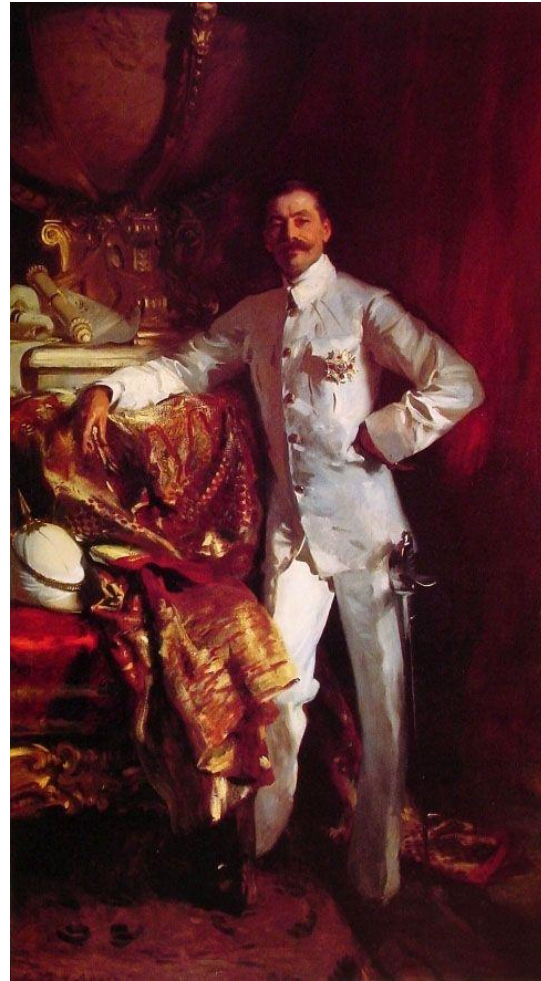


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THE LOST INDIANS IN BRITISH MALAYA

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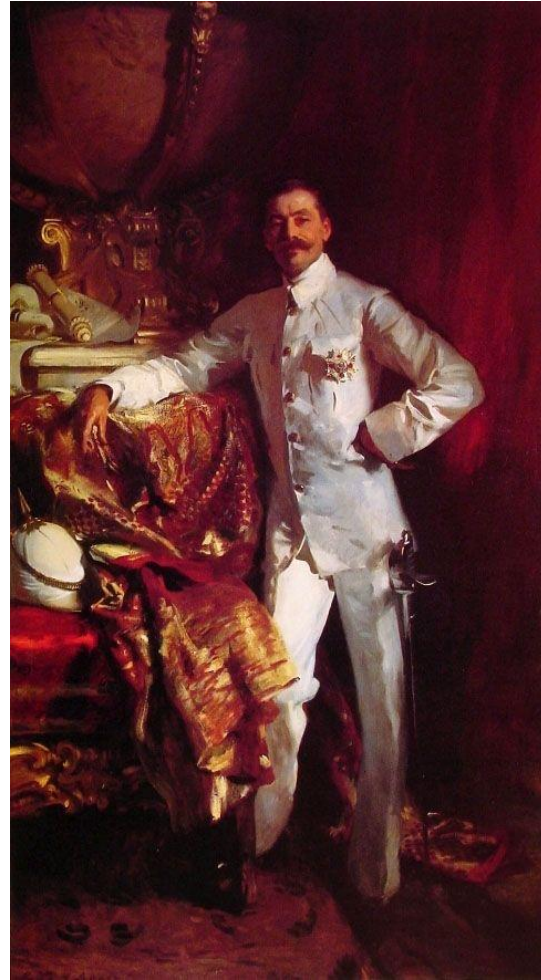
OBJECTIVE



