

## State History: A Case of Pahang

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### Abstract

This essay discusses the writing of state history in Malaysia which began at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century through state officials followed by British scholar officials before Buyong Adil joined the fray in the early 1940s. In the 1970s and 1980s Buyong went on to develop his state history and have 12 of them published by Dewan Bahasa and Pustaka. For unknown reasons Kedah and Kelantan were left out. However, Buyong's state history and even those of the British scholar officials are dynastic histories focussing on the rulers and the challenges they had to face internally and externally. There is nothing on the economy or the laity although the available sources do refer to them and with these sources it is possible to write a comprehensive state history covering economic, political and social history and culture. As suggested for Pahang the new state history needs to be more comprehensive and inclusive. After 1888 there are much more sources including annual reports (1888-1939) which are crucial in understanding Pahang's development or underdevelopment under colonial rule. There are much more sources on the period after 1945 with documentary materials located at the National Archives of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur and the National Archives of Malaysia Pahang state. A judicious use of these sources could produce a state history that would be a big improvement on existing works by Buyong and British scholar officials like R. O. Winstedt.

**Keywords:** state history; scholar officials; Buyong Adil; laity; economy; archival sources

### Introduction

Why the need for state history? Why not national history? State and national histories co-exist to strengthen one another although in Malaysia both are not in good shape with state history in much worse situation. For national history much have been written about but there is still nothing comparable to the Andayas' *A History of Malaysia* while in Japan the prefectural (state) history comes in thick multi volumes that are useful for serious research or for the laymen. *A History of Malaysia* offers a new interpretation of Malaysian history since the earliest times (about 3000 years ago) to 2015 that might pose a challenge to the way Malaysians across the ethnic and political divide see their history (Abu Talib, 2017). The book is divided into nine chapters based on periods in Malaysian history which the Andayas see as important point in the evolution of modern Malaysia such as the heritage of the preMelaka past, Melaka's legacy, the demise of the Malay entreport trade, the functioning of a colonial society, negotiating a new nation (1942-69), restructuring Malaya and Malaysia at the crossroads. It is written based on the available sources such as the standard texts in English and other European languages, Malay chronicles, Dutch documents for the 17th century and myriad specialised studies from political science, sociology, anthropology, economic, education and musicology

besides news papers and oral sources to make up for the lack of primary sources for the last quarter of the 20th century. The book discusses myriad issues affecting the country that are otherwise swept under the carpet. The following discusses the works of Buyong Adil, by comparing his works with those of British scholar-officials, its weaknesses, paddy farmers under colonial rule, the labouring class of the 1930s and a proposal for a state history of Pahang as based on archival materials kept at the National Archives of Malaysia Kuala Lumpur and the National Archives of Malaysia Pahang.

### **State history in Malaysia: the current situation**

To begin with it is necessary to come up with a working definition of state history. It is about the history of any state that formed the Malaysian federation that begins from the earliest possible until a suitable time in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For most of them it is dynastic history, about the rulers and their antics. It also cover local history that are otherwise overlooked or bypassed by the national history. These could be in the form of events or individuals which have little significance to make their way into the national narrative. Some state history might stretch for a thousand or more years like those of Pahang while others are relatively short as the case of Perlis and Selangor. One might wish to equate the Malay chronicles like the *Sejarah Melayu* or *Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa* as a form of state history although states as in the modern sense was still none existent at the time. Yet looking at another way, these chronicles are no different from the modern state history in the way they focussed on the rulers, the nobility and related matters. This is evident when one examine the state history of Perlis, Kedah and Johor written by Buyong Adil. There are numerous studies on various aspects of the history of a state undertaken by local scholars and history students such as on modern Johor (Fawzi, 1978), Kelantan during the traditional period (Rahmat, 1970), Kelantan under colonial rule (Shaharil, 1984), Kedah from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Sharom, 1984), Terengganu during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and until 1941 (Shaharil, 1984), and Pahang from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Aruna, 1991). Two studies on Kedah by the same author, *Politik Tradisional Kedah, 1681-1942* and *Pengalaman Kedah dan Perlis: Zaman Penjajahan British*, when combined place them closer to a state history (Muhamad Isa, 1990; Mohd Isa, 2001) while *Sejarah Kerajaan Perlis: 1841-1957* (Julie, 2002) is a state history presented with more academic rigour.

