya. Unfortunately, due to financial difficulties and other commitments, it was impossible to visit these places or to secure any of these materials. In any case little of the material, on the Indians in Malaya, either abroad or in Malaya, is written by geographers or from the geographical point of view. Problems of selection, detail and modification thus have been and would have been ever present. In these circumstances, much that follows has been culled from the sources listed and under conditions discussed above. This, it is hoped, will partly explain the omissions and gaps in the text.
Many statistics have been included to supplement and illustrate the thesis. In addition, since statistics about the Indians in Malaya are not to be found in any one place but scattered over both space and time — many of which are gradually becoming inaccessible for one reason or another — it was felt that the inclusion of as many of these as possible in the text would not only somewhat remedy this deficiency but also collect and preserve these statistics in one source for future research and reference.

The analysis and inclusion of the statistics in the text in a coherent intelligible form, however, posed a number of problems. In the first place, as mentioned above, statistics on Indians, particularly for the pre-World War I period, are not only scattered but in many instances virtually non-existent. The early Indian merchants and priests, despite their long commercial and proselytizing activities in the area in the early years of the Christian era, have left practically no statistical records. The Portuguese and Dutch, who followed them, with the exception of a few statistical details occurring in works like Balthasar Bort's Report on Malacca, also do not appear to have bothered themselves with statistics about Indians. As for the period of British rule in Malaya (1786-1957), though Indian immigration into Malaya dates from at least the early years of the nineteenth century, organisations like the Indian Immigration Committee, the Labour Department of

1. See pp. 184-90 below.
Malaya, Office of the Agent of the Government of India in British Malaya, The Planters' Association of Malaya and the Rubber Growers' Association (London), with which the Indian immigrants in Malaya were chiefly associated, did not come into existence till 1907, 1911, 1923, 1907 and 1907 respectively. Similarly, the first Malaya-wide population census was not taken till 1921, though some State counts had been held as early as 1871. Consequently, the statistical information on the Indians in pre-war British Malaya, too, is fragmentary.

This lack of adequate statistics, it appears, is not just a peculiarity of the earlier phases of Indian settlement in Malaya, but rather a recurrent malady. There is little accurate information on the large shifts and dispersals of population that took place during the Japanese Occupation. The same, almost, can be said of the changes that took place in the distribution of Indian population after the proclamation of the Emergency on June 16, 1948, and the consequent relocation and resettlement of rural peoples, for, despite a plethora

1. See Chapter IV.

2. The Malay Mail (Kuala Lumpur), April 28, 1908, p.5.


4. A state of emergency, later popularly referred to as "The Emergency", was proclaimed in Malaya on June 16th 1948, following the discovery of a Communist plot to overthrow the Government and the consequent outbreak of violence. This state of affairs ended twelve years later on July 31st 1960.

5. See Chapter V.
of State and District War Executive Committees and Resettlement Officers, no comprehensive up to date information is available on the actual locations, numbers and composition of the total population affected by the resettlement and relocation programmes.

More important than just the availability of sufficient figures, is perhaps the fact that many of them do not lend themselves to meaningful interpretation because they are either inaccurate or unreliable. G.T. Hare, who was in charge of the 1901 F.M.S. Census, for example, says, "... The census figures for 1891, F.M.S., are not accurate ..." while discrepancies also occur in the later population counts. For example, 32,456 Indians were enumerated in Singapore according to the 1921 Census, but the 1947 Census records 33,028 Indians for the same date. Similarly, the total number of Indians (excluding Ceylon Tamils) in Malaya in 1931 is given as 624,009 in the 1931 Census, but as 621,847 in the 1947 Census while if the numbers given for all the individual States are added, the total comes to 624,721! No explanation is given in any of the census reports for the "changing figures".

1. In the Malayan political hierarchy, next to the Federation are the "States" consisting of several "Districts", which in turn are subdivided into mukims, roughly the equivalent of the English parish. (Fig.3).
6. Tufo, op.cit.,
7. Personal counting on a computer.
As a final illustration of the discrepancies in the statistical data of Malaya, areas of States, as given in the census reports, keep on changing from census to census without any proper explanation being offered. The area of Malacca, for example, is given as 602 square miles in 1891\(^1\), 659 square miles in 1901\(^2\), 720 square miles in 1911\(^3\), 720.5 square miles in 1921\(^4\), and 632.7 square miles in 1947\(^5\), while that of the Federation is given as 50,850 square miles in the Annual Report\(^6\), and as 50,600 in the 1947 Population Census\(^7\). These discrepancies make comparative analysis difficult.

These inaccuracies in the Malayan statistical data are, however, not altogether surprising in view of the few officials, especially in the earlier periods, available who knew the many Indian and other languages. Furthermore the earlier statistical records are at the most approximate guesses. Difficulties of travel and insufficient number of trained officials made contact with the rural population difficult while even where this contact was possible, the traditional suspicion of the Asians of all government officials made the obtaining of accurate information difficult. Finally, the compilation and analysis of the Malayan statistical data was in the hands of people who were inadequately trained and equipped.

The decision to draw the population maps for the Indian population on a State basis brought to the fore a number of cartographical problems. Malaya, covering an area of 50,824 square miles, is divided into twelve States (Fig. 3). But the problem was not just one of numbers but more of sizes, for the States range from 224 square miles (Singapore) to 13,873 square miles (Pahang) in area. This great disparity in sizes made the choice of a scale difficult.

Similar to the problem of the scale of the base-map was the problem of the value to be given to each dot in the population distribution maps, in view of the fact that the range in the Indian numbers in Malaya was from 583 in Pahang in 1891 to 201,047 persons in Selangor in 1957, while that for the total Malayan population was from 70,490 for Perlis in 1947 to 1,445,929 persons in Singapore in 1957. As too high a value would have "blanketed" certain details of pattern, it was decided to separate the maps for the total population and the Indian population, giving each dot the value of 500 and 400 persons respectively, for the two series of maps.

A final handicap that applied to the mapping of all data was that since at least three copies of each map were required and facilities for employing colour were unavailable, they all had to be done in black and white, with consequent limitations.

Fig. 3. Malaya: Political Divisions, 1957.

Source: Based on Federated Malay States, Federated Malay States Surveys No. 2 + 1932 (Kuala Lumpur, 1932).
D. Plan of Work

The thesis is divided into six Chapters: The research setting of the work, i.e., its aims and scope, source materials available, accessible and used, and various handicaps and limitations encountered, is discussed in Chapter I. Chapter II provides a summary of the Malayan geographical and historical background. Chapter III is devoted to the Indians in pre-British Malaya, i.e., before the founding of the British Colony of Penang in 1786. Chapter IV discusses the Indian migration to British Malaya (1786-1957) while the consequent and other changes in the Indian population numbers and characteristics are analysed in Chapter V. Chapter VI concludes the study.

No attempt is made to give a complete chronological account of the Indians in Malaya. However, to provide a link with the past and maintain continuity and preserve the general trend of the Indian settlement in Malaya, an account of the early Indian connexions with this country was felt necessary. Chapter III is divided into four sub-sections: The first of these discusses the making of Greater India\(^1\), i.e., the flocking of the early Indian traders, adventurers and priests to the veritable El Dorados of Malaya and other Southeast Asian areas — the Suvarnabhumi (The Land of Gold)\(^2\) — and the

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1. This term is used in India and elsewhere to denote the Southeast Asian region, i.e., the area in which Indian cultural and commercial influence was paramount before the coming of the Europeans.

2. This Pali (sacred language of the Buddhist Scriptures) term, the Sanskrit version of which is Suvarnavipada (The Golden Island or Peninsula), it appears, was applied by the early Indians to almost each one of the present Southeast Asian countries, in addition to being used as a blanket term for the whole region. It
foundation and growth of city-states in the central sections of the Siamo-Malay Peninsula through the process of "Indianization". Sections two and three deal with the decline of Hindu influence through the coming and rise of Islam and the growth of Muslim power based on Malacca. With the rise of Malacca as a great port and the hub of Muslim influence in Southeast Asia, the focus of attention shifted from the north to the southern parts of Malaya. The decline of Malacca and the rise of the European powers in Asia also saw the disappearance of Indian shipping from Malayan and other waters. This is discussed in the final section of Chapter III.

is still a matter of debate, but it is possible it may have meant, specifically, the Malay Peninsula, one of the most important sources of gold of early India. (See Chap.III).

1. The term "Siamo-Malay Peninsula" or "Peninsula" is used in the text to denote the finger-like projection of territory jutting out from the Southeast Asian landmass from about 15°N. latitude to the southern tip of the Federation of Malaya. This is to distinguish it from the ambivalent and ambiguously used term, "Malay Peninsula", which from henceforth will be used only to denote the Federation of Malaya, unless otherwise stated and explained (Fig. 5).

2. "Indianization" is used in the sense of a culture transference, in this case, the moulding and transformation of the Malay ways of life through the diffusion of Indian political, economic and social influences.

3. The term "Hindu Influence" also includes Indian Buddhist influence. The two were so closely interlocked and intermeshed in early Malaya that it is difficult to say where one ended and the other began.
Following the establishment of British paramountcy in India and the consolidation of their power in Malaya, a metamorphosis took place in the character of Indian contacts with Malaya. From a spontaneous trickle of traders, merchants and priests — ambassadors of a great civilization — the movement of Indians to Malaya became a veritable tide, now consisting, principally, of illiterate poor labourers coming into the country to work for a pittance on some European-owned plantation or Government project, like road and railway construction. This transformation and the origins and characteristics of the Indian migration to Malaya during the British period (1786-1957) are discussed in great detail, in Chapter IV, because it was this modern migration which forms the basis of the whole of the Indian population in Malaya to-day.

"Migration" is a form of geographical or spatial mobility between one geographical unit and another, generally involving a change of residence from the place of origin or departure to the place of destination or arrival.¹ As employed in the text it may be defined as the essentially peaceful movement of individuals, from one country to another, with the intention of affecting a temporary or lasting change in residence. Migration so defined has a twofold aspect; it covers both "immigration" and "emigration", the movement into and out of a particular country respectively.² The term "emigrant", as used here, applies to all residents leaving a country either temporarily or

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permanently, including both nationals and aliens. "Immigrants" will be understood to mean persons moving either permanently or temporarily into a country where they are not resident at the time of the movement. This includes aliens, nationals having previously emigrated who now return to their country of nationality, persons born abroad, who were nationals at birth, and persons having acquired abroad the nationality of the country of immigration. \(^1\) It should be noted that the definitions of "immigrants", "emigrants" and "migration" employed here may not be the same as those used in the national statistics of many countries or in publications of the I.L.O. and other such international organisations. \(^2\) Furthermore, these definitions refer only to international movements and do not include the movement of people within the boundaries of a single country. This latter movement is usually referred to as "internal migration"\(^3\).

Chapter V follows up the Indian migration and discusses the historical growth, from the foundation of Penang (1786) to **Merdeka** (1957), of the Indian population in Malaya, together with its changing

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4. **Merdeka**, Malay for "Independence".
composition, densities and distribution, particularly as affected by immigration/emigration and natural increase. A short summary of the occupations, settlement patterns and ethno-linguistic characteristics of the Indians in Malaya is also included in this Chapter, while, wherever necessary, comparisons are also made with the Chinese and/or Malay communities of the country.

The study is rounded off in Chapter VI which recapitulates the past and discusses the present and future trends in the Indian community of Malaya.

As it must have become apparent to the reader, the picture of the Indians in Malaya has been one of constant change. Attempts to trace and appraise this continual transformation has inevitably led into the highways and byways of many other disciplines not normally associated within the working plans of a geographer. In fact, in view of the virtual non-existence of geographical literature on the subject under discussion, this procedure was absolutely essential in order to present a balanced picture of the Indians in Malaya.
CHAPTER II

MALAYA: GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Malaya, one of the youngest and smallest members of the Commonwealth of Nations, has an international importance out of all proportion to its age or size. Covering an area of only 50,824 square miles, the equivalent of about 1/50 of the size of Canada (Fig. 4), Malaya is the source of more than one-third of the world's supply of tin and rubber, while the strategically located bastion and port of Singapore commands East-West communication lines and trade routes.

Malaya is an advanced country, economically and industrially, by Asian standards and was, for the last twelve years, the scene of a bloody armed conflict between militant Communism on one hand and the Government forces, supported by Britain, on the other.¹ Malaya, to-day, is the home of about 8,000,000 people, including not only the indigenous Malays but also the biggest Chinese population outside China and, after Ceylon, the largest oversea Indian concentration. Besides, these three communities, there are also substantial numbers of Europeans, Eurasians, Siamese, Arabs and Jews.

A. Physical Setting

In Malaya, a combination of a continuous and profuse plant growth, encouraged by a heavy evenly distributed rainfall and constantly high temperatures, and a central system of longitudinally parallelling steep-sloped forest clad mountain ranges flanked by narrow water-logged

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¹ This conflict was officially declared over on 31st July, 1960, though there are still some armed Communists remaining along the Siamo-Malay border.
Fig. 4. Malaya and Canada: Comparative Areas.

swamp-fringed coastal plains. constitute a physical environment that is as
difficult for man to control as any other natural tropical landscape.
The key to the understanding of the favourable modern development of
Malaya lies thus not so much in the internal geographic character of the
country but rather in other factors, especially its situation in relation
to the rest of Monsoon Asia and the world in general.

(1) Global Position:

Malaya occupies the southern half of the long narrow peninsula
that projects far out southwards into the Indonesian Archipelago from the
Southeast Asian landmass. Singapore Island, at the peninsula's southern
tip, is joined to the mainland by a causeway across the Johore Strait.
Extending roughly from 1° to 7° north latitude, Malaya measures some 600
miles from the Thai border in the north to the islands just south of
Singapore, and about 200 miles from east to west at its widest, just north
of centre. On the east it is bounded by the South China Sea, an
extension of the Pacific Ocean, while on the west the 25 mile wide
Straits of Malacca, an arm of the Indian Ocean, separates it from
Sumatra. Thus, lying interposed between the Indian and the Pacific
Oceans, Malaya, in the first place, occupies a focal position in relation
to the rest of Southeast Asia. Not only is it the meeting ground
between the continental and insular halves of the region but its
physical and human ties with Indonesia, particularly Sumatra, are
characteristically close while on its northern and northeastern margins.
continental influences are and have been equally significant.1 Secondly, it borders upon the shortest sea-route between India and China, the two great neighbours which have traditionally overshadowed Southeast Asia. Malaya's contacts with these two countries go far back in history and were aided by the convenient convergence of the monsoon wind systems of the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea on the Malay Peninsula. Thirdly, the Straits of Malacca and the Straits of Singapore occupy key positions for all shipping between the Pacific and the Indian Ocean ports. These water bodies are natural canals comparable to the Suez Canal in importance. The pattern of Southeast Asian seas makes them a natural convergence area for sea-borne trade for not only the "island world" but also for international ocean lines, which are of necessity and convenience funnelled through these Straits, making Singapore, and before it Malacca, the "Gibraltar of the East" (Fig. 5).

The above strategic factors are illustrated by the fact that external sea-borne influences, for example, contacts with elements from India, Indonesia, China and Britain, to mention a few, have left an indelible imprint on the history and development of Malaya.2

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Fig. 5. Malaya: Position.

Source: Based on U.S. Army Map Service, Corps of Engineers,
Planning Maps: China, India, Southeast Asia, AMS 1102
(Washington, D.C., 1953).
(ii) Surface Configuration:

Structurally, Malaya is the emergent western position of a large, tectonically stable ancient massif known as the Sunda Platform, now largely submerged beneath shallow seas 100 to 200 feet in depth. The topography of Malaya is thus that of an ancient landmass that has been subjected to continuous weathering over a long period by a combination of high temperatures, heavy rainfall and highly acidic sub-surface water, due to rotting vegetation. These powerful agents of weathering have evolved a lateritic cover of material, derived from rocks weathered in situ for considerable depths, which has reduced the surface of the country to a type predominantly uniform from place to place and not obviously related to geological substructure. Bare outcrops of rocks, except on coastal promontories, are uncommon.

The significant part of the geology of Malaya is that nearly half of the country is made up of granite and other igneous rocks. Strongly jointed, the granites contain veins of quartz and metallic ores from which derive many of the exploited minerals of Malaya. The high mountains are predominantly granitic. Basic rocks of volcanic nature, mostly basaltic, are widely distributed in the centre and east, but their total area is small. Sedimentaries constitute more than a third of the area while the remainder consists largely of alluvium. Most of the soil so far developed for agriculture, including rubber, coconut and padi, is provided by the alluvium and by the sedimentary rocks older than the granite.

Physiographically, Malaya consists of a central backbone of

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1. This discussion is largely based on the comprehensive chapters on Malaya by E.H.G. Dobby in his Southeast Asia (London, 1950).
parallelling mountain ranges flanked by swampy narrow coastal plains.\(^1\)

The central mountain system, running in a general north-south direction from the Siamese border through two-thirds of Malaya, consists of several ranges - the innermost being the highest (maximum height 7,186 feet above sea-level) and also the longest. The ranges to the west of this are shorter while on the east the system merges into the dissected Trengganu Plateau which averages 2,500 feet above sea-level in altitude.

In the south the Main Range peters out in the State of Negri-Sembilan. The State of Johore consists chiefly of a poorly drained peneplain. On both sides of the central mountain system are belts of lowland from 5 to 40 miles in width, the widest being on the west coast (Figs. 6, 7). These alluvial coastal plains, however, tend to be swampy (Fig. 8).

The surface configuration of Malaya has markedly influenced its human settlement and patterns of development. On the lower flanks of the mountain ranges and in troughs between them are the densest concentrations of people, the indigenous attracted by land suitable for padi and the immigrant by alluvial ores and commercial agricultural potentialities.\(^2\) (Cf. Figs. 7,15,69).

(iii) Drainage:

The drainage pattern of Malaya closely follows the alignment of the central highlands. The major drainage lines, with the exception of the Kelantan River, tend to follow a longitudinal course in the upper


Fig. 6. Malaya: Physiographic Regions.

reaches before making a sharp bend at the break of slope and flowing out to sea on either side of the Main range. The heavy rainfall gives rise to a multiplicity of rivers which are generally narrow and swift in their upper courses and slow and meandering where they flow along the narrow plains flanking the Main Range. This factor together with the wide fluctuations in their volume, due to the local and torrential nature of Malaya's rainfall, give rise to frequent floods which destroy crops and property. The rivers of Malaya, though little used to-day, were main lines of movement in its early history. They set the pattern of population distribution on the lowlands and coastal areas in the period before the modern opening up of the country (Figs. 7, 18).

(iv) Climate and Weather:

Malaya has a tropical climate characterized by an abundant rainfall, high humidity and a generally uniformly high temperature. Strong winds are not uncommon but are almost exclusively associated with line squalls or isolated thunderstorms.1 Proximity to the Equator, giving uniformly high temperatures throughout the year, and the advance and retreat of tropical airstreams over Southeast Asia, causing seasons to depend on changes in prevailing wind direction, dominate the climatic changes in the country.2


2. For an exhaustive account of tropical airstreams in Southeast Asia, see W.L. Dale, "Wind and Drift Currents in the South China Sea", M.J.T.G., Vol.8 (1956), pp.3 ff.
Fig. 7. Malaya: Relief and Drainage.

Source: Based on Federation of Malaya Surveys,
The two main seasons in Malaya are the Northeast Monsoon (November - March) and the Southwest Monsoon (May - September) roughly corresponding to the winter and summer of the northern latitudes. April and October are the inter-Monsoon months representing the periods between the advance of one of the air flows and the retreat of the other. Though there is a definite seasonal rhythm, the Monsoons in Malaya differ from the monsoon prototype of India, in that the onset and termination of the seasons are not sharply defined in Malaya. Furthermore, unlike the northern latitudes, the chief variation in the seasons in Malaya is the incidence and distribution of rainfall.

The Northeast Monsoon blows when the warm moist Northeast current covers the South China Sea and extends to Java, giving rise to strong northeasterly winds, particularly in December and January. It brings heavy rainfall to Eastern Malaya besides making the region unsafe for coastal shipping. Elsewhere in Malaya the winds, during this period, are lighter and the rainfall less.

The Southwest Monsoon is the period when Malaya is covered at high level by moderate to strong south-westerlies which constitute the southernmost fringe of the Indian South-West Monsoon. Malaya is then in the rainshadow caused by the 6,000 to 8,000 foot mountain ranges of Sumatra and low rainfall is common to much of Malaya as well as an increase in storm occurrences due to increased convectional activity.

The inter-Monsoon months (April and October) are periods of calm, sometimes called doldrums, maximum convectional rainfall and highest number of thunderstorms.

Rainfall occurs throughout the year with some seasonal
Fig. 8. Malaya: A Coastal View.

Photo: R. Wikramatilake.
concentrations. The east coast gets most of its rainfall during the
Northeast Monsoon, with December being the wettest month, while in the
rest of Malaya, maximum rainfall occurs during the inter-Monsoon periods,
with the greatest amounts in October and November. There is, however
a considerable variation in periods of peak rainfall from area to area,
depending on local relief, aspect and local convection.

Table I: SEASONAL DISTRIBUTION OF RAINFALL IN MALAYA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locality</th>
<th>Total Rainfall Per Annum (In Inches)</th>
<th>Seasonal Percentage of Annual Rainfall</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>North-East Monsoon Period</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nov. - Feb.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Transi-Monsoon Period</td>
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<td>Mar. - Feb.</td>
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<td>South-West Monsoon Period</td>
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<td>May - Aug.</td>
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<td>Transi-Monsoon Period</td>
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<td>Oct. - Sept.</td>
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<td>FEDERATION</td>
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<td>East Coast Stations</td>
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<td>Kota Bharu</td>
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<td>West Coast Stations</td>
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<td>Inland Stations</td>
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<td>Taiping</td>
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<td>Temerloh</td>
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<td>Singapore City</td>
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</table>
The annual rainfall in Malaya is generally over 75 inches, sufficient for padi cultivation without irrigation. Of greater significance, from the agricultural point, however, is the timing of the rainfall, for the irregularity of the rainfall, especially on the west coast, causes frequent crop damage. The east coast is generally wetter than the west though the heaviest recorded rainfall occurs on the west coast in the Maxwell Hill area. The district around Jelebu, in southwest Malaya, which is surrounded by mountains, is the driest part of Malaya with an average annual rainfall of 65 inches (Figs. 7,9).

Temperature conditions are generally uniform seasonally, the range being $2°C - 4°F$ only. The diurnal range, on the other hand, is more marked, being about $12°F$ on the coast and $18°F$ inland at the higher elevations. Daytime temperatures seldom exceed $90°F$ in the lowlands and generally fall to $70°F$ to $75°F$ at night. In the highlands (above four to five thousand feet in height) there is the same uniformity of temperature but at lower levels. The Hill Station at Cameron Highlands, for example, has an average daily temperature of $64°F$, with a maximum of $72°F$ and a minimum of $56°F$ (Fig. 7).

Relative humidities of 70 per cent or more are common in Malaya. These high humidities, though enabling crops to recover much more rapidly from diurnal wilting during dry spells than in the dry tropics, however can be quite oppressive, for humans and animals alike, during the daytime when no breeze is present.
Fig. 9: Malaya: Rainfall,

Source: Based on W.L. Dale, "The Rainfall of Malaya",
(v) Vegetation:

The major vegetation of Malaya is tropical rainforest which, before the advent of man, covered almost the whole country, from sea-level to the tops of the highest hills. The absence of a marked dry season ensures that the forest is evergreen, although here and there, particularly in northern Malaya, deciduous trees do occur. The forest canopy is heavy, excluding the greater part of the sunlight, but where sunlight does break through, the forest floors are occupied by saplings, shrubs and herbaceous plants, while lianes and epiphytes are also conspicuous. The tropical rainforest is fairly uniform in the lowlands and up to 2,500 or 3,000 feet where there is a transitional zone. Below this the characteristic and dominant trees are dipterocarps, associated with such broad-leaved trees as *Garcinia*, *Artocarpus*, *Sanotaceae*, *Meliaceae*, *Burseraceae*, *Leguminosae*, etc. Above 3,000 feet, the dipterocarps tend to disappear and oaks, *Myrtaceae* and certain conifers predominate.¹

Much of the forest on the alluvial plains on the western side of the central highlands has been cleared by man but where the cleared land has been left unoccupied for sometime, it has been colonised by secondary vegetation, consisting chiefly of scrub and coarse grass, locally called "lalang" (*Cylindrica Imperata*).

Mangrove forest, chiefly of the *Rhizophora* and *Bruguera* species, is extensively developed along the sheltered and muddy shores of Western Malaya. On the more open east coast, on the other hand, the mangrove

forest is replaced by a narrow belt of casuarinas, just behind the sandy
beaches.

In some parts of the country, particularly in eastern and central
Johore, there are large tracts of fresh water swamp forests, where many
trees of other species develop the stilt-rooted habit, characteristic of
mangrove (Fig. 10).

Because the whole year is a growing season, plant life becomes
almost overpowering in Malaya in its rate of growth. Pioneering is both
arduous and expensive and despite centuries of occupation some $3/4$ of the
country is still under vegetation cover of one sort or another. In such
a setting, existing lines of communication have assumed an extraordinary
degree of importance, much of the economic activity and settlement in the
country being along or close to roads and railways.

(vi) **Soils:**

No systematic detailed study has as yet been made of the
development, distribution and classification of the soils of Malaya,
although the subject has been dealt with in general in papers published
in various journals. Broadly the soils of Malaya fall into two
categories: (a) alluvials, peats and sands of the lowlying areas; and
(b) the reddish-yellow sandy or silty clay loams, derived in situ from
parent acidic igneous or other rocks of the higher areas. The latter
type, which are extensively used for rubber cultivation, cover most of
Malaya. These Malayan soils, formed under conditions of uniformly heavy
rainfall, have marked lateritic characteristics including the formation
and occurrence of laterite "iron pans", in places, though not on the same

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1. See for example, G. Owens "A Provisional Classification of Malayan
Fig. 10. Malaya: Vegetation.

scale as for example, Thailand.

The soils of Malaya generally tend to have a poor structure and this, coupled with heavy leaching, results in rapid deterioration and removal of organic matter from the topsoil, giving rise to soils of low inherent fertility. Agriculture, in Malaya, thus demands good soil management practices.

B. Natural Resources

(i) Agricultural:

Agriculture, particularly rubber, is the most important primary industry of Malaya contributing some 70 per cent of the country's export values. About 22 per cent of Malaya has already been alienated, most of which is under cultivation. As regards potential arable land, it is not possible to estimate with accuracy the extent of available land as a detailed land use survey of the whole country has yet to be made. Nearly all land over 1,000 feet high can be excluded on account of steepness of slope, and a considerable area lower than 1,000 feet also can be excluded as there is almost no table-land country in Malaya. This leaves about 12,000 square miles of territory which could be utilized for agriculture. Most of this potential agricultural land is located in Eastern Malaya, in the States of Kelantan, Trengganu, Pahang and Johore, in areas generally away from the present concentrations of people and communications. Further development of agriculture thus would have not


only to overcome paucity of soils, problems of water supply, and cost of clearing, but also problems of accessibility. At present, except in the case of padi, (Malaya produces only about 50 per cent of its rice needs) subsistence agriculture or the introduction of new crops, there appears little likelihood of expansion of the existing crops, for example rubber, in view of the unstable market conditions (Figs. 11,15).

(ii) **Mineral:**

Malaya is highly mineralized and an abundance of ores are believed to be lying at or beneath its surface. Only about a fifth of Malaya has been explored geologically by scientific means, and it thus appears difficult to assess accurately the mineral resources. From available information, it appears that only five minerals – tin, coal, iron, bauxite and gold – are to be found in economically workable deposits. Copper, lead, and zinc are also known to exist while tungsten, manganese and phosphates have been mined. In view of the fact that mining is an old industry in Malaya and any large deposits would have by now been discovered, it appears that the chances of another "bonanza", on the scale of the Kinta Valley of Perak, occurring are remote.

**Tin.** Tin mining is the most important mineral industry of Malaya constituting about a 1/3 of the value of the country's exports. The tin bearing formations are largely along the western flanks of the central highlands and their outliers, though tin is also found on the eastern slopes. Much of the known deposits have already been worked over and reserves are estimated at 750,000 to 2,000,000 tons of tin metal.

**Other metals.** Malaya produces approximately 2½ million tons of iron ore
Fig. 11. Malaya: Potential Padi Areas, 1957

Source: Based on data supplied by the Department of Agriculture, Federation of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur.
annually and reserves, chiefly of magnetite and hematite ores, approaching 60 per cent metal content, are estimated at about 46 million tons. The principal known deposits are at Bukit Besi in Trengganu and near Ulu Rompin in southeastern Pahang.

Bauxite deposits occur widely in southern Malaya, particularly Johore, but the high silica content decreases their value while known reserves are small and scattered.

Low-grade manganese was mined before the war for export to Japan and some deposits are found in northeastern Malaya. Economic deposits of gold ores are restricted to the Raub area in western Pahang. Some tungsten deposits are found in association with tin and gold while columbium and tantalum ores are also found in association with tin ores, chiefly in Kedah.

On the whole, except for tin and iron, the mineral resources of Malaya are limited not only in quantity but also in quality (Fig. 12).

(iii) Power Resources:

Malaya is poorly endowed with power resources, possessing only wood in abundance. But this source of energy is not only relatively inefficient but undesirable as its extensive use would result in the destruction of the vegetation cover.

Malaya has no proven economic deposits of petroleum or natural gas and the geological formation of the country is unfavourable to their discovery. There are about 32 million tons of coal reserves near Batu Arang in Selangor, but the deposits are chiefly sub-bituminous and of low calorific value. Production has been declining due to the poor quality,
Fig. 12. Malaya: Minerals, 1955.

high labour costs, and the availability of relatively cheaper petroleum from producing areas in Southeast Asia.

Crude estimates put Malaya's hydro-electric potential at about 250,000 kw. Except for the 27,000 kw. plant in operation at Chenderoh, north of Ipoh, and the 30,000 kw. Robinson Falls, Cameron Highlands, proposed project, water power resources are virtually undeveloped in Malaya. Development is hampered by lack of funds, shortness of rivers, irregularity of flow, inadequacy of dam sites, hazards of silting, characteristics of the Malayan settlement and conflicting requirements of different resources.

Malaya's natural resources, as the foregoing discussion illustrates, are not as unlimitless as some politicians would have us believe. In fact, in view of her rapidly increasing population, estimated to reach 12,500,000 by 1975, Malaya will probably be hard put to maintain the present standard of living, leave alone improve it.
C. Biogeographical Aspects

Health is a major problem in the settlement and development of tropical areas, while other factors, like drinking water, soil erosion, physiological and psychological reactions to climate may also be critical in the success or failure of man's pioneering in these regions. Clemow, in his *The Geography of Disease* enumerates as many as fourteen major diseases that are prevalent in the tropical areas as compared to only six in the temperate regions. Disease has retarded the opening up of many areas in Malaya. The early immigrants died like flies. For example, out of a total net immigration of 1,189,000 Indians into Malaya, during the period 1860 - 1938, it is estimated that more than three-quarters of a million perished.

(i) Malaria:

Of all the insect vectors which help to communicate disease, the mosquito is probably the most deadly because of the variety and deadliness of the diseases it transmits. High temperatures and heavy rainfall — conditions essential for the breeding of malaria vectors — are found throughout Malaya and malaria has been a formidable obstacle to the work of planters and other settlers and partially explains why large tracts of the country still remain undeveloped. The disease has

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for long been present in Malaya. A third of the deaths in Penang, in 1829, for example, were attributed to malaria. But it was towards the end of the nineteenth century that the disease became prevalent throughout the country, following the clearing of forests and undergrowth for agricultural development. Breaking of the protective vegetation cover and jungle shade resulted in multiplication of mosquitoes causing a very high death rate among labourers when rubber was introduced on a large scale. In 1911, for example, 9,000 of the total rubber estate labour force, of Malaya, of 143,000, mainly Indians, died from malaria; the number infected (though not fatally) was very much higher.\(^1\) Urban centres were also affected, Port Swettenham being forced to close down within two months of its opening in 1901, because of malaria while in Kuala Lumpur the malarial death rate was as high as 9.7 per 1,000 in 1907. Malaria for long remained a menace throughout Malaya accounting for 30.6 per cent of all deaths from all causes in the Federated Malay States as late as 1938.\(^2\) In post-war Malaya, health control measures have however gradually reduced malaria to insignificance in terms of death but this applies only to "protected areas" like estates and urban centres. The rural population is still at its mercy, most of the hospitals in Malaya being located in towns. It is estimated that the effective radius of a hospital, in Malaya, does not extend beyond 10-15 miles because the peasants usually cannot travel further than that to

seek medical aid.\(^1\)

Rural areas have to depend on travelling dispensaries for medical attention, but their numbers are few, averaging one to 10,000 persons, and in places, for example Kelantan, one to 35,000 persons.\(^2\) Away from the "protected areas" malaria is still highly endemic and is hyperendemic in the foothill and upland areas, with the tin and rubber belt being a zone of intense malarial activity\(^3\)(Fig. 13).

(ii) Other Diseases:

**Tuberculosis.** Tuberculosis accounts for more than any other single disease in Malaya to-day. The tuberculosis rate is especially high in areas of shop-houses, which are regarded as "the most potent single factor in the production of the high rate of tuberculosis prevalent in Malaya".\(^4\) Shop-houses are the most common urban dwelling in Malaya, over 50 per cent of the urban population in the Federation living in them.

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Fig. 13. Malaya: Areas Subject to Malaria, 1950.

Filariasis. Filariasis, a worm infection, whose characteristic manifestation is swelling of the infected limbs, a condition often referred to as elephantiasis, is not as prevalent as malaria but is quite common in the swampy lower reaches of rivers, limiting settlement to levees.

Ankylostomiasis. There is also a high incidence of ankylostomiasis in Malaya. For example, in a sample survey in 1926-28, out of 27,000 persons examined in Malacca, Province Wellesley and Penang 70 per cent were infected (Table II).

Table II: COMMON INTESTINAL WORM INFECTION, MALACCA, PENANG AND PROVINCE WELLESLEY, 1926-28.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>No. Examined</th>
<th>No. Positive</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malays</td>
<td>14,261</td>
<td>12,565</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>7,346</td>
<td>2,847</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>4,651</td>
<td>3,321</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurasians</td>
<td>853</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europeans</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27,396</td>
<td>19,112</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A postwar sample survey, on a smaller scale among a group of smallholders, fishermen and wage-earning labourers, by the Institute of Medical Research, revealed a similar state of affairs, with the infection rate being 80 per cent, 77 per cent, and 75 per cent for the three respective groups. The high incidence rate among the Malays and Indians is largely because of the nature of their work, which brings them into contact with worms. Their milieu is largely the constantly damp soils and atmosphere, for example padi fields and rubber estates. Furthermore many of them go barefooted while in many rural areas there is a complete lack of the disposal of excreta. Debilitating effects of the infection partially account for the generally poor health of the Malay peasants and Indian labourers.

**Yaws.** Yaws, or 'puru' as it is known in Malaya, is also not uncommon among the rural population, infection rates of 60 per 1,000 persons being reported among Indian estate labourers.

**Scrub typhus.** Scrub typhus has also been on the increase in Malaya, resulting largely from the cutting down of forest cover thereby producing new ecological conditions. With increase of waste land and clearings the disease may become more widespread.

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Cholera. Cholera is not a common disease in Malaya but can be spread from neighbouring countries like Thailand, where the disease is prevalent and health control less stringent. In addition, Malaya's climate and swampy character breeds a host of insects, besides disease vectors, which can be an irritating nuisance making life unpleasant in the open without protective measures.

(iii) Domestic Water Supply and Sanitation:

Field experience has shown that, paradoxically enough, drinking water is scarce in rural Malaya, because:

(1) much of rural Malaya relies on wells and rivers for potable water as piped water is mainly limited to urban centres and their immediate proximities;

(2) the Malayan regolith characteristics limit percolation wells to only a few areas, for example, parts of the east coast where there are marine sands with their usual ground water features. Malayan wells, thus, tend to be shallow dugouts which are usually filled by runoff so that little natural purification occurs. There is little provision for household sanitation and wells tend to be located close to dwellings. Furthermore the high water table encourages acidic conditions and makes removal of night soil and other refuse difficult without polluting the well water;

(3) much of the rural Malay settlement is along streams and rivers, which serve a variety of functions ranging from transport and irrigation to sources of domestic water supply and agents of refuse disposal. In such a setting pollution of streams is rampant.

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1. See, for example, E.H.G. Dobby and Others, "Padi Landscapes of Malaya", M.J.T.G., Vol.10 (1957), passim. This work is based on field work in which the writer took part.
In 1940 it was estimated that only 35 per cent of the people in Malaya were supplied by unpolluted drinking water. In view of the foregoing, it is not surprising that there is a high incidence of entric fever.  

(iv) Erosion, Silting and Settlement:

The rivers of Malaya carry a large load of silt, a reflection, largely, of continuous erosion under heavy rain, accentuated by deforestation. For example, at Pontian Kechil, in southwestern Johore, removal of 200 yards of mangrove forest in 1951 resulted in the coastline eroding to a distance of 34 yards in 13 months. Erosion and the heavy silt loads have some striking effects on human settlement in Malaya:

1. Flood hazards are ever present and on the increase.

2. Rivers have developed a marked tendency of meandering in the lower reaches and the continuous "swinging" of rivers has on the one hand resulted in "cutting into" the foundations of bankside towns and on the other in the decrease in importance of others, leaving them "high and dry".

3. In sheltered areas, particularly on the west coast, the coastline is prograding at the rate of 30-50 yards annually, changing locational values in the process. Malacca, for example, "The Emporium of the East" in the early sixteenth century, is to-day only a small shallow port, set some distance from the deep ocean. Many other coastal ports have similarly suffered, becoming "inland" villages.

1. B.W. Hodder, op. cit., p.17.
2. Ibid., p. 18.
(v) Climate and Man:

The slight seasonal variation of Malaya's rainfall is of great human significance, as it not only enables two fruiting seasons but also fixes the padi-planting rhythm, in the absence of organised irrigation. But Malaya's rainfall is anything but regular. Sudden floods and droughts are quite frequent. They disrupt rural life, as for example, in Perlis in 1948, when a too early setting in of the seasonal dry spell destroyed over 1/5 of the planted padi acreage.¹

The enervating effects of Malaya's climate have been greatly exaggerated. "...Physically, mentally and morally they (the Malays) are the product of a marine - equatorial climate. Their mental outlook and philosophy, no less than their physique and mode of life, reflect an enervating climate, a circumscribed horizon and a bounteousness of nature which minimizes the necessity of effort ...."² Such subjective observations have little factual basis as there has yet to be a detailed integrated research on physiological climatology in the area. It is true that if one follows Huntington's outdated conclusions on health and physical efficiency, Malaya has a mean daily temperature of at least 16°F. above his 64°F. optimum and a relative humidity at least 10 per cent higher than his 75-80 per cent optimum, putting the climate into the "uncomfortable" category.³ In fact, however, cool winds and local

breezes along the coast, and altitude in the interior, ameliorate conditions considerably while frequent heavy showers, and the diurnal temperature variations and acclimatization make the climate more than tolerable.

D. Political and Economic Development

(i) Evolution of Malaya as a State:

a. Territorial Development. The pivotal position of Malaya has from ancient times made it an arena of conflicting foreign interests, which have markedly influenced the pattern of its political development. Indian influences from the west established the earlier pattern while the expansion of Europe into Asia marks the later stages.

The Indian Era c.100—1511 A.D.¹

This is the period when "Indianized" kingdoms flourished in Malaya and elsewhere in Southeast Asia, either as semi-independent city-states or under the hegemony of some controlling power, also Indianized and based outside Malaya. It falls into two broad divisions, which can conveniently be called as (1) The Age of the City-States, when the focus of attention was the isthmian tract of the Peninsula (Fig. 5) and (2) The period of the Malacca Sultanate when the centre of attention was the Straits of Malacca.

¹ This is discussed in detail in Chapter III and as such only a brief outline is given here.
The Age of the City-States. Archeological discoveries in Malaya indicate the presence of human groups in the area as early as 5,000 B.C., if not earlier. The emergence of organised states, however, had to await the coming of the Indians. Indian contacts with Malaya go far back in prehistory, certainly beyond the seventh century B.C., by which time trade was already firmly established between the ports of India and Southeast Asia. These trading contacts gradually blossomed into close cultural and political ties between India and the Malaysian world and the early centuries of the Christian era saw the emergence of a number of "city-states", with conceptions of royalty based on Hindu or Buddhist cults, in Southeast Asia. Nearly all of these city-states were trading marts and most of them were located in the isthmian tract of the Peninsula. This is not surprising for in the dissemination of Indian culture through the northern regions of Southeast Asia, the Siamo-Malay Peninsula fulfilled an important role. Not only was it the first landfall of most Indian voyagers, using the monsoons to Southeast Asia, but it was also an unavoidable barrier to further penetration, to be surmounted only by an overland portage or a circuitous coastal voyage.


2. As used in Malaya and in the text the term "Malay (or Malaysian) world" refers to "Malaysia" or the area comprised by Southern Thailand, Malaya, Indonesia, Southern Philippines and British Borneo. The inhabitants of this region are predominantly Muslims of Malay stock.
As commerce developed in early Southeast Asia, one region stood out as the most important region, the key to all the isthmian tract of the Peninsula, control of which was essential to any power aspiring to dominance in Southeast Asia. The fortunes of these city-states in the region thus waxed and waned, as they either enjoyed brief periods of precarious independence or were under the aegis of some outside power, before finally disappearing in the fourteenth century following repeated invasions, particularly those of the Thais from the north. After this the focus of attention shifted to the region of the Straits of Malacca where rose the fifteenth century kingdom of Malacca, which finally put a stop to the southward advance of the Thais.

(2) The Malacca Sultanate and the Spread of Islam, c.1400 - 1511 A.D. Malacca, founded by a renegade Sumatran, called Parameswara, at the estuary of the Malacca River, from a struggling "thieves' market" in the first years of the fifteenth century, gradually blossomed out to be the greatest emporium and entrepot of pre-European Southeast Asia, and the focus of the Muslim world of the region. It was from here that much of the conversion of the Archipelago and that of Malaya to Islam took place by the beginning of the sixteenth century, when Malacca was at the peak of its prosperity. Malacca's prosperity and its strategic position drew the attention of the Portuguese who conquered it in 1511 A.D.

1. For a comprehensive account of the early history of Southeast Asia, see D.G.E. Hall, History of Southeast Asia (London, 1955), Chapters 2-10.
The European Era, 1511 - 1957

(1) The Portuguese Period, 1511 - 1641 A.D. "God, Glory and Gold" were the guiding motives which catapulted the Portuguese into the Indian Ocean towards the end of the fifteenth century. The Spice Trade of the Indies was the most profitable commerce of the period and as a part of their plan to gain monopoly of this trade, the Portuguese captured Malacca. But their dreams were never fulfilled. The Portuguese were traders but they were first and foremost crusaders. Their proselytizing zeal made them deadly enemies of the newly Islamized countries of Southeast Asia while the corruptness of their officials and their general monopolistic policy regarding trade led to most of the merchants deserting Malacca for the other ports of Southeast Asia. The Portuguese power was at its height around 1550 A.D., but thereafter it declined, following repeated attacks by the supporters of the ex-Sultan of Malacca and by their European rivals, the Dutch. Malacca finally fell to the Dutch in 1641.

(2) The Dutch Period, 1641 - 1824. The Dutch had followed in the wake of the Portuguese, in quest of the same trade. Their power in the East Indies was based at Batavia in Java, and their capture of Malacca was, like the Portuguese before them, part of an overall aim of securing a complete monopoly of the spice trade in Southeast Asia, besides elimination of all unfriendly foreign interests. As such their efforts were directed chiefly to seeing to the functioning of their monopoly rather than extending political control.
In Malaya, no one was allowed to buy or sell spices and tin except from or to the Honourable Company. To secure monopoly of the tin trade the Dutch established forts at the Perak River, Pangkor Island and Ujong Salang (Junk Ceylon). But these were constantly attacked by their enemies and seldom maintained for long. Junks from China and Japan were not allowed to pass Malacca without calling while travel through the Straits was subjected to toll. This monopolistic policy of the Dutch East India Company was its undoing. Malacca was avoided by merchants and its trade declined. The foundation of Penang by the British in 1786 was a death blow to Malacca. In a few years after 1786, its trade almost ceased. One important fact was that Malacca's harbour is shallow and as ships increased in size this became a major hindrance. Another reason was that the enlightened British rule in Penang attracted the merchants in the Straits to Penang. The foundation of Singapore, in 1819, by Raffles, was the coup de grace to Malacca and when it finally passed into British control in 1824 it was little more than a "sleepy hollow".

(3) British Malaya, 1786 - 1957. The present political pattern of Malaya began with the coming of the British. Prior to the British, Malaya consisted, with the exception of Malacca, of a number of petty Malay sultanates almost entirely based on rivers and having no definite boundaries. The jungle between the rivers served as a natural barrier

1. The Honourable Company was the Dutch East India Company formed in 1600 to carry on trade with the East.
between the various chieftains, who enjoyed brief periods of independence between repeated foreign incursions.

Trade was the principal factor that drew the British to Malaya. A "halfway house" was needed, for the valuable China trade in silk and tea, where Southeast Asian goods could be obtained, ships refitted and warships maintained. The Sultan of Kedah was persuaded in 1786 to cede the Island of Penang which then was considered the most suitable to meet all the above requirements. In 1800 as a protection against possible invasion and the desire to obtain a productive area for growing foodstuffs, a strip of the adjacent Kedah mainland was added to Penang and named Province Wellesley, after the then Governor-General of India.

Penang, however, did not live up to expectations, principally because it lay too far off the main ocean trade routes of Asia. Singapore, more nodally situated to serve British interests than Penang, was founded in 1819 and Malacca was acquired from the Dutch by treaty in 1824. This treaty also delimited British and Dutch spheres of influence, leaving Britain free play in the Peninsula. In 1826, following the renewed southward advance of the Thais and their subjugation of Kedah, the Governor of Penang sent an envoy to Bangkok to negotiate a treaty. By this treaty the Thais agreed to leave the northeastern Malay States of Trengganu and Kelantan unmolested and also advance no further into Malaya on the Kedah side. The British thus saved the Malay States from Siam, but not from themselves.

Anarchy and chaos prevailed in the Malay States in the mid-nineteenth century. Piracy was rife. On the other hand Singapore had prospered following the creation of the Colony of Straits Settlements in 1867 and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. The Straits Settlements consisting of the British possessions of Penang, Malacca and Singapore were formed as a separate political unit, following agitation by local British interests, for direct control by the Colonial Office as opposed to control, as hitherto, by the Government of British India. Singapore was made the capital. Its merchants were continuously looking for fresh fields of investment, especially as the natural resources of the Straits Settlements were limited and the growing Dutch commercial opposition in the East Indies was crowding them out of that area. Furthermore many immigrant Chinese had followed tin to its source in the interior of Perak and Selangor, accentuating the prevailing chaos with their own gang wars and also by getting involved in the quarrels of the local rulers. The prevailing disorder threatened the trade of Penang and a petition was sent by the Straits Chinese merchants asking the British to intervene in the Malay States. This petition came just when the British foreign policy was undergoing a change following the coming into power of the empire builder, Disraeli. The policy of non-intervention now gave way to one of active participation in the affairs of the Malay States. Accordingly in 1874, following a disputed succession to the throne of Perak, the Pangkor Agreement was signed between Perak and Britain bringing the State of Perak under British protection. A British Resident was appointed to manage the affairs
of the State. This Residential System was extended to the States of Selangor and Negri Sembilan, later in the same year, and to Pahang in 1888.

British penetration into Malaya gradually led to the expansion of each sultanate to include the whole of the river basins as far as the water sheds which became the new boundaries of the States. The Residential System of government brought law and order into the four States and road and railway construction was started. But the four Residents were working in virtual isolation from each other. Co-ordination, especially in respect of road and rail construction, land alienation, and policy regarding the immigrant Chinese, was urgently needed. Furthermore it was felt that a pooling of the resources of the four States would help the development of the poorer member States, for example, Pahang. Consequently, in 1895-96, Perak, Selangor, Negri-Sembilan and Pahang were formed into the Federated Malay States (F.M.S.), entirely distinct from the British Colony of Straits Settlements (S.S.). Kuala Lumpur was chosen as the capital.

As on previous occasions, so also at the dawn of the twentieth century new economic developments paved the way for a fresh political advance. The growing demand for rubber and the rapid expansion of its cultivation in the Federated Malay States led to further investigations elsewhere for land for rubber. The States of Kedah and Kelantan came under consideration and a British owned concern, Duff Development Company, began cultivation in the latter in 1901. But it was not until 1907 when Britain became aware of growing German and French interests in strategically vital Kra isthmus, the site of a possible canal by-passing
Singapore, that negotiations began which ended in the transference of Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan and Trengganu to British rule as protected States in 1909. Finally in 1914, Johore also came under British control. These five States were collectively called the Unfederated Malay States (U.F.M.S.), and differed from the Federated Malay States, in that they still enjoyed a certain degree of independence, though their affairs were largely managed by British Advisers. Thus, though there have been internal changes since, the present territorial limits of Malaya can be said to date from 1914.

The most significant internal territorial changes since 1914 have been, firstly, the reversion to Siamese control of the northern Malay States during the Japanese Occupation and secondly, the creation of Singapore as a separate political unit. Malaya was under Japanese military occupation from 1942 to 1945, following the defeat of the British in Malaya during the last World War. As a token of appreciation of help received in the Malayan Campaign, the Japanese returned the former Siamese possessions of Malaya, the States of Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan and Trengganu, to Siam while they retained the rest of Malaya as a Japanese Colony.

Following the defeat of Japan and the return of the British to Malaya the British possessions of Penang and Malacca, together with the "hotch-potch" of Federated Malay States and Unfederated Malay States, were all amalgamated to form a single unit — the Malayan Union — in 1946, as a first step towards streamlining the administration and political control. Singapore was left out of this Union, as a separate British Colony.
In 1948, following Malay agitation for special privileges, the Malayan Union which granted equal economic and citizenship opportunity to all races domiciled in Malaya, was scrapped and replaced with the Federation of Malaya. The Federation which became independent on 31st August, 1957, safeguards the special position of the indigenous Malays (Fig. 14).

b. Population Growth

The indigenous Malays and the immigrant Chinese and Indians form the bulk of the population of Malaya (Table III).

Table III: THE POPULATION OF MALAYA, 1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative Unit</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Racial Composition as a percentage of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Malays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federation</td>
<td>6,278,763</td>
<td>49.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>1,445,929</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaya</td>
<td>7,724,692</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from 1957 Population Census of the Federation of Malaya, Report No.1 (Kuala Lumpur, n.d.), Table 1; 1957 Population Census of Singapore, Preliminary Release No.2 (Singapore, 1959), Table II.