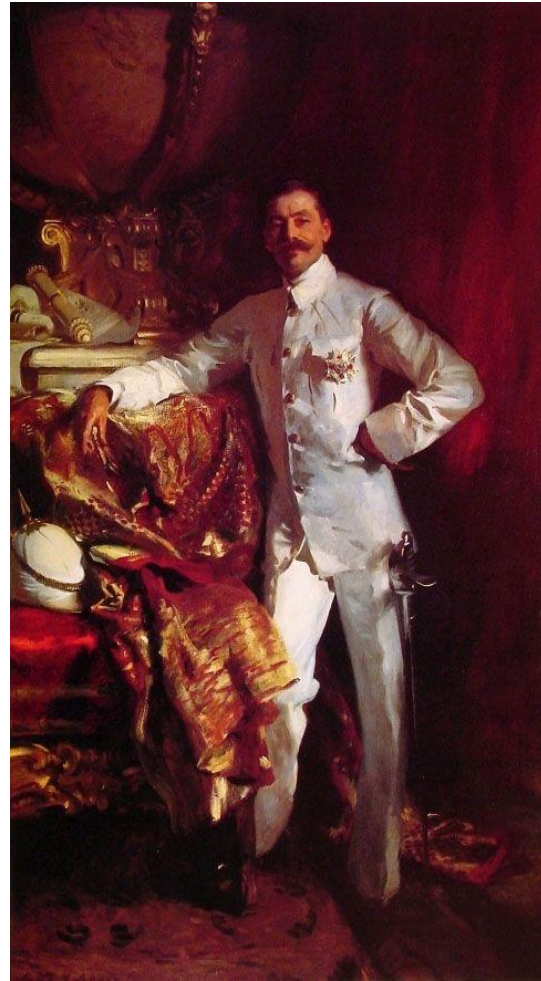
- This paper explores the extent to which Indian labour in British Malaya was neglected in relation to both Chinese and indigenous Malays.
- The Indians who came to Malaya in the late 18th and 19th century had contributed immensely to the development of Malaya in various sectors including plantation and infrastructure (building of roads and railways).



- The British seemed to have a policy which favoured the Malays (whom they viewed as “sons of the soil”) and the Chinese (who played a vital role in the mining sector).
- The Indians on the other hand were neglected whether intentionally or otherwise, and this had a great impact on their position in independent Malaysia.



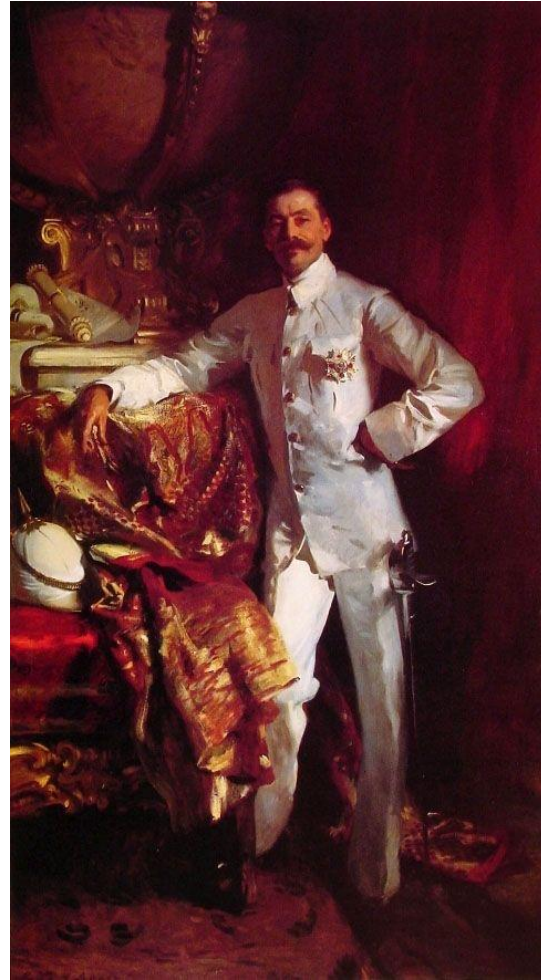
TRACING THE NEGLECT OF THE INDIANS



Tamil Immigration Fund



- The Fund (1907) was used to the advantage of the British and the employers in particular to control labour. From an indepth study of the Fund through four phases, it is obvious that during colonial days the Fund had benefited the employer and the British in controlling labour.



