

STATE PAPERS ONLINE COLONIAL: ASIA, PART III: MALAY STATES, MALAYA, AND STRAITS SETTLEMENTS

British Colonial Office files that document the history of Singapore and West Malaysia as British colonies from the early nineteenth century to the 1960s, providing insights into the political, social, commercial, and legal aspects of this particular region of Southeast Asia.

Chinese girls playing Sap Ma, Malaysia. CO 1069/197 (77). Image courtesy of The National Archives Image Library.



QUICK FACTS

SOURCE: The National Archives, UK

SIZE: Approximately 610,000 pages

DATE RANGE: 1807-1965

CONTENT TYPES:

Handwritten and typed manuscripts with some printed documents, maps, and plans

ABOUT THE COLLECTION

State Papers Online Colonial: Asia, Part III: Malay States, Malaya, and Straits Settlements is the third instalment of *State Papers Online Colonial: Asia*, a program to digitise the British Colonial Office's files relating to the former British colonies in East and Southeast Asia. This collection includes 12 Colonial Office series, over 5,000 volumes of mostly original correspondence covering the governance of the Straits Settlements, including Malacca, Penang, and Singapore; the Federated Malay States of Negeri Sembilan, Pahang, Perak, and Selangor; and the later Federation of Malaya, which comprises Johor, Kedah, Kelantan, Malacca, Negeri Sembilan, Pahang, Penang, Perak, Perlis, Selangor, and Terengganu. These series also contain the first part of the Colonial Office's "old collection" of maps and plans of former colonial territories as well as images from the Colonial Office Photographic Collection.

Within these documents, researchers can follow the history and culture of British Malaya, including power transfer from local sultans to colonial rule, trade between Malaya and the United Kingdom, development of mining and rubber industries, Japanese invasion and occupation during WWII, formation of political parties, communism, Chinese and Indian labour and immigration, the path toward independence, and the establishment of the Federation of Malaya.

VALUE OF THE ARCHIVE

Making these documents available for research and teaching is important for many reasons:

Supports Researchers: The collection includes mainly English-language documents covering a major sector of formerly British colonised Southeast Asia.

Comprehensive in Scope: The breadth of the material allows researchers to trace the "route to independence" for each of the key countries and territories included.

Unique Content: Offering 100% newly digitised materials with minimal overlap with existing products, these documents are often the only record of people and events in the countries concerned.

Scholarly Appeal: The archive supports research areas such as the history of Southeast Asia; British empire, colonialism, and imperialism; nationalism, communism, and post-colonialism; history of trade and commerce; and WWII in Southeast Asia.

SERIES INCLUDED

Dept	Series	Title	Date Range
CO	273	Straits Settlements Original Correspondence	1838–1946
CO	425	Straits Settlements Entry Books	1867–1873
CO	426	Straits Settlements Register of Correspondence	1867–1945
CO	486	Straits Settlements Register of Out-Letters	1873–1926
CO	700	Maps and Plans: Series I	1807–1906
CO	717	Federated Malay States: Original Correspondence	1920–1951
CO	786	Federated Malay States: Register of Correspondence	1919–1951
CO	889	Federation of Malaya Constitutional Commission (Reid Commission): Minutes and Papers	1956
CO	1022	South East Asia Department: Original Correspondence	1950–1956
CO	1030	Far Eastern Department and Successors: Original Correspondence	1953–1965
CO	1047	Maps and Plans: Series II	1905–1938
CO	1069	Photographs	1860s–1961

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