The Malays. The ancestors of the modern Malays are believed to have reached the Peninsula between 2500 and 1500 B.C. from the Yunnan Plateau.
In 1946 the whole of British Malaya except Singapore, which remained a Crown Colony, was constituted the Malayan Union. In 1946 the same area was constituted the Federation of Malaya with Kuala Lumpur its capital. In 1957 the Federation of Malaya (Persekutuan Tanah Melayu) became an independent member of the Commonwealth of Nations, while Singapore gained internal self-government. The capital of Perak in the meantime was shifted from Taiping to Ipoh and that of Pahang from Kuala Lipis to Kuantan.

area of China. Though some of them settled in the plains of northern Malaya, the majority of them appear to have moved on to the Indonesian islands. There was, however, a return flow in medieval and modern times when people of Malay stock left the Indonesian islands, particularly Sumatra, Java and Borneo, to settle, mainly, in the southern and southwestern parts of Malaya. The modern development of Malaya by the immigrant groups appears to have affected little the general pattern of the Malays' life, for the majority of them still remain tied to a largely subsistence economy in the coastal and riverine areas. Islam was embraced by these people in the fifteenth century, and to-day almost all of the Malays are Muslims.

The Chinese. Chinese contacts with Malaya go back to the early years of the Christian era, but the population in Malaya remained negligible till the beginning of the nineteenth century. Thereafter, opportunities in Malaya, following the establishment of law and order by Britain, the discovery of the rich tin fields of Perak and Selangor in the 1870's and the expansion of the rubber industry after 1900, attracted Chinese immigrants in increasing numbers. This continued till the depression of the early 1930's when a quota was placed on male Chinese immigration, followed by a similar ban on females a few years later. The state of

2. C.A. Vlieland, op.cit., pp. 8-10.
Chinese migration can be gauged by the fact that between 1874 and 1941 a total of 17,000,000 Chinese are estimated to have entered the country.

The majority of the Chinese, like the Indians, came in as labourers, chiefly on indenture or "borrowed" passage (to be "worked off") and less frequently on their own. The labour movement was followed by a lesser stream of traders, professionals, artisans, etc., to attend to the needs of their countrymen. Nearly all of the immigrants, however, came with a single common motive - to make money and return to China to live in comparative comfort. As such the Chinese population of pre-war Malaya was largely transient. Many Chinese, however did settle in the country and with the gradual improvement of the sex ratios, the proportion of the local born in the total Chinese population increased steadily. By 1957, 70 per cent of the Chinese in Malaya were local born. Initially coming in essentially as labourers, artisans and cultivators, they have spread to all walks of life, controlling much of the economic wealth and commerce of the country.

The Indians. Malaya's links with India go back in history even further than those with China but Indian immigration on a significant scale began only with the establishment of plantation agriculture in the second half of the last century. Thereafter it grew quickly with the expansion of the rubber industry in the first two decades of the present century. Unskilled labour formed the main stream of Indian immigration followed

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later by traders and professional classes. Even more than the Chinese, the Indians in pre-war Malaya, showed little tendency to settle in Malaya, but to-day more than 60 per cent of the 900,000 Indians in Malaya are Malayan-born and domiciled (Table IV).

Table IV: PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION BORN IN MALAYA, 1911 - 1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Malays</th>
<th>Indians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15 (estimate)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10 (estimate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>49.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>85.0</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>98.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from M.V. del Tufo, *op.cit.*, pp. 83-9;
1957 Population Census of the Federation of Malaya, Report Nos. 2 - 12 (Kuala Lumpur, n.d.), Table 9;
1957 Population Census of Singapore, Preliminary Release No. 7 (Singapore, 1959), Tables III, IV.

Others. Most of the "other" people of Malaya — Europeans, Eurasians, Ceylonese, etc. — are post-British Period arrivals. The numbers of Europeans are small, most of them being either in Government service or in commercial undertakings. The Eurasians are largely descendants of early unions between Europeans and local women. To-day they form a small distinct group of their own. The Ceylonese came in as professionals and traders in the wake of the establishment of British rule while the
Siamese who are chiefly in northern Malaya, have had contacts with Malaya from the days of the first Thai southward advance in the thirteenth century.

The multi-racial polyglot population of Malaya has grown rapidly, initially through large-scale immigration from China, India and the East Indies, and lately, following restrictions on immigration and the improvement of sex-ratios and health in Malaya, through natural increase. In 1957 the annual rate of natural increase exceeded 3.5 per cent (Tables V, VI, VII).
Table V: POPULATION GROWTH IN MALAYA, 1835 - 1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1835-39</th>
<th>1850</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1947</th>
<th>1957</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malays</td>
<td>1,414,197</td>
<td>1,627,108</td>
<td>1,934,900</td>
<td>2,543,569</td>
<td>3,325,198</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>365,395</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>915,883</td>
<td>1,172,896</td>
<td>1,705,915</td>
<td>2,614,667</td>
<td>3,426,429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>267,159</td>
<td>471,628</td>
<td>623,224</td>
<td>599,616</td>
<td>830,240</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,644,489</td>
<td>3,338,545</td>
<td>4,365,800</td>
<td>5,848,910</td>
<td>7,758,036</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RATE OF INCREASE (PER CENT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1839-1850</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850-1911</td>
<td>42.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911-1921</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921-1931</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-1947</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947-1957</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from M.V. del Tufo, op.cit., Appendix C; 1957 Population Census of the Federation of Malaya, Report No.1 (Kuala Lumpur, n.d.), Table I; 1957 Population Census of Singapore, Preliminary Release No.2 (Singapore, 1959), Table II.
### Table VI: FEMALES PER 1,000 MALES IN MALAYA, 1911 - 1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1947</th>
<th>1957</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>833</td>
<td>910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malays</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>969</td>
<td>1,001</td>
<td>1,021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Malaya</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>688</td>
<td>879</td>
<td>935</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As for Table V.

### Table VII: NATURAL RATE OF INCREASE (PER CENT) IN MALAYA, 1921 - 1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1947</th>
<th>1957</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birth Rate</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death Rate</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Rate of Increase</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There has been virtually no inter-racial marriage among the immigrant population in Malaya. Inter-marriage between immigrants and native Malays has also been rare other than in the case of a few of the early Europeans. The biggest obstacle to such unions has been the religious barrier but even where no such restriction has existed there has been little tendency to foster ethnic mixing. Each ethnic group while making Malaya its home, has kept to its own, giving rise to a plural society *par excellence* with all its inherent implications.

c. "Merdeka!" (Independence)

The first real step towards self-government in Malaya was made in 1946 when the Malayan Union was inaugurated. Pre-World War II Malaya consisted of a "hotch potch" of Federated (Perak, Selangor, Negri-Sembilan, Pahang) and Unfederated (Johore, Kedah, Kelantan, Trengganu, Perlis) Malay States and the Crown Colony of the Straits Settlements (Singapore, Penang, Malacca), each acquired separately, and all having their own constitutions and governing councils. Other than being nominated members the Asian population took no active part in the governments managed by the British. Politically, Malaya was a "vacuum". There was practically no indigenous nationalism and no demand for self-government. The inhabitants were divided along ethnic lines and, though living intermingled in outward harmony, were actually resentful and suspicious of one another.

The Malay was the least political minded of the people of Southeast Asia. While he was prepared to let the other communities be,

he resented any encroachment by the other races on his special social, economic and religious privileges as a "son of the soil". He felt strong loyalties to his particular State and Sultan, Pan-Malayan sentiment hardly existing. This parochialism was accentuated by the existing divisions in the country and the lack of official contact.

The Chinese population was more interested in making money and their attitude to politics is aptly summarized in the oft-quoted statement, "... the Chinese do not mind who holds the cow as long they can milk it ...." The little political activity that did exist among them was, with the exception of the Communists, directed towards China, where lay their loyalties. The Communist activity, predominantly Chinese, in Malaya began as early as 1924, under the direction of the Communist Party of China. It worked mostly underground and organized strikes, especially before the beginning of World War II. By 1937, the Communist Party of Malaya, formed in 1930 and immediately outlawed, had 37,000 members, principally Chinese. The Indians had little political interest in Malaya, their sentiments being largely orientated towards India. At least half the Indians and Chinese were transients and tended to keep close ties with their mother countries. Such was the state of affairs when the Japanese invaded Malaya on December 8th, 1941, occupying it in a short sharp campaign by February 15th, 1942.

1. For a more detailed account of the Chinese political activity in Malaya see V. Purcell, The Chinese in Malaya (London, 1948); J.H. Brimmell, A Short History of the Malayan Communist Party (Singapore, 1956).
The British pledge to protect Malaya had been put to the test and had failed miserably. 1

The Japanese Occupation brought about drastic changes. On one hand British prestige suffered an irreparable loss. On the other, political movements were given a great impetus by Japanese propaganda which heightened racial antagonism between the Malays and Chinese, through organizing Malay militias to fight the predominantly Chinese controlled and manned guerilla movement of the Malayan Peoples Anti-Japanese Army. 2 The Japanese impact awakened in the Malays a political consciousness to a degree never known before as they became aware of the threat to their position by the immigrant groups, especially the Chinese. This awakening was reflected in their opposition to the Malayan Union Plan of 1946. 3


2. The Malayan Peoples Anti-Japanese Army (M.P.A.J.A.) was organized by the Malayan Communist Party and armed by the Allies. It operated behind the Japanese lines throughout the Occupation (1942-1945) and in the short interim period between the Japanese Surrender and the return of the British it "ruled" Malaya. This interim period in Malaya is usually referred to as the "Three Star Regime", - three separate red stars on the caps, being the symbol of the M.P.A.J.A. During this period the Malayan Communist Party liquidated many enemies under the guise of punishing collaborators, and racial clashes between Chinese and Malays were frequent.

The Malayan Union was designed to streamline the existing medley of States and Settlements which had proved disadvantageous to military operations against the Japanese and a barrier to progress. Furthermore there was the feeling that the Chinese were entitled to a greater share in the government of Malaya, not only because of their numerical strength, but also because of their record of service to the development of the country and resistance against the Japanese. This marked a complete volte face of pre-World War II British Malayan policy which largely ignored the immigrant groups.

The main items of the Malayan Union Plan were:

(i) All the Federated and Unfederated Malay States and the Straits Settlements, excepting Singapore, were to comprise the Malayan Union with the Sultans retaining their individuality but no political control. The real rulers were to be the British Resident Commissioners who were to be responsible to a Central Government, control over which was to rest solely with the Colonial Office in London.

(ii) Singapore was to be a separate Crown Colony, administered by a British Governor.

(iii) Citizenship and equal opportunity was granted to all inhabitants domiciled in Malaya. Citizenship could be acquired either through right of birth in Malaya or through residential qualification of ten years stay in the country out of the fifteen years preceding the
These proposals raised a howl of protest from the Malay community who found their privileged position threatened. They rallied around Dato Onn bin Jaffar, their leader during the Japanese Occupation, and the United Malays National Organization (U.M.N.O.), representing all Malay interests, was formed in December, 1945 to resist the Union Plan in Malaya while retired British Malayan Civil Servants — "Messrs. Gammans, Winstedt and Company Unlimited" — who sympathized with the Malay sentiments, carried the cudgel in England. Surprisingly enough, the non-Malays, who stood to benefit most from the new proposals, showed little interest in them. The Chinese were, on the whole, sceptical of the new constitutional changes, having little confidence in British intentions after years of discrimination. Furthermore they were fully occupied with the rehabilitation of their businesses. The Indians were not interested either, being more concerned with the eventual independence of India. To them, association with an independent India appeared to be more exhilarating than the benefits of Malayan citizenship.

In the face of determined Malay opposition, pressure from retired officials in England, and lack of support from the other communities, Britain bowed to the wishes of the Malays, repealed the Malayan Union Act, and on February 1st, 1948 created a Federation of Malaya as recommended by the predominantly British and Malay Working

Committee. This Federation scheme marked a step backwards, for it embodied many of the disadvantages of the pre-World War II system of government, denied equality to all the people domiciled in Malaya and stiffened the citizenship laws to protect the privileges of the Malays. 2

The new proposals, together with the increasing militant attitude of the Malay nationalism, greatly heightened racial tension. Finally it awakened the immigrant communities to the full realization of their drastically changed position, following the emergence of a Communist regime in China and two independent nations, India and Pakistan, on the Indian Sub-Continent. Disruption of normal relations with Communist China led many Chinese finally to regard Malaya as their country of domicile, while a similar change of attitude also took place among the Indians, following the denial to them of dual citizenship by the new Government of India. These two communities now became vitally concerned with the internal politics of Malaya and so protested strongly not only against the Federal proposals, with no avail, but also joined the Malays in demanding self-government for their country of domicile.

The next few years saw a number of political parties, largely organized along communal lines, come to the fore, with the United Malays National Organization (U.M.N.O.), the Malayan Chinese Association (M.C.A.) and the Malayan Indian Congress (M.I.C.) representing the three main communities of Malaya, being the most prominent. Political progress was curbed 3 to some extent following the declaration of the

3. The declaration of the Emergency was followed by a great deal of repressive anti-Communist legislation, which, indiscriminately applied, also limited genuine democratic political activity.
Emergency on June 16th, 1948, and also through the inability of the Malays, Chinese and Indians to present a united front. But the independence movement gradually gained in strength and vociferousness and finally in 1955, following the U.M.N.O., M.C.A. and the M.I.C. arriving at an amicable settlement of conflicting interests and forming an U.M.N.O. - M.C.A. - M.I.C. Alliance, the British were forced to hold the first general election, which was overwhelmingly won by the Alliance, under the leadership of Tunku Abdul Rahman, the President of the U.M.N.O.

In the first general election only 52 out of the 98 members of the Federal Legislature were elected, the rest being nominated. Nevertheless, this general election marked a major step forward towards self-government which eventually came on August 31st, 1957,\(^1\) when Persekutuan Tanah Melayu\(^2\) - was formally inaugurated as a sovereign state within the Commonwealth of Nations. Singapore soon followed suit to become the internally self-governing State of Singapore in June, 1959\(^3\).

1. Since the stage of self-government in Singapore was already so advanced by 1957, Merdeka Day (August 31st, 1957) of the Federation is also regarded as the date of the independence of Malaya as a whole.

2. The Malay and constitutional name for the Federation of Malaya.

3. The foreign affairs of Singapore are still under British control.
(ii) Economic Structure:

Malaya, with a per capita national income of more than M$800 per year, is one of the wealthiest countries in Asia. Its economy is based on agriculture, mining and the entrepot trade of Singapore and Penang (Table VIII).

Table VIII: GROSS NATIONAL INCOME BY INDUSTRIAL ORIGIN, 1953: (Million M$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rubber</td>
<td>715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Agriculture &amp; Forestry</td>
<td>1,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepot Trade</td>
<td>1,000 (Est.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other Activities</td>
<td>1,925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,395</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The economic development of Malaya has been on typically colonial lines. Rubber and tin are the mainstays of the economy and prosperity of the country has been intimately linked up with these two commodities (Table IX). Malaya imports about 2/3 of her foodstuffs.
Table IX: PERCENTAGE SHARE OF RUBBER AND TIN OF THE TOTAL VALUE OF EXPORTS FROM MALAYA, 1936 - 1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rubber</th>
<th>Tin</th>
<th>Rubber and Tin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


More than 1/2 of the country's capital is believed to be invested in rubber as against 1/6 in tin while 2/3 of the cultivated acreage is under rubber while the total area alienated for tin mining is 200,000 acres. One striking feature in the history of rubber and tin in Malaya has been the unbalancing effect on the economy resulting from alternating periods of prosperity and depression accompanied by widely fluctuating prices. The livelihood of nearly half of the Indian population of Malaya depends on the rubber industry.
E. Regional Characteristics and the Main Urban Centres of Malaya

Physically much of Malaya looks very much alike but on the basis of economic development and demographic patterns the country can be divided into three general divisions, Western and Eastern Malaya and the Island of Singapore (Figs. 15, 16, 17, 18, 69).

(i) Western Malaya:

This area containing tin bearing alluvials and low foothills suitable for rubber cultivation and settlement, is dominated by the "Rubber and Tin Belt" of Malaya, consisting of tin mines, rubber plantations, large towns, modern roads and railways. Traversed by the main rail and road trunk lines and linked to the outside world by posts, trade and by relations through Chinese, British and Indian migrants, it contains more than 70 per cent of the total population of the Federation and about 80 per cent of the Chinese and Indian population. The two main urban centres of the Federation, Georgetown (population 234,930 in 1957) and Kuala Lumpur (population 316,230 in 1957), are also in this belt. Georgetown, the first British possession in Malaya, is the chief port of northern Malaya and also an important entrepot centre for the neighbouring Southeast Asian countries. Kuala Lumpur, located centrally in the Western region and accessible by mountain pass to the Eastern section, is the national capital and administrative focus of the Federation.
Fig. 15. Federation of Malaya: Land Alienation, 1953.

Source: Based on Ooi Jin Bee, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
Fig. 16. Singapore: Land Alienation, 1958.

Source: Based on Singapore Survey Department, Series: GSGS 1923, Sheet: Singapore, No. 25000/10/58 (Singapore, 1958).
Fig. 17. Malaya: Geographical Regions and Major Urban Centres, 1957.

(ii) **Eastern Malaya:**

This region is comparatively the least developed part of Malaya. While difficult terrain and forests hamper transport development in the interior, strong winds during the Northeast Monsoon, virtually isolate the coastal areas, making them unsafe for coastal shipping. Road and rail communications are few while the unprotected coast and sand bars at the mouths of most of the rivers have limited harbourage facilities to small ports. Except for significant numbers of Chinese and Indians in the interior valleys and in areas engaged in mining, rubber cultivation and trade, this region is occupied mainly by Malays engaged chiefly in a subsistence economy based on padi cultivation, supplemented either by fishing or other miscellaneous activities. The biggest concentrations of these Malays are in the coastal plains, particularly in the Kelantan Delta.

Eastern Malaya, has however great potentialities, for not only does it contain much of the potential agricultural land of the country but also most of its recently discovered huge deposits of iron ore of Pahang and Trengganu. Malaya is already producing more than 2½ million tons of iron ore for export from this area, principally from the mines near Dungun, Trengganu.
Fig. 18. Malaya: Communications, 1957.

Source: Ooi Jin Bee, op. cit., p. 16.
(iii) Singapore Island:

This small island, of 224 square miles contains 1,500,000 persons, giving it a density of more than 6,500 persons per square mile, one of the highest in the world. Nearly 80 per cent of the population is Chinese. The Island has few natural resources in its interior and is dominated by the port and city of Singapore, containing nearly a million inhabitants or more than 2/3 of the total population of the region. The strategically situated port has made Singapore not only the chief port of Malaya, handling 70 per cent of its sea-borne trade, but also a huge entrepot centre for the surrounding countries. In fact, much of the economic life of Singapore is centred on its function as a "middleman". More than 90 per cent of Malaya's entrepot trade, which accounts for some 40-50 per cent of the total trade of the country, is handled by Singapore. Besides being a trading and to some extent secondary manufactures' centre, Singapore is also an important military base of Britain (Fig. 19).
Fig. 19. Geographical Pattern of Singapore Island, 1938.

Source: As for Fig. 16.
In a dim distant unrecorded age
we had met, thou and I, --
When my speech became tangled in thine
and my life in thy life.
The East Wind had carried thy beckoning call.
through an unseen path of the air
to a distant sun-lit shore
fanned by the coconut leaves.
It blended with the conch-shell sound
that rose in worship at the shrines
by the sacred waters of the Ganges.
The great God-Vishnu spoke to me
and spoke Uma, the ten-armed Goddess:
"Make ready thy boat, carry the rites of our worship
across the unknown sea."
The Ganges stretched her arm to the eastern ocean
in a flow of majestic gesture.
From the heavens spoke to me two mighty voices —
the one that had sung of Rama's glory of sorrow
and the other Arjuna's triumphant arm —
urging me to bear along the waves
their epic lines to the eastern islands;
and the heart of my land murmured to me its hope
that it might build its nest of love,
in a far-away land of its dream ....

(i) Suvarnadvipa (The Land of Gold):
Relations between India and Malaya go back far into
prehistoric times. Just when Indian sailors first coasted the shores

1. The following discussion on "The Making of Greater India"is based,
mainly, on Paul Wheatley, *The Golden Khersonese* (In Press), which
contains comprehensive chapters on Indian contacts with ancient Malaya.

2. "Greater India", recalling the heyday of Indian influence in Southeast
Asia in the early centuries of the Christian era, is a term used,
somewhat nostalgically, in India, mainly, to denote pre-sixteenth
century Southeast Asia.

3. Rabindranath Tagore, *The Pilgrim from India* (Batavia, 1927), cited
of the Bay of Bengal and reached the Siamo-Malay Peninsula is unknown:¹ but certainly by the end of the second century A.D., Indian influence was firmly established in the Peninsula, Indo-China and the Archipelago, and Indian shipping was a common sight in the waters of Southeast Asia.² Unfortunately the genius of Indian thought sought its expression in realms other than historiography and information about these early times was never recorded with factual exactitude. For the most part we are dependent on incidental allusions in some such medium as Sanskrit verse or ancient Tamil court poetry. References have to be quarried from the vast mass of fable and fact that characterises early Indian literature.

One of the earliest place-names which can be related to Southeast Asia is Yavadvipa³ (Sanskrit,⁴ the Isle of Gold and Silver), in the Fourth Canto of the Bombay Rescension of the Ramayana, a third or fourth century B.C. Sanskrit epic. Scholarly opinion is divided as to whether this name refers to Java⁵ or Sumatra⁶, or to both, or even

4. "Sanskrit", derived from "Sanskrita" (put together), was the language of the learned in ancient India. It was used mainly by the Brahmin priesthood. Much of the ancient Indian literature is in Sanskrit.
5. See, for example, J. Ph. Vogel, The Relation between the Art of India and Java (London, 1925), p.15.
to Borneo, but that it was a part of Southeast Asia there can be no doubt.

The same name occurs again in Chapter 48 of the ancient Vedic tales of the Vayu Purana, together with another word, Kaserudvipa, which has been considered by some scholars to refer to the Malay Peninsula; but these matters are all highly speculative and probably the truth will never be known.

It seems that the ancient Indians used two general terms when referring to Southeast Asia. The first of these was Dvipantara (Clove Island?), a name which occurs several times in Somadeva's eleventh century Kathasaritsagara (Ocean Streams of Stories), in Kalidasa's Raghuvamsa, in a Sanskrit - Chinese lexicon of the seventh or eighth century, and in one of the earliest hagiologies of Tamil Vaisnavism, the Guruparampari Arayirappadi of the twelth or thirteenth century. The other term for Southeast Asia which first appears in the Ramayana and one which was used much more widely and is also better known today was Suvarnadvipa, a Sanskrit name with the meaning of "Golden Island" or perhaps "Golden Peninsula". Dvipa strictly means "land with water on two sides" but in ancient writing it was often used in a general sense to mean simply "land", so that Suvarnadvipa

can be translated quite adequately as the "land of gold". In Pali Buddhist writings it does occur in the form Suvarnabhumi with precisely this meaning. The ancient Buddhist folk tales, the Jatakas, for example, which were in existence in the late centuries of the pre-Christian era, but which certainly incorporate material from a much earlier period, picture an established trade between the ports of India and Suvarnabhumi. One well known story tells of how Prince Mahajanaka, seeking great riches, joined with a company of merchants bound for this El Dorado of the East, while two other tales refer to a voyage from Bharukaccha (modern Broach) to Suvarnabhumi. In the second or third century Milinda-panha (Questions of King Milinda), containing perhaps the best-known reference to these trading voyages to the East, we read:

... As a wealthy shipowner scrupulously discharges his port dues and, putting forth on to the high seas, voyages to ... Takkola ... Suvarnabhumi ..., while the Maha niddesa, a part of the Pali Buddhist canon from the second or third century A.D., records the hazards of these early voyages:

... he puts forth onto the high seas and enduring frost and heat, mosquitoes and stinging insects, wind and sun, and hunger and thirst he voyages on to Takkola ... Tamalin (Tambralinga) ... Suvarnabhumi ... .

1. The term "Pali" means actually the 'text', the text par excellence, that is, the text of the Buddhist scriptures, but it also indicates the language in which the sacred scriptures of Buddhism are recorded, and the script in which these are written (D. Deringer, The Alphabet, London, 2nd ed., 1949, p.388).
Other stories derive from the pre-Christian era *Brihatkatha* or "Treasury of Stories". Such for instance is the tale, preserved in the *Brihatkatha-slokasamgraha*, an abridged version of the *Brihatkatha*, of one Sanudesa, who after reaching *Suvarnabhumi*, set out on an adventurous expedition into the interior of the country.\(^1\) From the same source come stories of several voyages related in Somadeva's *Kathasaritsagara*, including that of the merchant Samudrasura, who visited *Kalasapura*, the capital of *Suvarnadvipa*.\(^2\) Another merchant, Rudra, was shipwrecked on the return voyage\(^3\) while there are references to trading expeditions to the *Suvarnadvipa* in the stories of/ travellers Isvaravarma\(^4\) and Yasahketu.\(^5\) Then the *Kathasaritsagara* also includes a tale of shipwreck on the coast of *Suvarnadvipa*, suffered by Princess Gunavati on her way from Kataha (Kedah)\(^6\) to India, and finally in the same work we find the itinerary of the Brahmin Candrasvami wandering among the islands of the East in search of his lost son.\(^7\) Figure 20 depicts the probable route of his voyage.

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2. *Kathasaritsagara*, taranga 54, verses 97, et seq.
3. Ibid., taranga 54, verses 86, et seq.
4. Ibid., taranga 57, verses 72, et seq.
5. Ibid., taranga 86, verses 33; 62.
Suvarnadvipa is also mentioned in the Kathakosa, another abridged version of the Brihatkatha, as a land whose king rescued the traveller Nagadatta and his five hundred ships from the hollow of the snake-encircled mountain, while Kautilya's encyclopædia of the fourth century A.D., the Arthasastra, refers to aguru from Suvarnabhumi and the Ceylonese Buddhist chronicle of the sixth century, the Mahavamsa or Mahavamsa, describes the missionary activities of the Buddhist monks Theva Uttara and Thera Sona in Suvarnabhumi in the third century B.C. Finally from Tibetan sources we learn that in the seventh century A.D. the Buddhist monk Dharmapala visited Suvarnadvipa, followed by another monk, Dipankara Atisa, in the eleventh century.

Clearly Suvarnabhumi featured in the early Indian folklore as an eastern El Dorado where great riches might be won. Some of the texts mentioned above are best interpreted on the assumption that Suvarnabhumi was specifically Sumatra, but there can be no doubt that the majority of the early writers applied the term to the whole of the Archipelago and the Siamo-Malay Peninsula.

1. aguru = aloeswood; from the Malay, gharu.
2. Kathasaritsagara, taranga 56, verses 56-64.
5. For example, Nilakanta Sastri wrote in 1952 of "the mysterious land of Suvarnabhumi, which has been proved to be a general title in those days for Burma, the Malay Peninsula and the Malay Archipelago" (K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, Age of the Nandas and Mauryas, Benares, 1952, p.270). This is corroborated by R. Braddell, the noted authority on ancient times in Malaya, who says, "Suvarnabhumi was an Indian El Dorado and can be said best to have embraced the gold bearing regions of Southeast Asia" (R. Braddell, "Malayadvipa", op.cit., p.4).
The Puranic accounts make it clear that Indian sailors visited the shores of Southeast Asia in very remote times, probably far back into the prehistoric period, but it is no less certain that Indonesian (Malay) traders, a sea faring folk par excellence, frequented the Indian coast equally early.¹ One of the Jataka texts, in fact, relates that a voyage to Suvarnabhumi was undertaken by merchants of Bharukaccha (modern Broach) in response to a visit from merchants of the latter country.²

By the time the Jatakas, Brihatkatha, Arthasastra and Milindapanha had assumed their present forms, some centuries of trade relations had brought substantial accessions to the Indian knowledge of Southeast Asia and their conceptions of the geography of the eastern El Dorado beyond the ocean, were beginning to crystallize. Within the realm of Suvarnabhumi itself were now discernible nebulous territories such as Kataha (Sanskrit form of modern 'Kedah'), Malavadvipa (Sumatra), Tambralinga (named possibly after Tambhalin, the birth place of the learned Buddhapalita) and Takkola (Takola), which if it had any meaning at all was probably the 'Land of Cardamom'. Half-way across the Indian Ocean was Narikeladvipa, the Coconut Islands, presentday Nicobars, while at the furthest bounds of Indian eastward penetration was Kapuradvipa, the Camphor Land, thought to have been the Borneo of to-day (Fig. 20).

2. From a comparative study of Hindu architecture in India and in Indonesia, Professor F.D.K. Bosch has also reached the same conclusion that Indonesians played an active part in the prosecution of trade between India and Indonesia and the transference of Indian culture to the Archipelago (Het vraagstuk van de Hindoe - Kolonisatie van den Archipel, Leiden, 1946).
Fig. 20. *Suvarnabhumi* (The Land of Gold).

On the motives of the voyages related above, the literary evidence is conclusive. Almost all of the tales were inspired by the search for wealth. Indeed, if literature, says Majumdar, mirrors the interests of an age, then trade and commerce "must have been a supreme passion in India in the centuries immediately preceding and following the Christian era." The very names of the fabulous kingdoms beyond the sunrise were invitations to merchant venturers: Suvarnadvipa, the Land of Gold; Kapuradvipa, the Camphor Land and Takkola (Takola); the Land of Cardamom.

Probably the itinerary of Chandrasvami across the Bay of Bengal to Narikeladvipa, thence to Kataha and Kapuradvipa, and back by way of Suvarnadvipa (in its restricted sense of Sumatra) to Simhala (Ceylon), is an adaptation for literary purposes of such voyages as Indian merchants were undertaking at the very dawn of history.

The "Indianization" of Malaya:

The morning came; my boat danced on the dark blue water her white sails proud of the favour of a friendly breeze. She kissed thy shore, a stir ran athwart thy sky, and the green veil fluttered on the breast of the Nymph of thy woodland.

We met in the shade of the night-fall, in the dark hours of the earth; the still evening was touched to its depth by the blessings of the Seven Holy Stars of Wisdom. The night waned; and Dawn scattered her prodigal gold on the path of our meeting along which the two companion souls continued their journey through ages among a crowd of gigantic visions....

During the early centuries of the Christian era a significant change occurred in the relations between India and Southeast Asia. Throughout the old realm of Suvarnabhumi there emerged kingdoms with conceptions of royalty based on Hindu or Buddhist cults. The arts practised in these states, and the customs of at least the nobility, were also Indian, while Sanskrit was the sacred language. The mythology of the Puranas and the observance of the Dharmasastras also played important roles while the aristocracy and the rulers were either Indians or Indianized local chiefs.

This transformation in the Indian relations with the eastern El Dorado from one of seasonal trading visits in the prehistoric period to that of almost complete Indianization in the early centuries of the Christian era, was the result of, probably, a number of complex and complementary processes, among which the expansion of trade and the arrival of Brahmins and other literati in Southeast Asian ports were the most prominent.

Precisely which factors were at work in the stimulation of this trade expansion are wholly matters of inference. Among current hypotheses the most credible is that formulated by G. Coedes, who attributes a re-orientation of Indian commercial interests to changing political conditions in the Mediterranean and Central Asia. In the first place, the formation of the Seleucid Empire fostered communication between India and the West, circumstances of which Rome took advantage when her subsequent unification of the shores of the Mediterranean inaugurated a demand for Eastern luxuries. Among these were gold, spices, and scented woods and resins, obtained by Indian merchants from Southeast Asia. In the second place, during the two centuries preceding the Christian era, nomadic disturbances in Central Asia, closed the trade routes through Bactria to India's source of gold in Siberia, a situation aggravated when the Roman Emperor, Vespasian, prohibited the export of precious metals from the Roman Empire. Thus cut off from the west and north, Indians turned eastwards to Suvarnabhumi, the very land of gold.

1. The old theory that the motive for Indianization lay in the flight of refugees from either Emperor Asoka's conquest of the South Indian kingdom of Kalinga (Fig. 21), in the third century B.C. or the Kushan invasions of the Gangetic plains in the first century A.D. can no longer be sustained now that we know that there was no mass migration of Indians to Malaya or other parts of Southeast Asia prior to the nineteenth century (D.G.E. Hall, op.cit., pp.17 ff.).

Two circumstances facilitated these trading voyages. The early centuries of this era were a period of innovation in ship construction in the Indian Ocean. Larger, ocean going vessels were build according to a technique borrowed from the Persian Gulf and, more important, were so rigged that they could sail nearer the wind. Finally, the development of Buddhism undermined the rigid ideas of racial purity and repugnance to travel entertained by Hindus. On the other hand the importance of Buddhism in the early days of Indianization is attested by the images of Buddha Dipankara — Buddha calming the waves — of the Amaravati school which have come to light on archeological sites in many parts of Southeast Asia and, in Malaya, in particular, by the discovery of Buddhist inscriptions in Kedah and Province Wellesley.

1. Sea voyages are clearly prohibited in the laws of Manu (III, 58) and Baudhavana Dharmasutra. Baudhavana places such voyages at the head of pataniyani (sins) and prescribes a three-year penance. Although in practice the prohibition seems to have been largely disregarded, such an authoritative command must have exerted a strong restraining force while the fear of loss of caste through association with mlechas (non-Hindus), who were regarded as unclean or impure, must also have been an equally potent deterrent to overseas travel by Hindus (R.C. Majumdar, Ancient Indian Colonization in Southeast Asia (Baroda, India, 1955), p.6).

2. From "Amaravati", a town at the mouth of the Kistna River on the east coast of India, an important centre of the overseas spread of Buddhism during second and third centuries (Fig. 21).


Fig. 21. India: Asoka's Empire, 260 B.C.

Stimulation of trade tremendously increased merchant activity in the Malaysian waters. These traders, *populo minuto* though they were, spread a knowledge of Indian customs and paved the way for the spread of Indian culture. Until recently, it used even to be thought that these merchants were proselytizing colonists and the chief bearers of Indian culture to the Southeast Asian courts. We now know this was not so. For one thing the traders led too confined an existence to enable them to transmit more than a few superficial aspects of Indian civilization. They were primarily of two types. First there were the merchant aristocrats, primarily investors and speculators who it is true did occasionally settle in parts of Malaya, but they were very few in number and their refined and secluded lives could have influenced the surrounding populations only slightly. The majority of the Indian traders were of a very different social status. They were in fact pedlars, usually from the lower strata of Indian society, who travelled all over the Indian Ocean. Poor and untutored, they could never have been a medium for the transmission of the subtler forms of Indian ritual and artistic sensitivity. Moreover, far from having access to the *kraton* (court), they were confined to special ghetto-like quarters in the port areas, with few opportunities of meeting the local folk other than those occurring incidentally during the disposal of their wares.

3. F.D.K. Bosch, *op. cit.*, passim.
How then is the high degree of Indianization that characterized the early Malayan settlements to be accounted for? There can be no doubt but that the seasonal visits of merchants had been supplemented by the arrival and settlement of priests and literati, who installed themselves as an aristocracy ruling over an indigenous population. In a fine passage of imaginative writing the eminent Malay scholar, Winstedt, has recreated the process of transformation as it must have happened at many a haven round the shores of Southeast Asia:

... A ship or so came with the monsoon to exchange beads and magic amulets for gold, tin, ivory, camphor and those rare medicines, rhinoceros-horns and bezoars .... Here and there a passenger practised magic, that proved potent in love or war or disease. Another won regard as a warrior. Some married local brides. Priests came and taught a new ritual in Sanskrit awe-inspiring, as Arabic was to be later, because it was unintelligible to the multitude. For daily speech the newcomers, evidently because they were sparse, adopted the languages of Malaysia and introduced very few words of their own colloquial Prakrit.1 In time a few married into leading Indonesian (Malay) families and brought Hindu ideas of kingship, just as more than a thousand years later Muslim Tamils married into the families of the sultans and bendaharas2 of Malacca. The coming of the Hindu appears to have been very similar to the later arrival of the Muslim from India and the Hadramaut, the Brahmin and Kshatriya taking the place to be usurped by the Sayid ....3

1. Prakrit, from Prakrita ('common, vulgar'). Prakrit was the language of the people and the ancestor of the Prakritic dialects still spoken throughout India.
2. bendahara, Malay for a palace chamberlain.
Nor is this process wholly imaginary. We have seen the quest of trade illustrated in early Indian writing while ancient Chinese literature records the manner in which the Indians were assimilated into the local population. According to local Cambodian tradition, preserved in a Chinese dynastic history, the pre-Khmer Indianized kingdom of Fu-nan, which flourished during the third century A.D., was founded in the first century A.D. by an adventurer who had assumed the name of the mythical Brahmin Kaundinya, who ascended the throne of Fu-nan by marrying the queen of the country. On a less exalted plane, we read of Brahmins taking wives from among the women of Tun-Sun.

The entry of the Brahmins was further facilitated by the relatively advanced stage of civilization attained by Southeast Asian peoples in early times. They were no barbarians but people already heirs to a socio-economic organization of some antiquity. They practised irrigation, they had domesticated the ox and buffalo, they had a rudimentary knowledge of metallurgy and were skilled seaman. They also had a mythology which involved a cosmological dualism frequently expressed in the complimentary form of mountain and sea. Through trade relations with South Indian ports, Southeast Asian rulers soon realized

4. See pp.128-30 below.
the value of Indian concepts as a method of legitimatizing their political status, to say nothing of stratifying their subjects. To achieve this end they summoned to their courts Brahmins skilled in protocol and ritual, and it was this comparatively small but influential group who introduced such characteristic traits as the consecration of a monarch by magical processes, Hindu religious formulae, mythological genealogies of ruling houses, Indian iconography, epic characters and plots and the whole complex apparatus of Indian court life. This does not mean, of course, that Brahmins were the only Indians other than traders who voyaged to Southeast Asia, but they were certainly the only group capable of transmitting the more refined aspects of Hindu civilization. Side by side with this religious and intellectual element, however, was a military and merchantile group represented by the Kshatriya, the warrior caste of India.  

That opportunities for acquiring influence should attract adventurers as well as priests and merchants is not unexpected, but we must not disregard the complementary process by which a local chieftain adopted Indian culture, even aspiring to the rank of Kshatriya. Apparent examples of this are not wanting if we read carefully between the lines of certain inscriptions. Sanskrit inscriptions dating back to the fifth century, found in the region of Kutei, east Borneo, show that both Mulavarman, the King, and his father Asvarman, for example, bore names of purest Sanskrit, but the grandfather was known as Kundunga, most likely a Tamil or Indonesian name. Again, Sanjaya, founder of the

2. Liang Shu, Chapter 54, cited in P. Wheatley, The Golden Khersonese (Mss.), Chapter IV.
kingdom of Mataram, in central Java, in the eighth century, and bearer of a good Sanskrit name, was nephew to one Sannaha, apparently a Javanese name recast in Sanskrit form. Finally, Coedes has called attention to a third important method of culture transference, namely the introduction of Indian customs into Southeast Asia by indigenous neophytes and traders returning from the Sub-Continent.

Such contacts and unions, as above, meant that there soon developed an aristocracy of mixed Indian and indigenous blood and Indianized local chieftains and bourgeoisie. It is thus not surprising that when the city-states of early Malaya first appear in Chinese annals, they are Indianized societies. So highly were they Indian in outlook and appearance that some writers have been led astray to conclude that these societies were colonies of Indians formed through waves of immigration coming across the Bay of Bengal. In his much criticized book, The Making of Greater India, Wales claims to distinguish four main immigrant waves corresponding to the chief phases of medieval Indian civilization: the Amaravati (second and third centuries A.D.), the

Gupta (fourth to sixth centuries), the Pallava (A.D. 550-750) and the Pala (A.D. 750-900). This idea of a settlement by waves of immigrants is incompatible with the character of the Indian culture transference as discussed above. The numbers of Indians in early Malaya were never large.

There has been a great deal of speculation about the precise places of origin of early Indian immigrants into Southeast Asia, and it is unlikely that the last word has yet been said on this matter. The main protagonists in this debate are the universities of North and South India, led by R.C. Majumdar and Nilakanta Sastri respectively, each of whom places the provenance of the Indian immigrants into Southeast Asia in his own particular half of India. 1 Several lines of approach, for example,

1. Interesting though it is, the long drawn out controversy is, however, outside the scope of this study. The following is a select list of books dealing, at some length, with the topic.

R.C. Majumdar, Ancient Indian Colonies in the Far East: I, Champa (Lahore, 1927).

Kambujadesa (Madras, 1944).

Ancient Indian Colonization in Southeast Asia (Baroda, 1955).

Nilakanta Sastri, History of Sri Vijaya (Madras, 1949).

The Age of Nandas and Mauryas (Benares, 1952).


South Indian Influences in the Far East (Bombay, 1949).

G. Coedes, op.cit., Chapters I, II, III.


A.K. Coomaraswamy, op.cit.

examination of scripts of earlier inscriptions, plastic arts, architecture, study of ports of embarkation, place names, dynastic traditions current in early Southeast Asia and of tribal names of the peoples of Malaysia have been explored in this connection but none have yielded incontrovertible results. From fragmentary indications, culled through the above lines of approach, it appears that although all parts of the Indian Sub-Continent contributed to the Indianization of Southeast Asia, the majority of migrants came from the South.\(^1\) Particularly is this true of the Peninsula where, apart from a few Gupta-style\(^2\) figures from P'ong Tuk, Ch'aiya, Wieng Sra, Nakawn Sritamarat, Kedah and Perak and fragments of Buddhist votive tablets in tenth-century Nagari script from a Kedah cave, the archeological evidence points uncompromisingly towards South India. For example, more than a century ago, in Kedah, Colonel Low found Buddhist inscriptions written in Pallava characters, together with a tablet inscribed with the prayer of a sailing-master for a safe voyage, also in Pallava.\(^3\) More recently in the Bujang Valley of Kedah, Wales unearthed inscribed quotations from the South Indian classic \textit{Sagaramati-paripraccha}.

\begin{itemize}
\item[1.] G. Coedes, \textit{op.cit.}, p.61.
\item[2.] This style of sculpture flourished in Northern India during the Gupta Period (A.D.320-544).
\end{itemize}
in Pallava grantha script. An inscription from Bukit Choras, and the writings on silver discs found on Sungei Batu Estate, in Kedah, are also in South Indian script. Then a bronze casket containing foundation deposits and a miniature damaru drum contained within it, both from the Bujang Valley (Fig. 28) are of South Indian type, while a dagger hilt from the same district closely resembles one on the Mahisasura Mandapam bas-relief at Mahabalipuram, Madras. Finally, an inscription found by Wales near Takuapa, implies that a community of Tamils was settled on the west coast of the Siamo-Malay Peninsula in the ninth century. On the basis of these finds it seems only reasonable to conclude that the dominant influence in early Malaya was South Indian.

We must, however, be on guard against regarding Indianization as precisely delimited in time and place when it was in fact a process of cultural diffusion operating over centuries. In this connection, Wales' postulate of four distinct waves of Indian migration and influence cannot be accepted. It is, however, undeniable that the changing phases of civilization in the Indian homeland are apparent in the provenance of the

2. Ibid., p.7
3. Ibid., pp.23-4.
4. Ibid., pp.73-4.
migrants and in the material remains by which we know them. In any case the pattern of migration is, as Wales is only too willing to admit, complicated by local currents originating from centres of diffusion mainly on the Siamo-Malay Peninsula or in Sumatra. Finally it must be stressed that the majority of our sources for the study of Indianization show us only the results of the processes, the evolution of and eventual decline of kingdoms, so that for the present we must be content with a largely inferential understanding of the origins.

It has already been stated that the Peninsula fulfilled an important role in the dissemination of Indian culture throughout the northern regions of Southeast Asia. Not only was it the first landfall of most Indian voyagers to the East, but it was also an unavoidable barrier to further penetration, which could be surmounted only by an overland portage or a circuitous coastal voyage. It is not surprising, therefore that some of the earliest Indianized settlements recorded by the Chinese annalists were situated on the Peninsula. At the close of the first century A.D. the kingdom of Langkasuka was founded on the east coast in the neighbourhood of modern Patani. During the third century we hear of Tun-sun, a trading mart in the extreme north of the Peninsula together with Ch'u-tu-kun and the port of Chu-li; in the sixth and seventh centuries a kingdom known as Red Earth Land and situated to the south of Langkasuka was sufficiently prominent to attract envoys from the Chinese Court, while in the fifth century from the isthmian state of Plan-Plan an adventurer, the second Kaundinya, planned his usurpation of

1. See p.113, footnote 5 above.
the throne of Funan. Then a seventh or early eighth century temple excavated on a low spur of Kedah Peak (Fig. 28) has been interpreted as a transition form between South Indian sepulchral shrines and the chandis (Indian monuments) of Java. The fact that the Peninsula should have been a regional centre for the diffusion of Hinduism and Buddhism argues that it was itself subject to Indian influences at an early date.

There is no archeological evidence from the Peninsula contemporary with the emergence of Langkasuka, or even with the heyday of Tun-sun, so that historical geographers have enjoyed considerable licence in their attempts to plot the routes followed by the Indian immigrants. In any case these routes would have been subject to continual change as the fortunes of Indian-kingdoms waxed and waned. From Amaravati early immigrants crossed the Bay of Bengal to the Arakan coast and the Burmese deltas, where two passes invited penetration into the interior. From Moulmein the Ataran River leads up to the Three Pagodas Pass at a height of 800 feet, where there is an easy descent by the way of the Me Nam Kwe Noi into the valley of the Me Klong River and so to the plains of Lower Siam. Southwards a more difficult route from the Tavoy district crosses the watershed at the Three Cedis Pass. Where these routes

3. The terrain of the northern part of the Peninsula may be studied conveniently on a medium scale on 1:1,000,000, Asia and the East Indies, G.S.G.S.2555 and 4204, sheets NB 47 (Penang Island) and NC 47 (Isthmus of Kra); and on a larger scale on Hind 604, Siam Kra Isthmus, 1:63,660, sheets C-47-0, P, U, V, W, And B-47-C, D, E, K, L, and Hind 1035, Malaya, 1:63,360, sheets 2E, 2I, 2M.
converge and the traveller comes out into the plains of Lower Siam are the archeological sites of P'ong Tuk\(^1\) and P'ra Pathom,\(^2\) which attest the use of at least some of these passes during the early centuries of the Christian era (Figs. 21, 24).

The hegemony of the Guptas (A.D.320-544) with their capital at Pataliputra (modern Patna) saw the rise of the port of Tamralipti\(^3\) (modern Tamluk) at the mouth of the Ganges as a place of embarkation for the fabled lands of the East (Fig. 22). We know a good deal about the voyage from here to Kedah because it is described in considerable detail in a compendium of Buddhist biographies compiled by the Chinese Buddhist monk, I-Ching,\(^3\) who presumably followed the same route in his round trip from Canton to the Buddhist University of Nalanda, in the Ganges Delta, in the seventh century, as the Indian voyagers. From Tamralipti a voyage of from two to four weeks brought vessels to a convenient revictualing station, the Nicobar Islands. A further ten days brought them to Kedah, where a powerful Indianized settlement had grown up in the neighbourhood of the Merbok and Muda rivers (Fig. 28). Here Wales unearthed a bronze standing image of the Buddha in Gupta style.\(^4\) From

1. See p.115 above.
here an easy route led north-eastwards to Patani, the nucleus of the
kingdom of Langkasuka. During this period another shorter route was
also in use which brought voyagers from Tamralipti to Takuapa, the site
of an Indianized settlement which flourished from the third to the eighth
centuries A.D.\textsuperscript{1} From this point the Takuapa River leads up to a col,
at just under 2,000 feet, from the far side of which the Khirirat River
affords an easy descent into the coastal plain of Bandon. Wales found
traces of Indian penetration along this route,\textsuperscript{2} while on the plain beyond
stand the remains of the city of Ch'aiya\textsuperscript{3} and the smaller site of Wieng
Sra\textsuperscript{4}, together with several other shrines and relics dating from the
period under discussion. From Ch'aiya comes a statue of Vishnu in
imitation of a Gupta model, while Buddhist figures of pure Gupta style
are also known from Wieng Sra and Perak\textsuperscript{5} (Fig. 24).

2. \textit{Ibid.}, pp.51-68.
pp.135-6 and Plates.XLII, XLIV; A. W.ight, \textit{Twentieth Century
Impressions of British Malaya} (Singapore, 1908), p.78.
Fig. 22. India: The Gupta Period, 320-544 A.D.

Pallava immigrants of the sixth to eight centuries would be more likely to have sailed from the neighbourhood of their capital at Kanchipuram or from the ports of Nagapattinam or Mahabalipuram so that it is not surprising that they have left few traces in Burma and Central Siam (Fig. 23). On the Peninsula, however, Pallava remains are rather more common. Takuapa, for example, seems to have retained its importance as a gateway to the Ch'aiya district, for the Pra No' Vishnu statue, found there, is in the purest Pallava style, while a similar modelled figure from Wieng Sra and the three Brahminic stone statues found in the valley of the Takuapa River attest the continued use of the trans-peninsular route. With the statues was found a Tamil inscription of the ninth century A.D., which places a tank constructed in the locality under the protection of Manigramam (a powerful merchantile corporation) and "the residents of a senamukam (military camp)". Nilakanta Sastri summarizing the implications of this evidence says, "... our inscription attests the presence at Takuapa of a good number of Tamils including soldiers and merchants and having a permanent stake in the country round about and rearing religious and secular institutions conducive to their spiritual and material welfare ...." There is no reason to dispute this conclusion, though the same author's suggestion that the presence of a military encampment indicates the extension of the political power of the Pallava King Nandivarman III (A.D. 826-50) over parts of the Peninsula, cannot be accepted in view of the preceding conclusions regarding the process of Indianization.

1. Manigramam was the most celebrated merchant guild of early Southern India. It owed no exclusive political allegiance to any ruler.
Fig. 23. Seventh Century India.

Source: Based on C. Collin Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
Similar Pallava-style statues still in situ at Nakawn Sritamarat, whence came also two Sanskrit inscriptions of the sixth to eighth centuries, would seem to indicate that the Trang River afforded a route across the isthmus at this time. So far, however, despite a strong presumption that the trading city of Takola was in this vicinity, no significant archeological remains have been discovered in the neighbourhood of Trang.1 Farther south in Kedah the foundations of Saivite temples built by Pallava immigrants have been laid bare by Wales. Finally mention must be made of an Indianized settlement discovered by Evans at Kuala Selinsing on the Matang coast of Perak, in 1928.2 This was a pile-built village which is thought to have flourished sometime between the sixth3 and twelfth centuries.4 Recently aerial photography has revealed some six or so apparently similar sites among the mangrove swamps of Matang but so far none has been visited, let alone excavated.