**No Attempt to
Make Indians
Full Citizen of
Malaya**

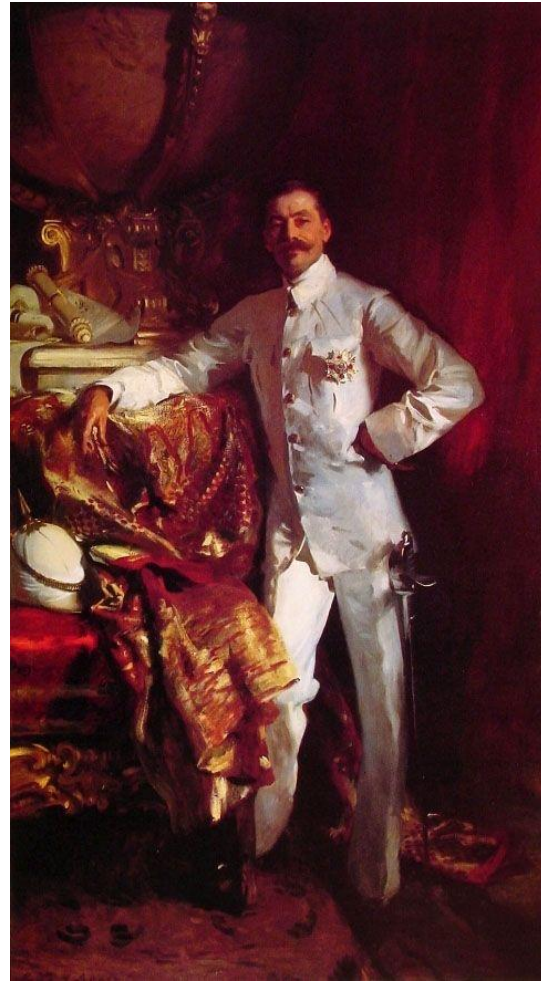


- Central Indian Association of Malaya (CIAM) – 1936 , were very critical of the British rule and labour exploitation. Highlighted the plight of Indian labour and argued that Indian immigrants should be accepted in Malaya as full citizens with a stake in the future of the country.





- The demand, by the Indian intellectuals were not given due attention by the British and they were only concern to find a solution to the problem created by the Indian governments ban on the import of unskilled workers.
- Attempts were made to recruit Indonesian labourers but didn't materialise due to Japanese occupation.



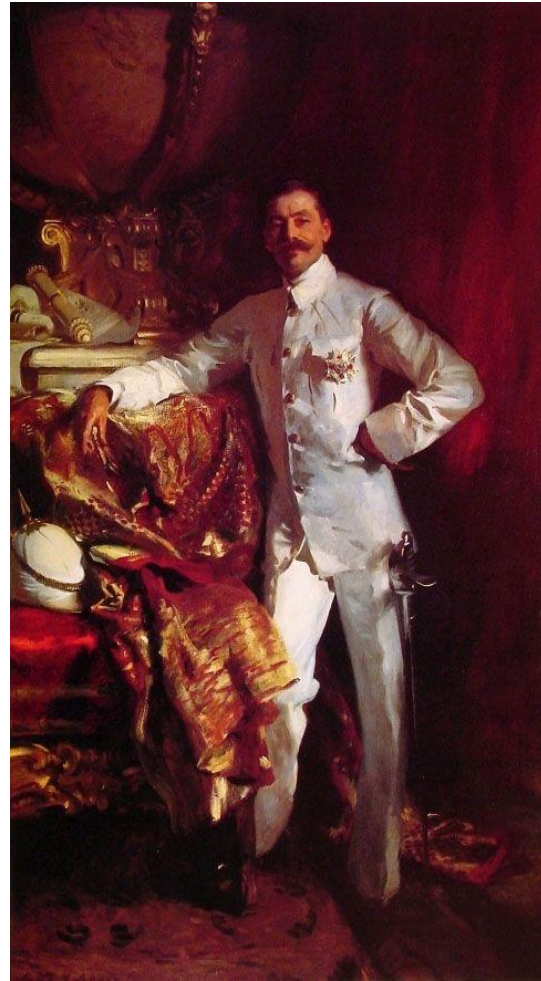
Second World War and the “Death Railway” Project



- During the war, Indian labourers from Malaya were recruited to work on the Japanese Siam-Burma railway which is often called “The Railway of Death”.
- The project saw thousands perish. When British returned to rule under the British Military Administration (BMA) from September 1945 to April 1946 no effort was made to use the fund to uplift the social life of the Indians who were living under miserable conditions.



- The predicament faced by the children of the Indian labourers who died during the building of Death railway clearly indicates British insensitivities to a people who had made immense contributions to the nation's coffers.



