

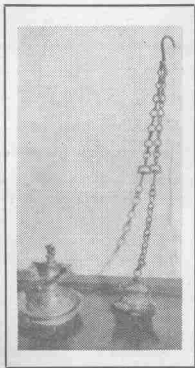
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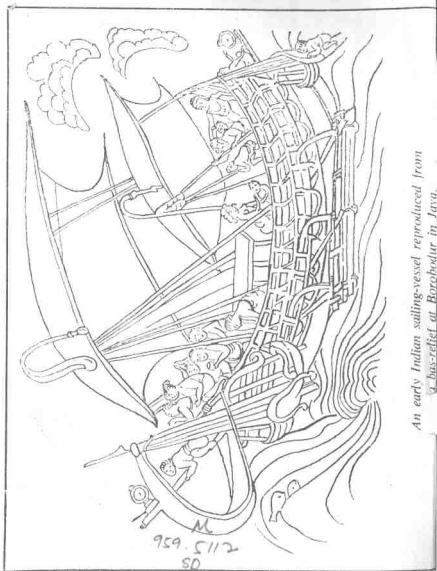
September 1966

(Revised and enlarged)



# INDIANS in EARLY MALAYA





*An early Indian sailing-vessel reproduced from  
a bas-relief at Borobudur in Java.*

4624

29 MAR 1972  
Perpustakaan Negara  
Malaysia

# LANGKASUKA

*(Glimpses of Indians in Malaysia in ancient times)*

BY

**S. Durai Raja Singam**

Have you ever looked down over the city of Penang from the Penang Hill? It is a most wonderful scene. Below us round about there are the green jungle slopes, the reservoir and the tower of the Ayer Hitam temple. There is the city of Penang jutting out on its promontory and ships lying in the strait between the island and the mainland coast. Over there to our right Pulau Jerjak and the other small green islets, while to our left on the mainland is the majestic form of Kedah Peak. Let us cast our minds back awhile to think of earlier visitors to this corner of the world. Penang is a green island — there is no reservoir, no temple, no city, no steamships but the rest of the scene is as much as we see it to-day. There is the lovely strait scattered with islands, there is the low and swampy mainland coast fringed with mangroves and there is the same majestic outline of Kedah Peak. There are little ships sailing by. Let us in imagination leave the hill and take our place with the passengers on one of these ships rather larger than the rest as she first enters the crystal-blue Malaysian waters at Kuala Merbok.



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We are thankful to see dry land again. The passage from India has not been a very pleasant one for those of us who are unaccustomed to the sea. Besides some of us have come for the first time. There is an attraction about the unknown, even when it may spell danger, and it is this attraction that has bouyed us up on our long journey. We have had our share of the peril, storms have assailed us but we have come through all safely and we now find that we have attained our goal—the fabulous *Swarnabhumi*.

We are just coming up the estuary and the waters of the *Bujang* River seem calm and smooth after the long voyage across the Bay of Bengal. There is not much yet to see of the land except the long fringe of mangroves and above us on the left the green slopes of *Kedah Peak*. Here once was *Langkasuka*, the Delightful Land where we Hindu colonisers had made our way to the top of the mountain and built our shrines. This peak was the abode of our gods and their shadow a protection for our ships and people to live in safely. We have brought a cargo of clothes, beads, precious stones and other Indian wares but at the moment more in evidence are the passengers excited at having reached Malaysia at last. There are with us some South Indian traders with jewels and beads and pearls who would spend the next months here and in the nearby villages and towns. We would open little markets at the river mouths. In