3. Professor H. Otley Beyer, (Philippine and East Asian Archeology and its Relation to the Origin of the Pacific Islands Population, Manila, 1948), on grounds of a strong typological affinity with a Philippine culture, considers that it probably existed as early as sixth century A.D.
4. H.G. Quaritch Wales, ("Archeological Researches", op.cit., pp.54-6), suggests that the village continued into the twelfth century.
In this brief and wholly inadequate survey of Indian archeological remains on the Peninsula no mention has been made of the two shortest trans-peninsula routes, that from Mergui to Prachuabkhirikun by way of the Tenasserim River, and that across the Kra Isthmus. Despite a fairly thorough search by archeologists and other interested individuals, like Wales and Wheatley, neither has yielded any evidence of Indian penetration in early times, although the Kra isthmus was a main highway between the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It would seem, thus, that the merchants, priests and adventurers who reached the Peninsula were in fact, seeking not merely to cross it, but to settle on it. They avoided those parts of the isthmus with restricted hinterlands, and settled only in localities with trading and agricultural potentialities, and we may further surmise, those with flourishing indigenous populations. This interpretation is in accord with current theories of Indianization, and confirms our earlier conjecture that the Peninsula was a local centre for the diffusion of Indian culture and not merely a barrier over which successive waves of immigrants flowed on to found the great kingdoms of early Indo-China and Indonesia (Fig. 24).
Fig. 24. Probable Routes of Indian Migrants to Ancient Southeast Asia.

Source: As for Fig. 20.
The Indianized States of the Siamo-Malay Peninsula:

It remains to say a few words about the kingdoms which grew up on the Malay Peninsula under the influence of Indian political conceptions. It is a topic which can only be treated in broadest outlines here, but readers requiring a more detailed account will find it in the select bibliography listed below. It must be remembered, too, that as most of our information about these states is derived from Chinese histories so we know them only under Chinese versions of their names.

1. (a) Ronald Braddell's magisterial series of papers which have appeared over the last 20 years under the title "An Introduction to the Study of Ancient times in the Malay Peninsula and the Straits of Malacca" in the J.M.B.R.A.S., Vol.14 (1936) ff.


During the third century A.D. there were about a dozen such "states", with no defined territorial boundaries and each with a walled coastal city as its nucleus, in existence on the isthmian tract of the Peninsula (Fig. 25). The most powerful of these "city-states" was a Mon confederacy, consisting of about a dozen settlements, located in the far north and known collectively, to the Chinese, as Tun-sun. If we are to believe the Chinese chronicler, its trade relations extended as far afield as Persia and Tonking. "At this mart" he says "East and West meet together, so that daily there are more than 10,000 people (there). Precious goods and rare merchandise ... there is nothing which is not there". We are also told that there were five hundred Indian families together with a thousand Brahmins living there. Though many of these "Indians" and "Brahmins" were probably Indo-Malays or Indianized indigenous people the figures, nevertheless, indicate the extent of Indian influence. Moreover, something of the process of Indianization can be glimpsed in the delightfully naive remark of the Chinese historian who said, "... the people of Tun-sun practise the doctrine of the Brahmins and give them their daughters in marriage; consequently many of the Brahmins do not go away." This, incidentally, indicates that the soi-disant Brahmins were, probably, really non-Aryans claiming membership of a caste from which in India they were excluded, for miscegenation would have been abhorrent to genuine Brahmins. The burial customs practised in this State, namely cremation and exposure to vultures, were also Indian importations.

2. T'ai p'ing yu lan (a Chinese compendium compiled between 977-983 A.D. by one Li Fang), Chapter 788, cited by P. Wheatley, Ibid., p.21.
Fig. 25. Indianized City-States of Early Malaya.

Source: As for Fig. 20.
Its chief product was **huo hsiang** (Chinese; **Malabathron** = patchouli).

As commerce developed in early Southeast Asia, one region stood out as the most important region, the key to all, and the control of which was essential to any power aspiring to dominance in Southeast Asia. This area was the isthmian tract of the Peninsula. Thus, the fortunes of the city states in the region waxed and waned as they either enjoyed brief periods of precarious independence or were under the aegis of some outside power. The exact course of **Tun-sun**'s history or its political status is uncertain. In the third century, together with ten other states including **Chu-li**, it was conquered by Fang Chih-man, King of **Fu-nan** (an Indianized empire centred on the Mekong valley and delta) in his efforts to control the trade of northern Southeast Asia. In the middle of the sixth century, **Fu-nan** itself fell to the land based vassal power of **Chenla** lying to the north of **Fu-nan**. What happened to **Tun-sun** after this is unknown (Fig. 26).

Further south in Patani the famous city-state of **Langkasuka** was founded early in the second century A.D. It controlled one of the overland "short-cuts" and its control may even have extended across the Peninsula to the Bay of Bengal. It passed through a period of eclipse,

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1. For a detailed account of the struggles of the early Southeast Asian powers for control of the isthmian tract of the Peninsula, see D.G.E. Hall, *op.cit.*., Chapters 2-10.

Fig. 26. The Isthmian Tract, C.500 A.D.

PANDURANCA
LAND ABOVE 1200ft.
EMPIRE OF FUNAN AND OTHER HINDUISED AREAS

LAND ABOVE 1200ft.
EMPIRE OF FUNAN
OTHER HINDUISED AREAS

0 225 MILES
following the Fu-nanese expansion of the third century, but its fortunes were restored by the intervention of a leader trained at one of the Indian courts. For almost another thousand years this kingdom persisted through the vicissitudes of the Peninsula history and then mysteriously disappeared leaving only a legendary name to peasant mythology.  

Another of these early states in the isthmian area was known to the Chinese as P'an-P'an. Here, too, there were numerous Brahmins, who had come from India in search of wealth. They were "in high favour with the King". But Hinduism was not the only religion practised in the State for we also hear of "ten monasteries where Buddhist monks and nuns studied their scriptures." However, Hinduism was the religion of the court and a Chinese history gives a vivid picture of the palisaded capital and court, every detail of their complicated ritual manifesting their Indian origin. For example, when the king reclined on a gilded couch he was surrounded by his ministers all kneeling with their hands crossed in Indian fashion and resting on their shoulders.  

The Chinese description of the Indianized court of Ch'ih-T'ü, the Red-Earth Kingdom, probably situated in the valley of the Kelantan River (Fig. 25), is of such interest that it merits an extended quotation:

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2. P. Wheatley, The Golden Khersonese (Mss.), Chapter IV.
The King resides in the city of Seng-Chih, which has triple gates more than a hundred paces apart. On each gate are paintings of spirits in flight, bodhisattvas and other immortals, and each gate is hung with golden flowers and light bells. Several tens of women either make music or hold up golden flowers and ornaments. Four women clothed in the manner of Chin-kang giants on the sides of Buddhist pagodas stand at the gate. Those stationed on the outside of the gate grasp weapons of war, those on the inside hold white cloths in the passage-way and gather flowers into white nets. All the buildings in the royal palace consist of multiple pavilions with the doors on the northern side. The King sits on a three-tiered couch, facing north and dressed in rose-coloured cloth, with a chaplet of gold flowers and necklaces of varied jewels. Four damsels attend on his right hand and on his left, and more than a hundred soldiers mount guard. To the rear of the King's couch there is a wooden shrine inlaid with gold, silver and perfumed woods and behind the shrine is suspended a golden light. Beside the couch two metal mirrors are set up, before which are placed metal pitchers, each with a golden incense burner before it. In front of all these is a recumbent golden ox before which hangs a jewelled canopy, with precious fans on either side. Several hundred Brahmins sit in rows facing each other on the eastern and western sides.

The above passage is a striking example of the extent to which Indian cultural influences had permeated local life. When Chinese envoys visited the Red Earth Kingdom they were welcomed by Brahmins; when they were entertained at a royal banquet, Indian music was played; and when they took their departure Brahmins escorted them to their vessels.

A little further south, perhaps in the neighbourhood of Trengganu, was the kingdom of Tan-tan. Here the King was advised by eight high officers of State, who were all Brahmins. This was not an arbitrary number but one of the attributes of the fabulous Mount Meru.

1. Ibid.
Winstedt has shown that preoccupation with the astrological numbers four, eight, sixteen and thirty-two is one of the most persistent legacies of Hinduism in the ritual of Malay courts. In Kedah and Pahang for example, there are four great chiefs, eight major chiefs and sixteen minor ones, to which Perak and old Malacca at one time added thirty-two petty territorial chiefs. A comparable manifestation of this underlying stratum of Hinduism are the eight Brahmins — representing the lokapalas (deities) guarding the eight points of the Brahmin cosmos — who surround the kings of Siam and Cambodia during their respective enthronement ceremonies.¹

The same concept occurs again in the twenty-four administrative divisions of Kalah (Ko-lo), a city-state in the neighbourhood of Mergui (Fig. 25). This State was, in fact, one of the most prosperous on the Peninsula, where the merchant fleets of Oman anchored to load cargoes of tin and aloeswood.² Here, too, were forged the finest swords in all India and Southeast Asia. Although we need not believe the Chinese writer, Ma Tuan-lin, who claimed that Kalah could put an army of 20,000 men in the field, yet the tales of Arab travellers³ make it abundantly clear that this city with its stone walls and fortress and numerous well-watered gardens, served as the capital of a populous and wealthy region. Southwards in the neighbourhood of Trang was the mart of Takola which features in both

³ A detailed account of these voyages is given by G.R. Tibbetts, op.cit., pp.21-60.
the Milinda-panha and the Maha-Niddesa\(^1\) as a port thronged with merchant shipping. Farther south on the Matang coast of Perak, was the Indianized settlement of Selinsing which flourished between the sixth and the twelfth centuries, with trading connections, principally in beads, as far afield as Korea and Zanzibar. A little further down the coast, at the mouth of the Perak River was the village of Ganganagara which is traditionally supposed to have been founded by the Pallavas in the seventh century.\(^2\)

Opposite to this, on the east coast, in the vicinity of the estuary of the Kuantan River, was the port city of Chu-li, which is now generally assumed\(^3\) to be the same place as the Ptolemaic\(^4\) Kole. The course of Chu-li's history, like that of Tun-sun is unknown other than that it too was conquered by the Fu-nanese in the third century A.D. Further north, on the east coast, in the vicinity of modern Nakhon Sritamarat, was Tambralinga, which, like Takola, also features in the Maha-nidessa as a port and trading mart. Tambralinga, unlike many of the other early

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1. See pp. 99-100 above.


4. The Alexandrine Claudius Ptolemy's *Geographike Huphegesis*, compiled about 150 A.D., contains one of the earliest, if not the earliest, extant description of Southeast Asia. The account of The Golden Chersonese (The Siamo-Malay Peninsula), consisting mainly of place names as known to the Greeks then together with their supposed mathematical locations, is contained in Chapter 2 of his Book VII. The definitive text for Book VII is that established by L. Renou, *La Geographie de Ptolemee, l'Inde (VII, 1-4)* (Paris, 1925). The account of the Peninsula begins on p.45.
city-states, appears to have 'weathered' the successive occupations by foreign powers, for in 1230, according to the Jaya inscription of King Jayavarman VIII (1243-1295 A.D.) of Kambujadesa (Fig. 27), we find the king of Tambralinya asserting his independence, from the Khmer empire of the north, and beginning to conquer on his own. After this Tambralinya prospered, cultivating friendly relations with the fellow Hinayana Thai state of Suk'ot'ai (Fig. 30).

But the best known of all these Indianized city states of early Malaya, and the one which has left the greatest number of archeological remains, is Kedah. On the banks of the Bujang River and around the estuaries of the Merbok and Muda rivers, Wales excavated upwards of thirty sites ranging in date from the fifth or sixth century to the fourteenth. This archeological evidence leaves little doubt regarding the existence or the general area of location of the ancient kingdom, though precisely where it was situated in the Bujang valley or further south on the plains bordering the Merbok — is still uncertain (Fig. 28).

In the early centuries of this era the Merbok estuary presented a more attractive land fall to Indian shipping than would the shoals and swamps of the present river. It was wider and deeper, a bay, perhaps, rather than an estuary, with such littoral eminences as Bukit Penjara and Bukit Batu Bintang rising as islands from its tawny waters. Here Indian ships found an anchorage protected from the south-westerlies which had carried them across the Bay of Bengal and a small community of indigenous

folk practising subsistence cultivation eked out with a little fishing. At an early date, these folk diversified their simple economy by casual trading with Indian merchants entering the Straits of Malacca and their settlement, at first a mere village, grew in proportion as it became the collecting point for the forest products of the surrounding districts, aided not a little by its situation at the western end of the transpeninsular route to the east coast. The swamps of the rivers restricted the choice of habitation sites to the higher ground adjacent to the foothills of Kedah Peak and, when they first feature in the archaeological record, these settlements are in the valleys of the Merbok Kechil and the Bujang rivers, particularly the latter. By about the fifth century Buddhism, the earliest Indian influence to reach Kedah, appears to have established itself.

This is not only consonant with what we know of the tenure of events of Southeast Asia as a whole, but is also evidenced by the discovery of the fifth century stupas, the earliest archeological remains in Kedah, in the middle Bujang valley.¹ This establishment of Buddhism implemented for the Indian merchants the attraction of commerce with a familiar cultural environment.

During the ensuing three centuries the cultural ties between Kedah and India were strengthened, but fashions changed and Buddhism was superceded very largely by Saivism, for the remains of no less than ten vimanas (towers) of Savite temples have been brought to light in the

¹. H.G. Quaritch Wales, op. cit., pp.8-10.
Bujang valley, while similar discoveries further south indicate the contemporaneous existence of two other smaller settlements, one in the valley of the Merbok Kechil and the other on a sandy permatang, to the south of the Muda River.

By this time Kedah had become an important port and attracted the attention of the expanding Indianized island-kingdom of Sri Vijaya which, founded in the seventh century, now matched the power of Kambujadesa in the north. Centred on southeastern Sumatra, Sri Vijaya, a thalassocracy, occupied Kedah and most of the other strategically located city-states of the Peninsula, in the eighth century, as part of its overall plan for monopolistic control of the Southeast Asian trade, like Funan before it (Fig. 27). Under Mayayana Buddhist Sri Vijaya the religious activity in Kedah swung back to Buddhism in the eighth and ninth centuries, and Mahayana shrines again became a prominent feature of the cultural landscape of the area. The nucleus of the city seems still to have been in the middle course of the Bujang where two halls of audience were created, but there was also a significant extension of settlement southward towards the Merbok River in the wake of the retreating sea. Both Indian and Arab traders frequented the port, while a trade in T'ang porcelain was inaugurated through the intermediary of the K'un-lun sailors. This indeed was the apogee of Kedah's prosperity which seems to have suffered hardly at all from the incorporation of the territory in the Sri Vijayan Empire. On the contrary it became a second foci of the thalassocracy

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2. K'un-lun, a Chinese regional name for the people of the 'South Seas' (Southeast Asia).
Fig. 27. The Sri Vijayan Thalassocracy, c. 1150 A.D.

Source: As for Fig. 20.
THALASSOCRACY

APPROXIMATE BOUNDARY BETWEEN SRI VIJAYAN AND KHMER SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

EMPORIUM FOR TRADE

SUNDIA

MILES

0 300
and its role as the Peninsula node of the Empire, may well have stimulated its commercial relations with the Archipelago. And as its wealth increased so its fame spread abroad. Throughout the Indian Sub-Continent its name was synonymous with riches and elegant living. As "the seat of all felicities" it features frequently in Somadeva's *Ocean of Stories* compiled for the amusement of a Kashmiri queen, while in the Sanskrit drama *Kaumudimahot saya* it is cited as a great city famous for revelry and gay life — in the jargon of modern advertising it was "The Paris of the East". It is to be expected that the city by the Merbok in reality fell somewhat short of these descriptions, but that Kedah was chosen from among all the other contemporary kingdoms of the East as typifying wealth and elegance is powerful testimony of its prosperity in the ninth century.

In about the tenth century, in response to a further retreat of the sea, the main settlement was transferred southwards from the foothills down to the plain course of the Bujang at the point where it enters the Merbok estuary. Colonization of the banks of the Merbok naturally induced the exploration of its southern tributaries leading towards the Muda River where a new settlement was inaugurated, while growing prosperity and power led to reversion of the port to Hinduism (Fig. 28).

The above description of Kedah may well be taken to be the general picture of many of the other city states of early Malaya. In summation it could be said that the first millenium of the Christian era witnessed the emergence of prosperous coastal city-states and the flowering

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1. See pp. 98-104 above.
Fig. 28. Kedah: Sites of Indianized Settlements, c.300-900 A.D.

of civilization throughout the isthmian tract of the Peninsula. In the courts this culture was almost wholly Indian but on the peasants of the fields it had practically no influence at all. Only rarely did it enter into popular traditions. We must, in fact, visualize these ancient states, each as a dual entity, with a powerful exotic Indian civilization towering over, but remote from the lives of the masses.

B. The Decline of Hindu Influence

The time wore on, the dark night came upon us, and we knew not each other.
The seat we shared was buried under the Dust raised by Time's chariot wheels.
By the receding flood of oblivion I was borne back to my own lonely shore -- my hands bare, my mind langorous with sleep.
The sea before my house remained dumb of the mystery of a meeting it had witnessed, and the garrulous Ganges spoke not to me of a hidden long track to her other sacred haunt.¹

During the ninth and tenth centuries there grew up a powerful Cola state in South India. Friendly at first, the Colas and the Sri-Vijayans, however, soon fell out, largely because of the monopolistic trade policy of the Maharajas of the Isles. In about A.D. 1025 the Cola king, Rajendra I, felt himself strong enough to attempt to challenge this monopoly of the Sri-Vijayan Empire, and to break its blockade of the Straits of Malacca. To that end he essayed a great raid against the Sri-Vijayan thalassocracy, some of whose choicest possessions were situated on the Peninsula (Fig. 29). Kedah, as one of the twin foci of this Empire, was selected as a major objective. Its king, Sangramavijayat-tungavarman, was captured together with his squadrons of elephants, his

capital sacked and his state treasure carried off to India. Tambralinga, Takola and Langkasuka were also similarly ravaged. However, Rajendra does not seem to have exercised any permanent political control over the Peninsula or other parts of the Sri-Vijayan Empire. Anyway the Sri-Vijayan power recovered from this reverse in a few years, and prospered till the end of the thirteenth century before finally crumbling, before the rising Thai power of Suk'ot'ai in the north and that of Hinduized Majapahit in the south (Fig. 30). On the Peninsula, however, with the exception of the Tambralinga, none of the isthmian states ever recaptured their lost prestige. By 1225 A.D. Kedah's position as the chief entrepot of the isthmus had been largely usurped by other centres, and the former mighty mart gradually sank into obscurity till its modern economic development. The other city-states just completely disappeared from the landscape. Tambralinga prospered till 1292, when it was taken by the southward advancing Thais and it too mysteriously disappeared from the scene.

With the founding of Temasik (the forerunner of modern Singapore) towards the end of the thirteenth century and Malacca, about c.1400, the focus of attention in Malaya shifted from the north to the region of the Straits of Malacca. Following this the isthmian tract rapidly became insignificant; Kedah, the mightiest mart of early Malaya, being nothing more than "a very small kingdom with few people and few houses", at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

2. P. Wheatley, op.cit., p.106.
Fig. 29. Eleventh Century India.

Fig. 30. The Siamo-Malaya Peninsula in the
        Fourteenth Century.

Source: As for Fig. 29.
With the passing of the "Isthmian Age", so also ended the heyday of Indian influence. After this though Indian influence continued in Malaya till the beginning of the sixteenth century, it never recovered its old glory.

With the establishment of Malacca, Hinduism was finally supplanted by Islam, ironically enough, also introduced chiefly by Indian traders. Before this proselytizing faith Hindu beliefs were suppressed and what was more disastrous for the student trying to reconstruct the story of early Malaya, the wealth of Indian statuary which marked the sites of ancient settlements, was almost wholly destroyed. Yet not all of what India had contributed to Malay life was lost. Many words of Indian origin still remain in the Malay language, mainly those relating to ritual, law and court ceremony, but also including others such as book, lion, herald, mango, nutmeg, pleasure, time, punishment, loyalty, religion, fasting, property, vase, intellect and sin. And the gods of the old Hindu pantheon, although excluded from the new religion, persisted as infidel genies summoned to the aid of the lover, the warrior or the sick man. The guardian genies of the State of Perak include not only Solomon and Ali, the Prophet's son-in-law, but also Hindu Brahma and Vishnu, while on the accession of a Perak sultan, his chief herald reads the following coronation formula in Sanskrit: "Fortunate great king, smiter of rivals, valorous, whose crown jewels ravish the three worlds, whose touch dispels suffering, protector, pilot over the ocean of battle, confuter of opponents, fortunate supreme overlord Raja Parameswara". Then this same herald whispers in the ear of the new ruler the Hindu
name of the demigod from whom Perak royalty are supposedly descended. Again at his installation a Malay sultan must sit motionless, thus exhibiting his divinity according to Indian ideas, and in Negri Sembilan the herald who proclaims the election of a new ruler, must stand on one leg with the sole of his right foot resting on his left knee, in the same way that Brahmin sun-worshippers stand on one foot with the other placed against the ankle. And still many titles of the Malay aristocracy incorporate Sanskrit honorifics such as duli, maha mulia and padaka sri.¹

Malay magic is richly impregnated with Indian lore and Malay charms patently reflect the influence of the Indian mantras (incantations) while an elaborate Hindu ritual precedes episodes from the Vedic epic Ramayana enacted in the wayang-kulit, shadow play, the Malay equivalent of the "Punch and Judy Show", of Kelantan.

These are but a few of the many legacies left to the modern Malay by the Indians who crossed the sea to the Golden Land nearly two thousand years ago. Numerous others can be found in Richard Winstedt's two books, The Malays: A Cultural History and Sharman, Saiva and Sufi: A Study of Malay Magic. Perhaps we should invite Winstedt, greatest of Malay scholars, to sum up the effect of Indian influence on Malay life. "Though he is unconscious of it, from the cradle to the grave the Malay is surrounded by survivals of Indian culture. Even his nursery tales are many of them derived from Bidpai's Fables, the Jataka tales and Somadeva's Ocean of Stories. India found the Malay a peasant of the late

Stone Age (a frog under a coconut shell) and it left him a citizen of the world. It taught him the weaving of silk and embroidery and metal work, and it gave him its clothes and material comforts. It taught him to tame the elephant and improved his methods of fishing. The customary law of the tribe it broadened into the law of the State. It introduced the Malay to Hindu and Persian classics and induced in an illiterate people a passion for knowledge.  

C. The Rise of Muslim Power

The Malacca Sultanate, c.1400-1511:

There is still uncertainty regarding the exact date of the founding of Malacca. Dates suggested range from the eighth century, proposed by Gaspar Correa, who was notoriously inaccurate when reporting at second hand, to 1420, the date fixed by the bastard son of Afonso de Albuquerque, the Portuguese conqueror of Malacca, who based his account on original documents. Most recent writers favour the beginning of the fifteenth century. The evidence is as follows.

Militating strongly against any date earlier than c.1370 is the omission of any mention of Malacca in the thirteenth century Narratives of Marco Polo and the failure of Prapanca, the Javanese court

1. Ibid., p.195.
poet, to include it among his list of place-names on the Malay Peninsula, in his poem *Negarakrtagama*, compiled about 1365 A.D. Neither is it mentioned by the Arab sailor Ibn Battuta, who roamed the Southeast Asian seas in 1345-1346 A.D.

The most authentic account of the circumstances leading to the foundation of this settlement is that of the Portuguese apothecary, Pires, who spent two and a half years in Malacca at the beginning of the sixteenth century. It seems that a band of Bugis corsairs from the southwards, under the leadership of an Indianized renegade Sumatran or Javanese called Parameswara, established themselves in at least two localities on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula, namely Muar and the Bertam district, some two leagues north of Malacca. After a couple of years, these adventurers commandeered a fishing village at the mouth of the Malacca River as a mart for their spoils. The marketing of illicit loot seems soon to have stimulated more orthodox trade with the Sumatran ports across the Strait and with Bengal, for Malacca was certainly an established trading centre by 1403, when the Ming envoy

Cheng-Ho visited it, in the course of his travels between China and Africa. The record of the embassy as related in the *Ming Shih* (History of the Ming Dynasty, 1368-1643) and the *Ying-yai Sheng-lan* (Description of the Coasts of the Ocean) of the Muslim interpreter Ma-Huan, who accompanied Cheng-Ho, leaves the impression of a prosperous chiefdom nominally subject to Siam. But in an effort to end Thai suzerainty, the ruler of Malacca lost no time in seeking the protection of China. In 1405, his envoys proclaimed that their chief was "aware of his duty and desired that his country should be considered a district of the Chinese empire, in return for which he would offer annual tribute." In acknowledgement of these sentiments the Chinese Emperor appointed Parameswara king of Malacca. Four years later the settlement was raised by imperial decree to the status of a city.1

The site selected for the city was not without advantage. A defensible hill close against a mangrove-free shore dominated a sheltered estuary, while inland a route led up to the Malacca River to join the Muar-Pahang water-way. On these natural attributes was based the early prosperity of Malacca, but it was not long before the wider implications of this situation became apparent. As Malacca came into competition with Pasai, Jambi and other Sumatran ports, so her rulers found it necessary to extend their control over the Strait. Now, although situated at the narrowest part of this channel, Malacca was not at the strategically critical point. This was the Klang district where the sailing routes

approached closest to the Peninsula coast in order to avoid the Capacia Shaols. But here the land was bordered by a broad fringe of mangrove (Fig. 10), while approach from the sea was made difficult by shoals and half submerged sandbanks, in contrast to the fair approaches to Malacca, remarked by Albuquerque as a "sure and speedy navigation." Malacca's supremacy over the Strait was ensured when Parameswara fitted out a fleet of patrol boats manned by the sea cosairs, Celates, to force vessels to call at Malacca. As in the days of Sri Vijaya, the Strait again became a private sea.

The need for such action emphasizes the essential character of Malacca's trade. Whereas the other ports on both the Sumatran and Malay Peninsula coasts existed for the export of the products of their hinterlands, Malacca was, by reasons of history and geography, an entrepot, dependent for its prosperity on the volume of trade passing through the Strait. Deli, Rokan, Indragiri, Kedah, Perak and the rest flourished in proportion to the productivity of their immediate territories and the demand for their commodities; Malacca was tied to the flow of Southeast Asian commerce, as it produced little of its own from its economically poor hinterland. But to enforce her monopoly she needed to implement and facilitate control of the sea by extension of her authority over the neighbouring coasts. This task was accomplished during the fifteenth century by a succession of able rulers employing a policy

1. Tome Pires, op.cit., p.239.
2. Joao de Barros, Asia (Lisbon, 1777-88), Decade 2, Book 6, Chapter 1.
of conquests and alliances — diplomatic, matrimonial and religious — with neighbouring principalities. By the end of the fifteenth century Malacca controlled all the northern shore of the Strait, the most important part of the southern shore, the archipelagoes athwart its eastern approaches and sundry other island bases which had formerly harboured pirate fleets preying on the commerce of their seas (Fig. 31). By this time Malacca had developed into a great entrepot and the centre of Muslim influence in Southeast Asia, following the conversion of Parameswara\(^1\) to Islam about 1411. In this rise of Malacca as a mart and focus of Islam, Indians played a dominant role.

The founder of Islam had been a member of the trading community of Mecca, and the expansion of Islam beyond Arabia, itself, was an economic movement as well as a religious and political one. Once their military conquests were over the Arabs settled down to administration and trade and an unified regime over the Middle East made possible a vast expansion of trade between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, and so provided a stimulus to the commerce of Asia as a whole. Islam moved eastwards following the conquest of Persia in the seventh century; and Muslim merchants carried their faith along with their merchandise wherever they travelled.

Yet it was not until seven hundred years after the foundation of Islam that the faith succeeded in taking permanent root within Southeast Asia. Persian and Arab merchants continued to visit its ports during

\(^{1}\) Parameswara took the name Iskandah Shah, following his conversion to Islam.
Fig. 31. The Malacca Sultanate at its Greatest Extent, c. 150 A.D.

THE MALACCA SULTANATE AT ITS GREATEST EXTENT C.1500 A.D.
all that time, and knowledge of Islam came with them, but it was not until
the faith was presented by Indian Muslim that it became acceptable: "It
was not to Persia or Arabia but to India that Southeast Asia had always
looked for cultural inspiration combined with commercial prestige." The
acceptance of Islam among the islands and in the Peninsula had therefore
to await its acceptance by Indians first, who were prominently engaged in
the overseas trade between India and Southeast Asia. It was not until
the thirteenth century that this condition was fulfilled when Islam
began to entrench itself in northwestern and northeastern India under
the rule of the Delhi Sultanate. From this beginning it gradually
spread to the rest of India. It was mainly through the mercantile
communities of the Gujerat and Malabar areas of western India that Islam
was introduced into Malacca (Figs. 29, 33).

Cambay, the centre of Gujerati maritime trade, fell into
Muslim hands in 1298, and although the majority of the Gujeratis remained
Hindu, the court and ruling class became Muslim. By the thirteenth
century Cambay had already had a long history behind it as an emporium.
Arab and Persian merchants had been settled there from the ninth century.
Its trading connections with Malaysia were of long standing. Gujerati
trading vessels had already been appearing in Southeast Asian waters
before the coming of Islam, along with others from Malabar, from the east
coast of India, from Persia and Arabia and from the southern coast of
China, all sharing in the marked commercial revival of the twelfth century.

This revival of commercial trade was the reflection of a new expansion of Chinese foreign trade under the Sung Dynasty (1127-1276) like that Sri Vijaya experienced during the time of the T'angs (618-906 A.D.).

The Chinese were now themselves taking an active part in overseas trade following the increased concentration of population and capital on the South China coast under the Southern Sung, accompanied by advances in ship-building and design, and in science of navigation. The Sung porcelain industry was another factor of importance, for Sung porcelain was in great demand as far as India, Africa and the Middle East. During this period another stimulus that helped trade was that given to trade by the Crusades (c.1100-1300), which affected the Indian Ocean especially. Here the Muslim Gujeratis were beginning to assert themselves as leading agents in India's overseas trade both with the Far East, Middle East and the Mediterranean.

The Gujerat and Malabar merchants were favourably placed vis-a-vis the Europe-Asia trade. Cambay and some Malabar ports were staging posts for Middle East merchants bound for Southeast Asia. They came in to pick up cargo and wait for the change of monsoon prior to setting out for the eastern marts. Gujerati merchants also acted as direct exporters of Indian goods and also as intermediaries between Eastern, Indian and Western markets. They were well equipped to do so by the existence of a growing textile industry in Gujerat itself which provided them at once with a commodity of high intrinsic value and with a medium of exchange in the Asian markets, for example, as an exchange for spices, the commodity forming the largest proportion of the goods flowing into Europe from Asia.
Furthermore, the conversion to Islam of many of the merchants added the stimulus of missionary ardour to their trade with Malaysia.

The earliest reference to Islam in Southeast Asia occurs in *The Travels of Marco Polo*. Marco Polo records that in 1292 he found "Saracens", probably Malabari, Gujarati or Arab merchants in Perlak, northern Sumatra. The people of neighbouring harbours also embraced the new religion, brought to them by Indian traders, whose cosmopolitan novelty, apparent affluence and pharmacopoeia of herbs and amulets had for the Malaysians the attraction that escapist tales of travel, Hollywood films, and spiritualism and science has had for Europe of recent times. A daughter of the ruler of Perlak married the first Muslim Sultan of Pasai, Malik-al-Salih, who died in 1297, and a descendant of whose later married the first Muslim Sultan of Malacca, Iskandar Shah (Parameswara) in 1411 A.D. After this event the great international port of Malacca became, within half a century, a centre of Islamic studies and sent missionaries into the Peninsula, down to the Malay Archipelago, and along every trade-route. About 1500 A.D. a league of Muslim port rulers overthrew the declining Hindu kingdom of Majapahit, whose fall led to the gradual conversion to Islam of the whole Archipelago (Fig. 32).

The Muslim Indian traders, like the Hindu and Buddhist merchants before them, were also few in number and largely untutored for

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Fig. 32. The Spread of Islam in Southeast Asia.

large-scale proselytizing activities. So they brought with them mullahs (religious teachers) and priests "learned in the sect of Mohammed - chiefly Arabs, who are esteemed in these parts for their knowledge of the said sect". These literati and merchants were still too few in number to introduce any Indian language, but as Winstedt observes, "notably expert at propaganda" and strategy. They moved on a double front. In the first place, through a judicious mixture of marriage and trade alliances they converted the ruling and leading commercial houses. Neither were these neo-converts too reluctant to come into the Muslim fold for conversion to the new faith, they felt not only had prestige value, but also facilitated trade and guaranteed their political claims in the eyes of these new "king-makers" -- the Muslim Indians. Once accepted by the rulers and chiefs the new religion spread quickly because the people, used to guidance from above in such matters, readily accepted what had the seal of authority on it.

Secondly, these Indian Muslim found the ordinary Malay looking to Hindu magic for the cure of disease and for success in war and love, and they saw him revelling in shadow play with its repertories from those great Hindu epics, the Mahabhrata and the Ramayana, as people to-day revel in the cinema. In place of Hindu they substituted Islamic magic, retaining the recital of Hindu charms by the addition of their new

confession of faith, acknowledging in Arabic, Allah to be the one God and Mohamed to be His Prophet. Against the heroes of the Hindu epics these proselytizers put up a fictitious picture of Alexander the Great as a predecessor of Mohamed in a war of monotheism, and they even went so far as to make Malay rulers his descendants. Where Muslim prejudice was powerless to squash the shadow play, they threw on the screen the marvellous adventures of Amir Hamza, another mythical hero of Islam. From Persian they translated many talks of the Prophet and his companions.

Thirdly they held out peculiar inducements to readers of a new literature. As the Hindu had proclaimed equal religious merit in those who listened daily to the exploits of the Bharatas, so the Mohammadan promised that the constant reader of the Koran or of a pious tract acquired the same merit as warriors who die in the Jehad (Holy War).¹

Before the proselytizing zeal of Islam all visible signs of Hinduism and Buddhism were wiped out, while the traditional concepts upon which Malaysian life was based were either undermined or greatly modified. For more than 500 years, it has moulded the mores of the Malays and has been a powerful factor in the moulding of the humanized landscape. To every kampong it gave a mosque; and to nearly every holding it brought a process of sub-division checked only by legislation in some States in the twentieth century. In addition, it introduced the Malay to the Perso-Arabic Muslim alphabet, which the latter adopted as his own besides a number of Muslim religious prefixes and honorofics like Lebai, Haji and Mufti.

¹ Learning to chant the Koran from cover to cover in an unintelligible language is a grinding task for Malay children and retards their secular education, but it is still a universal practice, a martyrdom establishing them in their faith!
Islam, by its abolition of caste restrictions, stimulated overseas travel and commerce from India. This was particularly the case with the Muslim merchants of Western India. These merchants who were "very rich, with large business and fortunes", were found in most of the ports of Southeast Asia, especially those whose rulers were Muslims. Before the rise of Malacca, Pase in northeastern Sumatra was their chief centre of activity. With the conversion of Parameswara, many of these Gujerati and Malabari merchants moved to Malacca from Pase. They were drawn not only by religious affinity but also by the favourable trade conditions guaranteed by justice, law and order, and by the progressive policy of the Sultan. They brought with them their own mullahs and priests and built mosques and houses after the fashion of home.

The Gujerati and Malabari merchants of Chaul, Goa, Cambay, Daman, Cochin and Cannanore were, however, not the only Indian merchants in Malacca. There were also "great Kling" merchants with trade on a large scale and many junks, besides some rich Parsis, Bengalis, Chuliahs and other merchants from Orissa and Ceylon.

Hand in hand with Malacca's rise to power and wealth, there was quite naturally, a rapid rise in population. By 1403, about three years

1. Kling, Malay for South Indian Hindus.
3. Chuliah, Malay name for the South Indian Muslim merchants of the Coromandel coast.
after the founding of the port, there were some 2,000 inhabitants and by
1414, just before Iskander Shah's (Parameswara) death, there were 6,000.\(^1\)
It was a cosmopolitan polyglot population, not very unlike that of the
modern great entrepot of the area — Singapore. Pires avers that no
less than eighty-four distinct languages could be heard in the streets of
fifteenth century Malacca. Malays were by far the most
numerous, but foreign merchants were the most prominent and influential.
In 1509, there were about 4,000 of these merchants of whom 1,000 were
Gujeratis, among whom were "great many rich ones with a great deal of
capital and some who were representatives of others".\(^2\) Most of the
remaining 3,000 were also Indians — Klings, Chuliah, Bengalis, Parsis,
and Malabaris of the Deccan kingdoms... who besides conducting their own
businesses were also "factors (agents) for others"\(^3\) (Fig. 33).

These Indians in Malacca were in all probability all males,
for overseas female emigration from India was virtually non-existent.
To the prejudices of Hinduism to travel, were now added the restrictions
of purdah, which limited female movement even in the house, leave alone
outside and abroad. These social and religious prejudices together with
the hazards of ocean travel and the mobile impermanent character of the
trade cancelled any possibility of Indian female emigration in that
period. Even, to-day, not many of the Indian Muslims in Malaya have
their female folks with them, preferring to leave them in India while

1. Ibid., p.238.
2. Ibid., p.269.
3. Ibid., pp.254-55.
Fig. 33. Ports of Sixteenth Century India.

Source: Based on C. Collin Davies, op. cit., p. 43.
making frequent visits to them. Or, as in some cases, they maintain two homes, one in Malaya with a Malay wife and the other in India with an Indian spouse!

This practice of taking local brides was also indulged in by the Gujerati and other Muslim merchants who married into the ruling Malay Muslim families. Likewise, some of the Hindu merchants also appear to have lived with local women, but in this case, probably Batak slaves, as religious barriers would have prevented them from emulating their more fortunate Muslim brethren.

Most of these "familized" merchants probably lived in their own houses which they modelled on the ones they were used to in India, while the "bachelor" merchants, we are told by the Ming chroniclers, lived in a hotel, the chief of which always gave "... female slaves to serve them and send them food and drink morning and evening...." ¹

Precisely where, in Malacca city, these Indian merchants lived is difficult to gauge owing to the paucity of descriptions of the plan of the actual urban area. It appears that from the very beginning the upper slopes of the present St. Paul's Hill were maintained as a royal precinct ² enclosing a residence of the chief and his retainers. ³ There was also a country istana set amid the pleasant sawahs and dusuns of the Bretam valley, the scene of the first settlement of Parameswara. ⁴ The lower slopes of St. Paul's Hill and the foreside of the Malacca estuary

¹ Ming Shih, Book 325, cited by Groeneveldt, op.cit., p.127.
² Tome Pires, op.cit., p.237.
³ Braz de Albuquerque, op.cit., p.79.
⁴ Tome Pires, op.cit., p.246.
were clustered by the pile-raised dwellings of immigrant Malays, while a community of Orang Laut had built their huts against the shore.¹

In all probability most of the Indian and other merchants too lived on the right bank of the Malacca River, though they may have had their offices in the town, on the left bank of the river. In the later years, certainly, when the nucleus of the settlement around the Hill had been enclosed by a palisade, the wealthier merchants maintained business offices within the town, while living amid their orchards and tanks outside the wall.² A bridge, which had been thrown across the river in the early days, linked the sections north and south of the river, besides also housing the main market³ (Fig. 31).

The Indians in Malacca were nearly all traders or connected with trade. Even the Malay colonists gave little thought to agriculture for Malacca was founded as, rather than developed into, a trading port. In addition the marine alluvium which extended some distance inland from the shore was still too brackish to permit padi cultivation, though it was quite amenable to the growth of sago, which was thus adopted as the staple food.⁴ By the beginnings of the sixteenth century, techniques had improved and with the growth of population there were more

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than a thousand orchards in Malacca territory. To subsequent visitors the abundance of fruit trees was certainly one of the outstanding characteristics of the landscape. Some of the orchards may have belonged to Indian merchants.

The life-blood of Malacca was commerce. During the fourteenth century the Strait was the crucial sector of the world's major trade route which had one terminus in Venice -- or even further westwards -- and the other in the Molucca Islands. Spices were carried through the Archipelago over many routes and in ships of divers peoples; in the Indian Ocean they also followed various directions before finally entering the Middle East through either the Persian Gulf or the Red Sea, but to the Straits of Malacca there was no practical alternative. Hence the staple produce of the Archipelago was funnelled through a natural channel in places less than forty miles wide. This, as later the Portuguese were to realise, was the only point throughout the


2. See, for example, the description of Malacca by the seventeenth century travellers, Niuehoff, Caveri and Navarette, as translated by J.J. Sheehan, J.M.B.R.A.S., Vol.12, Pt.2 (1934), pp.71-107.

3. For example, the Portuguese in their drive to gain monopoly of the spice trade, captured Malabar. But even this conquest, as Afonso Albuquerque pointed out, had failed to halt the flow of spices to Cairo. The answer, to Portuguese aspirations, he was convinced lay in the capture of Malacca. "I hold it", he said, "as very certain that if we take this trade of Malacca away out of their hands, Cairo and Mecca are entirely ruined and to Venice will no spiceries be conveyed except that which her merchants go to buy in Portugal" (Braz de Albuquerque, op.cit., p.118). Pires put the matter even more succinctly in his famous phrase, "Whoever is lord of Malacca has his hand on the throat of Venice" (Tome Pires, op.cit., p.287).
8,000 miles of the trade at which a monopoly of spice distribution could be established. There were, too, other unique advantages inherent in the regional position of Malacca. Before the days of steam the seasonal reversals of wind direction in this area of Asia induced a corresponding movement in the shipping sailing back and forth between India on the one hand and the Far East and the Archipelago on the other. Vessels not making the through voyage — and these were by far the majority — found at Malacca an entrepot for the transhipment of their cargoes so that by the second decade of the fourteenth century the port had become the collecting centre for produce of the Archipelago and the distribution point for Indian textiles. Of comparative minor importance was the third element in the web of Southeast Asian commerce, the China trade. The pivotal position of Malacca at the junction of the Indian, China and Java Seas was fully appreciated by the shrewd Portuguese apothecary, Pires, whose description of the economic regimen of Malacca can stand repetition here: "Malacca is a city that was made for merchandise, fitter than any other in the world; the end of monsoons and the beginning of others. Malacca is surrounded and lies in the middle, and the trade and commerce between the different nations for a thousand leagues on every hand must come to Malacca."

The fundamental basis of Malaccan trade was an exchange of the staple raw products of the Archipelago for the staple manufactures of India through chiefly Indian intermediaries who formed the most important

link. Malacca was in effect a collecting centre for the spices of the Banda and Molucca islands and a distributing centre for the textiles of Gujerat, Bengal, and the Coromandel and Malabar coasts. In addition to the not inconsiderable quantity of cloves and nutmegs brought to Malacca by traders of the Archipelago, yearly eight ships sailed from that port directly to the Moluccas where they bartered coarse Cambay cloth and the tails of white Bengal cattle for a total of five or six thousand bahare of cloves. From Malacca these were shipped westwards, mostly in Indian ships, together with a rich variety of island products such as nutmegs, mace, Borneo camphor, sandalwood, lignum aloes, benzoin, musk, seed-pearls, batiks, carpets, Javanese krises and bird-plumes. From her own Peninsular territories, Malacca contributed consignments of tin.

For her trade relations with the West, Malacca was dependent on the intermediary of the entrepot of Cambay. "Malacca", says Pires, "cannot live without Cambay, nor Cambay without Malacca." Merchants from the Middle East took eighteen months to journey from the Red Sea to Malacca. During the Southwest Monsoon they converged on Cambay with cargoes of arms, scarlet-in-grain, woollens, coral, copperware, trinkets, opium, rose-water, liquid storax, raisins, indigo and such-like commodities. In that city merchants from Cairo, Mecca, Aden and Ormuz, together with those from the Levant, Asia Minor and East Africa formed themselves into companies preparatory to sailing for Malacca in March,

A bahar is a Malay measure, the equivalent of approximately 400 lbs.
2. Ibid., p.45.
that is, at the beginning of the next favourable Monsoon. According to Pires, they dealt in a wide range of merchandise, including thirty kinds of cloth, rose-water, opium, seeds, grains, tapestries and incense. Merchants from the rest of the Indian littoral formed their companies either at Calicut, Pulicat or in Bengal. Yearly three or four vessels voyaged to Malacca from the Coromandel coast, together with another one or two from Pulicat, bringing "rich cloths of great value". While the Gujeratis monopolized the cream of the Malacca trade, the merchants from Coromandel handled the greater part of the bulk. Principally they exchanged textiles for white sandalwood, camphor, alum, white silk, seed-pearls, a few spices, a great deal of copper but little tin, fruseleira, calamsac, damasks, Chinese brocades and gold. The brocades were fed into the main stream of trade by the annual arrival from China of upto ten junks, which also bartered large quantities of silk, both raw and processed, satins, taffetas, and other textiles, seed-pearls, musk, camphor, alum, saltpetre, sulphur, copper and iron-war, trinkets, bric-a-bac and rhubarb mainly for pepper, together, with other spices, aromatics, drugs, ivory, tin, red beads, carnelians, coloured woollens and "infinite quantities of the black wood that grows in Singapura (Singapore)".¹

Nor were commercial relations lacking between the Malacca merchants and peninsula Southeast Asia. Cochin-China's trade links were orientated towards China and Champa was all but excluded from the

¹. Ibid., p.270.
southern trade by Siam, but this last sent up to thirty vessels annually with cargoes of lac, benzoin, brazil-wood, ivory, copperware, precious stones, precious and base metals and quantities of coarse Siamese cloth. On the return voyage the bottoms were loaded with a variety of merchandise itemized by Pires as follows: slaves, white sandalwood, spices, quicksilver, vermillion, opium, muslins, *Kling* cloths, manufactured specially for the Thai market, camlets, carpets, Cambay brocades, rose-water, wax, white cowries, and gallnuts. From Pegu there came annually to Malacca in February and March (the end of the Northeast Monsoon) some fifteen vessels, bringing rice and other foodstuffs, aromatics, rubies and silver. On the first of July each year these vessels set sail for Pasai, where they supplemented their cargoes made up from the China and island trade with consignments of pepper. In August they sailed for Martaban and to home. Throughout the whole of the Archipelago trade focussed on Malacca. A dozen Palembang vessels visited the port each year bringing mainly provisions, jungle products and slaves in exchange for coarse Indian cloths, while from Java, Borneo, Celebes, the Philippines and other lesser kingdoms *prahus* converged on the Strait during the Northeast Monsoon and scattered again throughout the unnumbered islands during the succeeding period of the South-Westerlies (Fig. 34). ¹

Despite the wealth and importance of Malacca, the immediate hinterland of the port appears to have been almost wholly undeveloped.

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¹ Ibid., pp.270-4.
Fig. 34. The Trade of Malacca, c. 1500.

Source: As for Fig. 31.
GUJERAT
BENGAL
FORMOSA
ILIPPINES
Sugar

Gujarat, Cambay
Malabar, Coromandel
Ceylon
Borneo

Gujarat, Cambay
Malabar, Coromandel
Ceylon
Borneo

Cotton cloth, opium, drugs, dyes
Silk, damask, brocade, satin, porcelain, saltpetre, iron, silver, pearls
Moluccas — Cloves
Bandas — Nutmegs, Mace
Timor — Sandalwood, honey, wax, slaves

Java — Rice, beef, sheep, pigs, fowls, garlic, onions, iron weapons

Trade routes to Malacca. Return voyage by opposite Monsoon.
It was covered with forest, interspersed with occasional groves of kampong fruit trees. Some timber for masts and building purposes and jungle products appear to have been the only economic products.¹

The rest of the Malaccan empire, too, consisted primarily of forested land, punctuated here and there, at irregular intervals, by small coastal riverine settlements, inhabited largely by communities of padi farmers and fishermen with the exception of a few centres, like for example, Dinding and Bruas, which depended on tin production for their livelihood.² (Fig. 31).

The most important of the coastal settlements were the ports of Pahang and Kedah. Pahang, which had become an appendage of Malacca in the fourteen-sixties, was a port with a good harbour frequented by prahus from the Archipelago and inhabited by citizens versed in the ways of commerce. It featured in an overland transit trade across the Peninsula to Malacca, and also exported its jungle products, tin and pepper to places as far distant as China, while importing textiles, ironware and sundry luxury goods in return. Kedah, on the opposite coast, was more important though now it was only a shadow of the wealth and prosperity and the felicities and elegance that characterised it in the former years. But although Kedah was thinly populated and had declined greatly since its heyday as an important node in the Sri Vijayan Empire, yet its position at the gateway to a trans-peninsular trade-route

1. Ibid., p.260.

2. Tome Pires records a total of 2,000 men at Muar, to the south of Malacca. This would imply a settlement of at least 4,000 persons. This is probably grossly exaggerated. Most of the other settlements had between 200-500 inhabitants (Ibid., pp.260 ff.).
was still ensuring a mild and limited prosperity for its few inhabitants. Even as early as then, Kedah had already assumed its role as a rice-bowl of Malaya and in addition exported about 400 bahars of pepper a year. Some of this was sent overland by way of the Kedah River to Patani and thence to China but most of the remainder was collected by a Gujerati ship which paid an annual visit to the west coast ports. Kedah also had long established trade relations with the Sumatran ports of Pasai and Pedir and even this limited trade, too, must have passed through Indian hands.

The rest of Malaya was under the jurisdiction of Siam, the east coast being governed by a Thai official from Ligor and the west by another residing in Tenasserim. Like the other parts of Malaya, this area was also largely forested, with a few ports, for example, Kelantan, dotting the coastline. Most of these ports seem to have engaged in a coastal trade which extended to Cambodia and Champa, Java, Malacca and the ports of eastern Sumatra. Although no record is made by Pires in his detailed account of early Malacca, in all probability much of their chief export, pepper, must have passed directly or through local intermediaries into Indian hands too.

Although Indian merchants called at other Malayan ports on trading voyages, all available evidence, to date, records Indian settlement only in the Malacca entrepot, during the period of the Malacca Sultanate. Here, the international port was administered on the lines practised in India from the time of Chandra Gupta to the days of the

1. Ibid., pp.109-10.
Great Moghuls. There were rules fixing port fees and the duty payable on exports like tin and elephants and on imports like cloth and slaves. Standard weights and measures were prescribed and rules laid down for the ships' manifests and for the collection of money due from trading captains. All shipping from the West, Arabia, India, Cylon and Pegu, paid fixed dues and presents to the Sultan, Bendahara, the Temenggong and the Shabandar for the nation in question. Shipping from the East paid no dues but only gave presents to the above chiefs.