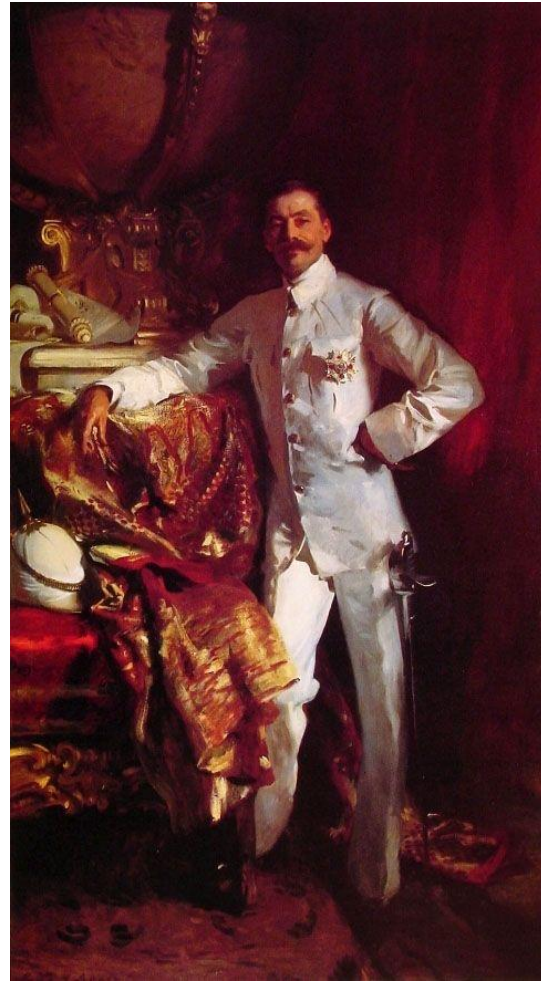
Indian Economic Status when Estates were Fragmented



- Between 1950-1967, approximately 324,931 acres of estate involving 28,363 workers were fragmented. This situation was capitalised by Chinese businessmen to buy and further divide the land into smaller units to obtain larger profits.
- Fragmentation led to thousands of Indian labourers losing their jobs. Those who chose to stay in the estates had to settle for lower wages, and were denied health and other facilities.



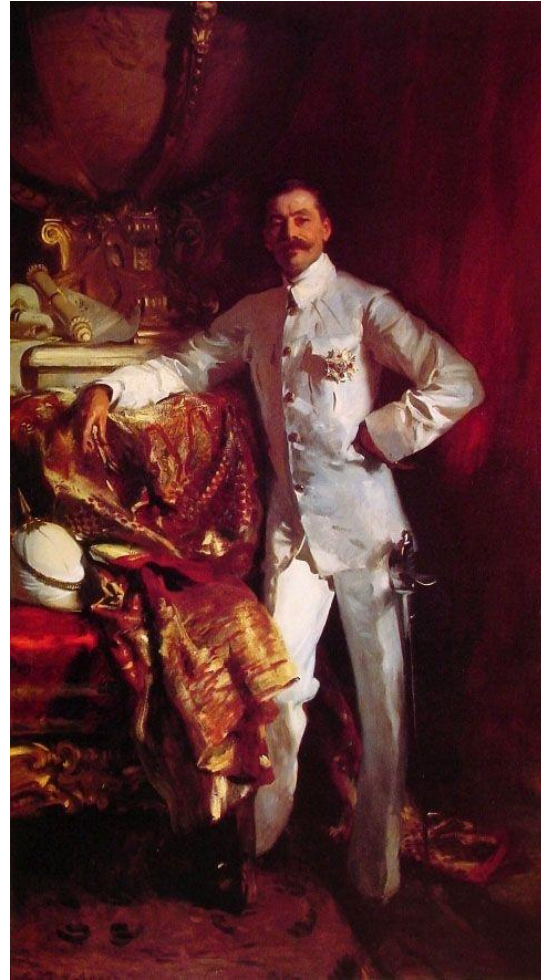
- MIC and NLFC urged the Government to draft laws controlling the sale of estates exceeding 100 acres but there was lukewarm response from the government.
- Although the effect of the policy was felt by the Indians after independence, the problem had its origins in the 1950s when estate owners decided to give up their properties in anticipation of independence.