exchange for the goods we have brought we would buy pepper, cloves, camphor, gold and silver, tortoise shell, sweet smelling sandalwood, drugs, porcelain, gums, dyewood, and rhinohorn. The most precious thing we bought was gold and we called the country the Land of Gold or *Swarnabhumi*. There are a group of Buddhist priests who have come at the invitation of the *Raja* of *Langkasuka* decked in yellow robes, fans in their hands bearing with them precious bundles of manuscripts which they will use in their monasteries patronised by the king. The monks mingle with the people. Everyday the yellow-robed men set forth with their alms-bowl and march in single file through the streets to get the offerings of the faithful. Each housewife will put a dab of food in the bowl. The monk receives his alms with bowed head — for he must not raise his eyes upon a woman — and no expressed thanks. Some of the Malays in turn become their followers. Here are the sailors to drop anchor and as we have been watching the passengers we have come upriver into the town and its landing stage. Around our vessel some Malay prahus have gathered and already we find excited talk and bartering going on between Malays and some of the crew and passengers. There are marble laid ponds full of blue water lilies and lotuses. The streets, squares and crossroads of the town are well-laid out. The market place and shops display all sorts of merchandise. There are hundreds of



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alms-halls, towers, temples and palaces. Handsome men and beautiful women move about the streets making their sundry purchases. Flowers and perfumes on sale near the temple enrich the air with their scent. There are elephants, horses, carriages and pedestrians. The city is full of money, of dazzling treasures of gold and silverware and of copper and stoneware. There are huge stonewalls with friezes of dancing figures of *Rama* and *Sita* and illustrations of enchanting detail from Hindu mythology. Most of the houses are thatched with attap and their posts standing in the water and as we reach the landing stage crowds of children as well as some old men gather on the shore with excited chatter. Here comes a tall and good looking Malay wearing a bright sash over his sarong and he is greeted by the Indian captain of the vessel who receives him graciously for this is the Harbour Master, and the arrival of a ship from India is a great occasion in the port. They soon go ashore together and meanwhile the passengers begin to disembark. An eager crowd is awaiting their arrival. There is a woman with a child in her arms. The child is ill. It is restless and is crying, its eyes glowing with fever. The woman beckons to one of the Indians who seems to be a physician. The Indian takes the child and mutters some words in his ears. The child appears quieter. From a little gold box the Indian rubs a little ointment on the child's forehead. He then smilingly gives the child to the

mother. The child is now in the mother's arms sleeping. The mother gives a present to the Indian who refuses it and waves his hand and walks away, his earrings swinging and flashing in the sun. He is followed by crowds of radiant faces with snow white teeth. They are children with their heads shaven except for a tuft at their heads tressed and at times plaited with a fillet of sweet smelling flowers.

Among the groups standing at the shore are two Buddhist priests who have come to receive their fellow priests from India. The people recognize their saffron orange robes as those of Buddhist priests and they smile at them in return. Let us follow them as they make their way to the monastery. They have little to carry apart from that precious bundles of books. The two groups of priests exchange reverences but say little as they go through the streets. Here an old woman bows to the ground as they pass praying for a blessing while behind them trails a little cluster of children questioning one another and pointing to the things they are wearing and carrying. Most of the town consists of attap houses but when we have passed through the busiest quarter we come to a quiet lane where we find the garden surrounded by a high wall. At one point there is an arched gateway flanked by stone lions who guard the door. We pass into an atmosphere of calm and quiet — the courtyard paved with flagstones and shaded



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by great trees. There is a stupa by the banyan and bo trees surrounded by waving palm trees. It is a faithful replica of the original which inspired it and which was constructed at far-off *Amaravati*. All the beauty of the latter is shown: there are the delicately sculptured rails, the lofty dome, the group of figures of gods, goddesses and angels of the Hindu pantheon so cleverly worked in stone, one somehow feels that great credit is due to the workmen who have created such beauty without working in marble. It is a true labour of love. Beside it is a temple built of bricks but it is not here but rather to the living quarters that we make our way. The new arrivals are received by the abbot who is a venerable Indian while around him sit the monks, some of them Indians but a few young men and boys are Malays. The abbot inquires from the newly arrived monks about their journey, about their health, the monastery from which they have come and the precious books which they have brought with them. He tells how the monks have the good-will of the king and people who want to learn more and more about the Buddhist faith but explains that they are slow to learn and that people cling very strongly to their old customs; they will have to learn Malay but will find already that the people use many Indian terms, both for which the traders bring and for the ideas which they themselves are introducing into the Malay world. The Malay was taught to express the human