In the port the merchants of the different nations were under the charge of their respective Shabandar, who was a sort of municipal-cum-port officer. There were four Shabandars, one each for the merchants of: Gujerat; Bengal; Pegu; Sumatra; China; and the other Indonesian islands. Each of the merchants applied to his nation's Shabandar on arrival in Malacca. The Shabandars received the captains of the junks and presented them to the Bendahara under whose jurisdiction they operated. They also allotted the traders warehouses, dispatched their merchandise, provided them with lodging (if needed) and if they had documents ready, gave orders for elephants to be provided.

Of the Shabandars the "most important of all" was the Gujerati representative. This is not surprising. Although the Hindu Tamil

2. Temenggong, Malay for Regent or Minister.
4. Ibid., p.265.
merchants (Klings) had the bulk of the trade, the co-religionist Muslim Gujeratis, who were equally wealthy, were the most influential in the Malacca court. Through diplomatic marriages, erection of mosques, bribery and general goodwill these "Moors became great favourites with the king and obtained whatever they wanted."¹ During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, these merchants were not only prominent in the commerce of the area, but also had become a powerful force in the Royal court intrigues of Malacca, and were in a position to make or mar kings and mantris (ministers), as for example, the appointment of the "full blooded Tamil trader" Raja Kassim, as Mantri in the fifteenth century Malacca. In this way the Muslim Indian merchants exerted a tremendous influence over Malacca's commercial and foreign policy. It was largely they, together with the mullahs, kathis (priests) and Arabs, who managed to persuade the Sultan to take strong action against the Portuguese, when the latter appeared in Malaccan waters as trade rivals.² They had heard alarming reports of Portuguese interference with the Indian trade and urged the Sultan to have no truck whatsoever with the francis (Portuguese) but instead prepare to wage a Holy War, "for as India was already in the hands of the Portuguese, Malacca should not pass to the infidels."³

¹. Ibid., p.241.
Many of the Hindu merchants, on the other hand, were for the most part uncommitted and if anything, like in India, their sympathies lay with the Portuguese, largely because of strong religious prejudices against militant Islam and also because of intense commercial rivalry between the Muslim and Hindu traders. It was a Tamil Hindu trader, Naina Chetu (Chetty) who succoured the Portuguese prisoners who were kept at Malacca between 1509 and 1511. It was thus no mere coincidence that when Afonso de Albuquerque appeared before the port of Malacca in 1511, with a large force of warships and men that there should be non-Muslim mercenaries among his fighting men, while opposing him on the opposite, were Gujerati and other Muslim ships, merchants and others among the Sultan's forces. This was just another example of the diverse character of the peoples of India — truly a nation of nations!

1. The Portuguese sailor, Diogo Lopes de Sequeira, who arrived in Malacca on 11.9.1509 with a fleet of 5 ships to explore trade possibilities was attacked by the Malays and some of his men taken prisoner and kept in Malacca. On his return to India, Sequeira reported the incident to Albuquerque, the Portuguese Governor-General. This incident and the prisoners provided the latter with the excuse to attack Malacca, the capture and control of which had anyway become imperative in Portugal's plan for a monopoly of the spice trade. (See p. 164 footnote 3 above).


3. There is still some uncertainty regarding the exact number of Indian mercenaries under Albuquerque's command. Richard Winstedt (op.cit., p.41), mentions "300 Malabar fighting men" together with 800 Portuguese. His figures are probably based on the earlier work of Duarte Calvao (Cartas, Vol.1, Lisbon, 1884, p.397) who lists "750 white and 300 Malabaris" under Albuquerque's command. Fernao Lopez de Castanteda (Historia do descobrimento e conquista da India porlos Portuguesees, Vol.3, Coimbra, Portugal, 1930, Book 1) writing in the nineteenth century, believes that there were only "200 native (Indian) foot soldiers besides 800 Portuguese." Joao de Barros (op.cit., Book 5, Chapter 9), an unusually conscientious and discriminating historian, records "600 Malabaris" among the Portuguese force.

D. The Coming of the Europeans and the Decline and Disappearance of Indian Shipping

(i) The Portuguese Period, 1511-1641:

The Portuguese captured Malacca in 1511 following the flight of Sultan Mahmud, the last Malay ruler of the Malacca Sultanate, and his retinue to Johore, and retained it till driven out by the Dutch in 1641.

The most authentic account of Portuguese Malacca is that of Emanuel Godinho de Eredia,\textsuperscript{1} the Portuguese explorer, who was in Malacca in 1613. It seems that Albuquerque immediately set about changing the town plan of Malacca to fit in with Portuguese needs. The Sultan's palace and mosque, on present day St. Paul's Hill, were demolished and in their place the Portuguese, with the help of some "Indios" (Indians), who told them where to get the masonry and lime, built a mortar and stone fort.\textsuperscript{2}

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The Indians (Hindus) in Malacca discovered a kind of stone (coral?), called Madrepores, probably a corruption of the Portuguese Madra parala, meaning "mother of pearl", with which to make lime. At the same time, to get masonry, they told Albuquerque that if "he would open and quarry in the sides of the hill upon which were the graves of the old kings of Malacca, he was sure to get enough stone materials, to carry out his purpose." Incidentally these tombstones were imported into Malacca from India by Gujerati merchants, and according to D.G.E. Hall (op.cit., p.177), formed an important item in the Indo-Malay trade.

In 1807 — the Malacca fort which till then had remained in a tolerable state of preservation, being valued at M$700,000, — was destroyed by order of the British Government, which had taken over Malacca from the Dutch in 1795, at the enormous expense of 260,000 rupees (£70,000) (T.J. Newbold, \textit{Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca}, Vol.1, London, 1839, p.126).

To-day, with the exception of one of the fort gates, little remains of the old Portuguese fort, that guarded the port of Malacca for some three hundred years.
Within this were housed all the official and religious buildings. The rest of the town consisted of three suburbs: Upe on the right bank of the Malacca River; Yler on the left bank and Sabac to the north of the fort, along the river. Yler was inhabited by farmers mainly, probably padi-planters, who lived in pile-raised wooden palm thatched dwellings while similar structures also housed the fishermen, the chief inhabitants, of Sabac. Upe, was the wealthiest and best developed of the suburbs. In it was the bazaar and the residences of the foreign merchants, chiefly Indians, Chinese and Javanese, who lived in their respective kampongs, not unlike the modern "China Towns" and "Little Indias" of many present-day Eastern and Western cities (Fig. 35).

The Indian residential area of Upe was known as "Campon Chelim" (Kampong Kling) and according to Eredia, it extended from the "Bazar of the Jaos (Bazaar of the Javanese) on the beach, in a northwesterly direction" and ended "at the stone bastion" (Fig. 35). Here the wealthier merchants lived in country houses, of timber and tiles, set amidst orchards and tanks, while maintaining business offices on the riverside.¹

The Portuguese, in their singlemindedness took no count of the various races inhabiting Malacca, and only distinguished between Christians and infidels. Thus Eredia records that there were 7,400 Christians in Malacca, the rest being "infidel natives".² The exact numbers of Indians in Portuguese Malacca is unknown. Excluding the

Fig. 35. Portuguese Malacca.

mercenaries, the number of Indian merchants could not have been as large as during the heyday of the Malacca Sultanate, in view of the flight of most of the Muslim merchants to non-Portuguese ports. Furthermore the composition of the Indian population had changed, for, though some Muslim Gujarati, Malabari and Bengali merchants came back to Malacca, after sometime, Muslim merchants generally avoided the stronghold of their archenemies, the Portuguese. Consequently the majority of the Indian merchants in Malacca were Khins who included among them also the Tamil Chettiar merchants of South India who, Duarte Barbosa observed, "are very corpulent with big bellies, (and) go bare above the waist and wear cotton clothes below". The Khins had most of the trade now and according to Pires, "this is the nation which brings the most honour to Malacca". In lesser numbers there were also other Hindu merchants from Bengal and Malabar besides a few Muslims from Gujarat, Malabar and Bengal. In addition, a cross unearthed in the compound of an Indian, Raya Modiliar, suggests the presence of some Christian Indians too. Eredia, is of the

1. It appears that the Portuguese retained a permanent force of Asian mercenaries in Malacca for even as late as 1640-1641, during the Dutch siege of Malacca the Portuguese had some "500 black troops" (Rev. Fr. R. Cardon, op.cit., p.16). Most of these "black troops" were probably Indians, for Portuguese had great difficulty in getting local non-Muslim troops. In addition, their attempts to raise a pro-Portuguese population through marriage with local women had failed miserably.


3. Duarte Barbosa, op.cit., p.177.

opinion that this particular cross belonged to "some Christian convert from Meliopor (Malipore), who came to Malacca in company with the merchants from Choromandel (Coromandel) and was favourably received by the Hindu Raya (Mudiliar)".

Not unlike the custom, to-day, the Indian merchants of the seventeenth century, too, appear to have taken petty servicemen, like cooks, cleaners, etc., of their own kind, along with them. For example, Eredia records the presence of mainatos (washermen) living on the outskirts of the Upe suburb of Malacca (Fig. 35). These washermen, besides washing the linen of the Indian merchants, also served the needs of the Portuguese.2

There appears to have been some further development of the hinterland of Malacca, during the Portuguese era, for Eredia mentions indigenous people raising livestock (cattle and farm animals) and foodstuffs in their orchards and gardens along the banks of the river.3

1. E.G. de Eredia, op.cit., p.27.
2. Ibid., p.72.
"In washing" Eredia continues, "they show a marvellous delicacy, withal it cost, but little .... The Menates (Mainatos) will bring you your shirt and a pair of drawers very white and cleaned with soap for two bousuruques. (Bazaruco, a coin generally of copper, sometimes of tin and tutenacy -- of iron as Pyrard puts it -- which was minted all through the Portuguese time; it varied greatly in value: Pyrard gives it the value of a farthing (The Voyage of Pyrard of Laveal, Haklyut Society, London, Vol. II, Pt.I, pp.67-9).... Moreover they return it all crisped and folded in a pretty fashion, for they soak it so and then leave it to dry, so that this crisping lasts a long while, and the linen seems damasked and made in that way. They use this linen as well at tables as for their beds, for shirts, bands, handkerchiefs, etc. Most of them change their linen everyday."
3. Ibid., p.27.
But for its rice supply, Malacca still depended on neighbouring countries, especially Java, the granary of the Archipelago.  

The landscape and economy of the rest of Malaya did not change much during the Portuguese Period. There were few, if any, Indians resident in the small Malay villages and ports that dotted the coastline of the country. The Muslim merchants who had evacuated from Malacca, went to Indonesian ports, with the exception of a few who sailed to trading centres like Patani, Kedah and possibly Pahang and Kelantan. This, however, does not mean that the former trade of Indian merchants with the Malay coastal ports had ceased. The system for this trade was now quite similar to the days of the Malacca Sultanate: — viz., — occasional goods collecting-and-distributing, through local middlemen, calls from the headquarters in Malacca.

In Malacca, commerce was still the life-blood of the entrepot, and the basis of this commerce was the traditional exchange of Indian cloths, now chiefly from the Coromandel coast and Bengal, for the precious metals, tin, pepper, spices and other similar low-bulk-high-value products of Southeast Asia. Barter was the usual mode of trade and in this the Indian merchants, chiefly Hindus, who were now in the forefront following the departure of their Muslim compatriots, were the most prominent.

Hindu Indians, from the Coromandel, had the most contact with the Portuguese. Some of these Indian merchants were useful to the Portuguese. First to help the Portuguese was Naina Chetu. He succoured the Portuguese prisoners in Malacca between 1509 and 1511. After the conquest of Malacca, while Timuta Raja, the chief of the Muslim merchants lost his head, ¹ Naina Chetu's services were rewarded by the grant to him of the office of Bendahara. This was still a high office, though it no longer had the same significance under the Portuguese rule that it had during the Malay Sultanate. In the next three years he helped the Portuguese to open up trade with the surrounding areas, though it was insinuated that he took very good care of his own interests at the same time. ² In theory he was supposed to hold office for life and to pass it on to his descendants, but by the time royal confirmation of his grant arrived, Chetu had been deposed and had, it is said, committed suicide. The office seems to have been restored to his family at a later date. ³

Other Indian merchants assisted the Portuguese in business matters and loaned them their slaves in time of war and sometimes, money as well. ⁴ On the whole, however, Portuguese relations with the peoples of Southeast Asia were far from cordial. The Portuguese were traders, but first and foremost they were crusaders. Their methods of conversion

¹. Tome Pires, op.cit., p.281.
². Duarte Calvao, op.cit., pp.94-5.
made them deadly enemies of not only the Muslims of Malaysia and India but also of other indigenous people with the result that for most of their 129 years of occupation of Malacca, they were almost constantly at war with neighbouring countries. Concurrent with this was their general monopolistic policy, regarding trade.

The Portuguese wanted monopoly of the spice trade. In striving for this, they insisted that any ship passing through the Straits, had on pain of death, to pay toll of 3 to 9 per cent of the value of goods carried, irrespective whether it "broke cargo" or not. As pressure was applied on merchant ships, traders avoided Malacca.

In 1530, Afonso Mexia, the Captain of Cochin, wrote to the King of Portugal: "The whole trade is being lost which afforded the revenues of your factory."\(^1\) And by about 1620, smuggling was carried out so extensively that in 1633, the revenues of Malacca had dwindled to practically nothing. About 1635, according to Resende, the rate of duty "was 10 per cent with a further 2 per cent which was given to the town for the fortification and artillery." Furthermore the behaviour of the captains of the fortress was not such as to induce the trade ships to resort to Malacca, as they used to buy the merchandise at a price much lower than the current price of the country and to compel the merchants to accept their money. Even the civilian Portuguese captains of the port were prone to seizing the wares of merchants, "assessing them at a price below their real value and using much abuse."\(^2\)

The corrupt and exclusive monopolistic policy of the Portuguese slowly strangled the entrepot trade of Malacca, besides bringing them into collision with other nations, firstly neighbouring Asians and later with their European rivals, the Dutch. Malacca was besieged a number of times and suffered heavy losses of life from want of food. Especially appalling was the last siege of 1640-1641 by the combined Dutch and Malay forces. Danvers avers that "the famine was so severe and food such a price that it had been found necessary to send all the women and children out of the town to reduce the numbers dependent upon available supplies. A story was told expressive of the severity of the famine, that a mother had exhumed the body of her dead child for food." By the time the Dutch occupied Malacca in 1641, it was a ruined city.

(ii) The Dutch Period, 1641-1795:

The Dutch had followed in the wake of the Portuguese, in quest of the same trade. Their power in the East Indies was based at Batavia in Java, and their capture of Malacca was, like the Portuguese before them, part of an overall aim of securing a complete monopoly of all the spice and pepper trade in the Straits and the Archipelago, besides elimination of all unfriendly foreign interests. As such their efforts were directed to the functioning of their monopoly rather than extending political control.

The exports of Malacca and the rest of Malaya included gold, pepper, tin, bezoar and elephants' tusks, while the imports were all sorts

of cloths — Surat cloths, Bengal cloths, salampories (half-wool-half-cotton cloth) bafta brotsjar (Indian cotton cloth) bethilis (fine Indian linen) — silver rupees, opium, and red wollens. Of these items of trade the most important were cottonpiece goods while tin was the most valuable export. These two articles could only be traded through Dutch hands. Besides this the Dutch also tried to take toll from all shipping passing through the Straits and as far as possible make them call at Malacca. In pursuance of their strict policy of monopoly, the Dutch East India Company forced contracts on the weak Malay States, making them trade with the Dutch only.

Unlike the Portuguese the Dutch had no religious feud with the Mohammedans, but to force their monopoly, they enlarged and maintained the fort at Malacca, besides two other factories at Perak and Kedah. Furthermore, like Sri Vijaya, the Malacca Sultanate and the Portuguese before them, they kept a constant patrol of ships up and down the Straits and did their best to direct all the trade to Malacca, even at the expense of their friends and allies of Johore. They also blockaded Perak and Kedah to prevent the exports of tin from these states from going elsewhere.

The Dutch legislated that Moors from Coromandel and Bengal had to have a tenth of their merchandise unloaded by the Shabandar and commissioners in their presence to be then turned into money by public sale. The duty for wheat and butter had to be paid in cash.

But if any of the Indian Muslims remained at Malacca and exported any of their goods to Johore no duty was levied on them, but on their return, they had to give 10 per cent pro rata (na rato) of the goods exported, because they were suspected of smuggling gold.¹

A similar rate of 10 per cent was also extracted from Indian merchants trading with Kedah. In addition to the above rates, merchants had also to pay 2 gilders (guilder = 1 sh. 9½d) a month for the Moorish cloth sold in shops in Malacca besides a flat rate of 5 per cent on all Indian cloth imported. On the other hand only a guilder was charged for the Dutch East India Company's cloth. Similarly cloth hawkers also had to pay a guilder in taxes just as the provision dealers.

The Dutch, however, like the Portuguese and others before them, found great difficulty in imposing their monopoly and legislation governing trade. They were in effective occupation of only the town of Malacca, about half of its territory and the island of Pangkor, off Perak, while their naval power was being threatened by other European powers. It was thus quite foolhardy to carry out their plan of control of the Straits trade. As such, despite their efforts, Moorish ships went to Perak for the purpose of buying elephants for export to Bengal and the

¹. Ten per cent was the importation rate for gold and other precious metals and stones. (Ibid., p.109).
Coromandel coast. For example, one Nabob Namet Aminchan, took elephants in his yacht, "Chafferie" to India, from Perak, in 1677. Similarly Moorish ships from Surat were trading in tin directly with Kedah and thus breaking the Dutch ban, while many Moors got round the ban on Moorish shipping by flying French, Portuguese, Danish or English flags.

Unable to suppress this "illegal" trade completely in the initial stages, the Dutch wisely decided to leave the Moors alone, as long as they did not directly contravene the trade set up at Malacca, itself. They felt that it was better to permit them to enter Dutch harbours, so as not to lose the dues, as they certainly would have if the Moors had been refused permission and consequently frequented the places neighbouring the Dutch factories. If this happened both those ports and the Dutch factories would be "filled with Moorish cloth" and there would be no prospect of a "better or greater demand for the Company's cloths", but probably of a decreased traffic with neighbouring peoples, who now came here to buy these Moorish cloths and thereby increased the trade and dues. If these traders were not admitted then the others would for the most part, stay away too, and would go to places where these Moors would then be, as for example, Kedah, Achin and Junk Ceylon, where the traffic was already far too great.

1. Ibid., p.145.
2. Ibid., p.156.
3. Ibid., p.133.
4. Ibid., pp.131-2.
Bort, on his retirement as Governor of Malacca in 1678, warned his successors that since everything had to be ordered according to and brought in harmony with present times, the Dutch had to do, not what they wished, but what they could, taking into consideration, that, even if they were to prevent the Moors from sailing to the said places and several others, the Honourable Company would all the same not attain its object, since the English, Portuguese, French and Danes, principally the first named, would in time of peace frequent the said places so much the more, whereas since the Moors were there, they mostly stayed away, knowing that, as regards the trade in cloth in competition with them they, like the Dutch, had no chance. This had been clearly proved at Aatchin (Achin) to the English, who had to stop their trade in that place so long as the Dutch allowed the Moors to traffic there, but as soon as the Dutch kept the Moors away they (the English) were able to "come back (according to their old usage) to fish in troubled water."¹

The warning was largely disregarded by the Dutch and they continued to interfere, though ineffectively, with Moorish shipping in the Straits. More important was the fact that the Malaccan trade had traditionally been a part and parcel of the Southeast Asian trade pattern and the strict Dutch monopoly rules threw everything 'out of gear'. Traders began to quit and avoid Malacca to escape the heavy taxes and inconvenience. This naturally had an adverse effect on the prosperity

¹. Ibid.
of Malacca. Valentijn, the Dutch trader, who visited Malacca in 1669, records that "in former times there were 12,000 souls (in Malacca) but now there were not more than 200 or 300 families." In 1678, Bort counted 4,884 persons in Malacca of whom 761 were "Indians" made up of:

- 372 Moors and Gentoo (Hindus),
- 100 Womenfolk,
- 75 Children,
- 35 Male slaves,
- 51 Female slaves,
- 128 Children of slaves.

The womenfolk, enumerated by Bort, must have been Malay converts or slaves.

Muslim merchants were again in ascendency following the decline of the Portuguese - their arch-enemies. The Dutch had no religious feud with the Moors but feared them as trade rivals. With their better organization and relations with co-religionist Archipelago ports, the Muslims quickly superceded their Hindu brethren; furthermore, the Madras area, the home of many of the Hindu Tamil merchants, was in turmoil following the seventeenth century English and French incursions into Peninsula India. This interfered both with their markets and sources of supply. Another feature that emerged with the rise of the Dutch power was the fact that the Muslim Gujerati merchants never appear to have recovered from their reverses suffered following Portuguese capture of Malacca, for no mention is made of Gujerati merchants in either Valentijn's or Bort's account of the trade of the area.

Furthermore, unlike their predecessors, not all of the Indian merchants were now prosperous for we hear of nine Moors being imprisoned for "debt" in 1665\(^1\) and a Hindu, Nachodar Giantij, having his debt cancelled on 18.4.1673 "because he died without any estate."\(^2\) The more wealthy Indian merchants, now, however, lived in brick houses. Twenty-seven such houses were occupied by Indians in a total of 137 brick and 583 atap houses that constituted the town of Malacca. The other Indians lived in thirty-two atap houses.\(^3\)

The large number of brick houses represents an expansion of Malacca town compared to the Portuguese period. Now it had "broad and handsome streets, planted on both sides with trees", though the houses were closely packed.\(^4\) This is especially striking when viewed in the light of the fact that even as late as 1848 much of the rest of Malaya was little more than a "vast desert".\(^5\)

But despite this early affluence, Dutch power and the port of Malacca, gradually declined as more and more traders kept away from the stringent and inconvenient trade system. Furthermore, Dutch relations with the neighbouring states were far from cordial. There were frequent

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1. Ibid., p.94.
2. Ibid., p.123.
3. Ibid., pp.32-42.
clashes between them and the war-like Minangkabaus of Nanning. As Francis Careri observed on his visit to Malacca in 1695, Dutch control in Malacca reached "but three miles round the city, because the native being a wild people ... will not easily submit to bear the Holland yoke". Coupled with these troubles of the Dutch was the rise of English power in Asia. Penang was founded by the British in 1786, and proved to be a tremendous blow to Malacca. The British rule, with which the merchants in the Straits had come into contact in other parts of Southeast Asia and which they viewed favourably, in Penang together with their laissez faire trade policy led to numerous merchants fleeing Malacca for Penang. In addition, Malacca's harbour is shallow and as ships increased in size following improvement in navigation and ship-building, it became a formidable hindrance. The founding of Singapore in 1819 finally sealed the fate of Malacca as a trading centre, for with its superior location in relation to ocean shipping and better harbourage facilities, Singapore soon outgrew not only Malacca but Penang too. By 1824, when it passed into British hands, following the Dutch withdrawal, Malacca was little more than a "sleepy hollow".

1. The Dutch had some 30 Moors among their garrison against Nanning while they also used, unsuccessfully, a Moor, Ossenina Matadja, an emissary of the King of Johore to Malacca in 1677, to take a message to Nanning and try and stop the marauding forays of the Minangkabaus into Dutch territory (Balthasar Bort, op.cit., pp.70-3). Formerly a part of the State of Negri Sembilan, Nanning now forms part of Malacca State.

Concurrent with the rise of English power in Asia was the gradual decline and, finally, disappearance of Indian shipping and merchants from the Southeast Asian seas, a scene that they had dominated for nearly 1,500 years. The smaller ships of the Indians found competition with the huge merchant-men of the Europeans difficult while with the establishment of British rule in India and Malaya, they also lost their markets and sources of supply. Indian cloth industries were legislated out of production by the British while Indian merchant activity was curtailed and discouraged. With the eclipse of Indian shipping and mercantile enterprise, Indian influence, too, declined in Malaya. The Indians who reappeared in Malaya during the present century were quite a different class of people and came under entirely different circumstances.¹

Summarizing, it could be said that Indian contacts with Malaya go back to prehistoric times. The full implications of the wealth of the region were, however, not realized by them till about the beginning of the Christian era. From then on, for more than a thousand years, there was a constant movement of Hindu and Buddhist traders, adventurers, priests and literati to the veritable El Dorados of Malaya and other Southeast Asian areas — the Suvarnabhumi (The Land of Gold). This traffic led to the Indianization of the Malay way of life and the foundation and growth of a number of city-states in the central sections of the strategic Siamo-Malay Peninsula. Several of the Indianized city-states prospered and featured prominently in Southeast Asian affairs

¹. See Chapter IV.
during the first millenium of the present era. Subsequently, although some of them lingered on, the majority of these city-states mysteriously disappeared and Hindu and Buddhist rituals were superceded by the Muslim way of life following the establishment of Islam in Malacca in the fifteenth century.

With the growth of Muslim power and the rise of Malacca as a great port and the hub of Muslim influence in Southeast Asia, the focus of attention shifted from the northern to the southern parts of Malaya.

Malacca prospered for nearly a hundred years and then it too declined. The eclipse of Malacca and the rise of the European power in Asia also saw the disappearance of Indian shipping from Malayan and other waters and the consequent decline of Indian influence in Malaya.

The apogee of Indian influence in Malaya was probably reached during the first millenium of this era. Subsequently, although Indians featured prominently during certain periods of Malaya's history, (as for example in the Malacca Sultanate and the present century) they never recovered their past commanding position.
Thy call reaches me once again across hundreds of speechless years. I come to thee, look in thine eyes, and seem to see there the light of the wonder at our first meeting in thy forest glade, of the gladness of a promise When we tied golden threads of kinship round each other's wrist.

That ancient token, grown pale has not yet slipped off thy right arm, and our wayfaring path of old lies strewn with the remnants of my speech. They help me to retrace my way to the inner chamber of thy life where still the light is burning that we kindled together on the forgotten evening of our union.

Remember me, even as I remember thy face, and recognise in me as thine own, the old that has been lost, to be regained and made new.  

A. Causes of Indian Migration to British Malaya

There are 900,000 Indians in Malaya to-day but nearly every one of them is either a recent immigrant or descendant of immigrants of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Modern Indian migration to Malaya in substantial numbers only began in the latter half of the nineteenth century following the establishment of British paramountacy in India and the consolidation of their power in Malaya. Whereas the earlier immigrants were ambassadors of a great civilization or traders in the rare

commodities, the modern Indian migrant was chiefly an unlettered labourer setting out to work for a pittance on some plantation or government project. \(^1\) Furthermore unlike the earlier phase, the modern migration was not spontaneous but rather politically arranged by Europeans and brought about to a considerable extent by the persuasions of agents and recruiters. \(^2\) The causes for this metamorphosis were mainly political and economic though social changes in India, for example, the growing rigidity of caste, the growth of prejudice against crossing the seas and the *purdah*, or seclusion of women, system discouraged migration by the middle and upper classes.

By the mid-nineteenth century nearly the whole of Indian Sub-Continent had come under British political and economic control. Henceforth, until India's independence in 1947, Indian interests were subordinated to the needs of the paramount power. Following the Industrial Revolution, the industrial and commercial needs of England necessitated the transformation of India from a manufacturing power to that of a market for the supply of raw materials and the consumption of British manufactures. \(^3\)

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To understand this it should be pointed out that in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, India supplied the markets of Asia and Europe with a number of manufactured goods, the chief distributors of which were Indian merchants who had trading contacts all over Asia, Europe and Britain. India began to flood the British markets with her goods. But repeated petitions from the growing British industry, resulted in the British Government imposing heavy customs duties on, for example, Indian cotton in 1677, on Indian calicoes in 1658 and on Indian silk in 1696. Finally the year 1720 saw the complete prohibition not only of the importation but also of the consumption of Indian cloth.1 The intention and effect of this mercantile policy was to change the whole face of industrial India in order "to render it a field of the produce of crude materials subservient to the manufacturers of Great Britain."2 Indian commercial competition was curbed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the British manufacturer (through pressure on the Government) employing "the arm of political injustice to keep down and ultimately strangle a competitor with whom he could not have contended on equal terms."3 Similarly immigration of Indian merchants into Malaya was not encouraged and attempts were taken to prevent the rise of Indian entrepreneurs who might compete on a footing of equality with Europeans, or in certain cases, with the indigenous community. On the other hand, immigration of Indian

1. C. Kondapi, *op. cit.*, p.3.
labour was not only welcomed and openly solicited, but even procured through "a regularly organised system of kidnapping." ¹ This official attitude, in the earlier stages of the modern Indian migration, is succinctly summarized in Sir Thomas Hyslop's often quoted phrase: "We want Indians as indentured labourers but not as free men." ² This policy was surreptitiously, if not openly, ³ pursued during the nineteenth century and largely explains the preponderance of labourers in the stream of modern Indian migration to Malaya.

(i) Labour Migration:

Indian labour migration to Malaya began shortly after the establishment of the British Crown Colony of Penang in 1786, the immigrants being employed as domestic servants and as agricultural labourers. ⁴ By the end of the eighteenth century, there were nearly a thousand of these coolies in Penang ⁵ and their numbers kept increasing following the foundation of Singapore in 1819. But the demand for labour nearly always exceeded the supply. After 1825, when Singapore, Penang and Malacca were opened up as

3. The Malay Mail (Kuala Lumpur), August 18, 1910, p.7.
penal stations, this shortage of labour was partially offset through employment of Indian convicts who had been sentenced here to terms of transportation (Appendix B). But this did not last long as following continuous protests from the local British settlers against accepting "expatriated villains from the jails of India", the Straits Settlements penal stations were finally closed in 1873 and the convicts removed to the Andaman Islands. The withdrawal of convict labour left a gap in the labour needs which became gradually more and more acute as both planters and the Government embarked on ambitious programmes of economic development after about the mid-nineteenth century.

**Demand for Indian Labour in Malaya.** The Industrial Revolution and the development of large scale production in Britain led to attempts at exploitation of the colonies for the supply of raw materials for production and markets for consumption of manufactured goods. The mercantilist policy of the East India Company and later on of the home government was espoused with great enthusiasm by the early British colonists in Malaya. Not only was the country to be a strategic asset but it was also to yield exportable products wherewith to pay for its protection and administration, and, not least, to provide an outlet for the settlers' surplus capital. Many of the colonists, too, were of that class of lower English gentry accustomed to the management of land, and were familiar from their earliest days with

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such words as "improvement" and "agricultural geology". They were firmly convinced that the future of Malaya lay in the development of crops for export for which it was eminently suited: "The soil is good, - the climate fine - the situation excellent, - and nought is wanting but the hand of man to bring abundance to our own doors."  

Beginning with the cultivation of spices for export in the 1830's, the nineteenth century mercantilist experiments were soon extended to the cultivation of sugar in the 1840's, coffee in the 1870's and finally rubber in the 1890's. Simultaneously the Government launched an ambitious programme of road and railway construction, particularly the latter, for which an Imperial loan of £500,000 had been granted in late 1899, to facilitate economic development of the country. As nearly all the work had to be done cheaply by hand to make the ventures competitive with older established areas, there soon grew up a tremendous demand for lowly paid labour in nineteenth century Malaya. This demand kept increasing as the pace of economic development accelerated in the first two decades of the present century.

Several avenues were explored to meet the growing needs for cheap labour. African slave labour, which had built up the plantations of the West Indies, was out of question as slavery had been abolished in

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the British Empire in 1833-1834. White labour was not only expensive but well nigh impossible to recruit for plantation work in the tropics, which were then, among the Europeans, referred to as the "white man's grave".

The indigenous Malay, by custom and inclination, was a peasant farmer or fisherman and did not approve of fixed hours of labour day in and day out. Being a native of the country and owner of land he could obtain a living usually in a more congenial manner than by working on estates or other similar foreign undertakings. As such it was difficult to obtain Malays in sufficient numbers to work regularly for wages. Employers thus had of necessity had to turn to immigrant labour.

In the nineteenth century Singapore gradually developed into a great emporium of Chinese, Javanese and Indian labour, with the Chinese predominating. The Chinese for a long time had been engaged in tin mining in Larut, Perak. "They were the most adaptable people, willing and able to do whatever the situation called for, whether manual labour


or crimping, merchandising, mining or prospecting, usury or piracy or gang robbery. Nothing was impossible to them, but they were "inclined to be disorderly, cost more in police and supervision and gave more trouble." They seemed to prosper better under the employ of their own countrymen and consequently did not cherish the idea of serving under an alien employer. They emigrated to Malaya on their own initiative motivated almost wholly by economic considerations.

Javanese labour was on the whole difficult to import, largely because of the cumbersome procedure required by the Dutch authorities. In addition many of them were physically unfit while it was also said that they were lazy and hard to manage. In these circumstances, where the Malay would not work as a field labourer, the Chinese found other, and more remunerative, occupations and the Javanese being both difficult to acquire and suspect as a worker, the Indian labourer became indispensable.

Altogether the South Indian was perhaps the most satisfactory type of labour for he was a good worker, not too ambitious and easily manageable.\(^1\) He had none of the self-reliance nor the capacity of the Chinese,\(^2\) but he was the most amenable to the comparatively lowly paid and rather regimented life of estates. He was a British subject, accustomed to British rule and was well-behaved and docile.\(^3\) The great majority of the Indian labourers who emigrated to Malaya were of low caste—Pariahs, Pallas, Padyachis and Goundans.\(^4\) "The relegation of the low castes to a sort of ghetto is carried to great lengths in South India, where the intolerance of the Brahmin is very conspicuous."\(^5\) There were castes (especially the Pariahs and Pallas) whose members defiled a Brahmin at a distance of 24 or 36 or even 64 feet. The Pariahs, the lowest caste in India, formed the great labouring caste of the southern districts of Madras Province\(^6\) from where Malaya drew her supply of Indian labour. The relegation of these depressed classes to the level of animals naturally tended to deprive them of initiative and self-respect, and made them a servile group. They neither had the education nor the

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enterprise to rise, as the Chinese often did, above the level of manual labour. These characteristics of the South Indian labourer, and his social background, made him all the more indispensable.

This demand was further enhanced by the preference of both the Government and the planters, especially the coffee planters from Ceylon who came over to Malaya following the failure of the crop in Ceylon in the 1870's, for Southern Indian labour. These planters had been used to Tamil labour in Ceylon and firmly believed that "Tamils must always be the mainstay of planters."\(^1\) They were best suited for picking crops\(^2\) while acclimatization to Malayan conditions was fairly easy for them as South India was not very different from Malaya climatically. Furthermore proximity and established lines of communications facilitated travel and enabled maintenance of close and constant contacts with changes in the homeland.

The demand for Indian labour to construct railways and roads in Malaya was equally great, and for want of this labour, road and rail construction was almost at a standstill in 1882. Indian labourers were preferred "for all work" on the railways,\(^3\) while a State Engineer stated that they were specially adapted for road making and were the "best metal breakers".\(^4\) A perennial complaint of the early planters was the enticing away of their Indian labourers by Government to carry out public works.\(^5\)

2. "A Tamil woman will pick coffee beans double what a Chinaman will pick" (Ibid.).
5. R.L.C., 1890, para. 461.
Apart from economic reasons, Indian immigration was also desirable as a political move as is illustrated by the policy statements of Sir Frederick Weld, the Governor of the Straits Settlements in 1879: "The great preponderance of the Chinese over any other race in these Settlements, and to a marked degree in some of the Native States under our own administration, should be counter-balanced as much as possible by the influx of Indian and other nationalities."¹ The Chinese were turbulent and faction fights amongst them were not infrequent. It was "therefore not by any means desirable to let the Chinese obtain too exclusive a possession of the (Malay) Peninsula."² Furthermore it was felt that the introduction of Indian immigrants into the Native States "might possibly, to a certain degree, render obligatory a more permanent adoption of the Residential system than as yet been decided upon — (as it would not be possible to leave the immigrants under the uncontrolled rule of a Malay Sultan)."³

Conditions in India, etc. Concurrent with the growing demand in Malaya for Indian labour was the fact that in India pressure to migrate, in the economic sense, was great,⁴ the subordination of that country to the British metropolitan power, and the rapidly increasing population

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resulting in millions being left in idleness and poverty. But several obstacles had to be surmounted before large-scale emigration from India to Malaya could begin.

The Indian peasant was not naturally inclined to emigrate. In fact the migratory instinct was practically non-existent in him. Even under the most desperate circumstances he always left his native land with an idea of returning to it. For example, for the ten years preceding 1898-99 some 84 per cent of the emigrants from Madras Province returned home.

The prevalence of the truck system of employment in India kept the peasants always in debt to the zamindar or land-lord, who was in most cases the leasee of the land on which the peasant lived and worked. The peasant and labourer consequently experienced great difficulty in leaving the land. The Tanjore mirasdar (land-lord) was keenly alive to the value of his pannaivals (labourers) and adopted every stratagem fair or foul to retain them in his village.

4. Tanjore, Madras Province, was the chief recruiting centre of labour for Malaya (Fig.44).
Apart from these factors which impeded the labour supply, the Indian Government's policy in the nineteenth century was not to encourage emigration. Its policy was one of seeing fair play between two parties to a commercial bargain, while abstaining from participation in the bargain itself. When urged by the India Office to encourage Indians to emigrate and populate the tropical possessions of Britain, the Indian Government stated that "any material departure from the permissive attitude, which has hitherto been observed, would be impolitic". The Indian Government felt that it would be impossible for it to secure observance of the conditions of engagement, even if agreed to in distant colonies like Malaya; furthermore if emigration was encouraged and proved illusory to the emigrant, the action of Government might be misconstrued, and "suspicion engendered throughout the country." ¹

The supply to Malaya was further impeded by the growing demand for labour in India itself with the inauguration of extensive irrigation and railway building projects and the opening up of tea and coffee plantations, in the late nineteenth century. ²


Burma and Ceylon were also formidable competitors to Malaya for labour in Madras. The absence of contracts and higher wages offered in Burma formed attractions which Malaya could not outvie in the earlier stages (Tables X, XI). Those who emigrated to Burma returned to their districts with from Rs.200 to Rs.300 each; with this money they were able to clear off their debts and redeem their lands. The rates of wages in Burma in 1875 to an immigrant amounted to Rs.16 per mensem while the contract wage in Malaya then, amounted to approximately Rs.6 per mensem (12 cents per day).²

1. R.L.C., 1890, para. 284.
Table X: FEDERATED MALAY STATES' INDIAN AND CHINESE RUBBER TAPPERS' DAILY WAGE RATES IN RELATION TO LONDON RUBBER PRICES, 1884-1940.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Indians (male only)</th>
<th>Chinese employed through Contractors (male and female)</th>
<th>London Average Rubber Prices (1 sh.= M.43¢)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>M.14¢ (male) M.12¢ (female)</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>M.39¢</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>M.40-60¢</td>
<td>M.80-$1.50¢</td>
<td>2 sh. 11d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>M.40-60¢</td>
<td>M.80-$2.00¢</td>
<td>2 sh. 0d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>M.45-60¢</td>
<td>M.80-&quot;2.10¢</td>
<td>1 sh. 6d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>M.45-65¢</td>
<td>M.70-$2.00¢</td>
<td>11d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>M.50-70¢</td>
<td>M.70-$2.00¢</td>
<td>10d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>M.40-55¢</td>
<td>(d)</td>
<td>6d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>M.30-50¢</td>
<td>(d)</td>
<td>3d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>M.26-47¢</td>
<td>(e)</td>
<td>2d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>M.32-40¢</td>
<td>(e)</td>
<td>3d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>M.35-64¢</td>
<td>M.40-65¢</td>
<td>6d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>M.35-60¢</td>
<td>M.40-65¢</td>
<td>6d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>M.40-50¢</td>
<td>M.50-65¢</td>
<td>8d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>M.45-50¢</td>
<td>M.75¢ +</td>
<td>10d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>M.40-50¢</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>7d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>9d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>M.50-55¢</td>
<td>M.70-$1.00¢</td>
<td>1 sh. 0d.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from Straits Settlements, Indian Immigration Ordinance (1884); State of Perak, Annual Report, 1904 (Taiping, 1905); Labour Department, Federated Malay States, Annual Reports, 1925-1940 (Kuala Lumpur, 1926-1941).

(a) Some employers offered Indian labourers payment by results. The Labour Department reported that wages of male Indian rubber tappers paid by results in the mid-1920's ranged between 60 and 90 cents per day.

(b) These rates are probably the gross amount paid to the labour contractor and not the net amounts paid to the labourers. The official reports do not say.

(c) Rounded figures only (Sir Andrew McFadyean, ed., The History of Rubber Regulation 1924-1943 (London, 1944), p.239.

(d) Chinese rates reported being "slightly higher" than rates paid to Indians.

(e) Chinese rates "practically the same" as Indians.
Table XI: COMPARATIVE FLOW OF INDIAN IMMIGRANTS INTO BURMA, CEYLON AND MALAYA, 1884-1889

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Immigrants</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Immigrants</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Immigrants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1880-1881</td>
<td>6,682</td>
<td>1881</td>
<td>54,204</td>
<td>1881</td>
<td>6,648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881-1882</td>
<td>8,020</td>
<td>1882</td>
<td>51,640</td>
<td>1882</td>
<td>9,728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882-1883</td>
<td>22,075</td>
<td>1883</td>
<td>39,055</td>
<td>1883</td>
<td>10,429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883-1884</td>
<td>12,659</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>45,962</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>15,904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884-1885</td>
<td>5,993</td>
<td>1885</td>
<td>46,665</td>
<td>1885</td>
<td>21,461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885-1886</td>
<td>7,616</td>
<td>1886</td>
<td>39,907</td>
<td>1886</td>
<td>20,308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886-1887</td>
<td>24,642</td>
<td>1887</td>
<td>72,660</td>
<td>1887</td>
<td>16,892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887-1888</td>
<td>38,956</td>
<td>1888</td>
<td>81,710</td>
<td>1888</td>
<td>20,496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1888-1889</td>
<td>38,014</td>
<td>1889</td>
<td>64,459</td>
<td>1889</td>
<td>18,032</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from R.L.C. 1890, paras. 282, 283, 284, 285.

Notes

(i) Wages:

The lowest wage in 1890's paid in Burma was 8 annas per day, and in Ceylon 6 annas per day.

(The Malayan equivalent of 6 annas at the rate of exchange then was about 33 cents).

The Contract wage in Province Wellesley was 16 cents per day in 1897, while planters in the Native States paid from 25 to 35 cents depending on locality. The Public Works Department in Kuala Lumpur town limits paid 27 cents a day while on the Pahang Road construction the labourers were paid 50 cents a day beyond Raub.

(ii) Ship Fares:

**India - Malaya**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before 1877</th>
<th>1877 - 1892</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rs. 15</td>
<td>Rs. 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**India - Ceylon**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before 1877</th>
<th>1877 - 1892</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25¢ (rupee cents)</td>
<td>25¢ (rupee cents)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Geographically almost a part of Southern India, its climate and other conditions thoroughly known, Ceylon presented greater attractions to the South Indian emigrant than could Malaya.\(^1\) Here again the absence of contracts and higher wages proved very favourable to the immigrant.\(^2\) Furthermore, in the 1890's, Ceylon expended the sum of over Rs. 100,000 per annum by way of subsidy towards increasing immigration, while the Malayan Government only granted a steamship subsidy of M\$30,000 per annum. The passage between Ceylon and South India cost the labourer only 25 rupee cents compared to Rs. 8 to Malaya after 1877 and Rs. 15 before that (Table XI).

Finally, service conditions in nineteenth century Malaya appeared to be more difficult than those in either Ceylon or Burma. Workers lived in dilapidated and filthy bangsals or labour lines (labourers' huts) and medical attention was poor and reluctantly given. For example, improvised field hospitals in Malaya were organised only in 1885 and the death rate among the railway workers admitted to these centres was as high as 14.4 per cent. Malaya was covered with thick virgin jungle, where malaria and other diseases took a heavy toll of human lives and men worked till they were fit for the graves.\(^3\) Tales of these hardships filtered back to India and many Indians believed that Malaya was a death

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1. R.L.C. 1890, para. 255.

2. In addition rice, the staple food of the South Indians, was also cheaper in Ceylon than in Malaya (\textit{Ibid.}, para. 871).

trap yawning to engulf the surplus population of India". New immigrants thus were naturally not too anxious to migrate to Malaya till conditions improved.

But since a large supply of cheap Indian labour was vital for the development of Malaya, the Government, in conjunction with the planters and other private employers of labour, set out determinedly to overcome the above obstacles and ensure a constant flow of labour from India.

Firstly, conditions of service were generally improved, as regards remuneration, accommodation, punishment and passage. Daily wages were gradually raised from 12-14 cents in 1884 to 38-50 cents by 1904, bringing them almost on par with those prevailing in Ceylon and Burma. These wages represented more than three times what the labourers could earn in India then.

Secondly, a steamship subsidy was inaugurated to stimulate immigration. In 1887 the Straits Settlements, Perak, Selangor and Johore agreed to contribute towards an annual subsidy of £30,000 to reduce steamship fares between Negapatam and Penang. In consideration of this sum, the Hultemback Liebert and Company shipping firm agreed to run a fortnightly service at the reduced fare of Rs. 8 per head as compared to Rs. 15 before. In 1896, the Federated Malay States entered into a similar

agreement with the British India Steam Navigation Company which agreed to provide cheap tickets to Indian bona fide agricultural labourers who wished to emigrate, while in 1904 the Straits Settlements subsidised a combined mail and immigration steamship service after which ships were run between India and Malaya at even more frequent intervals \(^1\) (Appendix D).

Thirdly, as even these did not provide the desired stimulus, in 1907, a semi-official body known as the "Indian Immigration Committee", consisting of official and unofficial representatives, was inaugurated with the desire to establish a "central labour bureau" to import Indian labour on a large scale and to create a system of registration of labourers to reduce "crimping". \(^2\) The Committee's work was embodied in the Tamil Immigration Fund Ordinance, enacted in the Straits Settlements in September 1907. \(^3\) Similar statutes were passed in the Federated Malay States and Johore and later in the other States of Malaya. Under the Ordinance all employers of Indian labour had to pay an assessment on the number of days worked by all Indian labourers in their employ. The funds thus accrued were to be used for the maintenance of the recruiting depots in India and the quarantine stations in Malaya besides providing

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1. Selangor Records, 1905, Miscellaneous 614/05.
2. "Cramping", or the enticing, by an offer of higher wages or other inducements, of one employer's labourers by another employer or his agent, was rampant in the 1880's with the rise in demand for labour (Straits Settlements, Annual Report on Indian Immigration, 1896, Singapore, 1897), passim.
free passage and board to all *bona fide* Indian labour emigrants from the time of their recruitment in India till their arrival at their place of employment in Malaya. Amendments in 1908, 1909 and 1911 to the Ordinance made the work of the Committee more comprehensive and all recruitment of Indian labour was placed under its jurisdiction (Appendix E).

Malpractices and gross exploitation of labour were curtailed while employers who failed to comply with the regulations of the Ordinance were penalised by heavy fines or had their licence to recruit Indian labour revoked. Under this Ordinance the Indian labourer was thus, not only ensured free passage and board to place of employment but also protection of rights.

Fourthly, on the government level, representation to the Indian Government to look favourably on emigration to Malaya was stepped up by the Malayan Government. It donated large sums of money in aid of famine relief in India, towards the end of the nineteenth century, at the same time advising the Indian Government that the best relief would be for the Indian Government to encourage emigration. Furthermore it felt that after all Malaya was a British possession and its development would contribute to the common good of the British Empire. These "patriotic urgings of the Empire builders" together with the fact that the Indian

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1. The fund initially called the "Tamil Immigration Fund" was later styled the "Indian Immigration Fund" (A.R.S.I.F.B., 1959, Appendix A).
Government now felt satisfied with treatment of Indian emigrants to Malaya, led to it withdrawing all restrictions on emigration on its side in 1897, and finally in 1900 agreement to facilitate the free flow of emigration to Malaya, though only from South India. The Indian Government felt that supply of North Indian labour which was generally more enterprising and more difficult to control and much of which would be coming from Native India would require special laws for regulating recruitment and transport in India and for the protection of these emigrants in Malaya. Furthermore many of these sturdier Indians would be required for British interests in India itself, especially in the armed and police services. Anyway it felt that it had "no reason to believe that the labour population of South India, which owing to the circumstances of climate and race is the natural source of supply to the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States, is not ample to meet all requirements".

Fifthly, more emigration depots were established in South India as "clearing houses" for Indian labour migrants and Government officers were posted to these depots to supervise the movement of all labourers

1. P.L.C. S.S. (1900), Correspondence relating to Indian immigration, Paper laid on the table on May 29, 1900.

2. That is, areas of India which were under the rule of Indian maharajas, subject to British sovereignty (Fig. 36).


This attitude of the Indian Government partially explains the preponderance of Tamils over the other Indian communities in Malaya, even till to-day.
Fig. 36. British India, 1941.

Finally, to attract more Indian labourers propaganda was stepped up by the planters themselves in both Malaya and India. For example, E.V. Carey, Chairman of the Selangor Planters' Association, even went to the extent of advocating the appointment by the Association, "of an experienced European well up in the dialects of Southern India, who should travel continually with his bullock-cart and tent through the labour districts, preaching the gospel of emigration to this country, distributing advertisements freely and recruiting coolies when opportunity offered." Although this suggestion of Carey was not taken up, however, there did evolve an elaborate system of recruitment in which the agents adopted the basic ingredients of the above suggestion. They went round to the prospective areas of supply and spared few pains in painting highly glowing, often false, pictures of prospects and opportunity in Malaya. This "artificial pressure of recruitment", together with the actions of the Indian and Malayan Governments, largely overcame the practically non-existent migratory instinct among the Indian peasantry, and large-scale Indian migration to Malaya began about the beginning of the present century concurrent with the development of the rubber industry and communication network.

1. Planters' Association of Malaya, Papers on Tamil Immigration: Presented at 12th Annual Meeting of the Association held on 30th April, 1919 (Kuala Lumpur, 1919), passim.
3. Lanka Sundaram, op.cit., p.4.
(ii) Non-Labour Migration:

Although predominant, labourers were not the only Indian immigrants attracted to Malaya. In the early days of British rule in Malaya, the very low standard of literacy of the local population resulted in a few of them being competent for work in the Government service while the majority of the Chinese preferred private enterprise. Consequently, the acute shortage of trained staff for administrative and clerical functions caused the Government of Malaya to appeal to the Governments of India and Ceylon to send personnel for service to Malaya. Attracted by comparatively better prospects, numbers of educated Indians from South India and Northern Ceylon came to Malaya and secured employment in building roads, railways, in surveying lands and in doing work of clerks, dressers, teachers, etc. Once this movement of educated Indians to Malaya had begun, many more emigrated from the same localities, and found employment as subordinate staff on plantations and other private enterprise where the European employers found them invaluable in dealing with Indian labour. For example, the Ceylon coffee planters brought their own subordinate staff along with them when they came to Malaya.