**POSITION OF
THE MALAYS AS
“SONS OF THE
SOILS”**



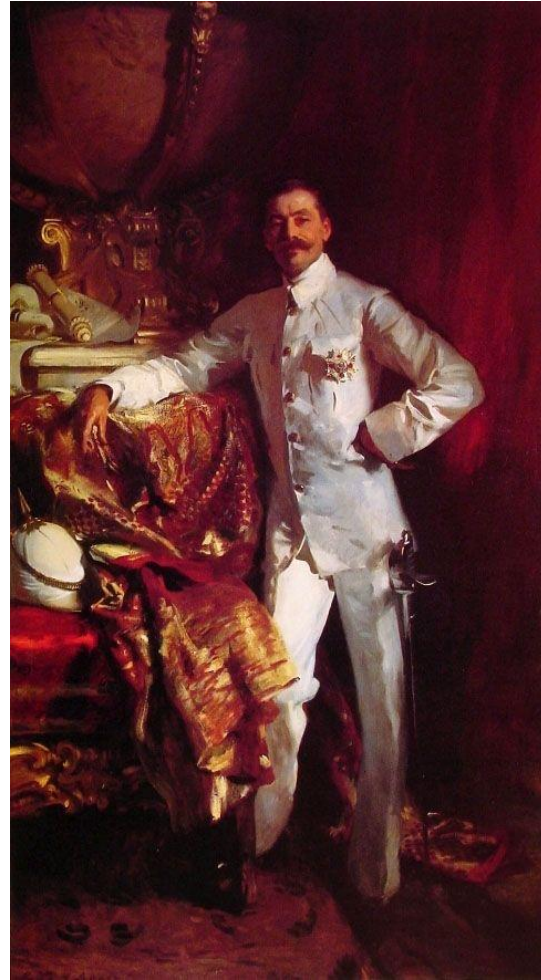
- In contrast to the other races, the Malays were always looked after by the British on the premise that it was with the rulers consent that they were able to rule Malaya.
- Therefore they were obliged to protect the natives from any encroachment be it from the outsiders (capitalists) or locals (such as the Chettiars). Efforts to protect the Malays were evident from the 19 to early 20 century.



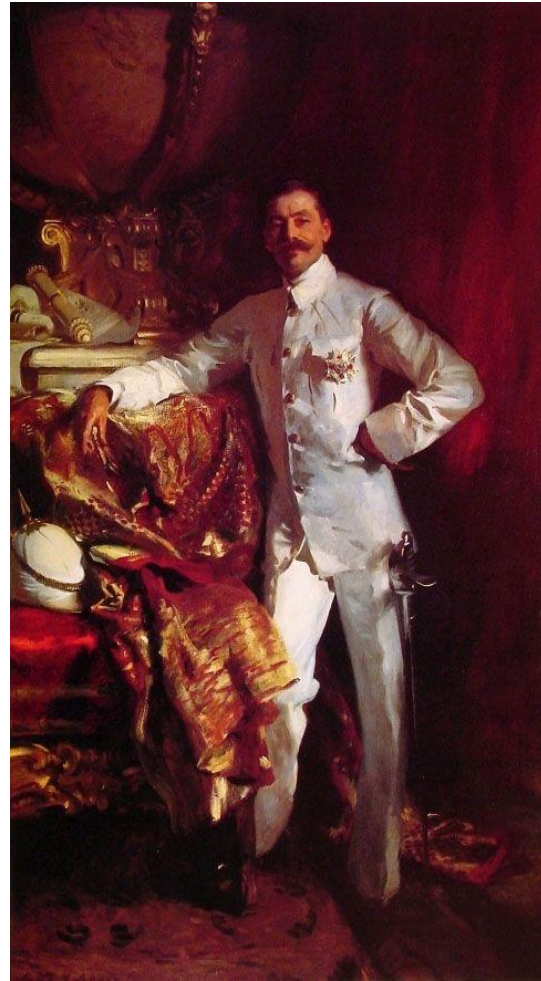
Various Policies to Help the Malays



- Pensions to the Malay Rulers and upholding their position as Conservative Authority
- Protecting Malay Civil Servants From the Clutches of the Chettiar
- Preferential Recruitment Policy for the Malays
- Enactment of Malay Land Enactment 1913
- Formation of Cooperatives
- Formation of RIDA and FELDA in the 1950s