For the present discussion I am taking state histories as a 20<sup>th</sup> century phenomenon that began in 1908 with Mohd Said Sulaiman and his *Hikayat Johor and Tawarikh Almarhum Sultan Abu Bakar* which was published in Singapore. In 1928 two books on Kedah were published in Penang namely *Salasilah atau Tarekh Kerja-an Kedah* by Wan Yahya Wan Muhammad Taib and *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* by Muhammad Hassan. Writers of these texts were state officials and closely connected to the rulers. Mohd Said Sulaiman started his career with the Johor Treasury followed by the Post Office and later private secretary to Sultan Ibrahim (1895-1959). Wan Yahya had held various senior administrative positions including supervisor of the Kedah Opium Monopoly Office, Changlun district officer and Kedah state secretary while Muhammad Hassan was the private secretary to Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah (1882-1943). In the early 1930s British scholar-officials like Winstedt (1971), Wilkinson (Winstedt, Wilkinson, 1967) and Linehan (1976) wrote their much acclaimed state histories which were published by the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society. Much later towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Gullick published his Selangor state history; in 2023 it was translated into Malay (Gullick, 1998; Gullick, 2023). Then there are the unpublished chronicles which are equally important like *Misa Melayu*, *Hikayat Pahang* and *Hikayat Seri Kelantan* that tell the story of a particular state and its rulers which were later committed to print (Mohd Taib, 2004; Raja Chulan, 1968; Muhammad Yusuf et. al., 1992).

These are often cited as another form of state history. A number of works like Aruna (1991) or Suzanna (2001) do focus on Pahang covering the Pahang civil war, the rise of Wan Ahmad as Bendahara and later Sultan, the demise of the Tun Mutahir and his son Tun Koris and British intervention in Pahang. However these are not state history as defined in this essay.

### **Buyong Adil and his state history**

The above works must have influenced Malaysians (Assad, 1962; Muhammad, 1969) to write their state histories notably Buyong Adil in terms of the way history should be written and the sources used although in most cases the documentary evidence are confined mainly to Malay chronicles. Buyong Adil (1907-1976) remains the most well known and influential of these amateur historians (Haji Buyong, 1976).

Buyong was born Mohd Yusuf but his parents changed his name to Buyong. He began his education in a Malay rural school and proceeded to the SITC in 1924. Later he joined the college as its teaching staff. Before the Second World War he wrote two history books entitled *Sejarah Alam Melayu* vol. 4 and 5. In 1941 Buyong was dismissed from the college (at the time it was located in Kuala Kangsar) due to his association with young Malay nationalists like Ibrahim Yaacob who were one of his students, and subsequently transferred to a Malay school in Tanjung Malim.

His series of state history were published by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka during 1971-1981 although he had already published a different version of state history through *Sejarah Alam Melayu* vol. 5 which cover Pahang, Selangor, Perak and Negeri Sembilan that formed the Federated Malay States. It served as a history text for trainee teachers at the Sultan Idris Training College (SITC) which, along with the *Pejabat Karang Mengarang*, was the centre of Malay intellectuality in colonial Malaya. The text was also used in schools before 1957. In the 1960s and 1970s Buyong expanded *Sejarah Alam Melayu* to cover other states of the Malaysian federation.