body and its parts with words like *rupa* (form), *pada* (foot), *roma* (hair of the body); the terms for members of a family and for relationship therein with words like *istri* (wife), *swami* (husband), *saudara* (brother), *bangsa* (race). Words for time, its divisions and measurement were introduced with terms like *kala* (time), *masa* (season or month), *hari* (day), *katika* (a division of time). The traders brought ways of trading, of buying and selling things and of using money. A great number of Sanskrit and Tamil words have been absorbed in the Malay language and form now a part of their vocabulary. It was the language of royalty and nobility, merchants and soldiers. Hundreds and hundreds of words were taught by the Indians to express the names of metals, precious stones, feelings, emotions of the human mind, words of farming, tools, names for animals, birds, plants, trade, implements, utensils, military terms, articles of commerce, musical instruments, words for law courts, prison and punishment, stars, astronomical terms, words for religion such as prayer and fast, hell and heaven, philosophic ideas, political institutions, epic myths and legends, Brahmanical and Buddhist divinities.

On the next day they are to be received in audience by the King. Let us follow them to the Audience Hall. The King's palace is the only large and substantial building in the city. It is surrounded by a shady garden with pools and water-courses



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and flowering trees, but even the palace buildings are made of wood. The whole palace or building is raised up on the stilts and the great hall at the centre is higher than the flanking wings. There is a magnificent staircase covered by a projecting bay and the pillars and eaves are magnificently carved. The Buddhist visitors with the Abbot go up the steps which are flanked by Malay guards wearing bright sarongs with krisses at their sides, and spears in their hands. In the hall itself we see the king sitting in audience in his throne, his *singhasana* shaped like a *Garuda*, the vehicle of *Vishnu*. He is surrounded by courtiers and guards. The King has just returned after a long procession around the town with his guards, drum beaters and carriers of fans and flags. He had just ridden on an elephant under a royal white umbrella, the emblem of sovereignty. He wears the finest robes in colour and texture. On his head he wears a diadem of gold. Round his neck is a heavy necklace of pearls and a garland of sweet smelling flowers. On his wrists, ankles and fingers are bracelets and rings of gold. He holds a sword of gold in his hand. His attendants are there with planquins, parasols and band. All around are red carpets and gold chairs. The roofs above are in red, rose and gold. The priests make their obeisance to their king, but he is a good Buddhist and he in his turn does reverence to them. As is mentioned in the Javanese work *Nagarakretagama*, the *bhikkhu* sings *slokas* in praise

of the king. The king then enquires of them about his own kingdom speaking in humble terms: the people are poor and ignorant but will respond to the teachings of the *Dhamma*. He himself honours the Law but regretfully because of the enmity of his neighbours is obliged to wage wars and to maintain an army of young men who he has to admit, somewhat enjoy going on raids or engaging on high spirited adventures which the priests may not altogether approve of. Still he promises his own support for the priests and is willing to provide them with the means of beautifying their temples and extending their work, believing that it is through his devotion to the *Dhamma* that his own safety and prosperity has been maintained and through his charity and generosity that he himself will attain *Nirvana*.