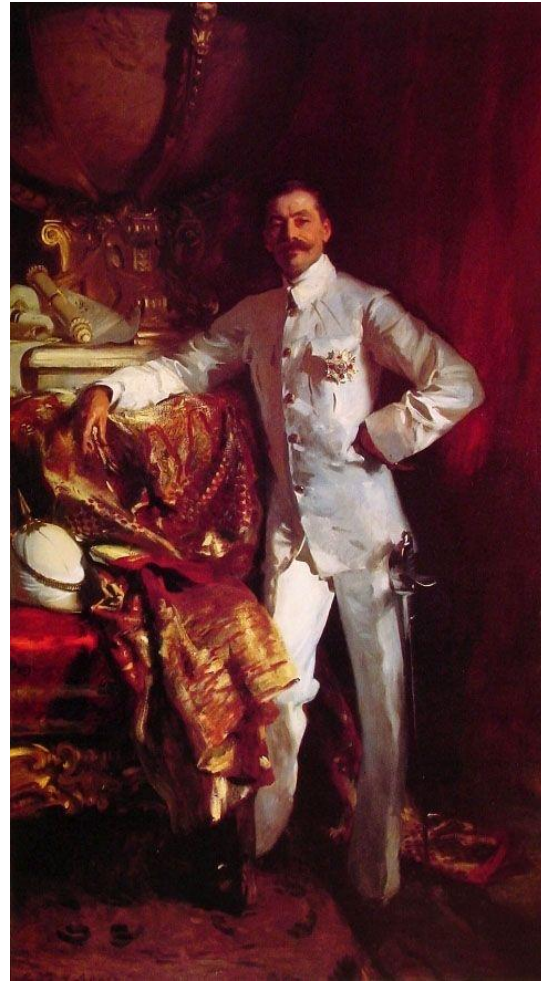
POSITION OF THE CHINESE UNDER BRITISH RULE



British Perception of the Chinese



- In the eyes of the British administrators and British travellers, the Chinese were a community who worked hard and constituted an asset for the government in power.
- Chinese were considered as the only people of the East from whom a revenue may be raised without expense and extraordinary effort of government.



Chinese Preference in the Economic Activities

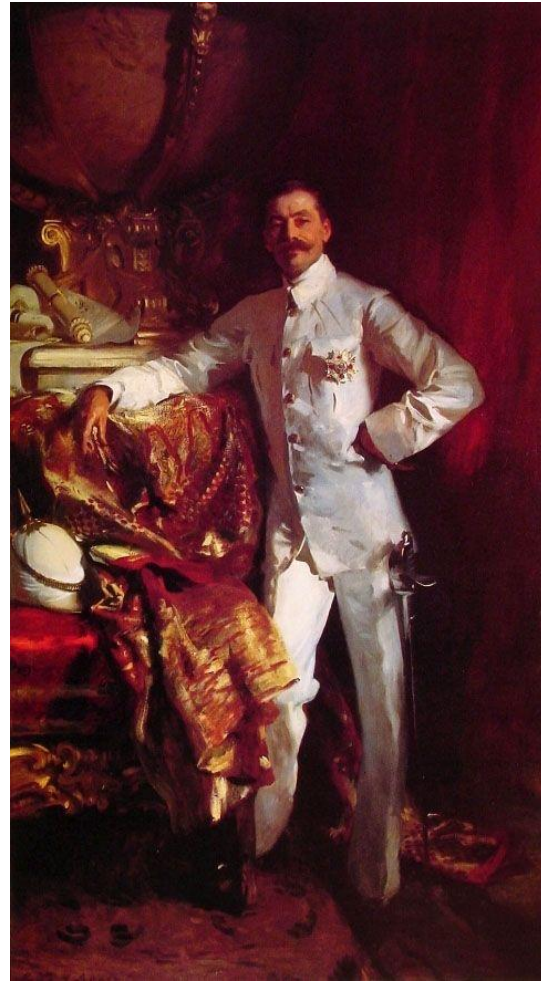


- British benefitted from import duties derived from Chinese opium trade. Between 1900 and 1930, close to a quarter of government revenue in the FMS was generated through opium.
- Much of the money needed to build roads and railways came from the sale of opium.
- British allowed transportation, distribution and sale of imported goods to be controlled by the Chinese.



- It was the British who allowed the Chinese to wield a dominant role in the economy.
- This enabled them to control many services which they were not willing to give up easily.
- This explains why the Indians were lost in comparison to the Chinese and the Malays.