Buyong's state history - there were 12 of them, covers the states of Malaysia including Singapore. They were written as part of the *Nusantara* history series. Both the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur and Labuan were subsumed under Selangor and Sabah respectively. For unknown reasons both Penang and Kelantan were not included in the series. If there is one on Kelantan, I have not been able to get a copy while for Penang it was probably included under Kedah although since 1786 it had already come under European rule. For Melaka, the book covers the period of the Malay sultanate and nothing on the Portuguese, Dutch or British periods after 1511. For Singapore, the emphasis was before 1824 when Malay rule came to an end after power had shifted to the British resident John Crawfurd. For Sabah, the book is divided into three periods: the British period with the story of local resistance led by Mat Salleh, followed by the short Japanese period and the period after Sabah joined the Malaysian federation. For Sarawak, the coverage begins with the stone age, the coming of the *bumiputeras*, the Malays, the Chinese, the opening of Kuching by a Brunei official, the conflict between local chiefs and Brunei representatives, the coming of James Brooke as the first white rajah of Sarawak followed by Charles Brooke and Charles Vyner Brooke, local resistance to Brooke rule, the Japanese occupation, Sarawak becoming a crown colony after the war and Sarawak joining the Malaysian federation in September 1963. For the other states, the coverage is dynastic history focussing on the Malay rulers, their whims and the domestic and external challenges they faced.

Most of these books were published between 1971 and before Buyong's demise in 1976 while four were published posthumously in 1981. Their publications began in 1971 with Johor and Selangor (Haji Buyong, 1980a; 1981a) followed by another three in 1972 namely those of Singapore, Pahang and Perak (Haji Buyong, 1980b, 1984, 1981b). Three more appeared in

1974 namely those of Terengganu, Sarawak and Melaka (Haji Buyong, 1982, 1981c, 1974). The last group that appeared in 1981 were those of Negeri Sembilan, Sabah, Kedah and Perlis (Haji Buyong, 1981d, 1981e, 1981f, 1981g). As indication of their popularity a few of these have been reprinted; 1980 saw the reprint of *Sejarah Johor* and *Sejarah Singapura* while the reprint of *Sejarah Selangor*, *Sejarah Perak*, *Sejarah Terengganu* and *Sejarah Sarawak* were undertaken in 1981. In 1984 it was the turn of *Sejarah Pahang* to be accorded a reprint. In 2019 all of them were revised and reprinted by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DBP).

The length of these books vary depending on their contents, their time frame and the available sources. The smallest is the Perlis state history which is a mere 38 pages while for Kedah, Sabah and Melaka were under 100 pages each. The longest ones belong to the state history of Johor (389 pages) and the state history of Pahang (461 pages). For Perlis, the coverage include the founding of Perlis in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, her rulers and chiefs, Perlis's relation with the northern Malay states especially Kedah and Penang and Siamese role and influence in the state. Significantly there is no sources cited for Perlis; it is probable that Buyong had access to various manuscripts deposited at the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka. Buyong's history of Pahang begins with the stone and bronze age, Pahang before the Malacca conquest and after, Pahang ruled by descendants of Malacca rulers, the Aceh conquest of 1614, Pahang as part of the Johor-Riau-Lingga sultanate, Pahang under the rule of the Bendaharas, the civil war of 1857-63, her involvement in the Selangor civil war, Pahang from 1874-1881, Wan Ahmad assuming the title of Sultan in 1884, British intervention in 1888, local resistance to British rule and Pahang from 1895 to 1970 which is the date of the demise of one of leading figures of the anti-British resistance, Mat Kilau. The sources he cited includes Hikayat Pahang, Linehan, Paul Wheatley, D. G. E. Hall and W. P. Groeneveldt and a number of JMBRAS publications. One writer (Suzana, 2001) was unhappy in the way he cited many of these sources notably Linehan and the Hikayat Pahang; she claimed the latter as mere propaganda to discredit Tun Mutahir and his sons.