Just as South Indians proved to be invaluable in the clerical and technical services, similarly North Indians, particularly the tall, sturdy, turbaned Punjabis (chiefly Sikhs) were much sought after as

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soldiers, policemen, caretakers and in other similar undertakings, partly because of the reluctance of the Malays and the Chinese to serve in these branches of service in view of the turbulence that marked the early days of British hegemony in Malaya. Beginning from 1872, when, in response to an appeal from the ruler of Larut, Perak, one Capt. Tristram Speedy raised and trained a body of Sikh police for service in Perak, increasing numbers of this community migrated to Malaya to be absorbed by the expanding military and police forces of Malaya,¹ and by private enterprise as watchmen and caretakers.

Besides the two groups mentioned, opportunity in a rapidly developing Malaya also attracted a continuous stream of other educated and skilled Indians, like lawyers, artisans, doctors, etc.

In addition there was the steady flow, too, of petty Indian entrepreneurs, businessmen, money-lenders, merchants and traders, and such like, who followed in the wake of the above movements to cater to the special needs of their brethren.²

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B. Types of Migrants and Recruitment

Labour migration formed the bulk of the movement of Indians to Malaya in modern times. However, several distinctions must be made not only within this labour movement but also between it and other forms of immigration. For example, there is the distinction between assisted and unassisted immigration of labour. The first comprises all those forms in which the labourer was financially aided by another party to get to Malaya; the second, those cases in which no such assistance was given. The great bulk of the Indian immigrants were of the assisted type, especially from 1833 to 1930. The unassisted labour immigration became significant only after the Great Depression of the early nineteen-thirties, when assistance was discontinued and quotas imposed on all immigration into Malaya. Within the assisted category, however, there were three different types. The first was composed of those assisted on the basis of an indenture contract. The second was composed of those assisted on the basis of a short term, or kangany, contract. Both of these types were recruited. The third type of assisted immigrants were those who were not recruited but came to Malaya as independent labourers.

1. Kangany is a Tamil word meaning "overseer" or "foreman". It is the word used in the Tamil bible for "bishop". It is not the word commonly used for "foreman" in Southern India but it is used in this sense in both Malaya and Ceylon. Most of the original recruiters under the kangany system were foremen on estates and the word kangany thus acquired the secondary meaning of "recruiters". (A.R.S.I.F.E., 1959, p.31).
Indenture was the most important method of recruitment in the initial stages of Indian labour migration to Malaya. In course of time it, however, declined in importance relative to the kangany system, largely, because of criticism of indenture and the availability of alternative supply of labour. The kangany system in turn was superseded by the non-recruits. Numerically, however, the kangany recruits were the most significant since this form of recruitment was pre-eminently the kind in use in Malaya during the first quarter of this century.

Finally there is the distinction between labour migration of all types and professional and commercial immigration. The latter consisted chiefly of money-lenders, merchants, artisans, tradesmen, shop-assistants and professional man. These have been far less important numerically than the labourers but because of their character they have acquired and exercised a political, economic and social influence in Malaya, out of all proportion to their numbers.
(i) Assisted Labour Migration:¹

Indentured Immigration. As a half-way stage between slavery and free labour, indenture was different from peonage or serfdom. It was adapted, like slavery, to the recruitment of labour through migration. It enabled business enterprise to transfer labour to newly developing areas, and yet restrained that labour from immediately taking holdings of its own where unexploited land was abundant. Less satisfactory than slavery because less permanent, it nevertheless could attract people too proud to become slaves.

Indenture supposedly originated with a contract, usually written and voluntarily assumed. But it was an unusual contract, because it bargained away the labourer's personal freedom for an extended period. Hence exceedingly strong inducements were required before anyone agreed to it. Often, in addition, emigration under this system was the result of ignorance on the part of the labourer and coercion or

¹ The following account of this aspect of Indian migration to Malaya is based on R.L.C. 1890; R.L.C. 1896; H.E. Marjoribanks and A.T. Marakkayar, op.cit.; "J. Geoghegan's Report on Coolie Emigration from India", op.cit.; Sanderson Committee, Report on Emigration from India to the Crown Colonies and Protectorates, Pts. I, II, III, Session Papers, Cmd. 5192, 5193, 5194 (London, 1910); Labour Department, Federated Malay States/Straits Settlements/Malaya, Annual Reports, 1904-1940 (Kuala Lumpur, 1905-1941) and "Statement made by Mr. Gilman of the Malaya Deputation to the Standing Committee on Emigration of the Government of India at Simla, on 31st August, 1922", Planters' Association of Malaya Annual Report, 1923/1924 (Kuala Lumpur, 1924), Appendix D.
fraud on the part of the employer. It was therefore often not a true contract at all, but merely a fictional one.¹

Presumably the contract led to the status of free labourer at the end of the period (three years in Malaya, later reduced to 600 days as compared to five years in other British colonies), but it could also lead to re-indenture or to a return to India. Naturally many an employer undertook to maintain their workers at as small a cost as possible, to work them as hard as possible, and to keep them on the job as regularly as possible. At the end of the indenture he tried to renew the agreement for another stretch if the worker was still productive, or to get rid of him if he was not. The prominent contemporary Indian leader, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, in an address to the Imperial Legislative Council, summed up the leading characteristics of the system from the labourers' point of view:

1. The indentured labourer in Malaya bound himself to labour for hire by signing a written contract for a certain period of time in lieu of cash advances made to him. Cash advances were made, to enable him to journey from his home to place of employment, and also to meet incidental expenses. During employment a certain sum was deducted from his wages for the advances made to him and also to repatriate him when his term of contract had expired. He received a fixed wage stipulated in the contract, and was provided with free housing, free medical attention (where and when available) and food rations at cost price. The indentured labourer was also referred to as a contract labourer or statute labourer. (Contract labourers should, however, be differentiated from labourers working for a contractor) (Appendix G).
Under this system, those who are recruited bind themselves, first to go to a distant and unknown land, the language, usage and customs of which they do not know, and where they have no friends or relatives. Secondly, they bind themselves to work there for any employer to whom they may be allotted, whom they do not know and who does not know them, and in whose choice they have no voice. Thirdly, they bind themselves to live there on the estate of the employer, must not go anywhere without a special permit, and must do whatever tasks are assigned to them, no matter however irksome those tasks may be. Fourthly, the binding is for a certain fixed period, usually five years, during which time they cannot voluntarily withdraw from the contract and have no means of escaping from its hardships, however intolerable. Fifthly, they bind themselves to work during the period for a fixed wage, which invariably is lower, and in some cases very much lower, than the wage paid to free labour around them. And sixthly, and lastly, and this to my mind is the worst feature of the system, they are placed under a special law, never explained to them before they left the country, which is in a language which they do not understand and which imposes on them a criminal liability for the most trivial breaches of the contracts in place of the civil liability which usually attaches to such breaches. Thus they are liable under this law to imprisonment with hard labour which may extend to two and in some cases to three months, not only for fraud, not only for deception, but for negligence, for carelessness and ... for even an impertinent word or gesture to the manager or his overseers.¹

In short, it was, as the ex-Chief Justice (1863-1868) of British Guiana, J. Beaumont described it, "a monstrous rotten system, rooted upon slavery, grown in its stale soil, emulating its worst abuses and only the more dangerous because it presents itself under false colours, whereas slavery had the brand of infamy written upon its forehead."²

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of indenture in Malaya differed from the other British colonies only in that, while the labourers in the other colonies were recruited by their respective governments and made available to employers of indentured labour, in Malaya recruitment was by employers themselves through private agencies in India. The Malayan Government's function was merely to watch over the fulfilment of the contract between the individual employer and the emigrant. In practice, even this was seldom done.

This obnoxious device of recruitment and exploitation of cheap labour was fortunately short-lived. It was abolished in Malaya in 1910, partly because of changed economic conditions in Malaya and the availability of alternative labour supply and partly because of legislation and criticism of the system, especially in India.

Indentured Indian labour immigration into Malaya began about the year 1833, when Tamil and Telegu workers were brought to work on the sugar plantations of Province Wellesley and Krian. To a lesser extent, indentured labour was also used by the Government in its road and railway projects but it was with the Straits Settlements' sugar industry that these labourers were chiefly associated. The labour

1. The last indenture contract in Malaya expired in 1913. In India the system was completely abolished in 1920, the event being likened to the abolition of slavery nearly a century ago and being hailed as a red-letter day throughout India (C.F. Andrews, "India's Emigration Problem", Foreign Affairs, Vol.8 (1930), p.434).

2. Natives of the Andhra Province of India.

requirements for sugar-cane cultivation were fairly heavy, compared to the work on coffee, pepper and gambier estates. In view of this, sugar planters required a steady labour force bound by long term contracts, and were not prepared to enter into free competition with other employers of Indian labour in the market. They were consistent champions of the indenture system.

No records are available before the 1880's of exactly how many indentured labourers entered Malaya before the abolishment of the system. Between 1881 and 1890, there were 136,078 entries, averaging more than 13,000 a year, but the number gradually declined until in 1910, just before the abolition, there were only 2,500 such immigrants (Appendix F). The labourers resented their conditions of employment and their labour output was on the whole unsatisfactory. This was understandable for as the Colonial Secretary of the Straits Settlements said, "It is quite conceivable that a man coming to a new country who finds things not quite as he expected, and sees before him apparently no end, falls into a despairing state of mind, which often ends in sickness and death. That despairing state of mind is materially added to by the fact that

he sees all around him, men of his own kindred and country earning very much higher wages (as free labourers). Under these conditions desertions were frequent, inspite of severe penalties. For example, there were no less than 661 desertions out of 1,173 indentured immigrant labourers on Gula Estate, Perak, alone in 1896. Under these circumstances sugar planters turned to the more efficient kangany recruited labourers who began to be available in increasing numbers from about the end of the nineteenth century. Anyway the sugar industry of Malaya was already tottering by the beginnings of the present century following the growth and competition of bounty-fed European sugar and the establishment of the industry on modern lines in Java in 1905. The last sugar factory in Malaya ceased operations in 1913. The final seal in the demise of the indenture system was set following the development of Indian Nationalism. The system became increasingly unpopular in India after 1900, being regarded as an insult to India and inconsistent with the sentiment of national self-respect, and consequently abolished. Indenture was followed by a system that had already developed, a system freer, but not completely free, the kangany system.

1. P.L.C. S.S. (1892), Meeting of November 14, 1892.
2. Section 48 of Straits Settlements Indian Immigration Ordinance 1/1876 states that an immigrant if found guilty of desertion would be liable to rigorous imprisonment not exceeding one month.
Kangany Recruited Immigration. With the spread of coffee cultivation in the 1890's, a difference of opinion developed between European sugar and coffee planters as to the type of labour desired in Malaya. Sugar planters employed largely professionally recruited indentured Indians while the coffee planters favoured "free" kangany recruitment, a procedure in vogue in Ceylon, from where most of the coffee planters had come.

The kangany system involved a short term contract generally verbal rather than written, which could be dissolved at a month's notice on the part of either party.\(^1\) It received its name because of the important role of the kanganies, or headmen, who in theory were the senior members of the families, but in actuality many of them were only "coolies of standing." The kangany was both recruiter and field foreman, sent by an employer or association of estate owners to bring back his friends, neighbours and relatives in his home district; the kangany undertook to provide food, clothing and transit for the recruits in connection with the overseas trip. Frequently he was empowered to discharge their local debts or to leave money with their relatives. Considerable responsibility rested on him to choose the right sort of recruits and as compared with indenture there was a better chance that whole families or neighbourhood groups would come together.\(^2\)

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On Ceylon coffee and tea plantations, where the system was inaugurated and where it had entirely replaced indenture by 1910, kanganies controlled gangs of labourers who were often composed of family units. Where several kangany gangs resided on the same estate there was often a head kangany. The kanganies in charge of the sub-groups were called silara kanganies or sub-kanganies who were responsible to the head kangany. The kangany was the all important link between the planter and his labour force. He recruited labourers in India, supervised their work on the estates and paid them their wages from a lump sum paid him by the employer.

In return for his services the head kangany generally received payments for recruits and also "head money" - 3 to 6 cents per day for each labourer who showed up for work. In addition he was occasionally paid a fixed salary for special services, and he might get additional money by sharp practices. More important, he was able to exploit his position to his own advantage, particularly to gain control over the labourers so that they were constrained not to leave the gang. The silara kangany usually worked in the field, either as a labourer or as overseer. For this he received a "name", which entitled him to a day's pay, in addition to "pence money", a sum of 9 or 12 cents daily, for each labourer in his group.

The labourer was obligated to pay back within two years the sum advanced to bring him to the place of work. He could not be compelled to pay, since the law clearly allowed him to leave his job with 30 days' notice and did not hold him liable for any debt to the kangany, but in
fact he would find it difficult to get work at another plantation if he failed to pay, and he took the debt as a point of honour.

In Malaya, the kangany system differed from that practised in Ceylon. The coffee planters exerted more personal control over the labour force, chiefly by the payment of wages directly to each labourer. The hold of the kangany was thus weakened but by no means broken. Under this system of recruitment, Malayan employers paid the passage and expenses to and from India, plus a commission for each labourer recruited. The employer paid the passages of the recruits, but did not require them to enter contracts. The immigrant was nevertheless expected to repay the cost of his importation to the employer, usually from wages. The employer's only remedy in case of desertion without making full payment was a civil suit - but this was seldom done. Instead he relied on a combination of reasonable terms and his kangany's influence to keep the labourer on the estate, and recover expenditure.

The coffee, and following them the rubber planters, preferred kangany labour because they were superior to one recruited professionally. Moreover kangany labour was cheaper since commissions paid to kanganies probably varied less directly with the demand for labour. Also of major importance was the fact that kangany recruited labourers were considered free labourers and thus initially less subject to Government control and inspection.

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1. Following the establishment of the Tamil Immigration Fund in 1907 all costs of importing a labourer from his home in India to his place of employment in Malaya were met from the above Fund. The only costs still paid by the employers, after 1907, were charges for feeding labourers for one or two days in immigration depots in Malaya while waiting for employers to call for them, and for services of financial agents in India and per capita commission to kanganies (Appendix F).
Begun about 1890, the *kangany* system rapidly replaced indentured immigration into Malaya. By 1902 the proportion of unindentured plantation labourers in Malaya had risen to 2/5 and by 1907 it was up to 5/6. Within twenty years after its inception, the *kangany* system had virtually replaced indenture\(^1\) (Appendix F). Although from time to time important changes were made, the *kangany* system remained unaltered in its fundamental aspects until 1938 when it was abolished following a ban by the Indian Government on all emigration of unskilled labour. The procedures of the *kangany* system were not entirely new but mostly adaptations of earlier practices. They were described in 1914 as follows.

An employer in need of labour would obtain from a Labour Department Office a blank *kangany* licence form. He would enter in this the *kangany's* name, the maximum number of labourers the *kangany* was to recruit, the wage rates the labourer would receive and the amount of the *kangany's* commission in respect of each labourer recruited. The *kangany* would proceed to Penang with the form where if found satisfactory by the Deputy Controller of Labour, the licence was registered. The Deputy Controller especially wished to see that the *kangany* appeared old enough, i.e., twenty-one years or older, and that the rate of commission was not too high. The *kangany* then embarked for India. On arrival in India the *kangany* would have his licence endorsed by the Malayan Emigration

\[^1\] Sanderson Committee, *op.cit.*, pp.167 et seq.
Agent or his assistant at either of the two Malayan emigration depots. In addition to the old depot at Negapatam (inaugurated in 1890) a new one had been established at Avadi (near Madras) in 1907. The kanganv then presented himself to either of the two European firms, who were the agents of the British India Steam Navigation Company — the carriers of immigrants to Malaya. These firms, which had formerly obtained indentured labour from professional recruiters for the Malayan employers, now acted as financial agents for the employers. They advanced money to the kanganv for his travels and recruiting expenses and later paid him the commission due in respect of each labourer actually recruited and shipped. The agents would cable the employer on the occasion of each shipment and periodically would bill each employer for the expenses incurred on his behalf, adding a charge for their services.

Having obtained his advance, the kanganv would proceed to recruit, ideally among his friends and relatives in his home village. The most popular South Indian recruiting districts for Malaya were Trichinopoly, North and South Arcot, Tanjore, Chingleput and Vizagapatam (Fig. 44). Part of the money advanced by the financial agents was used to settle emigrants' debts or for gifts to those left behind and also for a farewell party. These were the only expenses of the kanganv which were not recoverable from the Immigration Fund. The recruits were taken to the nearest railway station and from there to Avadi or Negapatam where they were kept in the camps until boarding the British India Steam Navigation Company steamers. At some of the more popular interior
railway stations recruiting inspectors were employed who endorsed the kangany's licence with the number of recruits entraining and paid the cost of the tickets. At other stations, the kangany paid for the tickets from his advance and was reimbursed by the Agent or Superintendent at the camps. Usually the kangany would go with his recruits to Malaya, but sometimes he would send them on and return to the villages for more recruits.  

The task of shipping the emigrants to Malaya was undertaken by the financial agents usually directly from the camp premises to the ship. Each labourer was given a "tin ticket" bearing a number which represented the estate to which he was being dispatched. On arrival in Malaya it was the usual practice for all immigrant labourers to enter quarantine stations for one week or longer. From there they were sent to nearby depots, where usually within one or two days, the employer or agent came to remove his new labourers. The immigrants disembarked at two points — Penang and Port Swettenham, mostly at the latter port.  

Kangany recruitment vastly improved Malaya's labour supply, and led to the creation of "Little Indias" on the estates. Under the kangany system the South Indian labourer acquired a paternalistic security. It enabled him to live within his own community among relatives and neighbours from his own village and area. Divorced from


2. Planters' Association of Malaya, Annual Report, 1923/1924 (Kuala Lumpur, 1924), Appendix D.
the general stream of Malayan life, having little relation with other ethnic groups and scarcely ever intermarrying with them, these Indians were able to lead their usual traditional lives, without disturbing native customs, diet or language. The system, however, was much criticised, full of abuses, considered already sacrosanct by the late 1920's, and finally abolished in 1938.

Kanganis recruiting practices left a lot to be desired. Bribery was frequently used to buy favours and it invariably entered the several phases of immigration, especially where a lowly-paid authority was in a position to dispense privilege. Sharp recruiting practices on the part of the kanganies included:

(i) obtaining recruits from professional recruiters or hotel keepers.

(ii) forging signatures of village munsifs (sub-Collectors of Revenue in India) who from 1923 were required to see intending emigrants.

(iii) exploiting family quarrels to get some member of the family to emigrate.

(iv) promising young men that they could find wives in Malaya if they went there.

(v) catching recruits at weekly "shandies" not unlike the practice of "Shanghaing" on the China coast.

(vi) matching strangers in order to circumvent the rule that minors and women must be accompanied by a parent or relatives.

(vii) substitution of unfit persons for ones already passed.¹

(viii) misrepresentation of work and wages.

Furthermore the kangany system was also criticised and disliked because it was more than a means of recruitment. It was a method of employment too in which liaison on estates between the labourers and the employer was chiefly through the kangany. This allowed the kangany to exploit the labourers' ignorance of rules and recruiting practices. In disputes between the kangany and labourers, the kangany usually had the support of the managers.

Kangany recruitment was under the control of the Indian Immigration Committee and the chief weapon that was available to the Committee to combat kangany abuses was the threat of cancellation or refusal of a recruiting licence. But this power only began to be effectively utilized in the late 1920's, and even then in the face of stiff opposition from the Planters' Association of Malaya. This body violently opposed abolishment of the system since it still implied low operating costs and effective control of cheap labour. But many individual planters, considered the system as already sacrosanct as early as the 1920's and favoured the creation of a permanent residential Indian population in Malaya. More important, however, was the development of nationalism in India and the growing criticism of labour emigration in general and the kangany system in particular.

1. For example, in 1927, when 7,882 kangany licences were outstanding some 8 per cent were refused re-registration or cancelled (Agent of the Government of India, Annual Report, 1927, Calcutta, 1928, p.4).

Criticism in India came mostly from the educated and informed Indians of political bent and from the Indian press which helped to shape Indian opinion. Kangany emigration to Malaya was singled out as a topic for comment by the Indian press at least as early as 1912. In that year the Amrita Bazar Patrika of Calcutta published an article by a correspondent in Selangor which stated that:

The recruiting kangany who generally belong to the lowest class and who do not care for the welfare of the coolies as long as they get a good commission from their employers give a very glowing description of the new country .... The kangany are easily believed by the simpleton, because he (sic) ... shines like a tin god clothed in gorgeous velvet (sic) coat and lace turban and bedecked with costly jewels in his ears and his fingers.

Advertisements of the F.M.S. Government, which are displayed in all the Railway Stations and some publications are an enchanting item. They give all that are best here; the race-courses which may not be seen by the coolie at all, the Mariamman Temple, within the radius of 59 miles of which the coolie may not even tread (?), the Government office in Kuala Lumpur with which the coolies have no connections whatsoever ... the ever flowing rivers in Perak which contain water saltier than that of the sea and breed myriads of crocodiles which make the rivers unbathable ....

And the announcement at the bottom of each such alluring advertisement (as to what) coolies (male) get as wages a day is true enough. But ... it is not coupled with a statement of the average cost of living, for an average number which is two and half times that in India ....

The conditions under which the coolies are to be recruited are not properly explained to them and in the majority of the cases the emigration agent does not even see the coolies until they are already to be packed away. According to the enactment in the States there are no statutory immigrants. Every one is a free coolie ....

It is all in theory. A coolie's notice is not generally accepted by the manager. In 99 estates out of 100 no coolie is allowed to see and speak to the manager. The coolie should give notice to the manager through the kangany, who if he discharged a coolie from the estate, would lose two cents a day (as he is given head money in addition to his wages of two cents per coolie working day). And naturally the kangany informs the coolies that their indenture is not terminated ....

1. The Malay Mail (Kuala Lumpur), January 30, 1913, p.9.
Despite efforts by the Malayan Government and some planters to show concern and to carry out inspections, etc., criticism in India not only continued but mounted in intensity. In 1936, the Indian Government sent the Rt. Hon. V.S. Srinivasa Sastri, a leader of the Moderates in the Indian National Congress, to Malaya to investigate the conditions of Indian labour. He received deputations from all sides. Commenting on the kangany system he said, "It is irrelevant to discuss here the merits or demerits of the administration of the system since the argument itself admits the abuses to which it is liable .... However careful the administration may be, the labourer may be under some concealed obligation to the kangany which will act to his disadvantage in Malaya ...."\(^1\) He felt that the Indian Immigration Committee was "heavily weighted in favour of the employers ..." and recommended the system be abolished.\(^2\)

By this time opposition from the Planters' Association of Malaya to abolishment of the system had also largely disappeared partly because of criticism of the system from the more sensitive of its own ranks and partly because of the availability of equally cheap alternative labour supply after the Great Depression of the early 1930's, through the increasing movement of non-recruited, assisted, and independent Indian labour to Malaya (Appendix F).

Already declining after the 1920's, through legal restrictions\(^3\)

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2. Ibid.

3. See pp. 240-7 below.
and the growing knowledge and sophistication of the Indian labourers themselves, the system virtually ceased after the Great Depression. Few Kangany licences were issued after this and these, too, mostly for the newly opened tea and oil palm estates and for employers whose labour connections were with remote parts of India, or were not well established to secure a sufficient supply of non-recruited labour. Thus for practical purposes it may be assumed that all emigration to Malaya since 1934 has been voluntary. Formal abolishment of the Kangany system came in 1938 when the Indian Government placed a ban on all assisted labour emigration.

Assisted Independent Labour Immigration. Kangany recruiters, numerous though they were, were not sufficient to meet the ever-increasing labour needs of fast developing modern Malaya. Consequently, to supplement the Kangany stream, the Indian Immigration Committee agreed to give assistance equal to that given to Kangany recruiters, to individual labourers voluntarily presenting themselves at the Malayan depots in India.

To promote this voluntary emigration, some of the employers of Indian labour suggested that returning labourers to South India should be provided with notices printed in the Tamil and Telegu languages explaining how to obtain free passages to Malaya. This was attempted in 1913 and 1916 but nothing positive happened because voluntary emigration was contrary to the interest of Kanganies and the Committee was not anxious to innovate any way that might undermine the Kangany system. From about the mid-1920's, however, voluntary emigration rose substantially, through stimulation by both official and private efforts, especially the Indian Emigration Act of 1922, by which there was to be an official Indian

scrutiny of recruited emigration to Malaya. After 1925, the Fund paid M$2.00 per adult and M$3.00 to each minor voluntary emigrant to encourage emigration. The numbers were also swelled by many kanganies posing as emigrants to get the voluntary "bonuses." So that, in 1925, for example, voluntary emigrants made up 28 per cent of the total number of Indian labourers assisted to emigrate to Malaya. The Agent of the Government of India described the procedure of voluntary emigration to Malaya in 1925, as follows:

Labourers who wish to go to Malaya independently of the kangany appear at the nearest emigration depot at Avadi or Negapatam. On being satisfied that they are bona fide labourers, the Emigration Commissioner sends them on to Malaya, at the cost of the Indian Immigration Fund. As soon as they are discharged from the immigration depots at the ports of destination in Malaya, they are at liberty to go to any place of employment they like ... and are provided with railway tickets ....

The Great Depression resulted in a heavy exodus of Indian labour from Malaya. In 1934 and 1935 the Malayan and Indian Governments agreed to resume assisted emigration on a quota basis of 20,000 annually. In so far as Malaya required fresh Indian labour after 1935, it appears to have been supplied largely by voluntary emigrants, for by this time they made up more than 90 per cent of the total Indian labour force entering Malaya (Appendix F). The quota was supplemented by the return of labourers who had been in Malaya before for five years, and who were not counted in the quota. A note from the estate manager was counted

1. See pp. 240-1 below.
sufficient proof of previous residence. Beginning with 1935, the Labour Department provided identification certificates for employers to give to their labourers returning to India. These were known as thittisurat and promised the labourer work on return by a certain date. These labourers could bring their families along.

About the same time as the economy of Malaya recovered from the Depression and the need for labour again rose, employers began to send to India to friends and relatives of labourers already on the estates, letters promising work to them should they come to Malaya. When these letters, called puthal surat, were presented at Negapatam or Avadi (Madras), the bearers obtained assistance to emigrate. Response to the bearer-letters was good and the number of emigrants applying for assistance to emigrate in 1937 was reported to be so large in relation to Malaya's needs that the Malayan Government restricted the number of immigrants and made efforts to inform intending emigrants that financial assistance was no longer available to all applicants. Only bearers of letters from Malaya were to be given free passage. On June 15th, 1938, the Indian Government clamped a ban on all assisted emigration to Malaya. Though precipitated by a dispute over the amount of wages to be paid to Indian labour in Malaya, the ban was a long time coming and when it did take place it was not a complete surprise.

Abuses under Assisted Immigration. In addition to the shortcomings under the kangany system, insufficient accommodation, overcrowding, insanitary conditions, ignorance or lack of experience of travel of the labourers, and a tendency of the Malayan authorities and the shipping
companies to shirk responsibility all led to numerous other abuses. For example, in July, 1900, the Penang depot was equipped to accommodate 800 persons, but held more than 2,000 and "appearance of cholera resulted in a great loss of life." As late as 1917 the anti-malarial works at Port Swettenham quarantine station were yet to be completed while in 1919 nine successive immigrant ships were infected with cholera.¹

Ship conditions were bad and overcrowding the rule rather than an exception. There was little care for life. The Senior Health Officer of the Federated Malay States condemned ship conditions, likening them to "overcrowded and insanitary tropical prisons,"² Through representation and the work of the Agent of the Government of India efforts were made to improve conditions through the introduction of better vessels but overcrowding and occasionally high mortality rates continued throughout the 1920's. This failure to improve conditions led to a rising wave of criticism in India against Indian labour emigration to Malaya.

The Government of Malaya on its side, was fundamentally concerned with the maintenance of a large supply of cheap labour and it had achieved this objective through systematizing the kanganý method of recruiting Indian labourers under the Indian Immigration Committee. It refused to accept anything but minimum responsibility for the labour forces on the grounds that the labourers were immigrants and sojourners in Malaya. It assured the plantation labourers little more than that

² Ibid.
which was necessary for the functioning of the rubber plantation industry. Furthermore it regarded the immigration machinery as near to perfection as a means of allaying most of the abuses inherent in the situation and alleged that criticism in India against labour migration was in large measure the work of British and Indian capitalists who considered emigration inimical to their interests and sought to oppose emigration. But in actuality it was an awakening India, keen on political reform both at home and abroad, that was the chief critic.

Criticism of Indian Labour Immigration in India. We have seen how emigration to Malaya was singled out for comment by the Indian press as early as 1912, in connection with the kangany system and how despite efforts by the Malayan Government to show concern the criticism had mounted, leading to the final abolishment of the system. Hand in hand with criticism of this particular mode of emigration was the overall dislike of assisted labour migration to the country. The cause of the Indians in Malaya became increasingly bound up with the political issue in India which concerned the rights of Indians overseas. Equal rights were demanded.

As a result of the Montagu-Chelmsford Constitutional Reforms of 1918-1919 in India, regulation of Indian emigration was placed in the hands of India's new Central Legislature. To insure that indentured Indian emigration, already abolished, would be permanently prohibited and to create a machinery for future control of emigration in order adequately

to help and to protect Indian emigrants abroad, a bill called the "Indian Emigration Act of 1922, of 5 March 1922 (No. VII of 1922)" was passed — Malayan Government objections notwithstanding — in 1922 by the Indian Legislature Assembly. 1 This Act interposed the Government of India in Malayan Indian affairs in a very large way. By it, each emigrant had to be provided with a statement, by the employer, giving details of conditions of work, wages, repatriation terms, etc., while no one under 18 years of age, unless with an elder relative, was allowed to emigrate. Furthermore an Agent of the Government of India (usually a prominent Indian Civil Servant) was appointed to Malaya to look after the welfare of the emigrants. 2

The appointment of the Agent to Malaya in 1925 added fresh fuel to the fire. His on the spot accounts of the abuses inherent in assisted emigration, fanned the already smouldering criticism in India, where this form of emigration was becoming increasingly unpopular and regarded as an insult to the status of the Indian nation.

Emigration to Malaya figured prominently in most of the leading newspapers of India, particularly the Hindu, a Madras daily, which was the Government's chief critic in the late 1930's. For example in 1937, the Hindu stated:


2. In 1946, the Agent's designation was changed to "Representative of the Government of India in Malaya", following constitutional changes in India, and to that of "The Indian High Commissioner in Malaya" in 1957, when Malaya became an independent member of the Commonwealth.
The Indian in Malaya to-day is discriminated against on every side. His status is ... far below that of other communities in the country. The public services are closed to him; under cover of protecting native interests arable land is denied to him; in the professions his existence is barely tolerated. Even the Malaya-born Indian, who does not know India, is treated as an alien in the land of his birth! To permit the emigration of Indians to a country where they are treated with such little consideration seems consistent neither with the self respect of India, nor with the best wishes of prospective emigrants ....

The Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri, though he avoided comment on the political and social issues of the Indians in Malaya, was nevertheless far from satisfied with assisted emigration. Besides recommending the abolishment of the kangany system he also deprecated the "prison camp appearance of quarantine camps." But neither these criticisms nor the visit of Pandit Nehru to Malaya in the following year, satisfied the ever mounting and increasingly militant anti-labour emigration feeling in the New India.

Criticism of Indian Labour Immigration in Malaya. Coupled with the rising unpopularity of the assisted emigration in India was the growing criticism of this movement among the Indians in Malaya too, though overtly expressed, in view of the severe discriminatory penalties against "seditious stuff of any nature or form." For example in 1922, a Tamil language newspaper, the Tamilaham, published in Kuala Lumpur,

1. The Straits Times (Singapore), March 25, 1937, p.10.
3. The Malay Mail (Kuala Lumpur), June 3, 1937, p.10.
urged the Indians not to come to Malaya to work on the rubber plantations.\footnote{J. Norman Parmer, \textit{op. cit.}, p.96.}

Following Malayan Indian representation in the Federated Malay States Federal Council in the mid 1920's, questions on behalf of Indian labour began to be asked there too, while outside, the cudgel was taken up by the Indian social and cultural organisations, particularly by the Central Indian Association of Malaya (C.I.A.M.), formed in 1936 by business and professional persons.

The issue that finally precipitated the ban, which was the end result of many years of mounting Indian criticism against the emigration of unskilled labour, inextricably woven with expression of Indian Nationalism, was the dispute between the two Governments over the minimum standard wages to be paid to Indian labour in Malaya.

Despite the fact that all the costs of importing a South Indian labourer under the Committee, on the average, amounted to only MG29.39, from 1908 to 1938, wages remained ridiculously low and showed no drastic improvements over those prevailing in the last century. The wages tended to follow the price of rubber, more downward than upward. Finally Indian Government representation led to the imposition, from June 1, 1924, of a daily minimum standard wage rate of 35 cents for men and 27 cents for women. This was based on the prevailing cost of living (Table XII).

\footnote{The Labour Department, Malaya, \textit{Annual Report for the Year 1938} (Kuala Lumpur, 1939), p. 10.}
Table XII: MONTHLY BUDGET FOR AN INDIAN LABOURER, SEPTEMBER 1925

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Cost as agreed on</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Provisions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>6 gantangs at 46 cents</td>
<td>M$2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>1½ chupak</td>
<td>M 0.99¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chilly</td>
<td>½ kati</td>
<td>M 0.14¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coriander</td>
<td>½ chupak</td>
<td>M 0.08¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamarind</td>
<td>½ kati</td>
<td>M 0.18¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhal</td>
<td>1 chupak</td>
<td>M 0.13¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green peas</td>
<td>1 chupak</td>
<td>M 0.12¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White beans</td>
<td>½ chupak</td>
<td>M 0.08¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onion</td>
<td>1 kati</td>
<td>M 0.12¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garlic</td>
<td></td>
<td>M 0.05¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumin seed</td>
<td></td>
<td>M 0.05¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mustard</td>
<td>½ chupak</td>
<td>M 0.06¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepper</td>
<td></td>
<td>M 0.08¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tumeric</td>
<td></td>
<td>M 0.05¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curry stuffs</td>
<td></td>
<td>M 0.10¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coconut oil</td>
<td>1 bottle</td>
<td>M 0.30¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerosene oil and matches</td>
<td></td>
<td>M 0.14¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betel nut; tobacco</td>
<td></td>
<td>M 0.75¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar soap</td>
<td></td>
<td>M 0.10¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pots and Pans, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td>M 0.10¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt fish</td>
<td>1 kati</td>
<td>(M 0.05¢)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutton</td>
<td>½ pound</td>
<td>(M 0.60¢)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. Clothes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veshties (wraps)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper clothes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(M$7.30¢ per year or 61 cents per month)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayern (singlets)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton cumbly (blanket)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III. Miscellaneous</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mat and pillow</td>
<td></td>
<td>M 0.05¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barber</td>
<td></td>
<td>M 0.10¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhoby (washerman)</td>
<td></td>
<td>M 0.10¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festivals</td>
<td></td>
<td>M 0.30¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(including Temple deductions)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>M$7.18¢</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Following the Great Depression thousands were thrown out of work in Malaya and there was a mass exodus of Indians to India. For example, during the period 1930-1932, more than 190,000 Indian labourers were repatriated at the expense of the Committee, in addition to tens of thousands of Indians paying their own passage. When conditions improved the Indian Government allowed assisted emigration on a quota of 20,000 annually but on condition that wages be returned to the pre-depressional levels. In addition India insisted on a "basic level", below which wages would not drop, to ensure livelihood and also suggested that the rise above this "level" should follow the state of the rubber market, in view of the rising cost of living which was increasing by about 20 per cent annually⁴ (Table X).

By 1935 the Malayan Government and the planting industry felt that sooner or later India would try and prohibit unskilled labour emigration and since in their estimation, the country now already had a large, permanent, labour population, most of India's suggestions were rejected with the exception of restoration of wages to pre-depression levels to which the planters agreed in 1937. But in January 1938, without any consultation of the Indian Government, most of the planters cut their wages in view of the reduced amount of rubber that Malaya could

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export under the International Rubber Regulation Agreement of 1938, which limited exports and prohibited new planting in order to reduce excessive surplus world stock of rubber to a normal figure and to maintain an equitable price which would be reasonably remunerative to efficient producers.

The Indian Government, informed of this high-handed action by the Central Indian Association of Malaya, retaliated with a complete ban on all assisted unskilled labour emigration to Malaya by its Prohibition Order of June 15, 1938, which read:

Whereas it appears that the number of unskilled Indian labourers now in the Malay States is in excess of the present requirements of industry and continuance of emigration to those States is therefore undesirable, the Central Government in exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (i) of Section 13 of the Indian Emigration Act 1922 (VII of 1922) is pleased to prohibit with effect from the 15th June 1938, all persons from emigrating from the Provincial Government of Madras to the Straits Settlements, the Federated Malay States, of Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang, and to the Unfederated Malay States of Johore, Kelantan, Trengganu and Brunei, for the purpose of unskilled work.

The effect of the ban was that no unskilled labourer was allowed to be assisted to come to Malaya from India to work here for hire or to engage in agriculture. Wives and children could join husbands and parents but not to work. Furthermore no unskilled labourer could leave for Malaya even at his own expense. Even "Malayan" Indian labourers who had gone to India for holidays and had remained in Indian for more than two years, were not allowed to return.

1. Labour Department, Malaya, Annual Report for the Year 1938 (Kuala Lumpur, 1939), p.17.
Mandors (overseers), kanakkapillais (headmen) and railway porters were classified as skilled workers and allowed to return to Malaya. Similarly no restriction was (or could be) imposed on unskilled labourers emigrating on their own, provided they gave proof that they had independent means and had not been promised work by some private or Government labour-hiring agency on arrival. Negotiations between 1939-1941, for resumption of emigration, produced no tangible results and the ban still remains and is likely to remain.

(ii) Non-Assisted Independent Labour Emigration:

Independent labour immigration to Malaya from India goes back to the beginnings of the British rule in the Straits. However, it was only following the Great Depression and the subsequent imposition of a quota on assisted labour emigration by the Indian Government in 1935, that the numbers of labourers paying their own passage rose significantly (Appendix F). No separate figures are available for labourers paying their own passage but in 1936 it was estimated, by the Labour Department, that in some years labourers made up more than 2/3 of the unassisted category of passengers coming from India. For example: in 1936, 61 per cent of the unassisted Indian immigrants arriving in Malaya were reported as labourers, while in 1938 some 41 per cent of the "other immigrants" (39,627) were labourers.

2. Labour Department, Malaya, op.cit., p.21.
There was a sharp fall in the movement of independent labour too, following the Indian Government ban on unskilled labour emigration to Malaya (Appendix F). For example, while in 1937 there were 50,128 unassisted immigrants, in 1940 there were only 833. After 1938, most of the labourers coming into Malaya were, with the exception of those who managed to "get round the regulations", either skilled workers or those returning after a short visit to India.

The Second World War disrupted movement between India and Malaya during the 1942-1945 period but even upon the resumption of normal conditions this stream of immigration gradually dried up and virtually ceased by 1953, as a result of the imposition of severe restrictions by the Malayan Government in August of that year on immigration in general. 2

(iii) Commercial and Professional Immigration:

Monied and educated the professional and commercial group has formed the most influential section of the Indian community in Malaya. This has been particularly so because the majority of the Indians in the country have been illiterate labourers, who even as late as 1947 formed 60 per cent of the total gainfully employed Indians in Malaya. 3

The factors that stimulated this stream of Indian immigration into Malaya, have been discussed above. It suffices here to say that unable to secure subordinate, trained and technical, staff from among

1. S. Nanjudan, op. cit., p.25.
2. See pp. 267-9 below.
the poorly educated Malays or from the Chinese, the Malayan Government turned to India and Ceylon, where the people had had the advantage of an earlier access to English education. Following the initial recruitment, more and more educated South Indians and Ceylon Tamils came into Malaya, which to them was an El Dorado where more money could be made than at home. Others from Northern India came in to fit themselves into the ranks of military, police and other such pursuits. For example, till the early decades of the present century the police and military forces in the country were the virtual monopoly of the Punjabis, particularly the Sikhs. Similarly the clerical, administrative and technical staff of plantations is still predominantly South Indian (mainly Malayali) while the Tamils from Ceylon have figured prominently in all branches of the Government services since 1867. For example, by the early 1920's more than 50 per cent of the junior officers in the Government services -- General Clerical, Railway, Post and Telegraphs, Medical, Public Works, Education, etc. -- were Tamils from Ceylon while even to-day practically all the station-masters and booking clerks in the various railway stations of the Malayan Railways are Ceylon Tamils.

In the wake of the labourers and professionals there followed an army of petty contractors, merchants, bankers, shopkeepers and pedlars, to cater to the special needs of their countrymen in Malaya. Free immigrants in every sense of the word, generally of a higher caste than those who had gone as labourers, these entrepreneurs came on their

own resources, usually with a small capital and experience in the kind of trade they sought to practice. More accustomed to travel, and more resourceful, aggressive and ambitious, they gradually assumed the role of a "petite bourgeoisie in the Indian community."¹ Among them they included petty Hindu and Moslem traders from the Malabar and Coromandel coasts of Southern India, textile merchants from the Sind and the Punjab areas of Northern India, and Chettiar and Sikh financiers from Madras and Punjab respectively. Though, compared to the Chinese, their share of the business and trade of Malaya is small, the success of these Indian pioneers was nevertheless phenomenal.

Tentative and cautious at the start, for fear of antagonising or earning displeasure of British officialdom or private enterprise, these businessmen gradually extended their spheres of activity in all directions and fields, though keeping their operational costs at a ridiculously low level through the employment of mainly "imported" shop-assistants from India.² Many of them became rich and invested large amounts of the profits in land, after the habit at home.

No separate records of the numbers of professional and commercial immigrants coming into Malaya from the early days of British rule in the country have been kept, but it is estimated that they came in substantial numbers, at times more than a third of the non-assisted

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¹ E. Dennery, op.cit., pp.190-2.
immigrants from India being clerical, professional or commercial workers. After the Great Depression, the trend was towards an increased proportion of such workers among the immigrants. In 1940, for example, of the 15,320 Indian deck passengers to enter Malaya, only 1,314 were estate workers, the rest apparently being tradesmen, shopkeepers, and clerical workers. The disruption of communications between India and Malaya during the last World War temporarily halted the movement of these people but there was a big influx (many of them refugees) in 1947 and in 1950, following the partition of the Indian Sub-Continent into India and Pakistan, and the "boom" caused by the war in Korea, respectively. The Straits Times, a Singapore daily, described this influx as an 'invasion'.

... hundreds of Sindhis (Hindus from Sind, Pakistan) have arrived in Singapore in the last few months .... Singapore Sindhi merchants who are concentrated in High Street set up an organisation early this year to receive and disperse the new arrivals. Many have been helped to set up their own businesses while others have been absorbed as shop-assistants in existing Sindhi shops .... New Sindhi textile shops have sprung up in Changi, Nee Soon, R.A.F. (Royal Air Force) Seletar, Naval Base, Middle Road, Arab Street and in the centre of the town .... Besides Sindhis, Sikhs have also been arriving in large numbers. Some of these Sikhs, well established businessmen in Bangkok, have opened up branches in Singapore .... Other Sikhs are from West Punjab.

This movement has also practically ceased since August, 1953, following the Malayan Government's restrictions on the entry of aliens into the country.

2. The Straits Times (Singapore), December 6, 1948, p.5.
C. Emigration/Immigration Law, Administrative Machinery and Current of Migration

Indian immigration into Malaya was accompanied by a great deal of legislative interference, succinctly summarized in the following remarks of a Straits Settlements Legislative Councillor, in 1898: "If we make a pilgrimage back through the desert of debate and discussion, we find the route mapped out for us by bleaching skeletons of its predecessors: Amended Ordinances, suspended Ordinances, repealed Ordinances — Ordinances which strangled themselves by the complexities and incongruities of construction, ... Ordinances of every sort and description, except indeed such Ordinances as would satisfy the requirements of the employer and the necessities of the labourer." In all this he was struck by two things — the absence of a fixed and definite policy on the part of the Malayan Government as regards Indian immigration and the generous consideration shown by India.¹

(i) Indian Emigration Policy and Practice:

Emigration to distant colonies from India was not altogether a natural process and was not caused by the spontaneous action of the people, but was brought about to a considerable extent by the persuasions of the agents and recruiters. It therefore required very close supervision on the part of the Indian authorities,² especially as the majority of the Indian emigrants were illiterate labourers.³

1. P.L.C. S.S. (1898), Meeting of May 25, 1898.
Furthermore it was felt that "a European proprietor of an estate in the tropics, is as a rule, unlike the proprietor of an estate in England in this respect, that he does not look upon his estate as a life investment --, but he, as well as his European employe (sic) looks to making large profits with as little outlay and delay as possible, with the view of 'going home' to live on the capital he shall have made out of the estate ...."\(^1\) Under these circumstances, he limited his expenditure to the barest minimums. Consequently, the immigrant was in danger of being neglected and the Indian Government, fully recognizing the need to protect its emigrants, passed such laws, from time to time, as would have secured the emigrant from being cajoled into emigrating and from being deprived of comforts necessary to life on his journey or by his employer.

Generally, Indian emigration legislation appears to have paralleled the changes in the character of the overseas movement. At first there was little Government control, but with indenture, problems soon rose and control became necessary. The early laws were chiefly aimed at protecting the prospective emigrant from force and fraud and at securing satisfactory sanitary and other conditions both during the passage and at the points of departure and arrival. As the kangany system began to replace indenture in Malaya, its regulations, with modifications, fitted quite readily with the regulation of indenture that had gone before. As regards free emigration, the Government generally did not interfere with it. Individuals of independent means could leave or not as they saw fit.\(^2\)

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2. I.L.O., op.cit., passim.
Gradually, however, as the number of Indians in Malaya increased, problems arose that had not been foreseen in the early days of emigration. These problems were chiefly concerned with the rights and duties of Indians as inhabitants of Malaya and did not fall easily within the scope of emigration control because many of the Indians concerned had not been in India for decades and many others had never been, or born there. But the Indian Government could not fail to take note of the problems raised, and its reaction affected its emigration policy. Compulsion of re-indenture, criminal prosecutions by employers of Indian labour, the disproportion of the sexes because of the predominantly male emigration, and the development of racial discrimination and prejudice all created a situation, which was not only harmful to Indians and Indian interests in Malaya but also discreditable to India as a nation and inconsistent with the sentiment of national self-respect.

In trying to protect the Indians in Malaya, the Indian Government had several weapons. Firstly, it could appeal directly to Whitehall, which had jurisdiction over the colonies and which, being remote from Malaya, was not so swayed by local White opinion as was the local Colonial Government. Secondly, it could stop emigration until conditions improved. Thirdly, it could give publicity to the conditions and call upon world opinion to bring pressure to bear on the situation. Fourthly, it could apply economic and political sanctions.

Under a policy of laisser-faire only the first two expedients were regarded as properly governmental, in view of the ambivalent position of the Indian Government within the British Empire. In applying
these, however, the Government was handicapped in the early stages, by the lack of information. The distance was great and communication too slow to allow the mother country to be adequately conversant with the conditions as they took shape. The Government felt that it could not afford to maintain its own agents in Malaya and it had to rely upon the reports of occasional officials sent out for the purpose of a temporary investigation.

But as the Indian population became settled in Malaya the problem was not longer simply that of regulating migration but of protecting a settled affiliated ethnic group. The conflict between employer and labourer, the deeply embedded notions of race superiority among the Europeans, the discriminatory policy of the Malayan Government with regard to the needs and treatment of the different immigrant and indigenous groups and the clashes of widely divergent cultures, all created racial problems of major proportions. These were things that the Indian Government could not control by its laissez-faire techniques, but which, in the name of India, it was sooner or later bound to take into consideration.

The Indian Government's efforts to supervise emigration to Malaya began in 1870, when it first prohibited indenture emigration to the Straits Settlements, following the denunciation, in that year, of the traffic as "an organised system of kidnapping", by Hathaway, the sub-Collector of Tanjore, Madras. But the prohibition was not enforced strictly in practice and was formally removed the next year, following assurance given by the Straits Settlements Government to provide adequate protection to immigrants. Subsequently, although certain checks were
enforced provisionally from time to time to protect the emigrants, the Indian Government on the whole, stuck to its traditional policy of laissez-faire, even going to the extent of relinquishing all direct control in 1897 over emigration to Malaya, whether the emigrants went as free or as contract labourers.

This state of affairs, however, began to change following increasing Indian participation in the Government of their country. The first positive step away from the traditional policy came in 1910, when the indenture system was abolished. There still, however, remained labour emigration under other forms of assistance and in 1922 the "Indian Emigration Act of 1922", was passed by the Indian Central Legislature, which sought not only to consolidate and renovate previous regulations, but also created a machinery for future control of emigration in order to help and protect Indian emigrants abroad. It marked the transition from laissez-faire to a much stricter form of legal control.

The provisions of the Act drew a distinction between skilled and unskilled labour, and subjected the latter to much more rigid regulation than the former. Individuals below the age of 18 years were not allowed to emigrate unless accompanied by guardians or relatives over 18 years of age while Rule 23 stated that "the number of male emigrants unmarried or unaccompanied by their wives, being assisted to emigrate

2. A.T. Marakkayar and N.E. Marjoribanks, op.cit., p.28.
must not exceed one in every five persons over eighteen to any one country in any one year. The Governor-General in Council could suspend emigration if he deemed it necessary while a magistrate's approval was necessary for every emigrant before embarkment. Any person emigrating or attempting to emigrate except in conformity with the provisions of the Act was punishable with a maximum fine of 50 rupees, and any person inducing another to emigrate under such conditions was subject to a maximum penalty of 500 rupees. Every case of recruiting was placed in the hands of a Malayan Emigration Commissioner, who was to be solely responsible for all recruiting transactions carried out in the name of his country.

Every recruiting agent was, however, required to obtain permission to recruit from the local government of the port from which the emigrant was to depart. A copy of the permit, if granted, was to be forwarded to the Protector of Emigrants at the port of embarkation, who issued a recruiting certificate after ascertaining that each emigrant had received in writing a full explanation of the period of his engagement and the general conditions in Malaya.

In addition to the above safeguards, there was to be an Agent of the Government of India, in Malaya, to look after the welfare of the Indian immigrants there. The first Agent was appointed in 1923.