The party of Buddhist priests in their saffron robes take their leave but let us stay a while. Here is another familiar face — one of the passengers who arrived with us the previous day and he too in his turn is being received by the king. He is a dark sharp featured man with a glint in his eye and a winning expression. He does obeisance to the king but after his formal introduction is received familiarly by the ruler. Again they talk about their countries — but what is it that so much fascinates the king. The visitor has a little casket beautifully decorated and opens it revealing a bright collection of precious



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jewels — there are rubies and emeralds, amethysts and pearls. The visitor takes out a magnificent ruby which he presents to the king. The king inquires further whether he had any more precious things to show. He replies "Yes". His attendant has brought them and that if it pleases His Majesty he would be very pleased for the ladies of the Court to see his wares and to choose those which they would most like to have. In all this there is no talk of buying and selling, such notions are beneath the dignity of kings. Instead His Majesty speaks of his visitors great generosity and of the beauty and worth of the treasures he was shown and that he in turn would like to confer some appropriate gifts upon so distinguished a visitor. He too has valuables to offer — gold dust which his men bring down from the interior, ivory and spices which he is anxious to bestow on his Indian guest. The king summons his *Bendahara* ordering him to provide him with suitable entertainment for his guest and to see that the gifts that he has promised are delivered to him. Our merchant friend is delighted at the reception he has had and the success of his mission. As he leaves the Audience Hall he stops to greet us, "This is a fortunate beginning to my journeys. To-morrow I shall leave for *Selinsing* and then on to the city of *Ganganagar* in the land of *Bruas*, and then if I can get a ship to *Sri Vijaya* and I hear that there are much lands beyond these straits — *Trengganu*, *Kelantan*, *Patani* and *Funan*.

As I go on my way I shall exchange my precious wares for others to bring back to India and thus each year I see many lands and meet strange peoples and earn a little wealth for myself and my family at home."

We have seen the Buddhist with his visitors from India and his subjects, some Indian, some Malay. The centuries pass, much continues as it has always done, other things change. New settlers continue to arrive from India and among these many more are of the Hindu faith, some of them especially the Hindus from Southern India have been the historic colonisers of Malaysia. There was a time when the Malay Peninsula and other parts of South East Asia was one vast Hindu kingdom. There was complete toleration between the Hindu and Buddhist missionaries from India who spread their teachings. This great Hindu-Buddhist empire has now vanished but it has not been forgotten for we find its traces in various facets of the Malay's rich heritage. We find that the worship of *Siva* (Kala) and his consort *Uma* (Durga) is as widespread as that of *Surya*, the Sun God. *Indra*, Lord of heaven, *Yama*, Lord of hell, *Ganesha*, *Brahma*, *Vishnu* on his *Garuda* are other deities that are regularly worshipped under *Siva*, widely known in the land as *Betara Guru* and his consort *Mahdewi*. *Buddha* is worshipped under various names. These gods adorn the crises, the gold and silverware of the land. The lotus, sacred to *Vishnu*, is a predominant art motif, and



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*Lakshmi*, his consort is worshipped as *Sri* in the rice-fields. Sanskrit "Om" became the mystic shout in chants. We find the Malay still paying homage to *Siva* as *Nataraja*, Lord of dancers and King of actors, though today he is quite unaware of this name and the role of the Hindu god whose theatre is the world and who himself is actor and audience. In Malay invocations the Black Genie is painted as "having but one bone, the hair of whose body is upside down, who can assume a thousand shapes". Though he has "one foot on the heart of the earth", yet this Black Genie also "hangs at the gate of the sky."

Let us return to another spot in north-west Malaysia — 200 years later and again look at this scene and meet the people in it. The sun is setting and the palm trees stand out against the evening sky in the distance and we look out over fields newly harvested of their padi. It has been a good year.

A series of ceremonies helps to insure a good crop. Sheds are erected in the fields and offerings are made in them to *Dewi Sri* — the goddess of rice or fertility, (*Sri Laximi*). In the centre of the field there is a small spot reserved for offerings for the "rice mother". Gifts are offered by the elders, such as arecanuts and flowers.

Let us follow the farmer home and sit with him for a while in the glow of the little oil lamp and hear what he has to say. We have worked hard and had a good harvest and are very happy that these new lands to which we have come only five years ago are so fertile and that we have been able to make here a corner of the countryside like our own India.