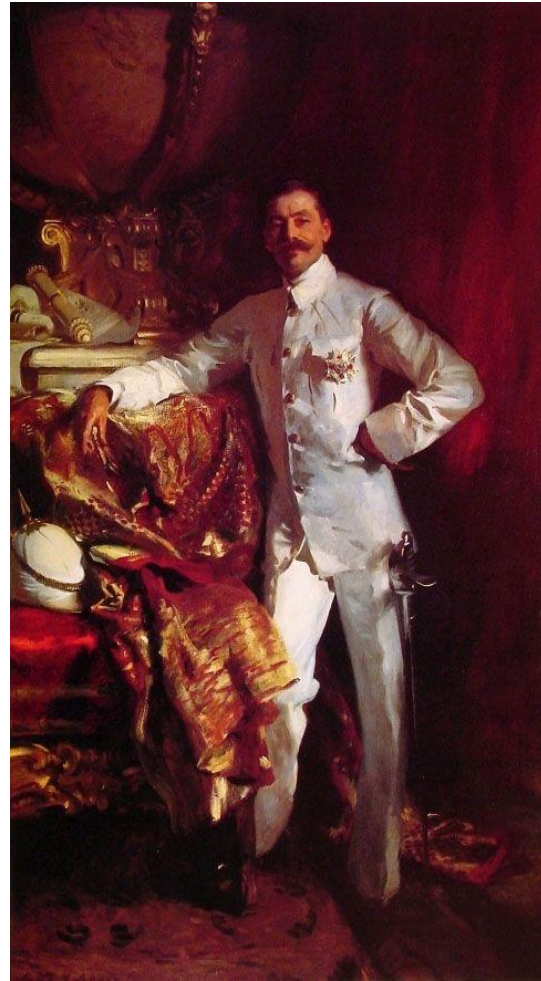
Economic Position of the Chinese During Emergency



- There were efforts to revive the economic position of the Chinese during the Emergency period (1948-1960).
- Government established new settlement areas known as New Villages under the Briggs programme.
- A total of 572, 917 people (85% Chinese, 9% Malays, 4% Indians and 1% other races) were located in 480 new villages.



- These locations were supplied with basic facilities such as roads, water, electricity and others.
- The land was subsequently owned by the Chinese on a permanent basis, and that enabled them to be better-off economically compared to the Indians.



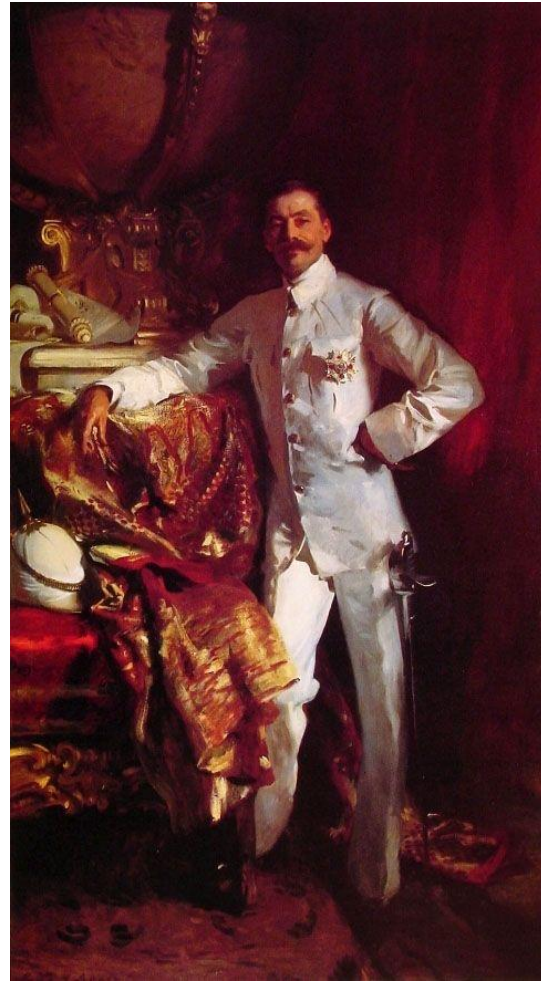
CONCLUSION



- It is evident that the Indians in Malaya were a “lost race” in comparison to the Chinese and the Malays.
- To the British, the Indians were not regarded as an asset unlike the Chinese; neither was the British obliged to help them as in the case of the Malays.
- The Indians never figured in the mind of British policy makers, a historical tragedy which continued long after the country achieved independence.



- The Chinese on the other hand had been preferred by the British due to their character and contribution to the British economy.
- The Malays needed to be assisted as “sons of the soil” to allow for continued British interest in the country.
- The Indians were the helpless lot, with very little role to play in the British economy.
- This explains why their concerns never attracted the attention both the British and the leadership of post-independent Malaya, particularly after the riots of May 13, 1969.



THANK YOU