1. The object of this Rule was to reduce the preponderance of male emigrants. For example, in 1911 there were only 308 Indian females to every 1,000 males in Malaya while by 1921 this proportion had risen to 405:1,000. A more even distribution of the sexes was considered necessary to obtain a healthier normal life for the labourers among whom there was a good deal of promiscuous living and violent quarrels, many times due to the disproportion of the sexes.
The Act of 1922 remained in full operation till 1938 when assisted emigration of unskilled labour was banned.

(ii) Malayan Immigration Policy and Practice:

The most fundamental immigration policy of the Malayan Government was on one hand to acquire and to maintain a large supply of cheap Indian labour, while on the other to accept only the minimum responsibility for the labour forces on the ground that the labourers were immigrants and sojourners in Malaya. It had no objections to immigrants becoming permanently domiciled in Malaya. Indeed, it was anxious to increase the size of the permanently domiciled immigrant labour force. In the early 1930's, the fact that more immigrants were becoming permanent residents of Malaya was appreciated. Yet, no steps were taken to assimilate the immigrants or otherwise to display responsible and positive policies towards them. It assumed to the plantation labourer little more than that which was necessary for the efficient functioning of the rubber plantation industry, while it worked hard to systematize and assure a continuous and sufficient supply of Indian labour immigration into Malaya.¹

The movement of Indians to Malaya was uncontrolled till the middle of the nineteenth century, when the Indian Government first passed two bills to regulate the passenger traffic in the Bay of Bengal due to several cases of overcrowding on the ships. The effect was to increase the expense of the voyage and lessen the number of emigrants. Consequently

there sprang up a system of assisted emigration in various forms. The larger employers of labour, mainly sugar planters, either sent their own agents over to India to recruit labourers or recruited them through local agencies by advancing passage money to willing but poor emigrants. And it became customary for ship owners, merchants and others to carry over labourers either on commission from the employer, or by deductions from the labourers' future wages.¹

Most of the recruiting was done through two Negapatam commercial firms (Messrs. Adamson, MacTaggart and Company and Ganapathi Pillai and Company) on a commission basis.² These firms sent out their sub-agents to the villages, who in turn employed recruiters to do the actual recruiting. These recruiters were generally the riff-raff of the country, and who owing "to their peculiar profession were an eager, callous, and too often, an utterly unscrupulous race of men."³ Though the Indian Government insisted that recruiting be controlled and licensed, beyond licensing of the recruiters no supervision was exercised over the actual process.⁵

1. R.L.C. 1890, para. 228.
5. "By the India Act 1877, an Emigration Agent (appointed by the Straits Settlements Government) was to be stationed in the port of emigration (Negapatam) and a Protector of Immigrants was to be appointed by the Madras Government. Depots were to be established at such ports (viz: Negapatam) by the Agent, subject to inspection and approved by the Protector. Recruiting was to be restricted to persons licensed as recruiters by the Protector and to districts specified in such licences .... Every recruit was to be taken to a Magistrate who registered particulars and ascertained that the emigrant was willing to emigrate" (R.L.C. 1890, para. 265).
The sub-recruiters formed a close ring and executed monopoly pressure, whereby the cost of landing labourers in Penang became exorbitant.¹ It was in the interests of recruiters to discourage emigration of free labour to Malaya to keep the supply down. Every indentured recruit meant a fee while there was no such inducement in the case of "free" labourers, until after the Penang Circular of 1887,² which limited recruitment by agents to only indentured labourers, was rescinded.

These recruiters generally cared little as to how they got their man as long as they got him and the commission. They limited their area of recruitment to the districts close to the port of Negapatam, (Tanjore, Trichinopoly, Madura and occasionally Salem and Coimbatore) to reduce travel expenses (Fig. 44). This restricted the area of recruitment and limited the supply and selection of labour, especially

1. The cost of landing a labourer in Penang was M$20/- of which recoverable items were fare, maintenance on board ship and in depot at Penang, which amounted to M$8/-. The balance of M$12/- represented the agents' expenses and commissions. It was estimated that the cost would have been brought down to M$12/- with the establishment of a proper recruiting machinery (R.L.C. 1890, para. 301).

2. The Penang Circular dated 8.11.1887 (Georgetown, 1888).

   Section (b) of this Circular stated: "No Agent or recruiter shall receive any commission on coolies not entered in the list of indentured coolies." This was a measure calculated to benefit sugar planters by forcing recruiters only to recruit indentured labour; but since 1887 coffee planting was extended and coffee planters found it difficult to recruit free labour without paying commissions. However, the question of non-payment of commissions could only have been enforced with the co-operation of a majority of the planters. With the decline of the sugar industry in the 1890's, the Circular was withdrawn in 1896 (R.V. Carey, "Recruiting Tamil Labour", op.cit., p.409).
since these same districts were also drawn upon by Natal, Mauritius and Ceylon for their supply of labour. ¹

Malaya was further deprived of a potential supply of labour by these recruiters frequently using the name of the Straits Settlements to recruit for other countries, especially Natal, which was farther than the Straits Settlements and far less attractive as regards working conditions. Furthermore, many of the men recruited were unhealthy and debilitated labourers, often of the non-agricultural classes (such as weavers, washermen, cooks, etc.,) who usually broke down, deteriorated into 'hospital birds' and swelled the already high mortality rate.²

This limitation of supply of labour from India at a time when the labour needs of Malaya were becoming almost insatiable, together with the growing criticism by both the Indian Government and the planting industry of Malaya of the immigration policy, finally galvanised the Malayan Government into action.

In 1890, a Government emigration depot was established at Negapatam to check on the malpractices of recruiters and to some extent improve the supply. A doctor was appointed its Superintendent while routine inspection of places of employment was begun with the appointment of a Superintendent of Indian Immigration at Penang, with a number of assistants. The Penang Circular was withdrawn in 1896 and the more efficient kangany system of recruiting was systematized, following the

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1. R.L.C. 1890, Appendix J.
2. R.L.C. 1890, para. 299.
Indian Government's decision in 1897 to leave the control of migration between South India and Malaya in Malayan hands and the formation of the Indian Immigration Committee in 1907 (Appendix E).

A large modern emigration depot at Avadi, outside Madras, capable of housing 6,000 persons together with a smaller segregation camp nearby at Melpakan, with accommodation for 2,000 persons, was established by the Committee in 1907. The Avadi camp was equipped with its own chlorinated and filtered water supply, electric lighting and modern bathing and cooking arrangements. There was also a General Hospital and a special Isolation Ward besides accommodation for the staff of the depot. In 1925, the Committee also took over from the Malayan Government the two camps at Negapatam and Papakovil, which could accommodate about 3,000 and 1,200 persons respectively. The Negapatam depot also had a general hospital and an Isolation Ward. The depots at Avadi and Negapatam were under the control of Emigration and Assistant Commissioner for Malaya respectively. Both these officers were Malayan Civil Servants, paid by the Malayan Government (Figs. 37, 38, 39).

Recruiting kangaries were licensed and supervised while all assisted emigrants had to pass through the Malayan emigration depots in India. Here they had to pass a medical examination before they could board the British India Steam Navigation Company steamers at Madras or Negapatam, as the case may be, for Malaya. On board these ships were Malayan Government inspectors and inspectoresses who looked after the immigrants. On arrival in Malaya, the labourers were quarantined at
Fig. 37. India: Location of Negapatam and Papakovil Labour Depots.

Source: Based on data supplied by the Controller of Labour, Federation of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur.
Fig. 38. India: Sketch of Papakovil Camp.

Source: Based on data supplied by the Controller of Labour, Federation of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur.
1 BUNGALOW TYPE (SENIOR STAFF QUARTERS)
2 HUT (JUNIOR STAFF QUARTERS)
3 LABOUR SHEDS
4 DISPENSARY
5 WELLS
6 WASH SHEDS
7 POND
Fig. 39. **India: Photographs of Papakovil Camp.**

A. Labour Shed.


(ii) Background: Administrative Building.

C. Staff Quarters.

D. Well.

Photos: G. Hilton.
Penang and Port Swettenham, where they disembarked. There were also immigration depots at these two places and at Singapore where the assisted immigrants stayed till they were sent to their places of employment. These depots also accommodated repatriates awaiting embarkation at these ports.  

With the systematizing of the kangsāny system and centralization of control through the Indian Immigration Committee, the worries of the Malayan Government, regarding Indian immigration appeared to have been solved for after this Indian immigration assumed a truly large dimension. Through assisted immigration the labourer was now able to start life in Malaya free of debt. But, though, the Malayan Government was firmly convinced that its immigration machinery was now near perfect to cope with any abuses under assisted immigration, this form of entry was anything but satisfactory, as illustrated by the criticism it drew, both in Malaya and India, and the final ban by the Indian Government on assisted emigration.

After World War II, the labour situation in Malaya was quite different from the pre-war era. With a rapidly increasing, largely settled, population, Malaya was now in a position to meet its labour requirements locally, especially as more and more Malays were now entering the labour market and there was little fresh expansion of plantation agriculture in view of the uncertain world commodity market. But as living standards in Malaya were much higher than those prevailing in many other countries, there was a constant pressure of persons wishing to come

---

1. Labour Department, Malaya, Annual Report for the Year 1938 (Kuala Lumpur, 1939), pp.10-1.
to Malaya to enjoy the better conditions. The Malayan Government now felt that if all these persons were allowed unrestricted entry into Malaya their large numbers would result in a lowering of wages and conditions of employment. Further they would add to the congestion in the schools and other social facilities, which were not yet even sufficient to meet local needs. It therefore felt it necessary to restrict the entry of such persons in order to "prevent a deterioration in the present standard of living and to safeguard, for those who have made their homes in Malaya and are going to form the Malayan Nation, the medical, educational social and other benefits which are at present available for them." Accordingly on April 24th, 1952, the Federation of Malaya and the Singapore Governments, passed the Immigration Ordinance, 1952, which came into force on August 1st, 1953.

With this Ordinance entry of Indians into Malaya was controlled for the first time, right of entry now being limited to "British subjects born or naturalised in Malaya, subjects of the Ruler of a Malay State, Federal Citizens, British subjects domiciled in Malaya for a period of 7 years out of the last 10 years, aliens who were holders of resident certificates issued in Singapore, and the wives and children, under 18 years, of all these persons." Fresh entry was restricted to any


2. In 1956 this clause was amended, with the passing of the Immigration (Amendment) Ordinance, 1957, G.N. 2917 of 20th December, 1956, which empowered the Government to refuse entry to Federal Citizens and British subjects born in Penang or Malacca of dual nationality who by virtue of the amendment lose their right of entry if they had previously left the Federation without valid travel documents, or who wish to return after they have visited countries for which their
person who:-

(a) had professional or specialist qualifications which would enable him to follow his profession of occupation in Malaya without prejudicing the interests of persons already resident in Malaya and possessing corresponding or similar qualifications; or

(b) was an employee of the owner of a substantial or well-established business and holds a contract of service with such owner providing for his employment in Malaya on such terms and conditions as to the minimum period of engagement and minimum remuneration as the Member for Home Affairs (or as in Singapore the Colonial Secretary) may from time to time approve; or

(c) was a member of the family of any person permitted to enter Malaya under paragraph a, b; or

(d) was a member of the family of a person lawfully resident in Malaya otherwise than on a Pass or on a Pass issued to him under the provision of any law relating to immigration for the time being in force in the country.¹

In practice even this selective immigration was restricted and with the coming into effect of the above Ordinance in August, 1953, fresh immigration into Malaya could be said to have virtually come to an end. The present small stream of Indian immigration is made up chiefly of returning residents of the country and a trickle of fresh immigrants — almost wholly highly qualified professional or commercial persons.

(iii) Current and Characteristics of Migration:

The important things to note about the Indian migration to Malaya is, firstly, that the great bulk of it has been of an ephemeral character, with approximately 4 million entering and 2.8 million leaving the country between 1860 and 1957. Secondly, much of the approximately 1.2 million net immigration, appears to have been wiped out by diseases, snake bites, exhaustion and malnutrition, for the Indian population of


2. Poor working conditions and the lack of adequate medical facilities resulted in the loss of thousands of Indian lives every year, especially in the earlier stages of the Indian immigration. For example, even as late as 1918 there were only 8 doctors to 1,006 plantations in the Federated Malay States and the number of deaths among the Indian labourers there (F.M.S.) exceeded 20,000 in that year compared to 5,751 births among them (Federated Malay States, Report on the Working of the Labour Department for the Year 1918, Kuala Lumpur, 1919, p. 11; Appendices D, E, F, G).
Malaya in 1957 numbered only 858,615 of which 62.1 per cent was local born (Fig. 40).

The trend of migration shows several major fluctuations, with six periods being prominent (Fig. 41, Appendix F). The first running from approximately 1860 to 1907, is the period of relatively uncurtailed indentured immigration, representing a steady rise in immigration until about the turn of the century. The second period from 1908 to 1922 saw increasing regulation and the final abolition of the indenture system but a rise in the kangany and other individual contract methods, and, with the exception of a few slight drops in total immigration, as for example, during World War I, a generally increasing volume of Indian immigration. The third period, from 1923 to 1929, represents the spurt in immigration under the Act of 1922 and under conditions of general prosperity in Malaya. The fourth, from 1930 to 1933, marks the highest reversal of flow, as a result of the Great Depression and economic hardships in Malaya. More than 370,000 South Indians left Malaya, during these four years, compared to only 126,000 coming in. The fifth, from 1934 to 1937, witnessed the revival of the migration flow towards Malaya, though not on the same scale as the late 1920's, largely because of the dampening effect of the Depression, a symptom not only confined to Malaya but a general feature distinguishing world population movements during this period. The final period, 1938 to 1957, shows not only the disrupting

1. 1957 Population Census of the Federation of Malaya, Reports Nos. 1-12 (Kuala Lumpur, n.d.); Table 9; 1957 Census of Population, Singapore, Preliminary Release No.7 (Singapore, 1959), TablesIII, IV.

Fig. 40. Malaya: The State of Health of Rubber Estate Labourers, 1911-1952.

Source: Qoi Jin Bee, op. cit., p. 55.
Fig. 41. Current of Indian Migration Between India and Malaya, 1951-1957.

Source: Based on statistical data given in Appendix F.
influence of World War II, but also the depressing and restricting influence
of the 1938 Indian Government ban on assisted emigration and the
increasingly stringent Malayan "selective immigration" policy. Fresh
immigration in large numbers, with the exception of a few instances as,
for example; in 1953 when many tried to beat the new entry regulations,
virtually came to an end. The movement of Indians, during this period,
was confined chiefly to those going to India to visit relatives and homes
and returning to their place of domicile and work in Malaya.

Analysis of the above periods shows two factors controlling
migration of Indians to Malaya; economic conditions in Malaya and
legislative enactments, initially in India and lately in Malaya.

The largest average annual flow of the Indian immigration into
Malaya was during the period 1911-1920, when more than 90,000 persons were
landing in the country every year. This movement more than doubled the
arrivals during 1901 and 1910. From 1921 to 1930 there were 88,000
arrivals annually, after which there was a marked decline. In view of
the present immigration and emigration policies of the Malayan and Indian
Governments respectively, there is little likelihood that Indian
immigration into Malaya will regain even the volume it had prior to 1900.
Similarly the net immigration has also been declining and Indian permanent
settlers, coming into Malaya, have been on the down-grade, for the last
three decades (Table XIII).
Table XIII: ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES OF INDIANS IN/FROM MALAYA, 1881-1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arriving Passengers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Arrivals:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Indians</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>421,038</td>
<td>908,100</td>
<td>887,751</td>
<td>570,445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Indians</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>194,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>137,898</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>764,449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Peak Year:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Indians</td>
<td>31,461 (1885)</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>83,723</td>
<td>118,583</td>
<td>174,795</td>
<td>135,353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(All Indian)</td>
<td>(1910)</td>
<td>(1913)</td>
<td>(1926)</td>
<td>(1937)</td>
<td>(All Indian)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Indians</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>22,689</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Lowest Year:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Indians</td>
<td>6,648 (1881)</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>20,030</td>
<td>51,217</td>
<td>45,687</td>
<td>25,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(All Indian)</td>
<td>(1903)</td>
<td>(1914)</td>
<td>(1921)</td>
<td>(1940)</td>
<td>(All Indian)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Indians</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>14,171</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Annual Average:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Indians</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>42,000</td>
<td>90,000</td>
<td>88,000</td>
<td>57,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Indians</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>19,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>76,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Departing Passengers</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Departures:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Indians</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>245,298</td>
<td>561,913</td>
<td>703,809</td>
<td>561,062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Indians</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>159,312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>720,374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Peak Year:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Indians</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>39,080</td>
<td>70,090</td>
<td>154,265</td>
<td>88,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1910)</td>
<td>(1913)</td>
<td>(1930)</td>
<td>(1932)</td>
<td>(All Indian)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Indians</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>17,828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1939)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Table XIII (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Lowest Year:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Indians</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>16,304</td>
<td>48,103</td>
<td>37,326</td>
<td>36,406</td>
<td>6,095(1952)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1902)</td>
<td>(1911)</td>
<td>(1924)</td>
<td>(1940)</td>
<td>(All Indian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Indians</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>13,407</td>
<td>(1931)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Annual Average:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Indians</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>24,000</td>
<td>56,000</td>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>56,000</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Indians</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>71,000</td>
<td>44,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>+175,740</td>
<td>+346,187</td>
<td>+183,942</td>
<td>+44,075</td>
<td>+61,193</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a = No information available.

* = No information available except for 1891 when there were 29,389 arrivals and for 1895 when there were 15,962 arrivals.

Source: As for Appendix F.
With the increased Indian movement into Malaya, after the turn of the present century, the already exceptionally high percentage of return movement, also increased. Compared to about 30 per cent of the Europeans emigrating to the United States between 1821 and 1924 returning home, more than 60 per cent of the Indians moving into Malaya, between 1911 and 1920, returned home. For the period 1921-1957 the returns exceeded 80 per cent of the total immigration (Table XIII). This large percentage of 'returnees' among the Indians was chiefly due to the fact that most of the Indians migrating to Malaya, came primarily as short-term contract labourers, and were more "seasonal migrants" than immigrants in any permanent sense. Many of the non-labour immigrants also came as short-term entrants, "to make a quick buck" and return home to the family hearth. The return flow thus largely followed the economic health of Malaya, being highest when Malaya's economy was at its lowest and vice-a-versa (Cf. Figs. 41 and 42).

The total current of Indian migration to Malaya was a summation of many lesser currents generated by and distinguishing the different categories of the migrants moving in and out of Malaya. The trends and characteristics of these lesser currents are by no means uniform, because of dissimilar economic, social and legal conditions affecting the different sections, both in India and Malaya. Labourers made up close to 70 per cent of the Indians entering Malaya before 1938. More than 70 per cent of these labour migrants were kangany recruits. Fluctuation in

Fig. 42. Malaya: Average Annual Price of Rubber, 1926-1957.

Source: Based on Ooi Jin Bec, op. cit., p. 157.
flow was marked among the labourers, since it was this section of the Indian population which was most sensitive to legislative sanctions in India and economic changes in Malaya (Table XIV).

Another outstanding feature of Indian migration to Malaya was that it was essentially monosexual, males predominating. For example, between 1916 and 1938, females averaged only 24 per cent of the total annual (South) Indian immigration (Appendix F). This was chiefly because the majority of the Indians were simply "birds of passage" — sojourners in Malaya — preferring to leave their families in India. Furthermore female emigration was hindered by the socio-economic handicaps, related mainly to the position of women in Indian society.

The Indian migration to Malaya, has been essentially a South Indian, predominantly Tamil, phenomenon. For example, between 1931 and 1940, more than 75 per cent of the Indian arrivals in Malaya were from South India, the remainder being from the North. Previous to 1931 the proportion of South Indians among the Indian immigrants must have been considerably higher, for North Indian migration to Malaya has been a comparatively recent innovation. More than 98 per cent of the labour migration was of South Indian origin.

The majority of the South Indians are from Madras Province, the remainder being from the Kerala (Travancore) and Andhra Pradesh (Central Provinces) regions of India and from the Jaffna district of Ceylon. Within these regions the chief areas of origin of the South Indian

1. Separate figures for North and South Indians are available for the period 1931-1940 only.
Table XIV: INDIAN LABOUR MIGRATION TO MALAYA, 1909-1938

### Kangany Recruited:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Numbers</th>
<th>1,207,529</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year and Numbers of Peak Flow</td>
<td>120,796 (1938)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year and Numbers of Lowest Flow</td>
<td>88 (1938)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total Indian Labour Force</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total Indian Population</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other Assisted Labour:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Numbers</th>
<th>220,320</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year and Numbers of Peak Flow</td>
<td>49,512 (1937)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year and Numbers of Lowest Flow</td>
<td>17 (1932)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total Indian Labour Force</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total Indian Population</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Non-Assisted Labour:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Numbers</th>
<th>300,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year and Numbers of Peak Flow</td>
<td>22,000 (1937)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year and Numbers of Lowest Flow</td>
<td>320 (1919)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total Indian Labour Force</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total Indian Population</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Total Labour Migration

| 1,727,849 |

### Total Indian Migration

| 2,629,023 |

### Labour as percentage of Total Indian Migration

| 66 |
migrants are the districts of Tanjore, Trichinopoly, Salem, Madura and Coimbatore (Figs. 43, 44). The South Indian migrants passed through Negapatam, Madras or Colombo on their way to their place of disembarkation at Penang or Port Swettenham. The journey from their home villages to the ports of embarkation was usually completed by rail while the voyage to Penang on ships of the British India Steam Navigation Company, which had virtual monopoly of this traffic, took nine days from Madras and five from Negapatam. The trip from Madras to Port Swettenham occupied ten days while it was completed in six days from Negapatam.

The relatively small number of North Indians (mainly Sikhs) who have migrated to Malaya are chiefly from the Mahja and Malva areas of the Punjab (Fig. 45). The other North Indians are from the Sind, Bombay, Uttar Pradesh (United Provinces) and Bengal areas of the Indian Sub-Continent. Though some Sindhis use the port of Bombay, the main port of embarkation for the North Indians is Calcutta, which has excellent rail connections even with the remotest parts of Northern India. Unlike their brethren from South India, the majority of the North Indians enter Malaya through Singapore. The direct voyage from Calcutta takes six days while the same journey via Rangoon may take more than two weeks. Almost all the Sikh deck passengers coming to Malaya used the Sikh temple, Bughwarnipur Gurudwara, Calcutta, as a "staging post". Here they rested, succoured and gathered up the latest information

1. Negapatam was the chief "labour" migration port.
2. Most of the South Indians entering Malaya, come through Penang. Very few use Singapore.
Fig. 43. India: Political Divisions and Languages, 1956.

Source: Based on D. Sopher, "India's Languages and Religions", *Focus*, Vol. 6, No. 6 (1956).
Fig. 44. India: Provenance of South Indian Emigrants to Malaya.

Fig. 45. Provenance of Sikh Emigrants to Malaya.

Source: Based on Field Work.
from "old hands" before themselves setting out for the eastern El Dorado — Malaya (Fig. 46).

To sum up, following the establishment of British rule in India and the consolidation of their power in Malaya, Indian interests were subordinated to the needs of the paramount power. To fit in with the economic requirements of Britain, India was transformed from a manufacturing power to that of a market for supply of raw materials and the consumption of British manufactures. Consequently the character of Indian contacts with Malaya also changed. In the first place, whereas the earlier immigrants were ambassadors of a great civilization or traders in rare commodities, the modern Indian migrant was chiefly an unlettered labourer coming in to work for a pittance on some plantation or Government project. Secondly, unlike the earlier phase, the modern migration was not spontaneous but rather politically arranged by the British and brought about to a considerable extent by the persuasions of agents and recruiters. Finally whereas the earlier movement was small in volume, the modern migration was on a large scale.

Much of the modern Indian movement to Malaya, during the period 1786-1957, was, however, a short term migration with an extremely high proportion of returns. The flow of migration was affected primarily by legislation enacted both here and in India and the economic conditions prevailing in Malaya from time to time. Within this framework probably the peak of Indian immigration was reached in the late 1920's, for since then increasing legal restrictions in India and Malaya, coupled with the growth of local labour supply and the strident Malay nationalism, have
Fig. 46. The Bughwarpur Gurudwara (Sikh Temple), Calcutta.

A. Ground Plan,

(a) The temple is three-storeys high.

(b) It has 17 (6' x 9') rooms for visitors, principally transit Sikh passengers.

(c) The rooms, together with the verandahs, can accommodate 100 - 200 persons.

Source: Based on Field Work.

B. A front view of the Bughwarpur Gurudwara.

Photo: G. Hilton.
SIX ROOMS ABOVE AND BELOW

3 ROOMS

TEMPLE

2 ROOMS

VERANDAH

COURTYARD

RASH BEHARI AVENUE (S. CALCUTTA)
seen the gradual decline and final cessation of Indian immigration into Malaya. The present movement of Indians, to and from Malaya, is limited almost wholly to Indians of Malayan domicile. The factors which contributed to the decline of Indian immigration show no real signs of slackening in the future. Consequently, unless a world catastrophe alters the situation, there appears to be little likelihood of fresh Indian immigration, even in small numbers.
CHAPTER V

GROWTH, DISTRIBUTION AND COMPOSITION OF THE INDIAN POPULATION, 1786-1957

A. Growth

Malaya's population has grown rapidly, especially over the last fifty years; by 1957, it numbered seven and three-quarter million persons. The growth of the Indian section of the country's population has been equally spectacular, though with considerable fluctuations over the inter-censal periods (Fig. 47, Appendix G).

(i) The Period 1786-1874:

The establishment of the British Settlement of Penang is usually taken as marking the beginning of modern Indian contacts with Malaya. Prior to this, Indian contacts with Malaya passed through two distinct phases, the first, ending with the coming of the Portuguese in 1511, and noted for the dominant role of Indians in the politico-socio-economic life of Malaya, and the second, ending with the arrival of the British, and characterised by the waning of Indian influence. Following the purchase by Francis Light of the Island of Penang from the Sultan of Kedah, new and quite different Indian connexions were forged with Malaya. While Indian sepoy (police, soldiers) helped to maintain law and order and Indian labourers and convicts toiled to develop the new settlement, Indian merchants established new and profitable trading links, with many of the Muslims taking local Malay brides.
Fig. 47. Malaya: Population Growth, 1871-1957.

Source: Based on statistical data given in Appendix G.
Geoghegan reports that a Tamil exodus, consisting of petty traders and domestic and other miscellaneous labourers, to the British Settlement of Penang had already begun by the end of the eighteenth century. In 1786 there were no Indians in Penang, but by the turn of the century Indians were next to Chinese in numbers. "The second class of our inhabitants", we are told by the official notices of Penang of 1800, "consists of Chuliahs (Tamil Muslims), or people from the several ports of the coast of Coromandel .... They are all shopkeepers or coolies. About a thousand are settled here, some with families." The presence of Indians in substantial numbers in Penang by the beginning of the nineteenth century is also attested by another notice, dated 1st October, 1800, which states that the Government of Penang had constituted communal courts for the immigrant populace over which "... three persons presided respectively under the appellation of Capitan (Kapitan) of the Chinese, Capitan of the Malays and Capitan of the Choolians (Chuliahs). These subordinate courts take cognizance in such cases only where the matter in dispute is under a certain value, and the Capitan of each subordinate court is assisted by certain members of his class, who are called assessors ...." 

By 1812 there were 7,113 Indians in a total population of 26,107 in Penang and Province Wellesley and by 1820 this had increased to 8,536

3. Ibid., p.193.
for Penang Island alone. There was a similar pattern of increase in Malacca, too, following its annexation by Britain in 1824. In 1827 there were 2,342 Indians in a total population of 33,162 and by 1829, 2,830 out of 30,164, compared to 1,023 Indians in Dutch Malacca in 1766. In Singapore, there is no record of the presence of Indians at its founding in 1819 but two years later, 132 Indians were enumerated in a total population of 4,727. Within the next two years there was an almost six-fold increase in this Indian population, under Raffles' administration. During this period, Indians were also beginning to penetrate into the other areas of Malaya, immediately adjoining the British territories. For example, Clodd, in his biography of Francis Light, the founder of Penang, quotes a letter written by Light in 1794, which states that there was an Indian settlement in Kedah about that date, while Winstedt records the presence of Tamils in the royal court of Johore. Sultan Hussein, whom Raffles installed as Sultan of Johore in order to acquire Singapore, was indolent and extravagant. This led his wife to get a Tamil friend, Abdul Kadir, to manage the royal house. Infuriated by the Tamil's economies, the Sultan's dependants started a scandal about the Tamil and his royal mistress, which forced Hussein to move to Malacca. There the Tamil was given a title and married to a daughter of Sultan Hussein.

1. T. Braddell, *Statistics of the British Possessions in the Strait of Malacca* (Penang, 1861), Table I.
A new element was introduced into the Indian population when the British gave up their settlement at Bencoolen, Sumatra, in 1825, following the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824, which delimited Anglo-Dutch spheres of influence in Southeast Asia, leaving present Indonesia as a Dutch preserve. Bencoolen, while a British settlement, was used as a convict station by the East India Company, but at its closure the convicts were removed to the Straits Settlements, and Singapore, Penang and Malacca became the "Sidneys of India".

In 1825, 200 of these convicts arrived in Singapore and more followed from Madras, Bombay and Calcutta. By 1836 there were 901 and by 1868 2,536 Indian convicts in the colony. When the penal settlement was finally abolished in 1873, there were still 1,420 convicts in Singapore. In Singapore there were probably seldom less than 100 Indian prisoners after 1840, and the average flow to the Straits Settlements in some years, as for example between 1832 and 1837, probably exceeded 900 convicts.

After some initial doubts (too frequent escapes) the penal settlement in Penang also got fully going and by 1805 Indian convicts were being transported to Penang from India quite regularly. By 1853 there were some 900 convicts in Penang and at the time of the abolishment of the penal colony, 650.

Malacca got its first group of convicts in 1825, from Penang. From here, convicts were sent inland in 1840 to open up communications in the interior of Malacca. In 1870, three years before the end of the "Convict Era", there were 492 Indian prisoners in Malacca.\(^1\)

These convicts came to Malaya through the action of the British Indian Government. The British Indian Government decided to dump its "undesirable characters" in the Straits Settlements, since these territories were administered from India, till 1867, and were at sufficient distance from India. The convicts comprised felons who had been sentenced to transportation for terms varying from seven years to life. They came from the Bombay, Bengal, Ceylon and Madras areas, with those from Madras being the most numerous. For example in 1837, there were 898 Madrasis among the prisoners in the Straits Settlements.\(^2\)

There was constant agitation by local British residents against the use of the Straits Settlements as dumping grounds for the "expatriated villains from the jails of India". But undesirable or not, the utilization of the Straits Settlements as a convict station turned out "to be a boon",\(^3\) for convicts were largely responsible for the early development of the settlements to which they were sent. As skilled and unskilled labour was scarce and expensive in the early days of Penang, Malacca and Singapore, convicts were used to reclaim swamps, make roads, erect buildings and bridges.

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1. P.L.C. S.S. (1870), Meeting of June 20, 1870.
The first "respectable" roads in the interior of Penang were built by convict labour, when the Public Works Department programme was begun in Penang in 1807. They were also used for various other tasks, like working on repairs and on spice plantations of the East India Company. Bricks for construction were made by them and they were skilled brick-layers too, in fact considered "by far the best ... on the Island" by Major Farquhar, Lieutenant Governor of Penang in 1804. Some were used as scavengers while others were asked to open up communication with the interior districts in Malacca during the Nanning Wars in 1831. By the 1860's others had become expert cart, furniture, iron and woodwork workers and black-smiths, equipped to do a variety of jobs, too numerous to mention here. Sufficient to say that "for years the history of the convicts is the history of the Public Works Departments" and the "Convict Era" of the Straits Settlements has left an indelible imprint on the scene. Buildings like the Mariamman Hindu Temple (built in 1826), St. Andrews Cathedral and the Government House in Singapore are outstanding monuments to the skill and labour of the Indian convicts. The East India Company estimated the cost of St. Andrews Cathedral at Rs. 120,932, yet this was completed by convicts at a cost of Rs. 47,916 (Fig. 48).

5. J.F.A. McNair, op.cit., p.73.
Fig. 48. Malaya: Indian Convicts in the Straits Settlements, 1870.

A. Muster of Convicts in Central Jail, Singapore.

B. Prisoners Grinding Stones.

Before the 1830's return passages were paid by the Indian Government for free prisoners at the end of their term. In those days some 90 per cent of the convicts left Malaya after their terms expired. But after the early 1830's payment of return passage was stopped by the Indian Government and more and more of the Indian convicts began to find it difficult to go back to India. By 1838, only about 60 per cent were returning to India and by the 1870's very few were able to return home at the end of their sentence and so settled permanently in Malaya. For example, 1,726 free convicts remained in Singapore when the station was closed in 1873, and the serving convicts transferred to the Andaman Islands. Owing to a very generous ticket of leave system many of these convicts merged, especially in Penang, into the local population. They set up their own forges, cart and furniture making and other such enterprises based on skills acquired within the prison walls of the penal settlements.

Following agitation by the locally resident British population against the use of the Straits Settlements as dumping ground for the "expatriated villains from the jails of India", and the transfer of the Straits Settlements to the Crown from the Indian Government, in 1867, the


Penang Malay contains more Tamil words than any other Malay dialect in the Peninsula. The number of "Jawi Pekan" (persons of Indo-Malay parentage), is large in Penang. In Penang alone, the influence of Indian Muslims has led to the celebration of the Muslim "Hassan - Hussein" festivals and to a dance called the "Boira", preceding the months of the Muharram. In 1881 there were 4,486 Jawi Pekans in Penang.
Indian Government asked for the cessation of the convict establishment by April, 1873. It was then that Governor Ord and the general public realized how indispensable the convicts were, and in 1870, Governor Ord of Singapore, made a request to the Colonial Office for the retention of the convict establishment (Appendix B). The state of labour in the Straits Settlements was such as could not ensure a regular supply of labour at reasonable cost for the development of the country. Governor Ord's earnest entreaties to retain the convict establishment were turned down by the Secretary of State who was, however, quite ready "to recommend to the favourable consideration of the Indian Government, proposals for systematized and regulated importation of labour from India" for agricultural and other activities.¹

The mercantile policy of the East India Company was also enthusiastically espoused by her colonists, who felt that the colonies should not only pay for their upkeep but provide products for export too, besides a market for home goods and an outlet for surplus capital. Furthermore, many of these early settlers in the Straits belonged to the lower English gentry, accustomed to management of land, and they were fully confident that the future of the Straits Settlements lay in the development of plantation agriculture based on cheap labour.²

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2. See Chapter IV.
Plantation agriculture was begun in Penang and the adjoining mainland as early as 1800 and shortly after in Singapore and Malacca. The first crops cultivated were chiefly spices and pepper but following unsatisfactory yields, largely because of unsuitable soil conditions and disease, many planters turned to sugar planting. This switch-over to sugar was furthermore, in keeping with British colonial traditions which were firmly based on the belief that the "pleasure, glory and grandeur of England had been advanced more by sugar than by any other commodity, wool not excepted."¹ The cultivation of sugar spread rapidly in the Straits Settlements. For example in 1870 there were 7,500 acres under sugar in Province Wellesley and Penang but by 1871 this acreage had almost doubled to 13,500.²

The stability of the production of these plantations rested on the twin supports of cheap labour and protected markets³ and consequently there was a constant stream of labour from South India to Malaya to work the expanding plantations. In addition the garrison in the Straits Settlements, before 1867, was manned by Indians, chiefly Madrasis, and this resulted in a regular arrival of camp-followers besides the usual crop of petty traders, merchants and other independent individuals, who found scope not only in the Straits Settlements but also in some of the

Malay States. For example, Winstedt says that Sultan Ali of Johore, Sultan Hussein's heir and successor, was heavily indebted to a Tamil moneylender, and that he gave him, in 1868, "the right to sell Muar to the British or anyone else." In the same year, Sultan Ali, also gave power of attorney to an Indian schoolmaster, Babu Ramasamy, "to collect the non-existent revenue" from his small territory.

The combined numbers of these petty traders, plantation and other labourers, domestic servants and others averaged nearly 4,000 arrivals a year in the 1860's. As a result of this immigration the Indian population in the Straits Settlements had increased to 35,389 by 1871, the date of the first population census of the Straits Settlements, compared to the 12,000 Indians in the 1820's in the same area. By 1881, seven years after the British occupation of the Malay States of Selangor, Perak and Negri Sembilan, the Indian population in Penang, Malacca and Singapore had increased to 41,231, an increase of over 16 per cent (Table XV).

1. R. Winstedt, *op.cit.*, p.112.
(ii) The Period 1874–1957:

The British occupation of the Federated Malay States (Pahang was occupied in 1888) started a fresh wave of expansion of plantation agriculture, not only in the Straits Settlements but also in the Federated Malay States. For example the sugar acreage in Penang and Province Wellesley had increased to 15,000 by 1901 and tapioca to 9,300 acres from 7,650 in 1891, while in Perak there were already 40 sugar estates by 1899, covering 50,000 acres and employing 8–9,000 labourers.

Coffee was another crop, which spread rapidly in the Federated Malay States. By 1896, Selangor alone, had 72 estates, comprising 47,000 acres and employing 4,000 Indians.

The labour in these new plantation enterprises, as well as in the transport construction projects of late 1890's was chiefly Indian, following an increasing volume of fresh immigrants in the 1880's and 1890's. By 1891 the Indian population had jumped to 74,104 and by 1901 to 115,532 in the Federated Malay States and Straits Settlements, an increase of over 55 per cent for each of the two decades from 1881 to 1901.

The story of the growth of the Indian population after 1900 is tied up very closely to the expansion of the public works projects of the Government and the oil palm and rubber estates, particularly the latter, which now replaced the sugar and coffee enterprises as these

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dwindled owing to unfavourable market conditions.

The history of the introduction of *Hevea Brasiliensis*, its period of trial in Malaya, and its subsequent phenomenal success, has been described in numerous publications. For our purposes it is sufficient to say that it was first grown as a commercial crop in Malacca by a Malacca-born Chinese, Tan Chay Yan, who in 1898 planted the first rubber estate (Bukit Asahan Estate) in the northeast corner of Malacca territory, following the introduction of the first rubber seeds into the country in 1876 from the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, London. It was soon taken up by coffee planters and others. The expansion was rapid. In 1897 there were 50,000 acres under rubber. But by 1905 this had increased to 127,000 acres, by 1911 to 543,000 acres, by 1922 to 1,400,000 acres and by 1940 to 2,100,000 acres. In 1957 Malaya had 3,500,000 acres of rubber almost entirely in the Federation, chiefly along the west coast (Figs. 15, 16, 49). From the first recorded export of 105 tons in 1905, Malaya's production rose to 196,000 tons or 53 per cent of the world's production in 1920. By 1940, though Malaya's proportion of the world production had decreased to 40 per cent, following development of the industry in Indonesia, the overall production had increased to 600,000 tons. In 1957 Malaya's production was 637,000


Fig. 49. Malaya: Rubber, Tin and Padi Areas, 1931.

Source: Based on Federated Malay States Surveys, Malaya 1931, Nos. 1 - 1932 (Kuala Lumpur, 1931).
The establishment and rapid expansion of the rubber industry was largely aided by the following factors: Firstly, the natural conditions of soil and climate were ideal for the tropical plant, which could be grown anywhere on well-drained land below 1,000 feet. Secondly, a skeleton of an excellent railway and road system had already been laid to serve the mining industry. Thirdly, proximity to India and China ensured abundant supplies of cheap and efficient labour. Fourthly, the development of the motor car immensely increased the demand for rubber as the automobile industry expanded rapidly. Fifthly, booming prices which rose from 2 shillings a pound in 1900 to 12 shillings by 1910, brought huge profits, which could be ploughed back into the industry. Sixthly, systematized production and settled labour conditions proved to be more economical than the jungle production of South America and Malaya, by 1914, could deliver rubber in New York at less cost than it could be collected and shipped from the wilds of Amazon. Seventhly, the ease with which land could be acquired (restrictions on new planting and on land acquisition were not imposed until the depression of 1920-1922) considerably facilitated cultivation. Leases in perpetuity for 1,000


2. L.A. Mills, op.cit., p.185.

acres in one block or in blocks of not less than 500 acres each could be obtained at a nominal annual rent of only 20 cents an acre after two years of free occupation by any bona fide planter. Eighthly, loans were available from the Government at moderate rates of interest. For example, in Selangor alone, М$1,500,000 were available for loan to planters as early as 1908. Finally, research by the Planters’ Association of Malaya, founded in 1897, by the Department of Agriculture, established in 1950, and by the Rubber Research Institute of Malaya, inaugurated in 1926, kept Malaya well in the lead in the technical field of the industry.

The above factors all combined to make rubber the chief industry of Malaya, greatly influencing the whole economic development of the country. The rubber industry was;

... responsible for opening up the country and reclaiming vast areas from jungle for cultivation. It ... transformed the States from a little explored region to one of the best supplied with means of communication in the East. It ... led to the establishment of numerous subsidiary industries and attracted capital from many countries ... it gave an impetus to the development of the States, the importance of which it would be impossible to overestimate ... in addition to extension of roads and railways, etc., it almost doubled the population between 1901 and 1921 through the introduction of hundreds of thousands of Chinese and Indian labourers ...

The rubber industry was the single most important factor influencing the flow of modern Indian migration to Malaya.

2. The Selangor Records, 1908, Miscellaneous 1486/08.
The oil palm, coming originally from West Africa in 1875, was not commercially cultivated in Malaya till 1917, when Monsieur H. Fauconier established the first plantation in the district of Kuala Selangor, in southwestern Malaya. Since then the cultivation has been an estate monopoly. In the early years, 1917-1924, the cultivation was confined to Selangor, but it then spread to Negri Sembilan, Perak and Johore with the latter, into which the crop was introduced in 1925, having 42,990 acres out of the total of 116,000 in 1957 (Fig. 15).

The present day excellent road, rail, air and sea transport and communication systems of Malaya are a modern development.

When the Malay States came under British protection the only means of communication internally was by river, and each State, corresponding roughly with a river basin, was politically and economically isolated from its neighbours by stretches of jungle passable only with great difficulty. One of the first needs was, therefore, to connect the newly-developed areas with the ports. At first short roads and railway lines were made to a convenient place on the coast where small steamers, like those of the Straits Steamship Company — founded by a group of Malacca Chinese in the 1860's — could collect tin and other produce and land supplies. Few short railways had been built by the time the Federated Malay States were created in 1896. There were (with date of completion) the Perak State Railways with two lines, one from Port Weld

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to Taiping (1885) and the other from Telok Anson to Ipoh (1895); the Selangor Railway from Klang to Kuala Lumpur (1886) and the Sungei Ujong Railway from Port Dickson to Seremban (1891).

These railways were placed under the unified management of the Federated Malay States Railway Department and ten years later were connected to a main line linking Taiping, Kuala Kangsar, Ipoh, Kuala Lumpur, Seremban and Tampin, with extensions into the Straits Settlements territory at Prai in the north and Malacca in the south. Between 1908 and 1909 the mainline was continued southwards through Gemas and Segamat to Johore Bahru, where a ferry connected it with a short line across Singapore Island. After 1909 it was, therefore, possible to travel by train and railway ferry from Penang to Singapore, and the tin mining regions and rubber estates were directly connected with these ports. This happened just at the time when the rubber industry was expanding rapidly, and helped to bring about the prosperity of Western Malaya during the first two decades of the present century.

After the First World War it was hoped that the construction of another line through Pahang and Kelantan would open up these States in the same way. Construction was started from Tumpat in the north and Gemas in the south. By 1920 the southern section had reached Kuala Lipis, the whole line being completed by 1931. At the same time links were made with the Royal Siamese State Railways at Padang Besar in the west and Sungei Golok in the east. Meanwhile in 1923, the ferry between Johore and Singapore Island was replaced by a concrete causeway, physically linking the Island to the mainland.
During the Second World War, the Japanese removed the rails from both the east coast and the Malacca-Tampin branch-line, for use on their notorious and ill-fated Siam-Burma railway. Whereas the east coast line was restored by 1954, the Malacca line has not been (Figs. 18, 50).

The first important roads were also constructed in the same more developed western coastal region as the railways, chiefly as feeders to the rail lines. During the 1920's, however, motor cars, buses and trucks began to play an ever-increasing part in Malaya's transport system. This necessitated a bigger programme of road construction. The old bridle paths and feeder tracks were soon metalled and a main trunk road running through the length of the country from north to south, following closely the railway line was constructed. Within a short time Eastern Malaya was also provided with a road network, though roads in this region are still few compared to Western Malaya. However, Malaya's system of 6,000 miles of highways, constructed principally between 1895 and 1941, makes it easily the best equipped country in Southeast Asia in terms of road transport (Figs. 18, 51).

In addition to the 6,000 miles of first class roads and 1,000 miles of rail-lines, Malaya has an excellent system of shipping, telecommunication, postal, air and wireless connections both internal and external (Fig. 18).

Indians have played a dominant role in every phase of development of the transport and communication system, particularly the rail and road network.

1. Federated Malay States, Fifty Years of Railways in the Federated Malay States, 1885-1935 (Kuala Lumpur, 1935), passim.
Fig. 50. Malaya: Railways, 1885-1935.

DIAGRAMMATIC REPRESENTATION
OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF
FEDERATED MALAY STATES RAILWAY
CONSTRUCTION
1885 TO 1935.
Fig. 51. Malaya: Roads, 1887-1948.

The growth of the Indian population was equally spectacular as the modern development of Malaya. The labour and clerical force for the rubber and oil palm plantations and railway and road construction was mainly Indian, provided by an increasing volume of immigration after 1900. There were 267,628 Indians in Malaya by 1911 and 471,628 and 631,847 by 1921 and 1931 respectively. This steady growth of the Indian population was, however, interrupted by the Indian Government's ban on unskilled emigration and by the outbreak of World War II, when Malaya was occupied by the Japanese in early 1942.

Indian migration stopped following the Japanese occupation of Malaya and the consequent disruption of normal passenger services between India and Malaya. More important, the Malayan economy came to a standstill. By 1943 the Japanese began to lack the bottoms to ship out the country's rubber and their efforts to distil it into motor fuel failed, for lack of capacity, to solve the problem of its disposal. Rubber, therefore, became practically unsaleable and thousands of Indians were thus deprived of their livelihood. The tin dredges, or rather those which had not been sunk or destroyed during the campaign, were gradually worked to a standstill with no spares coming from Japan to get them going again. At the same time, the price of goods began to leap upwards, and considerable stands of rubber were felled to speed up the food-production plans of the Japanese. These plans only partially succeeded, for although food had been widely produced in Malaya before the war, great quantities not only of rice and other grains but also of fresh, preserved and tinned foods had been imported from Indo-China, China, Siam and Australia. Food
imports now were limited, and this coupled with the failure of the Japanese rationing system to operate effectively outside the larger towns and villages, created a tremendous shortage of food, resulting in thousands of Indians, particularly infants and the aged, dying from malnutrition. In addition to these deaths, some 50,000 Indians, chiefly those living on estates, were mobilised into forced labour battalions to work on the notorious Siam-Burma railway project. Few of these unfortunate Indians survived to rejoin their families. Furthermore the birth-rate of the Indian population fell as a result of the long absence of husbands, while the mortality rate increased from the absence of the able-bodied bread-winners.

The net result of the above calamities was that the Indian population, which stood at 631,847 in 1931 and, in normal circumstances, might have been expected to reach 800,000 in 1947, even without the aid of an immigration surplus, actually declined: only 616,399 Indians being enumerated in 1947, representing a drop of 2.4 per cent on the 1931 figure. With the full recovery of the Malayan economy in the early 1950's, the rate of population growth increased and by the last census in 1957 there were 858,615 Indians in the country, a rise of 43.9 per cent over 1947. If this rate of increase is maintained the Indian population will more than double itself over the next forty years (Table XV, Fig. 47).

Increase in State Population, 1891-1957

Though Penang had the largest Indian population in 1901, the biggest increase between 1891 and 1901 occurred in the Federated Malay States. Perak and Selangor, for example, gained 19,900 and 3,300 new
Table XV: GROWTH OF THE INDIAN POPULATION OF MALAYA, 1871-1957

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1. The Singapore Indian population figures do not include Ceylon Tamils and Pakistanis.
Table XV (Continued)

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<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>+5.5</td>
<td>+32.1</td>
<td>+11.3</td>
<td>+59.4</td>
<td>+16.0</td>
<td>+57.5</td>
<td>+32.69</td>
<td>+87.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>+32.3</td>
<td>+4.9</td>
<td>+21.5</td>
<td>+8.2</td>
<td>+8.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malacca</td>
<td>-42.3</td>
<td>-12.9</td>
<td>-22.5</td>
<td>+489.9</td>
<td>+150.5</td>
<td>+23.2</td>
<td>-15.1</td>
<td>+15.2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-</td>
<td>+131.4</td>
<td>+113.4</td>
<td>+79.5</td>
<td>+22.1</td>
<td>-14.5</td>
<td>+27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selangor</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>+369.0</td>
<td>+339.7</td>
<td>+78.9</td>
<td>+17.6</td>
<td>-6.9</td>
<td>+38.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Negri Sembilan</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+394.7</td>
<td>+230.0</td>
<td>+84.4</td>
<td>+48.8</td>
<td>-22.9</td>
<td>+42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pahang</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+110.4</td>
<td>+438.4</td>
<td>+31.5</td>
<td>+70.4</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>+48.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johore</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+326.6</td>
<td>+111.0</td>
<td>+7.8</td>
<td>+28.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelantan</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>+140.1</td>
<td>+209.0</td>
<td>+14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trengganu</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+24.6</td>
<td>+556.8</td>
<td>+27.5</td>
<td>+55.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kedah</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+444.4</td>
<td>+53.6</td>
<td>+1.0</td>
<td>+10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perlis</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+611.4</td>
<td>+19.1</td>
<td>+74.3</td>
<td>-8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALAYA</td>
<td>+16.7</td>
<td>+55.8</td>
<td>+56.0</td>
<td>+132.6</td>
<td>+78.0</td>
<td>+34.0</td>
<td>-2.4</td>
<td>+43.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Indian arrivals between 1891 and 1901, an increase of 131.4 and 369 per cent respectively. In Pahang and Negri Sembilan, though the absolute increase was not as large as Perak and Selangor, the percentage increases of 110.4 and 394.7 per cent respectively, were, nevertheless, phenomenal. These large increases were chiefly because the Federated Malay States were in a transition stage and large numbers of labourers and other workers moved into them from India, to work the new development projects. In the Straits Settlements much of the land had already been alienated by 1901 and the increases were chiefly in the urban centres of Penang and Singapore, through the movement of traders, shop-assistants and other such people. Malacca, having no such "pull" as the entrepot of Singapore or Penang, actually registered a decline of 22.5 per cent in its Indian population (Fig. 52).