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You see the wide fields, the coconut palms and palmyrah which we have planted along the bunds. The padi fields are thronged with peasants, knee deep in muddy brown water planting out their seedlings under the roseate clouds. You see that we have a little orchard round our house which gives us shade and provides us with welcome fruits. You see that we have strong buffaloes and oxen to draw our carts. You see that as at home we have our little temples where we are able to offer our *poojas*. And now that the harvest is in we are happy that our daughter *Siti* is to join in happy wedlock to *Chulan*. He turns to us and explains that even now the women of the house are busily engaged in the preparation for the wedding. We will leave them at their business. There are clothes to make, there is jewellery to be brought out and made, there is the feast to be prepared and the house to be made gay. The music of drums and gongs and other musical instruments are heard. Everywhere there is rhythmic drumming and melodious chanting.



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The bridegroom has arrived gaily decked in fine silks but nevertheless with a somewhat bashful look. Presents are brought from both sides as a blizzard of tossed rose petals await them. Variegated garlands of silvery white and golden - yellow flowers tied on saffron coloured thread are exchanged. There is great excitement as he is received and enters the house. We know that after the ceremonies in which the *Brahmins* have their part there will be the great feast. But let us stay a while outside. All the village seems to have come and for them there are many attractions. There are cakes and fruits and drinks and other good things and as evening comes there are a thousand little lamps lighting up the orchard and making things gay. Here we see a juggler with all sorts of fascinating tricks with his young attendant who shouts encouragement from time to time to keep up the excitement with continual tap on his drum. Over there is a crowd of people looking at the antics of two clowns with grotesque masks. There are dancing girls dancing with expressive gestures the celestial dances of *Indra's* heaven. There are dances including the *beduan* done in musical chorus, the *menora*, folk dancing, the *hadrah* and *hersilat*. The dances in their ornate costumes appear as princes, princesses, birds, monkeys, *Yakshas* and *Kinnaris*. The stories of the dances are recited in poetry in high pitched voice by the village poets. They are stories from the Hindu sagas. At another spot a group of

children are shouting and laughing. They seize the hands of an Indian who takes them to a shady place. He laughs and enjoys the jokes the children make. He sits down and all the children squat round him in a circle. The Indian starts telling a story, stories from the *Mahabharata* and the *Panchatantra*, of heroes and of battles, of love episodes and romances, legends, morals and discourses, magic formula taken from the web of Indian life. But the greatest excitement takes place round the temporary stage of the shadow play, *Wayang Kulit*, which has been set up for the performances of the great *Rama* story. There is a white sheet suspended and below the stage in front sit the players with their drums and songs of countless verses and flutes. Now the performance begins. The dresses and robes and masks are well shaped for the show. The shadowy figures cross the stage while in a high pitched chant the story teller sings of the deeds of *Rama* and *Sita* and *Laksmna*. Now we see the fearful figure of *Ravana* appearing to the tumultuous clamour of the orchestra and the growling crescendo of the performers voice and the shouts and screams of the children in the audience as he comes to steal away beloved *Sita*. And now to the delight of all, *Hanuman* with his army comes to the rescue and *Sita* is bestowed to her husband. Amid all the clamour and noise of the performance it is not easy to follow the chanting of the story teller but it is no matter for the tale is familiar to all and is a constant delight of young and old. They delight in the exploits of *Hanuman* and the monkey hosts. The story of *Ramayana* has a natural fascination for these