The story of the 1901-1911 intercensal period was very much similar to the previous decade, with spectacular increases in the Federated Malay States. These increases were the result of the rapid extension of rubber planting, especially in the latter years of the 1901-1911 period. Large labour forces were introduced to meet the demands of the numerous new estates being opened up and these labourers helped considerably to swell the population. The extension of rubber planting made itself felt in all parts of the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States, but particularly in Perak, Selangor and Negri Sembilan, where it was undoubtedly the main cause of the very large increase in population over the ten years.¹ In Perak, Indians were almost

Fig. 52. Malaya: Percentage-Increase/Decrease in the Indian Population, 1891-1901.

Source: Based on statistical data given in Table XV and Appendix G.
5 times as numerous as in 1891 while in Selangor they had multiplied by 20 times and in Negri Sembilan by 17 times over the same period.

The highest percentage increases, however, were in Pahang and Malacca, but the total numbers of Indians in these two States in 1901 were little more than a thousand each. In Malacca the recruitment of labour for the rubber estates was mainly responsible for the 6,000 new arrivals, while in Pahang the Indian population was temporarily inflated by the entry of Tamil labourers employed on railway works (Fig. 53).

The first Pan-Malayan census (i.e. for the whole of Malaya as a single political unit) was taken in 1921. In that year there were 471,514 Indians in Malaya, an increase of 78 per cent over 1911. The increase was proportionately far higher than any other race, for the Chinese increased by 28.1 per cent and the Malays by only 14.8 per cent. This large increase in Indian population was mainly due to the demand for Indian labour on rubber estates, which continued to spread further into the rest of Malaya, following the acquisition of Kelantan, Perlis, Trengganu and Kedah in 1909 and Johore in 1914 by Britain. The demand for new land for rubber and other plantation crops in these latest additions to British Malaya, over the period 1911-1921, was as brisk as it had been in the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States before them. The most remarkable percentage increases were thus in these Unfederated Malay States. The Indian population of Perlis, for example, increased by 611.4 per cent between 1911 and 1921. The absolute numbers involved

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1. Ibid., p. 21.
Fig. 53. Malaya: Percentage Increase/Decrease in the Indian Population, 1901-1911.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
were, however, small. Perlis, for example, had only 114 Indians in 1911 while Kedah, containing the biggest number of Indians in the Unfederated Malay States in 1921, had 33,000 Indians compared to which Perak had 134,000.

The Federated Malay States, with the exception of Pahang, showed increases of more than 75 per cent for the decade 1911-1921. The lower rate of increase in Pahang was due to the departure of large numbers of Tamil labourers employed in railway construction in the State, following completion of the project.

In the Straits Settlements, with the exception of Malacca, the rate of increase of the Indian population was low compared to the Unfederated Malay States and Federated Malay States. This was natural in the case of Singapore and Penang because there was little land left for expansion and the increase was largely in the urban population of the cities. In Malacca the large increase was due not so much to expansion in cultivation, but largely to the gradual substitution of Tamil for Chinese labour on estates. Province Wellesley estates had for long had settled Tamil labour forces, but on the Malacca estates Chinese labour predominated till 1911 and it was only in the few years preceding the 1921 Census, that systematic recruiting in India had led to the introduction of Tamils in large numbers¹(Fig. 54).

The increase in the State populations would have been considerably higher during this period (1911-1921) had it not been for a number of adverse factors affecting the growth. Firstly, in August 1914,

Fig. 54. Malaya: Percentage Increase/Decrease in the Indian Population, 1911-1921.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
the European War broke out and for a month or two there was a dislocation of trade, many mines closed down and great difficulty was experienced in obtaining remittances from England to continue development projects on newly opened rubber estates. The number of labourers thrown out of employment was so large that immigration from India was totally prohibited. The embargo was only lifted in 1915. Secondly, there was an outbreak of influenze in 1918, which killed more than 40,000 people, many of them Indian, who had little resistance and contracted pneumonia easily. During the epidemic the death rate per mille for the Indians was 372.0 compared to 129.6 for the Malays and 158.4 for the Chinese. Finally, in 1916 there was a general rush for land for rubber and the area alienated was so large that there was an almost unprecedented demand for Indian labour and the probability of the record figure of 1913\(^2\) being exceeded in 1917. But in April 1917, the Indian Government stopped all emigration of unskilled labour from India, except under licence, and limited the number allowed to be recruited for labour to 82,000 adults. In 1918, this number was reduced to 73,000 and owing to the urgent need of recruits for labour battalions, both in India and Europe, the emigration of males between the ages 18-25 years was prohibited. In 1919, all restrictions were removed but an outbreak of cholera in the emigration camps of India halted operations. Furthermore the unfavourable rate of exchange between the Indian rupee and the Straits dollar limited the numbers immigrating while towards the beginnings of the 1920's, the world trade depression also began to hit Malaya, reducing immigration further.

1. Perak Annual Report, 1918 (Ipoh, 1919), passim.
2. See Appendix F.
During the 1921-1931 decade the Indian population of Malaya increased by only 32.3 per cent compared to 78 per cent and 132.6 per cent for the previous two decades. Perak and Selangor still showed the biggest increase in absolute numbers and contained about half the total Indian population of Malaya in 1931. All the other States also showed increases, but, with the exception of Trengganu, not on the same scale as in the previous decade. The case of Trengganu is quite different as its development began comparatively late. However, the Indian population of the State in 1921 was so small (211), that the increase of 556.8 per cent for the decade 1921-1931, by itself, can be misleading. As for the other Unfederated Malay States the rate of increase slackened as the movement in the direction of large scale rubber cultivation lost its impetus after the 1921 depression in the rubber growing industry.\(^1\) (Fig. 55).

The Indian Government's ban on the emigration of unskilled labour and the depredations of the Japanese Occupation were felt strongest in the States with the largest Indian estate populations. The Federated Malay States, particularly Perak, Selangor and Negri Sembilan were the hardest hit and all showed decreases in their population in 1947, compared with 1931. With the exception of Kelantan, there was a sharp drop in the rate of increase in the Unfederated Malay States too, the other area of large rural populations of Indians. Kelantan is one of the rice bowls of Malaya, and following the stoppage of tapping on the estates, numbers of Indians took up rice-planting. In addition, larger numbers of Indians

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Fig. 55. - Malaya: Percentage Increase/Decrease in the Indian Population, 1921-1931.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
moved into the State, from other parts of Malaya, to engage in food growing. The normal increase of the Indian population of Singapore is probably the only other incongruous feature of the 1931-1947 period. But this is of "little significance for increases of the same order were observable in most of the towns of the Federation"¹ (Fig. 56).

The post-war years have seen the stabilization of the Indian population. The northern Unfederated Malay States (Kelantan, Kedah, Perlis and Trengganu) have assumed their pre-war mantle of being "unattractive and out of the way States", being away from Kuala Lumpur, the hub of the intensely developed section of Malaya. These States, with the exception of Trengganu, show the lowest rate of increase. The inflated increase of Trengganu is probably largely the result of the large Indian labour force, brought in by the British Colonial Development Corporation Ltd., to work its experimental cocoa and abaca plantation projects at Jerangau in south-west Trengganu. The rate of increase in the other States also rose appreciably during the 1947-1957 decade. All of them showed increases, particularly Singapore, which registered a record increase of 87.8 per cent, the highest since 1860, following the influx of thousands of job seekers from the Federation and of hundreds of refugee merchants from the Indian Sub-Continent, consequent upon its partition in 1947 (Fig. 57).

Fig. 56.—Malaya: Percentage Increase/Decrease in the Indian Population, 1931–1947.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 57. Malaya: Percentage Increase/Decrease in the Indian Population, 1947-1957.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Immigration and Natural Increase as Factors in the Growth of the Indian Population

Until the late 1930's, the dominant factor in the increase of the Indian population in Malaya was the excess of immigrants over emigrants. This point is stressed by the Superintendent of the 1921 Population Census of Malaya,

... in British Malaya the main factor which governs the increase in the population is not, as in European countries, the excess of births over deaths but immigration ... Deaths during the past decade have been largely in excess of births and were it not for the stream of immigrants from ... India ... there would have been a decrease in the population instead of an increase...

and reiterated by Vlieland who says, "... the dominant factor in the growth of the Malayan population is not as in European countries, the excess of births over deaths but the excess of immigrants over emigrants ..."2

Certainly, until the beginnings of the present century, the Indian had no intention of settling permanently in Malaya. If married, he almost invariably left his wife and family in India and returned to them as soon as he had saved sufficient money or finished his contract in Malaya. If unmarried he had little opportunity of finding a wife here owing to the shortage of women of his own kind and the difficulties of religion, forming an almost unsurmountable barrier, barring him from intermarriage with other communities, even if he got over his own

2. C.A. Vlieland, op.cit., p.32.
prejudices. Thus, though poverty may have kept him longer, a stretch of two or three years was the longest he endured, before answering the call of his native village in India. Nevertheless, ephemeral though the Indian migration to Malaya was, there was a net migration (excess of arrivals over departures) of 1,189,000 Indians into Malaya between 1860 and 1938. If all these had survived the present Indian population in Malaya would certainly have been very much higher. Unfortunately, disease, malnutrition and generally unhealthy conditions of employment took a heavy toll, and they died in thousands. For example, in the early days of Indian migration to Malaya instances of as many 75 per cent of the arrivals dying were not uncommon. By the 1890's health conditions had improved but nearly 15 per cent of the Indian immigrants were still dying while even as late as 1938, the death rate among the Indian labourers was as high as 17.2 per mille, in parts of Malaya.¹

In the earlier stages, the Indian migration to Malaya was nearly all male; in 1901 there were only 171 females to every 1,000 males in the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States. Following the establishment of the rubber industry and the stabilization of the immigration machinery, there was a greater movement of family labour. To ensure a stable and healthier social life the Indian Government insisted on the emigration of more females to balance the sexes. In 1922, it finally made it mandatory that there must be 1 female for every 1.5 males emigrating to Malaya.² As they became more settled in Malaya

¹ Labour Department, Malaya, Annual Report for the Year 1938 (Kuala Lumpur, 1939), p.38.
and as their means improved, other Indians -- traders, moneylenders, policemen, clerks, professional people, etc. -- too, like the labourers, began to bring in their womenfolk and by 1957 there were nearly 700 females to every 1,000 Indian males in the country (Table XVI).

Table XVI: FEMALES PER 1,000 MALES IN THE INDIAN POPULATION, 1891-1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1891</th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1947</th>
<th>1957</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States only</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>693</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As for Table V.

With the improvement in the sex-structure, natural increase among the Indian population began to become significant. In 1937 the annual rate of natural increase among the Indians was 2.0 per cent. Twenty years later it had reached 3.4 per cent. Since the late 1930's, much of the increase in the total Indian population has been due to the excess of births over deaths. In 1911 only 7 per cent (Federated Malay States) of the Indian population was local born but by 1947 nearly 50 per cent was so born and ten years later the proportion of local born in the total Indian population of Malaya was 62.1 per cent. To-day more than 65 per cent of the Indians are local born (Table IV). Fresh
immigration has virtually ended and from now onwards, barring a major world catastrophe, the future growth of Indian population in Malaya will be determined by the rate of natural increase.

Proportion of Indians to the Total Population of Malaya

The proportion of Indians in the Malayan population increased steadily till the outbreak of World War I and thence generally maintained its level until adversely affected by the Great Depression, the Indian Government's ban on labour emigration and the depredations of the Japanese Occupation (Table XVII). For example, in 1891, only in one State, Penang, did the Indians make up more than 10 per cent of the total population (Fig. 58). By 1901 and 1911, Perak, Negri Sembilan and Selangor also joined the ranks of Penang, with Indians making up more than a quarter of the total population in Selangor in 1911 (Figs. 59, 60). In 1921, 33 per cent of Selangor's population was Indian while by 1931 in Johore and Kedah too, Indians comprised 10 per cent or more of each State's total population (Figs. 61, 62). The decrease in the total Indian population over the 1931-1947 period was felt most in Selangor, Perak and Negri Sembilan, the major rubber areas. In Selangor, for example, only 20.8 per cent of the total population was Indian in 1947 compared with 33 per cent in 1921 (Fig. 63). During the 1947-1957 decade, increases in the Indian proportion in the total population was limited to States like Johore, Negri Sembilan, Kelantan, Pahang, Kedah and Trengganu (Fig. 64). Much of the post-war economic development of Malaya has been concentrated in these States.
Table XVII: PERCENTAGE OF THE VARIOUS RACES IN THE TOTAL MALAYAN POPULATION, 1911-1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1911 Actual No.</th>
<th>1911 Percentage</th>
<th>1921 Actual No.</th>
<th>1921 Percentage</th>
<th>1931 Actual No.</th>
<th>1931 Percentage</th>
<th>1947 Actual No.</th>
<th>1947 Percentage</th>
<th>1957 Actual No.</th>
<th>1957 Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malays -</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Federation</td>
<td>1,367,245</td>
<td>58.45</td>
<td>1,568,688</td>
<td>53.74</td>
<td>1,863,872</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>2,427,834</td>
<td>49.46</td>
<td>3,126,706</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Malaya</td>
<td>1,410,105</td>
<td>53.32</td>
<td>1,622,183</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>1,928,866</td>
<td>44.38</td>
<td>2,541,637</td>
<td>43.47</td>
<td>3,324,617</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese -</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Federation</td>
<td>693,228</td>
<td>27.32</td>
<td>855,400</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>1,284,888</td>
<td>33.92</td>
<td>1,884,534</td>
<td>38.39</td>
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<td>Singapore</td>
<td>220,915</td>
<td>72.32</td>
<td>315,151</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>418,640</td>
<td>75.05</td>
<td>729,473</td>
<td>77.75</td>
<td>1,091,554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Malaya</td>
<td>914,143</td>
<td>34.56</td>
<td>1,170,551</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>1,703,528</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>2,614,007</td>
<td>44.71</td>
<td>3,424,490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indians -</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Federation</td>
<td>239,179</td>
<td>10.22</td>
<td>439,222</td>
<td>15.04</td>
<td>570,987</td>
<td>15.07</td>
<td>530,638</td>
<td>10.81</td>
<td>695,985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>27,890</td>
<td>9.13</td>
<td>32,314</td>
<td>7.69</td>
<td>50,787</td>
<td>9.10</td>
<td>68,967</td>
<td>7.35</td>
<td>124,246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total -</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Federation</td>
<td>2,339,050</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>2,918,541</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>3,787,758</td>
<td>87.2</td>
<td>4,908,086</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>6,278,763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>305,439</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>420,004</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>557,745</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>938,144</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>1,476,694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Malaya</td>
<td>2,644,489</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2,338,545</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>4,345,503</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>5,846,220</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>7,755,457</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As for Table V.
Fig. 58. Malaya: Indians as a Percentage of the Total Population, 1891.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 59. Malays: Indians as a Percentage of the Total Population, 1901.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 60. Malaya: Indians as a Percentage of the Total Population, 1911.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 61. — Malaya: Indians as a Percentage of the Total Population, 1921.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 62. Malaya: Indians as a Percentage of the Total Population, 1931.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 63. Malaya: Indians as a Percentage of the Total Population, 1947.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 64. Malaya: Indians as a Percentage of the Total Population, 1957.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
B. Occupational Distribution

The economic development of Malaya is concentrated to a large extent on the production of rubber and tin for export, on the output of a variety of foodstuffs and secondary manufacturers mainly for domestic consumption, and on commercial and financial services for domestic markets and for the large entrepot trade with most of Southeast Asia. The role of Indian capital, enterprise and particularly of labour, has been of special significance in the economic development of the country and accounts for the close ties between India and Malaya.

Agriculture occupies a dominant position in the economy of Malaya, contributing some 40 per cent of the gross national income and 75 per cent of the total exports (value). The majority of the Indians are connected with this industry either directly or indirectly, though in smaller numbers they are also found in every other segment of Malayan economic life. For example, in 1931, more than 35 per cent of the total Indian population was engaged in agricultural pursuits while in 1947 and 1957 more than 57 and 49 per cent, respectively, of the economically active Indians were engaged in agriculture (Tables XVIII, XIX, XX, XXI, XXII, XXIII).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Pursuits</th>
<th>Total (All Races)</th>
<th>Indians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Pursuits.</td>
<td>915,254</td>
<td>291,177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Pursuits.</td>
<td>197,802</td>
<td>15,211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous (Administrative, Personal and Professional Services, etc.).</td>
<td>493,132</td>
<td>71,765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry.</td>
<td>421,038</td>
<td>67.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. This total excludes Ceylon Tamils.
### Table XVIII (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERCENTAGE OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING</th>
<th>All Races</th>
<th>Indians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Pursuits.</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>77.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Pursuits.</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous (Administrative, Personal and Professional Services, etc.).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry.</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-productive Occupations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0

Source: Compiled from C.A. Vlieland *op.cit.*, Tables 118-44.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Federation</th>
<th>Singapore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Gain-</td>
<td>Total Gain-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fully Occupied Population</td>
<td>fully Occupied Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>Malays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubber Cultivation.</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padi Cultivation.</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Agricultural Occupations.</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total in Agriculture</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>57.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing.</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining and Quarrying.</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing, etc.</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and Communications.</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial and Financial.</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration and Defence.</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Occupations.</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Services.</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical Occupations.</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other and Indeterminate Occupations.</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from M.V. del Tufo, op.cit., Tables 78-110.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupations</th>
<th>Malays</th>
<th></th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th></th>
<th>Indians</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actual No.</td>
<td>Percentage of gainfully occupied</td>
<td>Actual No.</td>
<td>Percentage of gainfully occupied</td>
<td>Actual No.</td>
<td>Percentage of gainfully occupied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Technical and Related</td>
<td>26,425</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>24,880</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>71,81</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative, Executive and Managerial</td>
<td>4,231</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>15,208</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3,006</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical Occupations.</td>
<td>15,977</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>28,306</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>12,165</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and Related Occupations.</td>
<td>28,371</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>119,139</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>30,405</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmen, Production and Process Workers</td>
<td>76,981</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>181,749</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>64,496</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services, Sport, Entertainment and</td>
<td>72,412</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>60,783</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>23,355</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational Occupations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Occupations.</td>
<td>721,381</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>289,044</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>153,965</td>
<td>49.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining, Quarrying and Related Occupations</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4,720</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and Communications.</td>
<td>27,634</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>26,808</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>10,685</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers Not Classifiable by Occupation.</td>
<td>3,651</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>3,198</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>937</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Working But Looking For Job.</td>
<td>18,839</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>12,647</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>5,711</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Gainfully Occupied Population</td>
<td>996,851</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>766,745</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>312,207</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from the 1957 Population Census of Malaya, Reports Nos. 2-12 (Kuala Lumpur, n.d.), Tables 13-17.
Table XXI: SINGAPORE: PERCENTAGE OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING OF THE
GAINFULLY OCCUPIED POPULATION BY RACE, 1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Percentage of</th>
<th>Malays</th>
<th>Percentage of</th>
<th>Indians</th>
<th>Percentage of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actual Nos.</td>
<td>gainfully occupied Chinese</td>
<td>Actual Nos.</td>
<td>gainfully occupied Malays</td>
<td>Actual Nos.</td>
<td>gainfully occupied Indians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Forestry, Hunting and Fishing</td>
<td>36,389</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>2,747</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>925</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>1,434</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>57,611</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>3,779</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>4,474</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building and Construction</td>
<td>17,901</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>1,784</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4,495</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>94,987</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>6,541</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>16,829</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, Storage and Communications</td>
<td>33,577</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>7,551</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>7,190</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, Gas, Water and Sanitary Services</td>
<td>1,432</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1,298</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2,672</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services</td>
<td>97,341</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>31,661</td>
<td>57.2</td>
<td>25,566</td>
<td>41.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Gainfully Occupied Population</td>
<td>340,672</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>55,392</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>62,259</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from the 1957 Census of Singapore: Preliminary Releases Nos. 12, 13
(Singapore, 1959).
Table XXII: FEDERATION OF MALAYA: ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION BY INDUSTRY AND RACE, 1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Total Numbers</th>
<th>Racial Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Malay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Economically Active Population</td>
<td>2,201,569</td>
<td>47.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Technical and Related Occupations.</td>
<td>65,005</td>
<td>40.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers (a).</td>
<td>39,117</td>
<td>48.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative, Executive and Managerial Occupations.</td>
<td>24,396</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical Occupations.</td>
<td>61,235</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services, Sport, Entertainment and Recreational Occupations.</td>
<td>180,639</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policemen (including Officers).</td>
<td>44,743</td>
<td>88.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and Related Occupations.</td>
<td>180,174</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Occupations.</td>
<td>1,173,197</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Labourers.</td>
<td>603,979</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining, Quarrying and Related Occupations. (b).</td>
<td>5,495</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and Communications.</td>
<td>66,455</td>
<td>41.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers, Road Transport. (c).</td>
<td>44,276</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmen and Production Process Workers.</td>
<td>326,388</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers (Other than Agricultural Labourers).</td>
<td>116,190</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers Not Classifiable By Occupations.</td>
<td>8,040</td>
<td>45.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Working But Looking For Work.</td>
<td>38,037</td>
<td>49.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) The figures for "Teachers" are only for the States of Johore, Selangor, Perak, Penang and Kedah. Data for the other States was not available.

(b) These figures are for the States of Selangor, Negri Sembilan, Perak, Penang, Kedah, and Trengganu only. There were no Indians in this category in the other States.

(c) These figures are only for the States of Johore, Selangor, Perak and Penang, data for the rest of the Federation being unavailable.

Source: As for Table XX.
Table XXIII: SINGAPORE: ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION BY INDUSTRY AND RACE, 1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Total Numbers</th>
<th>Racial Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Economically Active Population.</td>
<td>480,267</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Forestry, Hunting and Fishing.</td>
<td>40,151</td>
<td>90.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock Rearing.</td>
<td>8,226</td>
<td>93.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubber Cultivation and Processing.</td>
<td>10,032</td>
<td>86.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining and Quarrying.</td>
<td>1,601</td>
<td>89.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone-quarrying, Clay and Sandpits.</td>
<td>1,416</td>
<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing.</td>
<td>66,754</td>
<td>86.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building and Construction.</td>
<td>24,628</td>
<td>72.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, Gas Water and Sanitary Services.</td>
<td>5,624</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services.</td>
<td>161,280</td>
<td>60.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Staff and Personnel of British Military Establishments.</td>
<td>34,345</td>
<td>31.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, Storage and Communications.</td>
<td>50,347</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce.</td>
<td>121,533</td>
<td>78.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade.</td>
<td>86,771</td>
<td>80.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking and Other Financial Institutions.</td>
<td>4,878</td>
<td>63.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade, Import/Export trade and Agency Houses.</td>
<td>25,648</td>
<td>71.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically Active Persons Who Had Never Previously Worked.</td>
<td>8,349</td>
<td>65.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As for Table XXI.
The majority of the Indians in the agricultural occupations are in the plantation industry. In fact Indians and plantation agriculture have been almost synonymous terms in Malaya from the earliest beginnings of the industry. For example, in 1931, 71.7 per cent of the total estate population of 423,851 was Indian while in 1957, 52.6 per cent of the total gainfully occupied population on Malayan estates was Indian (Tables XXIV, XXV).

Table XXIV: FEDERATION OF MALAYA: THE ESTATE POPULATION BY RACE, 1921-1947

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Estate Population</th>
<th>Percentage Racial Composition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Malay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>371,933</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>423,851</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>412,332</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from M.V. del Tufo, op.cit., pp.113-6.

Table XXV: FEDERATION OF MALAYA: TOTAL GAINFULLY OCCUPIED ESTATE POPULATION, 1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>163,290</td>
<td>52.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>86,860</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malays</td>
<td>57,230</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>309,020</td>
<td>99.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The principal role of the Indians in the estate economy has been that of labourers and, to a smaller extent, that of subordinate administrative and technical personnel and estate owners and managers.

C. Spatial Distribution and Density

The surface configuration of Malaya (consisting of a densely forested central belt of mountain ranges flanked by a well-drained foothill zone in many places cut off from the coast by large stretches of marsh and mangrove swamp)¹ has markedly influenced the pattern of economic development and population distribution of the country.

Repelled by the forbidding forested interior, the Malays were quite content to remain in their coastal and estuarine settlements and eke out an existence through fishing, agriculture, trade and, if need be, piracy. The Chinese, on the other hand, attracted by the rich tin deposits of the western foothill zone were already moving into the interior by the middle of the nineteenth century. Subsequent to the British occupation of the Federated Malay States railway lines were built to link up the pioneer mining settlements with the ports and with each other. With the rapid spread of large-scale mining activities along this railway network the concentration of population shifted from the coast to the western interior foothills. Furthermore the railway network encouraged extensive agricultural developments.

¹ See Chapter II.
Hampered by lack of suitable land in the Straits Settlements, planters flocked into the Malay States as soon as British rule was established there. Initially experimenting with sugar and coffee, in the 1890's, these planters began to grow rubber as a plantation crop close to the original centres of immigrant activity, the mid-western foothill zone. The rubber tree was unsuited to the lower temperatures of the highlands and the soggy soils of the swamps. The foothill zone had the advantage of good natural drainage, and, more important still, it had the existing railway network for communications and supplies, especially rice. Rice was the staple food of the immigrant Indian labourers, and it had to be imported. Rubber cultivation thus spread ribbon-like along the railway lines in the western foothills, confirming the new pattern of population distribution initiated by tin mining. Later on, this pattern was further emphasized and extended as the plantations spread along roads constructed to serve the needs of the expanding industry. From the mid-western foothill zone pioneers gradually pushed north into Kedah and south into Johore as the railway lines were extended into these States.

Roads and a north-south railway line were also constructed in the eastern foothill zone. Consequently, this zone too began to receive new settlers in substantial numbers. But Eastern Malaya generally suffered from the disadvantages of isolation and inaccessibility and the lack of the economic attractiveness of Western Malaya. The net result was that the greatest concentration of people and economic development was in Western Malaya. In subsequent years this overall pattern of population distribution and economic development has not changed very much,
the tendency has been for it to be accentuated (Figs. 65, 73, 74).

The spread of Indian settlement in Malaya has been closely linked up with the expansion of the plantation, particularly rubber, industry, transport lines and trade; its present distribution has, like the economic development of the country, evolved from an earlier pattern, conditioned by physical geography and historical factors.

During the nineteenth century, Indian contacts with Malaya were for the most part limited to the Straits Settlements and these places quite naturally had the highest densities of Indian population. After the 1870's Indians spread into the Federated Malay States, following the advent of planters into the area, and by 1901, the foundation of the present distribution pattern of the Indian population was already laid. Besides Penang and Singapore their densest concentrations were in the rubber belt of Western Malaya, along lines of communications and close to established urban centres, like Kuala Lumpur, Seremban, Ipoh and Taiping. In subsequent years, though there was a gradual spreading out of population, both northwards and southwards in Western Malaya and also on a very much smaller scale in Eastern Malaya, along roads and the railway lines, the overall pattern of population distribution did not change. Rather it was accentuated, for in 1957 98.8 per cent of the Indian population was still in Western Malaya compared to 99.9 per cent in 1911, 99.6 per cent in 1921, 99.4 per cent in 1931 and 98.6 per cent in 1947, respectively.
Fig. 65. Malaya: Racial Composition of Population
By Districts, 1957.

Source: Based on statistical data given in 1957 Population
Census of the Federation of Malaya, Report No. 1
(Kuala Lumpur, n.d.), Table 1, and 1957 Census of
Population, Singapore: Preliminary Release No. 2
(Singapore, 1959), Table II.
With the exception of the large Indian agglomeration of Singapore, the densest concentration of Indians in 1957 was in mid-west Malaya -- the region of greatest economic development -- from central Malacca in the south to southern Kedah in the north. Kedah, Penang, Perak, Selangor and Negri Sembilan, between them contained 69.5 per cent of the total Indian population in 1957, compared with 55.2 per cent in 1911, 81.25 per cent in 1921, 76.3 per cent in 1931 and 72.0 per cent in 1947, respectively. Within this area there are further pockets of concentration, mainly in (i) the port-city and island of Penang; (ii) the intensely developed agricultural region of Province Wellesley and north-western Perak; (iii) the rubber region of Ipoh/Telok Anson, Kuala Lumpur/Klang and Malacca, including the urban concentrations of Ipoh and Kuala Lumpur.

These places, in addition to being regions of intense economic development, have also had the advantage of the momentum of an early start, all of them have been centres of settlement from the beginning of the opening of the country (Figs. 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81).
Fig. 66. Malaya: Indian Population Densities, 1891.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 67. Malaya: Indian Population Densities, 1901.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 63. Malaya: Indian Population Densities, 1911.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 69. Malaya: Indian Population Densities, 1921.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 70. Malaya: Indian Population Densities, 1931.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 71. Malaya: Indian Population Densities, 1947.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 72. Malaya: Indian Population Densities, 1957.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Urban-Rural Structure and Distribution

For a primary producer of raw materials, Malaya has been a highly urbanized country for the last fifty years. Twenty-three per cent of the country's population in 1911 was urban, and by 1947 this figure had increased to 35 per cent. In comparison about 15 per cent of the total population of Southeast Asia was estimated to be urban in 1947, while only 10 per cent of Indonesia's population was classified as urban.

The high proportion of urban dwellers in the population of Malaya was further increased following the declaration of the Emergency in 1948. The campaign against the Communist guerillas necessitated the shifting of some 580,000 rural dwellers into 536 nucleated settlements, called "New Villages". These were located along the main roads for convenience of administration, access and supervision. (Fig. 75).

1. There is yet no satisfactory definition of the terms "Urban" and "Rural" which could be uniformly applied in any part of the world. In Malaya, for census purposes, urban areas are taken to be towns or large villages which have 1,000 or more inhabitants (C.A. Vlieland, op.cit., p.44).


3. For a fuller account of the resettlement programme see:
   (iii) "Resettlement and Development of New Villages in the Federation of Malaya, 1952". Minutes of the Legislative Council of the Federation of Malaya, March 1952 to February 1953, No. 33 in
They thus accentuated the existing pattern of urban concentration in the rubber and tin belt of Western Malaya, which already had most of the towns and 90 per cent of the urban population of Malaya in 1947. In terms of numbers the resettlement programme, together with the normal growth of urban population, increased the number of urban centres, from 187 to 444 and the proportion of urban dwellers in the total population from 35.1 to 47.6 percent from 1947 to 1957, making Malaya, after Japan, the most highly urbanized country in Asia (Table XXVI) (Figs. 73, 74).


Table XXVI: COMPARATIVE GROWTH OF TOTAL, URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION IN MALAYA, 1947 to 1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>4,908,086</td>
<td>6,278,763</td>
<td>940,824</td>
<td>1,445,929</td>
<td>5,848,910</td>
<td>7,724,692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Urban Population</td>
<td>1,301,376</td>
<td>2,658,153</td>
<td>752,737</td>
<td>1,019,500</td>
<td>2,054,113</td>
<td>3,667,653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Rural Population</td>
<td>3,606,710</td>
<td>3,620,610</td>
<td>188,087</td>
<td>426,429</td>
<td>3,794,797</td>
<td>4,047,039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Urban</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increase 1947 - 1957</th>
<th>Actual Numbers</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>1,370,677</th>
<th>505,105</th>
<th>1,875,782</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban Population</td>
<td>1,356,777</td>
<td>266,763</td>
<td>1,623,540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rural Population</td>
<td>13,900</td>
<td>238,342</td>
<td>252,242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td></td>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban Population</td>
<td>104.3</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>79.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rural Population</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>126.7</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from M.V. del Tufo, op.cit., pp. 42-8, Table 7;
1957 Population Census of the Federation of Malaya, Report No.1 (Kuala Lumpur n.d.), Table 3;
1957 Census of Population, Singapore: Preliminary Release, No.2 (Singapore, 1959), Table II.
Fig. 73. Malaya: Distribution of Population, 1947.

Source: Based on statistical data given in M.V. del Tufo, *op. cit.*, Table 5.
Fig. 74. Malaya: Distribution of Population, 1957.

Source: As for Fig. 65.
The urban Indian population has been increasing steadily. In 1901 there were 6 towns in Malaya with an Indian population of more than 1,000 persons. But by 1947 there were 33 such centres among Malaya's 187 towns while a decade later this figure had risen to 43 out of a total of 444 urban centres (Table XXVII).

Table XXVII: MALAYA: TOWNS WITH 1,000 AND MORE INDIANS, 1901-1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban Centres</th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1947</th>
<th>1957</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Towns with an Indian Population of 1,000 - 4,999 Persons.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towns with an Indian Population of 5,000 - 9,999 Persons.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towns with an Indian Population of 10,000 - 24,999 Persons.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towns with an Indian Population of 25,000 - 49,999 Persons.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towns with an Indian Population of 50,000 and more Persons.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Towns with 1,000 and more Indians</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Towns in Malaya with Populations of 1,000 and more persons.</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>444</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Information not available.

Source: As for Table XXVI.
The resettlement programme did not affect the Indian population on the same scale as the Chinese, or the number of towns with more than 1,000 or more Indians would have been greater. Only about 12,000 Indian rural dwellers were shifted to resettlement camps compared to some 568,000 Chinese. This was largely because most of the rural Indians were on estates. Each estate, as a precaution against the Communist terrorists, regrouped labourers and families from scattered locations on the estate to a centrally defended point within it (Fig. 86). As the numbers involved were small, this regrouping did not give rise to large Indian villages on the same scale as the resettlement, involving whole shifting of rural dwellers to new locations, did for the Chinese (Fig. 75).

The Emergency, however, led to an increasing drift of Indians from the rural areas to comparatively "safer" urban centres and this coupled with the regrouped "villages" on estates, and the normal increase of the urban population, has altered the urban-rural ratio in the Indian population.

For more than a hundred years, since the beginnings of Indian immigrations into British Malaya, less than 40 per cent of the Indians lived in urban centres. But by 1957, 53.8 per cent of the Indians were urban dwellers (Table XXVIII).

Urban Indians in Malaya have traditionally lived in the larger towns, though over the last couple of decades there has been a decided increase in the Indian numbers in the smaller towns. For example, in 1947, almost 80 per cent of the urban Indians (185,668 of a total of 233,991) lived in towns of 10,000 or more inhabitants. But by 1957 only 65 per cent of them were so living.
Table XXVIII: MALAYA: THE RACIAL COMPOSITION OF THE URBAN POPULATION, 1947-1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Federation</th>
<th>Singapore</th>
<th>Malaya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1947 - Indian</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Urban Population</td>
<td>179,434</td>
<td>54,557</td>
<td>233,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Urban</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>79.1</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total Urban Population of Malaya</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Malay</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Urban Population</td>
<td>274,618</td>
<td>83,333</td>
<td>359,951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Urban</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total Urban Population of Malaya</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chinese</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Urban Population</td>
<td>811,520</td>
<td>592,172</td>
<td>1,403,692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Urban</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>53.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total Urban Population of Malaya</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>78.5</td>
<td>68.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Federation</th>
<th>Singapore</th>
<th>Malaya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1957 - Indian</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Urban Population</td>
<td>231,896</td>
<td>92,224</td>
<td>324,120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Urban</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total Urban Population of Malaya</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Malay</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Urban Population</td>
<td>532,919</td>
<td>115,662</td>
<td>647,581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Urban</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>37.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total Urban Population of Malaya</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chinese</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Urban Population</td>
<td>1,798,992</td>
<td>783,939</td>
<td>2,582,931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Urban</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>74.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total Urban Population of Malaya</td>
<td>67.7</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>66.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As for Table XXVI.
Fig. 75. Malaya: New Villages.

A. A New Village in the Kulai area of Johore.

B. The Mambang Di-Awang New Village, Perak.

Photos: Director of Information, Federation of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur.
Penang, Kuala Lumpur, and Singapore have been the chief centres of Indian urban concentration, since the advent of the British. Lately, their share of the total urban Indian population has been decreasing following the expansion of other towns like Ipoh and Klang. Singapore, Penang and Kuala Lumpur, however, still had more than 50 per cent of the urban Indians in Malaya in 1957 (Table XXIX).

Table XXIX: INDIANS IN THE MAJOR URBAN CENTRES OF MALAYA, 1921-1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Penang</th>
<th>Kuala Lumpur</th>
<th>Singapore</th>
<th>Total Indian Population of the 3 Centres</th>
<th>Total Indian Urban Population of Malaya</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Indian Urban Population of Malaya in the 3 Centres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>19,547</td>
<td>20,889</td>
<td>27,777</td>
<td>68,213</td>
<td>108,433</td>
<td>62.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>24,120</td>
<td>25,342</td>
<td>41,356</td>
<td>90,818</td>
<td>161,495</td>
<td>56.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>26,220</td>
<td>31,607</td>
<td>48,989</td>
<td>106,816</td>
<td>197,406</td>
<td>54.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>32,020</td>
<td>53,506</td>
<td>80,099</td>
<td>165,634</td>
<td>324,220</td>
<td>51.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As for Table XXVI.

The rural Indian population in Malaya is chiefly associated with the rural estate economy, forming nearly two-thirds of the total estate dwellers of Malaya. In 1947, 65 per cent of the rural Indian population was enumerated on estates, while in 1931 the proportion of the estate dwellers in the total rural Indian population was as high as 70 per cent.
The significant point to note here is the fact that though most of the rural Indian population is still on estates, the proportion of this segment in the total rural population has been gradually decreasing over the last two decades. This decline has been the result of partly the drift of some rural Indians to urban centres and partly because of the increasing flow of Malay and Chinese labour into the estate economy (Tables XXIV, XXV).

The thickest concentration of rural Indians are in the coastal districts of central Selangor, southern and northern Perak and Province Wellesley. These are highly developed rubber and coconut producing areas. Other concentrations of Indians, chiefly associated with the cultivation of rubber and oil palm, are found in southern Kedah, Negri Sembilan, Malacca and Johore, though not on the same scale as those of either Perak or Selangor (Figs. 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81).
Fig. 76. Malaya: Distribution of Indian Population, 1901.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 77. Malaya: Distribution of Indian Population, 1911.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 78. Maleya: Distribution of Indian Population, 1921.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 79. Malaya: Distribution of Indian Population, 1931.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 80. Malaya: Distribution of Indian Population, 1947.

Source: As for Fig. 52.
Fig. 81. Malaya: Distribution of Indian Population, 1957.

Source: As for Fig. 32.
D. Settlement Characteristics

The settlements of the Indians in Malaya have been and are markedly nucleated in contrast to that of the largely dispersed and sprawling settlements of the indigenous people. This emphatic nucleation of the Indian settlements is chiefly because the majority of the Indians came into Malaya as gangs of labour, to work the estates. These undertakings, many of them employing hundreds of labourers, usually grouped the labourers together in dwellings located close to the office factory and managerial staff quarters, for convenience of management and security. Furthermore, this was in keeping with the traditional cultural trait of the Indians, who preferred living close together with their own kind. This pattern has not changed much from its inception in the pioneering stages. In fact it has been further accentuated by the Emergency-necessitated relocation and resettlement programmes of the Federation Government.

The other Indians, who did not enter the estate economy, were absorbed by the Government services and the commercial trades. The Government, though maintaining field camps, housed its employees in or adjoining existing urban centres while the commercial Indian community was quite naturally chiefly in the urban areas, though many of them did travel to the rural areas to conduct their business. This picture of the non-estate Indian population has not changed to any marked degree over the years. In actuality, the trend over the recent years has been a drift of the rural farm population towards the urban centres, thereby emphasizing the nucleated pattern of the Indian settlement.
The nucleation tendency of Indian settlement in Malaya is nothing new, in the sense that almost all the Indian immigrants into Malaya came from traditionally nucleated village hearths in India. But, other than the ubiquitous temples, the form of the Malayan nucleation bears no relation to the compact, wall-to-wall and back-to-back village forms of India. This is chiefly because the Indians came into Malaya largely as wage-earners and not as colonizers, and their settlements and dwellings were designed and provided by the employers, usually Europeans. Furthermore, the constantly wet Malayan climate and other environmental factors, like building materials available, are not conducive to the implanting of the Indian village forms here, as for example mud houses, in Malaya. Anyway, the Indian until only recently, regarded his stay in Malaya as a "temporary exile" from the village hearth in India, and he was not concerned with setting up familiar settlement types. Indian permanent settlement in Malaya is thus comparatively recent. Those who have settled have been in Malaya for a long time and their outlook towards settlement is conditioned to an appreciable extent by the Malayan environmental conditions.

The urban settlements of Malaya are principally the creation of Europeans and Chinese. Here too, they bear no or little resemblance to the towns of India or China but are laid out more on the pattern of the English towns while the imposition of hygienic standards has prevented, or at least put a restraining brake on, the earlier tendencies of the Indian, Chinese and other Asian immigrants to huddle together.
The Indian settlements in Malaya fall into two broad categories: (a) urban and (b) rural, though these types may not always be discrete.

(a) Urban Settlement:

The Malayan urban centres consist chiefly of a nucleus of grid pattern streets, lined with brick or concrete shops, godowns and entertainment buildings, and surrounded by areas of irregularly spaced streets, winding through government buildings, residential districts and sprawling timber and thatch dwellings, which gradually merge with the surrounding rural landscape. These rectilinear nucleated patterns may be aligned either along a railroad, road or a waterfront. More often than not their primary function is that of gathering and processing centres of Malayan produce, the distribution of consumer goods in addition to providing financial and social services for the surrounding rural population beside their own, maintenance and repair facilities for transport media and as centres of administration. Except for the cities and some of the larger towns, the Malayan urban centres have virtually no secondary manufacturing functions.

In the larger towns and cities, as for example in Singapore, the Indians, though found in almost all parts of the urban centres, tend to congregate in certain sectors, forming distinctive "Little Indias" of their own. In the smaller towns, the Indians are less significant. They are few in number and their dwellings and business premises are usually scattered among their Chinese and Malay counterparts.
The most common house type of urban Indians is the ubiquitous shop-house. This building may vary in detail and design in Malaya, but its overall pattern is very similar. It is usually a rather low double-storeyed structure, in which the bottom portion is used for business and the top for dwelling (Figs. 82, 83, 84).

(b) **Rural Settlement:**

Indian rural settlement in Malaya is principally estate settlement connected with rubber, oil palm, tea and coconut cultivation. These estates, along roads and railways, are still closely tied to transport routes as is the settlement within the estates.

The overall pattern of estate settlement, whether it be a rubber, coconut, or an oil palm estate, is quite similar. It consists of a number of buildings, for the most part labourers' quarters, usually long barrack-like wooden structures divided into rooms, residences of the manager and other administrative and technical staff, a factory, office, estate shop, dispensary, school and on the larger estates, a hospital and recreation club, concentrated at a focal point on the estate or dispersed about the estate, for convenience of work, along estate roads. The dispersed settlements on the estates, however, no longer exist, for under the same conditions that created the resettlement "New Villages", the dispersed estate population was gathered and regrouped in nucleated settlements, usually round the factory and office. These Emergency measures also introduced other new features, like the barbed wire fencing which now surrounded the nucleated settlement and
Fig. 82. Singapore: Racial Groupings in the centre of Singapore City, 1952.

Fig. 83. Malaya: Racial Occupation of Shop-houses in the Main Street of Segamat, a typical Malayan town.

Source: Based on Field Work.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Restaurant</th>
<th>Malay General Shop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Tobacco Wholesaler</td>
<td>Chinese Cycle Shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Tailor Chinese Dhoby</td>
<td>Chinese General Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Furniture Dealer</td>
<td>Chinese General Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Cloth Merchant</td>
<td>Indian General Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Money Lender</td>
<td>Indian Barber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese General Merchant</td>
<td>Indian Cloth Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Barber</td>
<td>Chinese Contractor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Goldsmith</td>
<td>Indian Sundry Shop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Coffee Shop</th>
<th>Chinese General Merchant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Barber</td>
<td>Chinese Cloth Shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Solicitor's Firm</td>
<td>Indian Merchant (Cloth)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Wine Merchant</td>
<td>Indian Restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Sundry Shop</td>
<td>Chinese Photo Studio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Shoe Maker</td>
<td>Chinese General Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Cloth Shop</td>
<td>Chinese Medicine Shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian and Chinese Contractor</td>
<td>Chinese Cloth Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Dispensary</td>
<td>Chinese General Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Fruitshop</td>
<td>Chinese Restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Goldsmith</td>
<td>Chinese General Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Cloth Shop</td>
<td>Chinese Cloth Shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Photo Studio</td>
<td>Chinese General Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese General Merchant</td>
<td>Chinese General Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Pawnshop</td>
<td>Chinese General Merchant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fig. 84. Malaya: Shop-Houses.

Photos: Wong Outdoor Photo Service, Singapore.
the quarters of the special constables, who were recruited to provide security against terrorist attacks (Figs. 85, 86).

E. Ethno-Linguistic Composition

To the average Malay or Chinese, every South Indian is a *Kling* and all the other Indians are *Bengalis*, irrespective of their geographical or ethnic origins.1 While the 'blanket' division into North and South Indians is convenient, the ethno-linguistic composition of the Indian population is much more complex2 (Fig. 43) and here can be treated only in very general terms. Almost all the major ethno-linguistic groups of the Indian Sub-Continent are represented in Malaya but the most prominent are the South Indians. Traditionally, Malaya's contacts with India have been chiefly with South India and the South Indians formed 94.4 per cent of the total Indian population in Malaya in 1921 (Table XXX).

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1. See Glossary.

Fig. 85. Malaya: Johore Labis Oil Palm Estate Settlement.

Photo: Manager, Johore Labis Estate, Segamat, Johore.
Fig. 85. Malaya: General Rubber Estate Settlement.

A. The pre-Emergency layout of settlement.

B. The post-Emergency layout of settlement.

Source: Based on Field Work.
Table XXX: ETHNO-LINGUISTIC COMPOSITION OF THE INDIAN POPULATION OF MALAYA, 1921-1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethno-Linguistic Group</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1947</th>
<th>1957</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tamils: Numbers</td>
<td>387,509</td>
<td>514,778</td>
<td>460,985</td>
<td>634,951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As Percentage of South Indian Population</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>83.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As Percentage of Total Indian Population</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>73.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceylon Tamils: Numbers</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>16,783</td>
<td>28,051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As Percentage of South Indian Population</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As Percentage of Total Indian Population</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telegus: Numbers</td>
<td>39,986</td>
<td>32,536</td>
<td>24,093</td>
<td>27,694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As Percentage of South Indian Population</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>5.5</td>
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<td>As Percentage of</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Indian</td>
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<td><strong>Parsis:</strong></td>
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Table XXX (Continued)

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<th>Ethno-Linguistic Group</th>
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<th>1947</th>
<th>1957</th>
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<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
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<td>Other North Indians: Numbers</td>
<td>3,737</td>
<td>5,479</td>
<td>12,122</td>
<td>81,008(b)</td>
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<td>As Percentage of North Indian Population</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>85.5 (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As Percentage of Total Indian Population</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>9.4 (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total North Indian Population</td>
<td>25,495</td>
<td>39,635</td>
<td>54,231</td>
<td>94,769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population (c)</td>
<td>470,180</td>
<td>631,847</td>
<td>616,399</td>
<td>858,411</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Information not available.
(b) These figures include all North Indians other than Pakistanis.
(c) These totals may not agree with the total Indian population figures given in the census reports (Chapter I).

Source: Compiled from M.V. del Tufo, op.cit., p. 78;
1957 Population Census of the Federation of Malaya: Reports Nos. 2-12 (Kuala Lumpur, n.d.), Table 5;
Following the immigration of more North Indians, the Indian Government's ban on unskilled labour emigration, almost wholly South Indian, and the large number of deaths among the Tamil labourers during the Japanese Occupation, the proportion of South Indians in the total Indian population declined to 92.1 per cent by 1947, and a decade later, to 89.0 per cent. Thus, though their proportion is decreasing, the South Indian element is, numerically, still the most dominant element in the Indian population of Malaya.

Of the South Indians, the Tamil speaking group has been the largest in Malaya since the earliest contacts between India and Malaya, and in 1921 formed 87.1 per cent of the South Indian and 82.4 per cent of the total Indian population of Malaya. Over the last three decades, the proportion of the Tamil population in the total and South Indian population has been declining for the same reasons as cited for the whole of the South Indian element. In fact the decline in the total South Indian population has been largely the result of the decrease in the Tamil proportion since it is the latter that is the most dominant South Indian group. Any change in the Tamil population thus affects the whole of the South Indian population. For example, as the proportion of Tamils in the Indian population declined to 73.9 per cent between 1947 and 1957, there was, as discussed above, a concomitant decrease in the proportion of South Indians, as a whole, in the total Indian population (Table XXX).

Nearly two-thirds of the Tamils are on estates, where they form the bulk of the labour force. They are found mainly in the
Federated Malay States which contain nearly 80 per cent of the Tamils in Malaya. Within the Federated Malay States the largest concentrations are in the States of Perak and Selangor, particularly in the Kinta, Krian, Larut, Lower Perak, Klang, Kuala Langat and Kuala Lumpur areas, which contain some 50 per cent of all the Tamils of Malaya.

The Tamils are all from the Madras Province of India. Madras Province was the chief labour supply centre of pre-war Malaya.

Until the late 1930's, the Tamil population was almost entirely migrant and the natural increase or decrease factor practically negligible in its growth. Further, this population was, except for a very small clerical and mercantile element, a labouring population, mainly employed on the estates and, to a smaller extent, in mining and general labour. It followed that the increases in the Tamil population were closely dependent on the state of development of the country, and more particularly on the "health" of the rubber industry. Of late, following the Indian Government's ban on unskilled labour emigration, which affected the Tamils chiefly, and the improvement of sex-ratios among them, the Tamil population has become somewhat more settled. Furthermore, though the majority of them are still found on estates, they have spread to every walk of Malayan life. (Fig. 87).

The Telegus, natives of the hill country of the Eastern Ghats of South India, are also chiefly connected with the estate economy of Malaya. They too, like their Tamil counterparts, declined in numbers,

Fig. 87. Malaya: Indian Rubber Tappers.

A. A male Tamil rubber tapper.

B. A female Tamil rubber tapper.
from 39,986 in 1921 to 27,694 in 1957, making up only 3.3 per cent of the total Indian population and 3.6 per cent of the South Indians compared with 8.5 per cent, respectively, in 1921 (Table XXX). The Telegus, unlike the other Indians, brought their womenfolk with them in considerable numbers and their sex-ratios were always the highest among the Indian population. To-day the sexes among them are almost evenly balanced and the community leads a normal settled life.

The Telegus are most strongly represented in Perak, Johore and Kedah, chiefly on the rubber and coconut estates.