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people. Malay children are brought up on stories about *Sri Rama*, *Sita Dewi* and *Hanuman*. They do not forget the stories that are woven round the famous *Laksmiana*, *Rama* and *Sita*. The *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* have been the fountain head of the shadow-play *Wayang Kulit*. The mere mention of *Sri Rama* is enough to recall in the mind of a Malay the ancient ties of fellowship between India and Malaysia. Small wonder then that we find in Malaysia today the Malays are acquainted with the main outlines of the poem which in many cases they have adapted to their own circumstances. Local states (*negri* — *negara*, Skt.), rivers and mountains, places and towns were given names from the epics and soon these stories became for most of the people part and parcel of their own literature. *Indragiri*, *Sitapura*, *Langkawi*, *Ganganagar*, *Indrapura*, *Linggi* and *Singhapura* are place names drawn from the rich background of Indian stories. The hills behind palaces (as in *Sri Menanti*) was the hill of *Sri Indra* and the rulers *Sailendras* (*Indra* of the mountains). The rulers became incarnations most often of *Indra* and was Lord of Mount *Meru*, the Hindu Olympus. As the classic version itself declares "So long as the mountains and rivers shall continue on the surface of the earth, so long shall the story of the *Ramayana* be current in the world."



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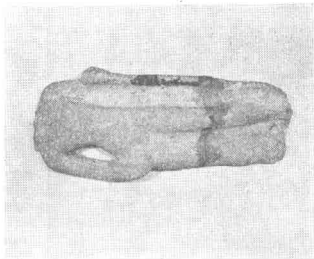


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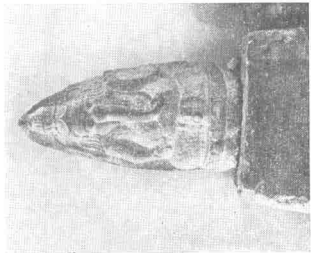
As we leave this festal scene we hear the continuing sound of music and ritual dancing and the rhythmic beat of drums. There is dance, music, puppet shows, masks, traditional dress and drama. There is bustle everywhere. People are merry



*A bronze figure of Buddha in Gupta style dredged up from a tin-mine at Pengkalen, near Ipoh, in 1931.*



*Part of a statue of Buddha found at Satubong, Sarawak. It may be more than a thousand years old.*



*An Elephant-headed Ganesa, from an old Hindu Temple. It was found in Limbang, Sarawak. It is now in the Sarawak Museum.*

making and the public gardens are thronged. The youth and maidens sing songs, improvise poems, crack jokes, and play on musical instruments. The festivals last for weeks. The drums rolled and conches blew. The bonfires gleamed from the distant hills.



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The years pass. The intercourse between the people of the Peninsula and their powerful Indian neighbours continues unchecked. The Kingdom of *Kadaram* (Kedah) grows from strength to strength until her royal daughters attract the attention of the Indian monarchs. At last a great day dawns - an Indian emissary arrives with gifts to us for the hand of the Princess of Kedah, *Putri - Alangkastuka*. She has an angelic face, charming looks and golden brown skin. *Raja Singa Cholan*, the son of the King of the Cholas, *Raja Raja Cholan*, has become enamoured of the beauty of the Princess and he cannot rest until he has her for his bride. The emissary bears greetings and his gifts are impressive to all who behold them. There are images of the gods, kindly deities to smile on the coming union, to ward off the malignancy of evil spirits, to bless the young couple with bold and brave sons. There are tusks of ivory and chests of fragrant camphor. There are jewels, pearls which seem to have caught the lustre of the moon, diamonds which burn with a hidden fire, rubies as red as drops of blood. There are boxes and locked

chests containing festive dress, gold embroidered handbags, hair ornaments, pendants, elaborate bracelets, bead necklaces and belt buckles. There are bales of cloth, some heavily brocaded, others as flimsy as gossamer but with a strength which completely belies their appearance. There are coats of mail for the Raja of *Kadaram* (Kedah), coats cunningly fashioned and wonderfully inlaid with gold and silver, and there is a dagger, a masterpiece of its kind, the gift of a king, fit only for a king. Troupes of dancers add gaiety to the party. Paintings, pottery and exhibits of the fine arts add lustre to the pageantry of dance and music.



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It is small wonder that the Princess is won over by such a display of gifts but at the same time her heart is stirred by an image of the youthful Prince carved by the hand of a master artist. The whole court is agog. Preparations for the journey are swiftly made. The Princess will return with the emissary but she must journey as befits a princess. The royal coffers are drained to provide for her. *Kadaram's* (Kedah's) richest treasures are collected to accompany her on her return journey for she must impress her Indian bridegroom with the sense of her father's wealth and importance. The haunting strains of the *nafiri* - the trumpet like instrument of ancient Malay courts fill the air as the princess, dressed in the hue of the pomegranate, bids goodbye amidst the dazzling pomp and splendour of Malay royalty. And the drums rolled to a crescendo as the princess departs with the *Laksmāna*, the head of the fleet in command. The Raja of Kadaram (Kedah) with his consort, the *Raja Perumpan*, the *Raja Mahkota*, the

*Perdana Menteri, Sri Jaya Pahalawan, Sri Maharaja Lela, Sri Pekerma Raja, and the Bendahara (Skt. Bhandagarika) wave as the princess' boat with its orange coloured sails moves under the milk white clouds and sails to the land of the Chola king.*

And so the story goes on. India and Malaysia come closer together. What is most attractive in each appeals to the other. The Indian and the Malay mix and marry and weave a fabric that lasts the centuries.



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We have travelled far in time, but we know the scenes we have witnessed have gone on in much the same way ever since the first Indians came to Malaysia as merchants, adventurers, priests and exiles, and we can still see much of the customs and manners of the people continuing in the same way - true much has changed. In their time the Muslims appeared and made their religion the dominant one in the land. The Portuguese and the Dutch have come and gone and in modern times the British with their trade and government and western civilisation as well as the great increase in Chinese populations have greatly changed the Malaysian scene. But the old things still go on - their memory does not fade for they have contributed to the culture and spirit of Malaysian life giving it some of its most permanent beautiful and worthwhile features. In the intertwining of Indian and Malaysian elements a civilisation with a character of its own was brought into being and continues to influence the people of this



land. Today innumerable Indians and Malays derive inspiration from the memory of India's civilising mission in Malaysia and are picking up again the golden links of their ancient cultural friendship. They recall proudly the importance of the historic events of centuries ago when Indians set foot on Malaysian soil bringing Indian culture and thus enriching the cultural heritage of the Malaysians of today. Many of us retrace with pride the cultural pattern established hundreds of years ago, a pattern which although it is interwoven with the texture of the Malaysian scene, still maintains a character all its own. Indian history manifests a unity in diversity. We may say the same of the influences of Indian culture on Malaysia. *Langkasuka, Ganganagar, Indrapura* and *Singapura* are of the dim and distant past but the counterparts of the early Indian ambassadors of culture, trade and goodwill who ventured across the cruel sea to seek their fortunes are still to be seen in Malaysia today.

Thus the name and fame of India were reached from ancient times in distant lands. Luxuries of Indian commerce and even speculations of her philosophers were known to the Greeks and the Romans while the religion of Buddha spread as far as China. But when we look for the more direct and penetrating influence of India beyond her borders, it is specially to the lands of South East Asia like Malaysia, Indonesia and Indo-China, (Funan and Kambuja) that we must go. Here Indian colonists and Indian ideas have shaped the names to many of these lands and their mountains and rivers and cities. Some were brought from India itself by the early colonists, others Sanskrit in form bear witness to Indian imagination in describing their new lands; and the great number of these names is an indication of the leading position of India as a civilizing agency in South East Asia over many centuries. Remembrances of a most brilliant period of Hinduism in South East Asia is recalled as one mentions *Langkasuka, Singapura, Rajapura* (Bangkok), *Angkor, Champa*, (Annam), *Kambujadesa*, (or *Kamboja* - Cambodia), *Singharadja*