The Malayalis whose racial home is the Malabar coast, particularly the Cuddalore and Ramnad districts of the Kerala (Travancore) Province of India, are the only South Indian group in Malaya which has been steadily increasing. In 1957 they numbered 72,946, compared to 17,190 in 1921, and their proportion in the Indian population had increased to 8.5 per cent in contrast to only 3.5 per cent in 1921 (Table XXX).

The Malayalis suffered less from the ravages of the Japanese Occupation than the Tamils and Telegus, partly because of their superior physique and partly because the majority of them have always lived in towns where they are engaged mainly in stevedoring, clerical services and building trades. The Malayalis in the rural areas are mainly on the estates where they provide most of the subordinate administrative and technical staff. The numbers of the Malayalis in Malaya were further swelled following the influx of large numbers of their brethren into the country in the first few years of the post-World War II period.
These new arrivals found employment in the fast expanding British Military Bases, where they form the largest Indian group.

The Malayalis are most numerous in southern Malaya, their biggest concentrations being in Singapore, south-central Johore and the Klang/Kuala Lumpur area of Selangor. Of the Indian communities in Malaya, the Malayalis have been the least anxious to bring their womenfolk with them. The sex ratios are the lowest among them, with about only (1957) 250 females to every 1,000 males compared to the 900 : 1,000 female-male ratio of the Telegus. They are the least settled Indian group in Malaya and, in general, regard Malaya as a place of earning to support families in India.

Ceylon Tamils or Jaffna Tamils, as they sometimes called in Malaya, are descendants of Tamil emigrants, from South India, who settled in the Jaffna district of northern Ceylon in the early centuries of the Christian era. Ceylon Tamils were first enumerated separately in 1931, prior to which they were included in the general Indian population. In 1931, 10,000 Ceylonese were enumerated in Malaya and by 1957 this figure had more than doubled to reach 28,051, making up 3.7 per cent of the South Indian and 3.3 per cent of the total Indian population (Table XXX). The Ceylon Tamils in Malaya are the most literate of the various Indian groups. In 1955 more than 70 per cent of them could read and write English. It was in fact their knowledge of the English language that brought them initially to Malaya in the latter half of the nineteenth century. In nineteenth century Malaya, there was a shortage of subordinate technical, medical and clerical personnel,
particularly those with a knowledge of English, the language of the
government. Tamils of Ceylon, who had the advantage of an earlier
contact with the English language were brought into the country to
supplement the arrivals from Madras. It appears that the first Ceylon
Tamil to arrive in Malaya was one Mr. Vythilingam Pillai, who landed in
the country about 1875. He came in as an overseer. Other Tamils from
Ceylon, learning that better wages could be had in Malaya compared with
Ceylon, soon followed the pioneers. Their numbers grew steadily in
Malaya. To-day, the majority of the Ceylon Tamils are domiciled here.
They are found chiefly in the Government services — as teachers, doctors,
surveyors, station masters and clerks.

The bulk of the Ceylon Tamil population of Malaya is in the
Federated Malay States and Singapore Island, with the biggest concentrations
being in the Ipoh, Seremban, Singapore City and Kuala Lumpur, particularly
the latter, areas. Kuala Lumpur is the capital of the Federation of
Malaya and a large proportion of the Federal Railways' employees and, to
a lesser extent, of the other Government departments, is composed of
Ceylon Tamils.

As for the North Indians, by far the most numerous among them
are the Punjabis, who in 1947 numbered 30,592, or 56.3 per cent of the
total North Indian population of Malaya. These natives of the Punjab
Province of the Indian Sub-Continental comprised 60.6 per cent of the
North Indians in Malaya in 1921. This decrease in their proportion in
the total North Indian population, was chiefly because of the rise in
numbers of the other North Indians.
The most conspicuous of the Punjabis are the tall, bearded and turbaned Sikhs. The Sikhs are not only co-religionists but also form a very distinct social, economic and political community. The majority of the Sikhs in Malaya are from the Malwa, Majah and Doabah areas of the Punjab (Fig. 45) and in 1947 numbered 10,132 compared to 18,149 in 1931. This decrease, however, was not real, because many Sikhs were wrongly classified under some other heading, presumably, in view of their large increase, as Punjabis. In actual fact the Sikh population has been steadily increasing and in 1960 was estimated to number more than 20,000.

The Punjabis and Sikhs are found in most parts of Malaya but mainly in and near the large towns. Biggest numbers of these people are in Singapore, Selangor and Perak, particularly the latter, which was one of the first areas of Punjabi immigration into Malaya, shortly after the British occupation of the State in 1874.

The Punjabis and Sikhs were first attracted to Malaya by either military or semi-military employment. In 1872, when serious fighting took place between rival Chinese tin mining clans in Taiping, Perak, Captain Speedy was sent by the British to India to obtain recruits for a semi-military force. He brought back a force of 25 Pathans, Punjabi Mussulmans (Muslims) and Sikhs.\(^1\) The Sikhs gradually increased in numerical strength and by 1876 they had virtually replaced the Punjabi Mussulmans and Pathans who either returned to India or went elsewhere. After 1876, the Malayan Police Force consisted chiefly of Malays and

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Sikhs, until the Japanese Occupation. During the Occupation the majority of the Sikh policemen quit the Force and struck out on their own as money-lenders, watchmen and farmers, and did not return even after the War. Now, almost all the Sikhs in the Malayan Police Force are officers, the rank and file being Malay (Fig. 88).

It must be emphasized that not all the Sikhs who came into Malaya, came to or did join the Police Force. Many came in on their own and were employed as watchmen in the towns. They frequently combined this occupation with money-lending and other pursuits. Others took up stock-farming and bullock-cart driving in suburban and rural areas while quite a few came in as shopkeepers and traders.

To-day, the descendants of these pioneers are found in almost every sphere of the country's economy, but are particularly prominent in the professional and mercantile groups.

The rest of the North Indians are present only in small numbers in Malaya. In 1947 there were 3,166 Pathans in the country, chiefly in Singapore, Selangor and Kedah. These natives of the North-West Frontier Province of the Indian Sub-Continent first came to Malaya as police-recruits but have since "graduated" to money-lending, stock-farming, bullock-cart driving and acting as watchmen for business and commercial enterprises.

In 1921, 5,074 persons were returned as Bengalis while in 1947, only 3,834 were so enumerated. This decrease in the Bengali

1. North Indians are not separately enumerated in the 1957 Population Census of the Federation of Malaya or in the 1957 Census of Population, Singapore.
Fig. 83. Malaya: Sikh Sepoys.

A. The Sikh Body-guard of the Sultan of Perak (1907), Kuala Kangsar.


Photos: A. Wright.
numbers is not so much the decline in the population growth but rather
due to the fact that the 1921 figure for Bengalis also included a number
of Punjabis who were wrongly returned as Bengalis.

The Bengali proper, ¹ i.e., the native of Bengal, is not very often
met with in Malaya except in the larger towns, where they are employed
chiefly as clerks, artisans, shopkeepers, boatmen and of late as
professional people, particularly as teachers and doctors. The majority
of the Bengalis in Malaya are from the Calcutta and Dacca regions of Bengal
and are most numerous in Selangor, Perak and Singapore, especially the
latter, which contains almost half their total numbers in Malaya.

The Gujeratis have a long tradition of trading contacts with
Malaya² but unlike their predecessors, the present day Gujerati population
forms only a minor and relatively not very influential section, of the
Indian population. In 1947, there were 1,301 Gujeratis in the country,
with nearly half of these being in Singapore. Of the remainder, the
major portion were in Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Klang and Malacca. The
majority of the Gujeratis, like their predecessors, are connected with
the textile trade.

There were 1,301 Mahrattas in Malaya in 1947 compared with 403
in 1921. These natives of Bombay Province are chiefly concentrated in
the urban and suburban areas of Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Ipoh. They
are principally petty traders, stock-farmers, watchmen and money-lenders.

¹. See Glossary.
². See Chapter III.
The Marwaris, of the western Rajasthan, Bikaner and Mewar areas of North-Western India, are found almost wholly in the urban areas of Malaya, where they are prominent as enterprising merchants and bankers. Their numbers have steadily increased in Malaya and in 1947 there were 556 Marwaris in the country compared to only 29 in 1921.

The Rajputs, like their neighbours in India, the Punjabis, are chiefly engaged in money-lending, stock-farming and semi-military duties of guards and policemen of private enterprises. More than three-quarters of them (479 in 1947) are in Malacca, Kuala Trengganu, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, with the first mentioned having the largest numbers.

The Sindhis, natives of the Province of Sind, are the most prominent textile merchants of Malaya. Nearly all of them are in urban centres, with Singapore having more than half their numbers (728) in 1947, mainly in High Street, the "Textile Bazaar" of the Lion City. The numbers of the Sindhis substantially increased following the partition of the Indian Sub-Continent when there was a big influx of Sindhi refugees into Singapore and other urban centres of Malaya.¹

The Parsis are of Persian origin and are found chiefly in the Bombay area of India. In Malaya their numbers are small, only 98 in 1947. But despite their small numbers they are a very influential group, being big financiers and prominent lawyers and merchants. Nearly all of them are in the city of Singapore.

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¹ See Chapter IV.
Of the other North Indians in Malaya, the most numerous and prominent are the natives of the United Province (Uttar Pradesh) of North-eastern India. As stock-farmers, milkmen and "mobile" (on bicycle or tricycle) tea-hawkers, they are a common feature of almost every large town of Malaya. Their largest concentration is in Singapore - their biggest "market".

Pakistanis in Malaya were first enumerated separately in 1957, when 13,761 persons were so returned. Almost all of these nationals of Pakistan are Punjabi and Bengali Muslims, with the former being the most prominent. Their general distribution and occupations are identical with their Indian Punjabi and Bengali counterparts.

Summarizing, it could be said that the Indian population of Malaya has a dynamic pattern in which a rapid rate of growth, lack of uniformity in spatial concentration of numbers and a remarkable rate of urbanization are the outstanding characteristics.

The Indian numbers in Malaya have increased rapidly, through principally immigration in the earlier phases and later, with the improvement of the sex-ratios, through natural increase. Almost half of the present Indian population is below 15 years of age and its annual rate of increase (3.7 per cent) is higher than any other community in Malaya. Furthermore, unlike the transient character of the earlier population, the major portion of the present Indian population of Malaya is stabilized and locally born and domiciled.

A century ago the settled parts of Malaya consisted merely of a few clearings along the coast, up the rivers and in isolated patches in the forests and swamps. Production was restricted to some foodstuffs and jungle items. Yet to-day it is one of the richest and best developed countries in Asia, producing more than a third of the world's supply of tin and natural rubber, as well as large quantities of palm oil, copra and pineapples. In this transformation the Indians played a leading role for they were the pioneers in plantation agriculture and the development of modern communication lines. They laid the foundations of the rubber industry and of the present railway and road network of the country.

Until the mid-nineteenth century the Indian population was located almost wholly along the coast, in the Straits Settlements. But with the establishment of law and order in the Malay States, and the consequent development of modern transport lines and of sugar, coffee, rubber and oil palm plantations, the concentration of population moved inland from the coast to the rubber belt in the foothills of Western Malaya, and, except for slight modifications, has remained there ever since.

Finally, the rate of urbanization among the Indians has been remarkable. For example, the proportion of the urban dwellers in the total Indian population was less than 10 per cent in 1921, but within the next three decades it had increased to more than 50 per cent. To-day, it is estimated that almost 60 per cent of the Indians in Malaya are urban dwellers.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In considering the historical geography of the Indian community of 858,615 (1957), with its historical contacts with Malaya stretching over some 2,000 years, the first that becomes apparent is the number of aspects of the Indian community which have been just given a passing reference or, as in most cases, completely omitted. Little or nothing, for example, has been said about the internal migration of Indians; of demographic features, like fertility rates, age groups, birth ratios, death trends, etc.; of their co-operative movements; of the part played by members of their race in the municipal services; of their architectural styles; of the spatial arrangement of properties; of their regional and communal voting habits and political attitudes; and of the activities of their under-cover societies and their influence on the distribution and organisation of the different ethno-linguistic groups comprising the Indian population. However, many of these omissions, though the inclusion of them would have given a more complete picture of the Indians in Malaya, have been deliberate. The size of the community, the wide historical and spatial scope of the subject, coupled with the limitations of the availability of time and space, dictated concentration on the barest essentials of the topic. The purpose of this concluding chapter is to review the general characteristics of the Indians in Malaya and summarize some of the more salient tendencies apparent within the community.
The situation of Malaya, astride the Asian commercial and communication lines, makes it the focal point of Southeast Asia. Control of Malaya was thus essential to any power aspiring to dominance in Southeast Asia. This fact was recognized not only by the early Indian and Malay empires but also by the Portuguese, Dutch, English and the Japanese who followed them. Consequently external influences, particularly Indian, British and Chinese, have figured prominently in the political and economic evolution of the country, giving it a civilization that is essentially foreign.

Malaya's contacts with India go back to the pre-Christian era, when desire of commerce first brought Indian traders to its shores. These occasional trading voyages soon blossomed into an intimate embrace through intermarriage and cultural assimilation, giving rise to a number of city-states, since extinct, and an indigenous civilization, almost every aspect of which bears the stamp of Indian influence. This was the heyday of Indian influence in Malaya, for with the rise of the Malacca Sultanate and the arrival of European powers, particularly British, the whole position of the Indians was altered. In contrast to their earlier brethren, who represented a powerful and respected commercial and economic force, the Indians who now flocked into Malaya were chiefly illiterate labourers.

This transformation took place as British power was established in both India and Malaya and the economies of the two countries subordinated to imperial needs, which entailed the curbing of Indian enterprise and the encouragement of a flow of cheap, docile Indian labour in large
numbers to work the Malayan plantations and Government projects. In their wake followed petty shop-keepers, tradesmen, clerks and professional men to cater to special needs and also seek opportunities in the expanding economy of the country. This latter movement continued long after the labour migration was stopped by the Indian Government in 1938 but in a gradually decreasing volume, following immigration restrictions imposed by the Malayan Government in the post-war period. It was this section of the Indian migrants which first sank its roots in Malaya, thus beginning the stabilization of the local Indian population. In contrast, until only recently, the labourers formed a transitory floating population which kept coming and going since the beginnings of modern Indian migration, the volume of their movement depending on the economic conditions in Malaya.

The Indian population has increased steadily, through immigration until the 1930's, and later through natural increase, following the improvement in the sex-ratios and the general stabilization of the community. Most of the Indians in Malaya are now local born and are re-producing at a faster rate than the other communities. If the present trend keeps up their numbers are expected to pass the 1,500,000 mark by 1980. With stabilization, changes are also taking place in their occupational structure and urban-rural ratios.

Following the Indian Government's ban on unskilled labour emigration and the spread of education in Malaya the proportion of labourers in the Indian population has been steadily declining. For example, it is estimated that less than 50 per cent of the economically active Indians were labourers in 1960, compared to more than 80 per cent in the early
1920's. This trend will probably continue as the majority of the younger generation Indians appear to prefer clerical, technical, commercial and professional occupations.

In 1921 less than 10 per cent of the Indians were urban dwellers but by 1957 more than half of them were living in urban centres. By 1960, the proportion of the urban dwellers in the total Indian population was estimated to be as high as 60 per cent. If this rapid rate of urbanization is maintained, and there is no reason to believe that it will not be, Indians might well challenge the Chinese as the foremost urbanized community of Malaya in terms of the proportion of urban dwellers in the total population, though not in actual urban numbers.

The Indians have figured prominently in the political life of Malaya, especially since the Second World War. Prior to this, they had little political interest in Malaya, their activities being largely orientated towards the mother-country, with which they retained strong economic, sentimental and political links. Consequently most of their political organisations were just pale reflections of the Indian National Congress.\(^1\) This India-orientation of the Indians in Malaya was strengthened by periodic visits by Indian leaders like Pandit Nehru and

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1. A good example of this was the Central Indian Association of Malaya. The C.I.A.M. was inaugurated in 1936 and was the most representative and best supported Indian organisation in pre-war Malaya. It drew its inspiration from the Indian National Congress and worked to improve the economic and political status of the Indians in Malaya. It led scathing attacks on the discriminations against the Indians in Malaya and was largely responsible in getting the Indian Government to ban assisted Indian immigration into Malaya in 1938.
Srinivasa Sastri. It was finally brought into the open with the establishment of an Indian National Army (I.N.A.) in Malaya, following the defeat of the British by the Japanese in the Malayan Campaign.\(^1\)

Between 1942 and 1943 thousands of Indians volunteered to join the Indian National Army, under the command of Subhas Chandra Bose,\(^2\) for

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1. Only a brief account of the I.N.A. and its allied organizations that sprang up in Malaya and in other Southeast Asian countries, during the Japanese Occupation, is possible here as the subject is outside the scope of this study. A detailed analysis of the subject is, however, available in the following references:


2. Subhas Chandra Bose, a former President of the Indian National Congress, mysteriously escaped British house-arrest in Calcutta in January 1941 and made his way to Germany where he was contacted by the Japanese to mobilize the Indian independence movement in Southeast Asia.
the "sacred purpose of fighting for the independence of India". In addition Indian Independence League (I.I.L.) organizations were established in all leading centres in Southeast Asia, to recruit men, collect funds, and generally co-ordinate the independence movement.

Men and money poured into the independence movement on an unprecedented scale from all over Southeast Asia, particularly from Malaya, the headquarters of the movement. Though it is true that some of the volunteers joined the independence movement for safety, better rations, or want of something better to do, the majority were genuinely inspired and patriotic. They regarded themselves as the vanguard of the liberation movement and Subhas Chandra Bose the veritable Messiah come to lead them, with Japanese help, to the completion of the Indian struggle against Britain for freedom.

Many regiments of the I.N.A. fought bravely and with distinction on the Burma Front while the Tricolour was formally hoisted on Indian soil, at Madawk, in eastern Chittagong, in May, 1944. These successes, however, were short-lived. The whole independence movement collapsed following the I.N.A. and Japanese surrenders and the death of Subhas Chandra Bose in 1945. Short-lived though the Indian independence movement was in Malaya and the rest of Southeast Asia, its repercussions were nevertheless far-reaching in both India and Malaya.

In India members of the I.N.A. were acclaimed as national heroes. The I.N.A. became the rallying point of the Indian people and the Congress and helped to precipitate the final surrender of British power in India on August 15, 1947.

Fig. 89. Malaya: The Indian National Army.

A. The Formation of the Indian National Army, Singapore.

Photo: J.S. Jessy.

B. The Azad Hind (Free India) Cabinet.

Subhash Chandra Bose is in the front row, third from left. On his right is Miss Lakshmi Swaminathan, who was in charge of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment (Women's Auxiliary Force) of the I.N.A.

Photo: H. Toyo.
In Malaya, the independence movement, particularly the I.N.A. and its achievements, fired the imagination of the Indians and wrought a tremendous psychological revolution in their minds. The Indians, down to the humblest laborer, felt confident of themselves and proud of being Indians.

Over the last ten years the position of Indians in Malaya has, however, undergone a number of fundamental changes. In the first place, there has been a stabilization of the Indian population, more than 65 per cent of which was estimated to be Malayan-born in 1960. Secondly, though Indians still retain their emotional ties with India, actual contact with the country has been diminishing as illustrated by the decreasing frequency of visits of Indians in Malaya to India, a tendency accentuated by the disruption of shipping during the war and the doubling of the fare between Malaya and India since the Japanese Occupation. Thirdly, many Indians in Malaya were hoping to acquire dual Indian-Malayan citizenship, in an effort to enjoy the benefits of both, following the independence of India. This idea was not only condemned by Pandit Nehru but also by the Indian Government which made it quite clear that all Indians outside India must decide either to remain Indian citizens or become citizens of their country of domicile, preferably the latter, and that no dual citizenship would be entertained. Faced with the choice of remaining aliens in an independent Malaya, most of the Indians have decided to become Malayan citizens, an opportunity opened to them following political changes in September, 1952, allowing non-Malays to become citizens of Malaya provided they fulfilled the required residential
or birth qualifications for citizenship. As Malayan citizens, they now occupy a position that is increasing in importance in the political life of the country.

The Indians form an important minority in the Chinese and Malay dominated plural society of Malaya. This position of the Indians is increasing in importance, as they are wooed both by the Chinese and Malay elements of the population in their bid for domination. The Malays are citizens of the country by law. Only about half of the Chinese were eligible for citizenship in 1957, while even a smaller percentage had acquired citizenship. Among the Indians about 62 per cent of the population of 665,000 in 1953 was estimated to be eligible for Federal citizenship\(^1\) while to-day the percentage is very much higher. The majority of the Indians eligible for citizenship have taken out citizenship papers. Furthermore, the Indian population is increasing at a faster rate (3.7 per cent) than either the Chinese (3.3 per cent) or the Malays (3.5 per cent)\(^2\) thus increasing its voting strength and future representation in the government.

The distribution pattern of the Indian population and its economic concentration in the plantation industry, Malaya's chief primary producer, have also important political implications. The large Indian concentrations on estates, lying as they are between the major coastal and urban concentrations of Malay and Chinese populations, respectively, have

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the power to act as either unifying or separating agents or remaining neutral as buffers. In the economic sphere, through their predominance on estates as administrators and labourers, now organised into powerful trade unions, they have the power to make or mar the country's primary production and its chief item of export.

Since 1948, the Indians have had their own communal political party, the Malayan Indian Congress (M.I.C.). In coalition with the United Malay National Organisation (U.M.N.O.) and the Malayan Chinese Association (M.C.A.) it forms the Alliance Party, which not only successfully led the independence movement in the Federation of Malaya but is also the present (1961) governing party of the country. In addition Indians also form the core of the important non-communal multi-racial political parties of Malaya, as for example, the Socialist Front in the Federation and the Peoples Action Party in Singapore. It appears that, in contrast to their earlier attitudes of being "birds of passage in temporary exile from their village hearth", the Indians are becoming increasingly "Malayanized" and it seems likely that as they tend to identify their interests with the future of the country they will assume an even greater role in its politico-economic development. This, however, will depend on the resolving of the existing differences between them and the other two main communities of the country, the Chinese and the Malays, particularly the latter, who as the indigenous people hold overall political sway in Malaya.

Malaya has a name and a government while an international treaty recognizes its existence as a state and defines its territorial limits.
But these hardly create it into a Malayan National State, which is still a myth. There are few centripetal forces in the political geography of the country to foster national cohesion. In contrast, centrifugal forces are numerous and formidable, making territorial and political unification of the country difficult. For example, vast stretches of swamp, jungle and mountain ranges cut off one population centre from another while the federal constitutional structure of the country gives individual States too much power. This fosters parochial rather than national loyalties. This situation is aggravated by the deepseated rivalry between Kuala Lumpur and Singapore as to which of the two is better fitted for the role of Malayan capital. Kuala Lumpur is the Federal capital but Singapore, though politically separated from the mainland, is still the economic heart of the country. But serious though they are, the above separating influences appear insignificant in comparison to the schisms among the people of Malaya.

The people of Malaya are divided along ethnic lines. There has been no development of a common patriotism and common willingness to make sacrifices for the common good. Men are still Malays, Chinese, Indians or Muslims, Buddhists or Hindus. They feel themselves neither fellow-citizens nor brothers in God or strife. Malaya has no "Marseillaise" or "Magna Carta" or any other such symbol arousing a common reverence in all. There are few non-communal political parties or attitudes to the outside world while the mutual prejudices engendered by religious differences and social taboos are further accentuated by the differences in population distribution patterns and economic pursuits.
The Malays are largely a rural people with most of them still tied down to chiefly small-holding self-supporting agriculture. The Chinese on the other hand are the principal middlemen, controlling most of the business and retail trade, in addition to a substantial portion of the rubber and tin industries, while the Indians are most prominent on plantations, both as labourers and non-labourers, and in towns as administrators, clerks, tradesmen, and professional people. While the Malays have their greatest concentrations in the northeastern and northwestern parts of the country — in the chief rice-growing areas of Malaya, the Kelantian Delta and the Kedah Plain, respectively — the Indians and Chinese are largely found in the tin and rubber areas of the western littoral.

These ethnic, cultural and economic differences among its people have often led people to describe Malaya as a country with a "cleaved plural society". To weld together this plural society of Malays, Indians and Chinese into a unified and loyal Malayan citizenry — with a Malayan consciousness — is probably the country's major problem. Assimilation and not Communism is the most perplexing and pressing issue in the political geography of Malaya to-day.

The schisms among the main groups of the country's people are largely the result of the traditional British colonial policy of divide et impona. The British pursued a pro-Malay policy. The immigrant Indians and Chinese were tolerated as they served the needs of tropical colonization. The Malay, while he was prepared to let the other community be, resented any encroachment by the other races on his special economic and religious privileges guaranteed by the British. The Indians and
Chinese formed the "floating population"—thousands of them coming and going annually. Denied any substantial political rights in Malaya, largely because of their transitory character and the pro-Malay policy of the Government, the loyalties of the Indians and Chinese lay with India and China, respectively. Peace and prosperity in Malaya, orientation of the political and emotional interests of the immigrant communities outside Malaya, and the political passiveness of the Malays, largely kept the racial problem in pre-war Malaya in the background and below the surface.

The Japanese Occupation, the role of the Indians in the Indian National Army, the "Interim Three Star Regime" of the M.P.A.J.A., together with the agitation against the Malayan Union proposals by the Malays and the subsequent campaigning for independence, completely altered the pre-war picture of communal relations. The smouldering racial prejudices and fears now came up to the surface.

The above events developed in the Malay a political consciousness to a degree never known before. He became more and more militantly nationalist while a sense of kinship, through closer contact and unity of purpose, was forged between the Malays of the different States. The whole position of the Indians changed too, for with the disruption of normal communications, as a result of the Japanese Occupation and the emergence of an independent India together with its denunciation of dual loyalties and dual citizenship, the Indian population has gradually become stabilized, regarding Malaya now as its home. The same can be said of the Chinese. Thus, while the immigrant communities are becoming more and more aware of their political position in Malaya, the Malays are
becoming increasingly militant and resent the fact that they have become an economically poor minority in their own country. They feel they have become "step-children" in their own land as a result of Chinese and Indian immigration.

The dilemma of the Malays appears to be that while they desire immigrant co-operation, they fear it can only be obtained by making concessions to the Indians and Chinese. Many of them believe that concessions such as equal citizenship and greater participation in the political administration of the country would result in the consolidation of Chinese and Indian economic influence with greater political power leading to an eventual control of the country by these groups. Many Malays, in fact, feel their country should not be at all ruled by "foreigners" who came for commercial advantages and who, particularly in the past, showed little interest in the life of the country.

The Indians and Chinese believe that the economic unbalance between them and the Malays is partly due to the Malay's lack of initiative and enterprise. They are discriminated against in almost every field of Government employment and yet are taxed more heavily, proportionately speaking, than the Malays. Jus soli is denied to them while they are called to give their all to the Malayan cause. Furthermore, they fear that their very linguistic and cultural affinities are threatened through a drastically Malay language biased educational policy.

A number of solutions have been suggested to these racial problems by Malay politicians. First, exclude the Indians and Chinese from Malayan citizenship, making the Malaya-born among them, "a people without a country". The undesirableness of this measure are obvious
while even with no immigration, the Malays will face the problem of increasing numbers of Chinese and Indians as a result of their higher rate of natural increase. Second, incorporate Sarawak, North Borneo and Brunei to increase the number of Malays in the total population. Third, federate with the Republic of Indonesia whose citizens are also largely Muslim Malays. But with the present trend of events in British Borneo and Indonesia, suggestions two and three appear unpracticable and undesirable. Fourth, create a single unified and patriotic Malayan citizenry from the different ethnic and cultural groups of the country. This appears to be the most attractive and feasible of the above solutions.

The majority of the Indians and Chinese are in Malaya to stay. More than 65 per cent of them are local born and the ratio of local-born to foreign-born will keep on increasing, unless a drastic change occurs in the present immigration policy of the country. With the present trend, a reversal of the Malayan immigration policy regarding the entry of aliens, including Indians and Chinese, is most unlikely. Thus, with the Indian and Chinese settled communities forming more than half the total population

1. Entry into Malaya by aliens for purposes of employment and settlement has been further restricted through the enactment of a fresh legislation in 1959. By this enactment, entry into Malaya, for the above purposes, is to be limited to only those who can furnish proof that they are "entitled to a salary of not less than one thousand two hundred dollars (Malayan) a month". Furthermore, the Government has to be satisfied that such an entry would not be prejudicial to any local interest. Even if an applicant fulfils all the above conditions the Government still reserves the right to refuse admission, without having to submit any reasons (Colony of Singapore, "The Immigration Regulations, 1959", Government Gazette Supplement, No. 37, Thursday April 30, 1959, Singapore, 1959, pp.539-94).
of the country, no viable political system, much less a united Malaya can be created unless due consideration is given to these immigrant groups and their active support obtained. The new Malayan Nation can never be wholly Malay nor can it be Indian or Chinese. Rather it will have to be Malayan, in which each community would have its rightful place.

Sentimental links with New Delhi and Peking, particularly in view of the rise of India and China as international powers, are likely to remain, but on the whole the Indian and Chinese communities are gradually drawing away from the pull of their native hearths and are thinking more and more in terms of Malaya as their home. They, however, cannot be expected to give their loyalty to Malaya unless they are given equal rights with the Malays. The principle of *jus soli*, without qualification, should operate for citizenship while equal opportunity for employment should be assured to all, irrespective of ethnic origin or cultural beliefs. These aspirations of the Indians and Chinese will have to be met if they are to identify themselves emotionally with Malaya. The improvement in the economic status of the Malays could go hand in hand with the improvement of the political status of the Indians and Chinese. Attempts to keep these immigrant groups in a permanent state of political inferiority can only wreck the chances of building a Malayan Nation. Such attempts would only throw the Indians and Chinese in Malaya into the arms of their country of origin and thus probably bring about in due course that very Chinese or Indian expansion, particularly the former, which the Malay so fears. On the other hand, practical concrete measures will have to be taken to see that that the Indians and Chinese, once and for all,
make up their minds whether to be Indian, Chinese or Malayan citizens. Dual citizenships and divided loyalties will have to be discarded. The immigrant communities will have to identify themselves with the country in a practical manner. Just registration or declaration will not be enough. Loyalty will be wanted. Given equal rights as the Malays, this loyalty and responsibility are imperative.

Malaya is politically a young country lying in the shadow of China and India in a traditionally colonial region in which at present a power vacuum exists following the gradual withdrawal of the Western colonial powers. A policy of tolerance and foresightedness, based on geographical realities, is urgently needed if a Malayan Nation is to evolve, and prosper, from the various communities inhabiting the country. Planned exploitation of the limited natural resources for the common good, inter-racial marriages and equal rights of opportunity and citizenship for all may hold the answers for Malayan unity and prosperity.
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APPENDICES
### APPENDIX A

#### INDIANS OVERSEAS

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name of Country</th>
<th>Indian Population</th>
<th>Year of Census or Estimate</th>
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<td>27. Northern Rhodesia</td>
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<td>39. Windward Is. (Excluding St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Grenada)</td>
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<tr>
<td>40. Zanzibar and Pemba</td>
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1. Except for Malaya, the term "Indian" here excludes Ceylon Tamils completely and Pakistanis after 1948.
APPENDIX A (Continued)

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APPENDIX B

Governor Sir Harry Ord's Plea for the Retention of the Indian Convict Establishment, Straits Settlements, 1870

"... It had been brought to my notice that question of the retention of the Convict Establishment had during the last year or two occupied something of public attention and I had reason to believe ... that the feeling of the public which some years since was expressed in the strongest manner against the retention of Indian criminals in the Settlements had undergone some change but I was not prepared for the sudden and very decided expression of opinion to which utterance was given last week in favour of the retention of the Establishment and the re-assumption of transportation to the Colony.

Although the change is a great one it has been forced upon the thinking portion of the public, as it has been on me - by the state of the labour market in the Settlements. The opening out of fresh ground in so many directions not only in the Settlements themselves but in the neighbouring countries, as Johore (where there are now probably 30,000 Chinese where 3 years since not a tenth of the number were to be found), is interfering with one and that the most important of our supplies -- difficulties are arising with respect to the immigration of coolies from India and there is reason to apprehend that the result will be an increased difficulty in obtaining labour for private purposes, if not an addition to the cost of the labour itself ....

... The proper development of the Settlements cannot be looked for, until far free access than now exists is afforded to the interior of the country .... I'll only remark that the great part of Singapore is altogether inaccessible. At Malacca large tracts of fertile food producing country are lying barren for want of roads and the newly acquired territory of Province Wellesley is valueless until means of communication are made throughout it whilst much remains to be done in this respect before the older part of the Settlements are properly accessible ....

... What the country wants is a large increase in its food producing power and that this, and a corresponding increase in its production of agricultural imports, sugar, spices, drugs, etc., may be justly anticipated if only a sufficient supply of labour at a reasonable cost can be obtained, but that there is not and not likely to be such a supply as would enable this increase to progress simultaneously with the exception of those public works ... which are needed for the development of its agricultural resources.

There is but one way of affecting this object on which ... a considerable part of the Settlements' ... further advancement if not the maintenance of its present position depends and this as I have already stated appears to me to rest in furnishing it with convict labour."

Source: Extract from Governor Sir Harry Ord's Despatch to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Straits Settlements Records, 1870, No.213/22, 10. 1870, cited by N. Jagathesan, op.cit., Appendix A.
APPENDIX C

FORM OF CONTRACT BETWEEN IMMIGRANT AND EMPLOYER

This contract made under the S.S. Ord. No. 1 of 1876 between (immigrant's name) of the one part and (employer's name) of the other part. Whereas the said (employer's name) has promised the said (immigrant's name) (hereinafter called 'the immigrant') that if the said immigrant do proceed to the Settlement of ____________, and do remain and labour therein on the estate of the said (employer's name), his successors, representatives, and assigns hereafter called 'the employer') he, the said employer, his successors, representatives, and assigns, will advance all necessary funds for providing for the passage of the said immigrant to the Settlement, and other expenses necessary for enabling the said immigrant to proceed on the voyage, and will, from the date of the arrival of the said immigrant on such estate, pay or cause to be paid to the said immigrant the sum of 12 cents as wages if working in the first-class gang, and the sum of 10 cents if working in the second-class gang, daily for such labour, payable monthly, for ____________ years from the date of the arrival of the said immigrant on such estate.

Now this contract witnesseth that the said immigrant doth hereby, in consideration of the aforesaid promise by the said employer and of the agreement by him hereinafter contained, agree with the said employer, that he the said immigrant will, so soon after the execution of these presents as he shall be required so to do, proceed to the Straits Settlements, and will there remain and labour on the estate of the said, his successors, representatives, or assigns, or on any other estate in the said Settlement which the said employer, his successors, representatives, or assigns, may direct, for a period of ________ years from the date of his the said immigrant's arrival on such estate, subject to the several provisions of the Straits Settlements Ordinance, No.1 of 1876, in that behalf made and enacted, and will repay to the said employer the sums advanced to him by the said employer. And this contract further witnesseth that the said employer doth hereby, for himself, his successors, representatives, and assigns, in consideration of the said agreement by the said immigrant, agree with the said immigrant that he the said employer will, with all convenient despatch after the execution of these presents, convey or cause to be conveyed the said immigrant into the estate of the said employer, in the Settlement of ____________ aforesaid, and will from the date of his the said immigrant's arrival on such estate employ the said immigrant as a labourer for the period aforesaid, and will pay or cause to be paid to the said immigrant as wages for such labour the wages agreed upon as aforesaid daily, payable monthly, as directed by the said Ordinance, and will not deduct from the said wages in payment of advance made by the said immigrant more than the sum of one dollar for each and every month, and will supply or cause to be supplied to the said immigrant rice and all such other matters as are required to be supplied according to the rules proscribed under the said Ordinance, at such rates as are by the said Ordinance or Rules directed, deducting the price of articles supplied from the wages of the said immigrant.
And the said employer hereby binds himself, his successors, representatives, and assigns, generally to fulfil all the conditions and perform all duties imposed on him by the said Ordinance.

Note: The execution of this contract must be attested before the Protector of Immigrants, or such officer as may be appointed by the proper authorities in India, and be witnessed by the Emigration Agent appointed by the Government of the Straits Settlements in India, who shall certify that the agreement was duly explained to the immigrant.

Source: N. Jagathesan, op. cit., Appendix C.
This Agreement made the 29th day of December Nineteen Hundred and Four, between the Government of the Straits Settlements (hereinafter called "the Government") of the one part and the British India Steam Navigation Company, Ltd., (hereinafter called "the Company") of the other part. Whereby it is agreed by and between the Government and the Company as follows:

(1) The date of the commencement of this Agreement shall be deemed to be the Twelfth Day of February 1905 and it shall continue in force for a period of three years certain from that date. If either party shall desire that this Agreement should terminate at the end of the said period of three years or at any time thereafter, and gives to the other party six months' notice in writing of such desire then on the expiration of the said period of six months the Agreement shall ipso facto terminate. If no such notice is given the contract will continue indefinitely.

(2) During the continuance of this Agreement the Company shall provide and maintain a fortnightly service of steamers between Penang and Negapatam or Madras. The steamers shall leave Penang not later than every alternate Saturday and Negapatam or Madras every alternate Sunday at 9 a.m. or as soon as thereafter as the marts are on board. The Superintendent of the Colonial (Malayan) Government Depot at Negapatam shall have the option of delaying the steamer for a period not exceeding 24 hours to wait for the mails from Europe or of expediting its departure by a period not exceeding 12 hours, should the mails from Europe arrive before the time fixed for the steamer's sailing. The aforesaid hours may be altered hereafter by Agreement between the contracting parties. Postponements and accelerations of departures are to be made on written notice to be given at Negapatam.

(3) The Government contracts during the continuance of this Agreement to take annually eighty thousand tickets for adult coolies from Negapatam or Madras or the ports intermediate between the two to Penang or Singapore with usual reductions for minors and upon the usual conditions, the voyage to begin and end on board ship. Should notice under Clause 1 be given by the Government the number of tickets to be taken by the Government for the six months during which the Agreement continues shall be 4,000, but if the said notice be given by the Company the Government shall not be bound to take any tickets during the said period of six months.
(4) The passage money payable for a ticket for an adult under the last preceding Clause shall be as follows:

11 Rupees for a passage from Negapatam to Penang
13 " " " " Madras to Penang
16 " " " " Negapatam to Singapore
18 " " " " Madras to Singapore

these rates to include food during the voyage, to be supplied by the Company. In the event of the rate for ordinary passengers falling as low as or below the rates mentioned in this Clause (owing to any cause whatsoever) it is understood that the Government has to pay the rates above stated.

(5) The Company shall supply tickets to the Government at the rates mentioned in the last preceding Clause for the first eight thousand, and shall supply additional tickets if required by the Government at the following rates:

For every ticket above 8,000 but not exceeding 12,000 one rupee in addition to the rates mentioned in Clause 4.

For every ticket in excess of 12,000 but not exceeding 16,000, two rupees in addition to the rates mentioned in Clause 4.

For every ticket in excess of 16,000, three rupees in addition to the rates mentioned in Clause 4.

Provided always that in the event of the rate for ordinary passengers, owing to outside competition or for any other reasons whatsoever, falling as low as or lower than the rates mentioned in Clause 4 no excess rate shall be charged to Government by the Company whatever the number of tickets taken may be beyond eight thousand.

(6) The passage tickets shall be provided by the Company and supplied to the Superintendent of the Depot and shall be paid for in cash on delivery of the tickets. The tickets shall be numbered consecutively and shall be in counterfoil.

(7) The Superintendent of the Depot shall not use more than 450 tickets for any one steamer unless he shall give the Company's Agents at Negapatam (or at any other port at which the coolies will be shipped) at least 3 full days' notice of his intention to require a larger number which shall not exceed 600 in all or one half of the total number of passengers (whichever be the greater), for which the steamer is licensed. Twenty-four hours before the time fixed for the departure of the steamer the Superintendent of the Depot shall finally declare the number of tickets that he will require for that sailing and after declaration no additional tickets can be claimed. Passages so declared shall be paid for even if not used.
(8) The Government agrees to forward by the Company's steamers all coolies from India in which they are directly or indirectly interested and the Company on the other hand agrees to provide tonnage in excess of the contract steamers, if need be, to take forward all the Government coolies for whom passages are required within a reasonable time.

(9) All Government coolies from Negapatam or Madras shall be embarked by Saturday afternoon.

(10) During the continuance of this Agreement the Government shall pay to the Company a subsidy of M$60,000 per annum payable quarterly at the end of each quarter.

(11) The Company shall convey all Government Inspectors and Officers of the Indian Immigration Department travelling on duty free of charge upon all its steamers sailing under this Agreement.

(12) The Government shall provide adequate quarantine facilities at Penang so that in case of any sickness among the passengers that may be landed at Penang, the Company's steamers may not be detained to the detriment of the regularity of the service.

(13) Steamers employed under this service to be allowed, outward and inward, the use of a berth at the Government Wharf at Penang free of charge, a suitable berth to be reserved for them on the Company's Agents giving notice of expected time of arrival; Government to have the right to levy the customary dues on cargo and livestock from consignees.

(14) The steamers of this service shall be exempted as Mail Steamers from the operations of the Sunday Labour Ordinance No. 6 of 1892.

Signed at Singapore by the Hon. F.G. Penny, Colonial Secretary on behalf of the Government of the Straits Settlements in the presence of E.L. Brockman, Assistant Colonial Secretary.

Signed at Singapore by W.P. Waddell, for Messrs. Boustead and Co. on behalf of the British India Steam Navigation Company Ltd., in the presence of Alex E.T. Murray, Assistant, Boustead and Co.

Source: The Selangor Records, 1905, No. 614/05.
APPENDIX E

A SUMMARY OF THE FUNCTIONS OF THE IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE AND THE INDIAN (TAMIL) IMMIGRATION FUND

The control and supervision of immigration was in 1907 vested in an Immigration Committee consisting of the Superintendent of Labour as Chairman, the Principal Medical Officer of the Federated Malay States and four of five non-official gentlemen, members of firms of estate agents or managers of estates. This Committee after consulting the Planters' Association of Malaya recommended that the cost of importation of Tamil labourers should be distributed amongst all those who employed them and the Indian Immigration Fund Enactment (Tamil Immigration Fund Ordinance in the Colony of Straits Settlements) was subsequently passed. This enactment was later incorporated in the Federated Malay States Labour Code of 1912. Similar enactments or rules were passed in the Unfederated Malay States. In the Colony, the law relating to Indian labourers had not yet been codified (i.e. by 1917) but for all practical purpose it was identical with the provisions of the Federated Malay States Labour Code of 1912.

Under these laws, an assessment on the amount of work done by their labourers was levied upon all employers of Indian labour and the proceeds were paid into a fund styled the Immigration Fund. Employers were required to send in to the Labour Office, Penang, certified returns of their Indian labour for each quarter of every year. The returns were to be sent within a month of the expiration of each quarter, i.e. in April, July, October and January. These returns were assessed according to the rates published for each quarter in the Government Gazette and each employer was duly sent a notice informing him of the amount of assessment he was required to pay. The amount each employer was assessed at was to be forwarded to the Deputy Controller of Labour, Penang, within 21 days of the posting of the notice and for payments made after such period, the employer was charged interest at the rate of 8 per cent per annum on the amount assessed.

All such payments were credited to the Immigration Fund, which formed no part of the general revenue of the Government, but was administered by the Controller of Labour under the authority of the Immigration Committee solely in the interest of importers of the Indian labour. The Government was in fact the largest single contributor to the Fund through the assessments which it paid on all Indian labour employed in the Railways, Public Works Department, Municipalities, Sanitary Boards and other departments.

The law (section 156 of the Federated Malay States Labour Code, 1912) provided for the levy of two rates, one ordinary, on all Indian labourers employed, and the other, a special, or extra rate on the Indian labourers employed over and above the number recruited from India by the employers within the last 24 months; the maximum assessment per labourer per quarter did not exceed three dollars.
All employers of Indian labour engaged in agriculture, road construction, the construction and maintenance of canals, railway construction, construction of public works, mining, quarrying, brick making and factory work were brought within the scope of the law.

When an estate manager or other employer wished to recruit Indian labour, he selected his own recruiters from amongst his labour force and applied to the Indian Immigration Committee at Penang for a licence. Licences to recruit labourers in the Madras Presidency were then issued to these persons (kanganies) on the authority of the Chairman of the Immigration Committee and were granted free of charge.

At Madras and at Negapatam emigration offices had been established by the Malayan Government under the charge of their officers. The agent at Madras was an officer of the Colonial Civil Service and the agent at Negapatam was an officer of Straits Medical Service. There were also fourteen recruiting inspectors stationed at various places in the Madras Presidency. They assisted kanganies, by giving them train fares to Negapatam or Madras for the labourers recruited. The kanganie on receipt of his licence from Penang had it registered in the office of the Emigration Agent (Madras or Negapatam).

Messrs. Binny & Co., Madras, or Messrs. The Madura Co., Negapatam, generally acted as financial agents for employers in the Straits. (The Malay Peninsula Agricultural Association Agency in Madras and Negapatam also acted as financial agents for certain estates). The agents made advances to the kanganies, and paid commission to them for each labourer recruited and shipped. (The advances made were deducted from the commission).

Large advances were no longer made to the kanganie in Malaya and the risk that he might squander away such advances was avoided by this new arrangement. The financial agents informed the estates in advance of the number of labourers shipped for each estate.

The labourers recruited were brought to the Straits Governments’ depots at Avadi (near Madras) or Negapatam. Here they were well provided for with feed and accommodation before embarkation.

The emigrants were conveyed in the subsidized steamers of the British India Steam Navigation Company. On board the steamers two or three Indian inspectors, employed by the Immigration Fund Committee, looked after the welfare of the emigrants.

All emigrants were quarantined in Penang or Port Swettenham at the Government quarantine camps. The cost of feeding them was borne by the Fund. After quarantine they were taken to the immigration depots in Penang and Port Swettenham.

Of the expenditure involved in bringing the labourers to Malaya the following items were borne by the Fund:
(i) Salaries of recruiting inspectors and of inspectors on board steamers.

(ii) Train fares of labourers.

(iii) Cost of feeding labourers at Government depots in Avadi and Negapatam and at the quarantine camps in Malaya.

(iv) Cost of transporting the labourers from Avadi or Negapatam to their first place of employment in Malaya.

(v) Cost of repatriation of bona-fide assisted labourers.

The Government bore the expenses of administering the Fund. It maintained the emigration depots in India and the immigration depots in Malaya; it provided Government officials in India to supervise emigration and paid a large annual subsidy to the British India Steam Navigation Company to run a weekly service.

Other charges met by the Fund were:

(a) The maintenance of a home for decrepit Indian labourers (opened at Kuala Lumpur in 1913).

(b) Payment of interest upon money borrowed by the Committee.

(c) The payment of recruiting allowances. (Since the Fund was started, an allowance was paid to employers in respect of each Indian labourer imported by them under the Committee's licences. This allowance varied from ₹3 to ₹5 per head).

(d) The payment of the cost of preparing registers of locally engaged Indian labourers.

A large part of the sum collected for the Immigration Fund was thus spent on either meeting the expense of recruiting or in encouraging employers to recruit. However the fact that recruitment was well supervised, meant that the labourer was well protected.

Notes.

(1) Present Status of the Malayan Emigration Depots in India

A South Indian industrialist, Mr. A.M.M. Murugappa Chettiar, on behalf of the Madras Government, concluded negotiations with the Federation of Malaya Government in 1955, for the purchase of the 190-acre Avadi Camp, Madras, for M$1,000,000. The Madras Government expects to use the Avadi Camp property for police quarters and a multi-million dollar plant for the manufacture of steel tubes and allied products.

The other Malayan depots in India have also been sold.

(2) Indian Immigration Fund

Since 1938 there has been no assisted immigration of unskilled Indian workers to Malaya. The expenses in connection with recruitment of Indian labour have thus ceased and other expenditure is also on a considerably lower scale. The collection of cess which was leviable upon the employers, was discontinued in 1941, and has not been re-introduced since. As the supply of labour in Malaya is now more than sufficient and it is unlikely that the Government of India will change its attitude regarding emigration of unskilled labour, it was decided to wind up the business of the Indian Immigration Committee and the Indian Immigration Fund. Accordingly legislation was enacted in 1958, by which the above Committee and Fund ceased to function and the proceeds were to be divided in the ratio of 1:14 between Singapore and the Federation, the two component independent political units of Malaya. Singapore was to get only 1/14 of the total because it was just one of the 14 units
subscribing to the Fund, the others being from the Federation.¹

In 1952 the total amount in the Fund was M$12,000,000 but by 1958 it had dwindled to M$$7,083,037.69 following expenses incurred in repatriating Indian labour.² Singapore got about half a million dollars (Malayan) while the remainder was instituted into a South Indian Labour Fund by the Federation Government. This Fund was to be administered by the South Indian Labour Fund Board, set up in 1958, for the benefit of South Indian labourers. A South Indian labourer was defined as "any person whose mother tongue is or the mother tongue of either of whose parents is, Tamil, Telegu, Malayalam, Canarese or Oriya."³

This Fund may be disbursed for:

(i) Repatriation of and assistance to such Indian labourers and their dependants or orphans as would, but for the repeal of the enactment, have been eligible to be repatriated or assisted by the Committee at the expense of the Indian Immigration Fund.

(ii) Maintenance of aged or decrepit South Indian labourers and their dependants or orphans.

(iii) Acquisition, construction and maintenance and disposal of depots for housing South Indian labourers, whether such depots be in the Federation or elsewhere.

(iv) Welfare or benefit of South Indian labourers in need of assistance.

(v) Any other purpose for the benefit of South Indian labourers, which may from time to time be authorised by the Board after consultation with the Government.⁴

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³ "South Indian Labour Fund Ordinance", op. cit.

⁴ Ibid.
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### TOTAL ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES OF INDIANS BETWEEN MALAYA AND INDIA, 1871-1897

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<th>Total Arrivals</th>
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### SOURCES

### APPENDIX G

**POPULATION OF MALAYA, 1871 - 1957**

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Federation</th>
<th>Singapore</th>
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<tr>
<td>1835</td>
<td>d</td>
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<tr>
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<td>731,067</td>
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*d* = Information unavailable.

1. Figures for Straits Settlements only.
2. Figures for Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States only.
### APPENDIX G (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Year</th>
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<th>Malay</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Population of India (000's)</th>
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<tr>
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<td>173,861</td>
<td>192,623</td>
<td>387,247&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>445,916</td>
<td>887,910&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>528,926</td>
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<td>470,000&lt;sup&gt;(Estimate)&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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**Source:**

1. **Malaya:** Compiled from M.V. del Tufo, *op. cit.*, Appendix C, Table 1; 1957 Population Census of the Federation of Malaya, Report No.1 (Kuala Lumpur, n.d.), Table 1; 1957 Census of Population, Singapore: Preliminary Release No.2 (Singapore, 1959), Table II.