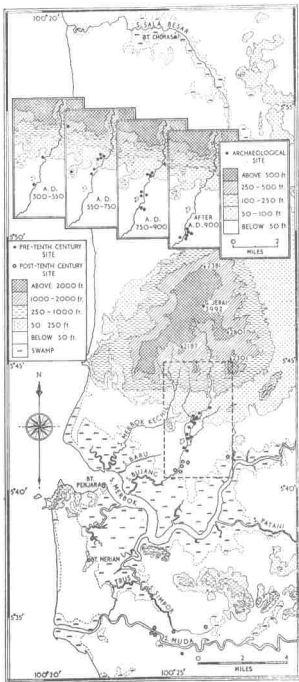
(in Bali), *Jogjakarta*, *Sitapura* (in Patani), *Suvarnadwipa*, *Suvarnabhumi*, *Varunadwipa* (Borneo), *Yavadvipa* (Barley Island). - Java, Bali, *Ayodhya*, *Madura*, *Indragiri* and *Ganganegara*.

Even the very word *Merdeka* which is on everyone's lips today comes from Sanskrit *Maha-riddhika* which means "great prosperity" for in freedom alone lies the greatest prosperity. (*Ke-merdeka-an*, Indonesian word for freedom. In Malay it means freedom in contrast to servitude).

In recent years a new term - Greater India - has been widely adopted by historians to describe the long and important connections between India proper and the land which came under her cultural influence in South East Asia. Much of that history still remains to be investigated but the main pattern is clear and the extent and importance of the Indian influence is now fully recognised, which we have been able to follow among other ways from our study of the place names of South East Asia.



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### SITES OF INDIANIZED SETTLEMENTS IN KEDAH.

(Based on the investigations of Col. James Low, Mr. I.H.N Evans and Dr. Quaritch Wales  
University of Malaya, Historical Annual No. 3, 1957, Singapore.)

①  
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

②  
 प्रथमशतमाने श्री  
 विष्णुसिंहस्य कृतं

③  
 यथा

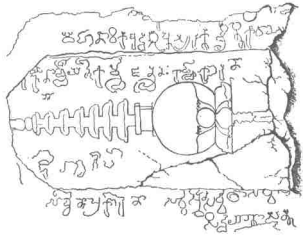
④  
 एवमुक्त्वा

⑤  
 ॐ

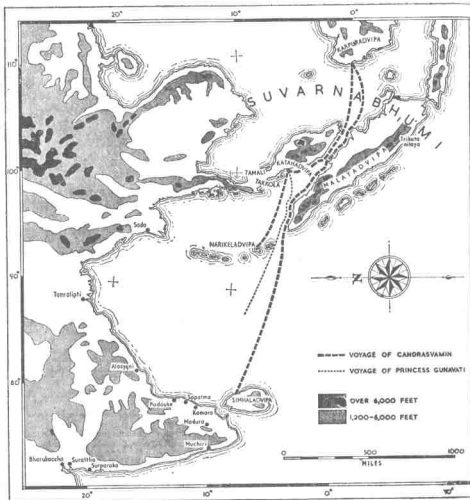
⑥  
 शिव

⑦  
 ॐ

Seven fragments of a Sanskrit inscription  
 on granite from Cherok Tekun  
 in Province Wellesley.



Slab inscribed with a stupa surmounted  
 by a chatravali and bearing a Sanskrit  
 prayer fifth-century Pallava script for the  
 success of a voyage about to be under-  
 taken by a ship's captain called Buddha-  
 gupta, a native of the Red-Earth Land.  
 This slab was found in Province Welles-  
 ley by Col. Low, more than a hundred  
 years ago.



*The Land of Gold mainly as it is recorded in early Indian literature.  
Some Indian ports from Greek sources.*

(Reproduced from "Indians in Early Malaya")



THE EMPIRE OF MADJAPAHIT. THE WHOLE TERRITORY OF MALAYSIA WAS SUBJECT TO MADJAPAHIT INFLUENCE  
 (Compiled from the Original Sources by H. Otley Beyer)