In reality Buyong is very dependant on the chronicles which gave his state history the appearance of indigenouness that finds much favour with Malay nationalist in the immediate post independence period. For Pahang, the Hikayat Pahang was indispensable while for Kedah, Buyong depends on Muhammad Hassan and Wan Yahya. In essence Buyong's state histories are dynastic history with doses of political history thrown in. This is evident from the history of Johor, Perlis and Kedah while for Pahang there is the added discussion on the origins of the Malays which he claims came from Yunnan. For Kedah there is much information on Sultan Abdul Hamid, his wives and his 30 children.

### **Buyong's state history and those of British scholar official (Winstedt)**

In his treatment of state histories, Buyong was very dependant on the Malay chronicles, the works of British scholar officials, and other well known scholars. The question is how different is Buyong from these scholar officials which probably served as his model? For the discussion we will be looking at Johore which was Buyong's first in his series of state history and compare it with Winstedt's treatment of the same subject.

Buyong's coverage for Johore (Haji Buyong, 1980a) begins before the 16<sup>th</sup> century followed by discussion on all Johor rulers beginning with Sultan Mahmud Shah I (1511-1528), the last ruler of Malacca who found refuge in Pagoh, Bentan before finally retiring in Kampar who is regarded as Johor's first ruler followed by other rulers like Sultan Alaudin Riayat Shah II (1528-1564), Sultan Muzaffar Shah (1564-1570), Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah I (1570-1571), Sultan Ali Jalla Abdul Jalil Shah II (1570/71-1597), Sultan Alauddin Riayat Shah III (1597-1615), Sultan Abdullah Ma'ayat Shah (1615/16-1623), Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah III (1623-1685) and Sultan Ibrahim Shah (1671-1685) while the Malacca lineage ends with the following

Sultan Mahmud Shah II (1685-1699). There is nothing on the pervert nature of Sultan Mahmud Shah II perhaps out of deference to the royalty.

After the regicide, the lineage was taken by the line of Bendahara Paduka Raja Tun Abdul Jalil starting with Sultan Abdul Jalil Riayat Shah IV (1699-1718), Sultan Abdul Jalil Rahmat Shah (1718-1722), Sultan Sulaiman Badrul Alam Shah (1722-1760), Sultan Abdul Jalil Muazzam Shah (1760-1761), Sultan Ahmad Riayat Shah (1761), Sultan Mahmud Shah III (1761-1812), Sultan Abdul Rahman Muazzam Shah (1812-1819), and Sultan Husain Shah (1819-1835). This was followed by Tengku Ali and Sultan Ali Iskandar Shah although the Temenggong family which began with Abdul Rahman had become more prominent through his son Temenggong Tun (Daing) Ibrahim and grandson Temenggong Abu Bakar (later Sultan Abu Bakar) (1862-1895), Sultan Ibrahim (1895-1959) and Sultan Ismail (1959 and still ruling Johore in 1971). The Temenggong family had to fend off Sultan Husain and his descendants for the control of Johore and its resources. The text is woven around these rulers and how they had to face foreign threats from Aceh, Bugis, the Dutch and later the British through a chronological narrative with various dates as markers for the reign of each ruler. In fact all the chapters adopted the names of these rulers as their titles while two chapters have the name of two individuals – one from the sultan lineage and the other from the Temenggong lineage indicating the contest for the control of Johore. The provision of an index provide much help to the reader while the sources cited are varied but without any archival documents. For Johor the sources cited are Malay chronicles, Shahrom Hussein, Muhammad Saad Haji Ibrahim, R. O. Winstedt especially, and well known scholars like Paul Wheatley and William Roff. The MBRAS have published many essays on Johor and there are well covered by Buyong.

Winstedt's history of Johore (Winstedt, 1971) is more thematic touching briefly on ancient Johore, the Hindu and Melaka ancestors, followed by more detailed discussion on the founding of Johore in the 16<sup>th</sup> century in chapter three, Johore facing foreign threats starting with Portugal, Holland, and Aceh in chapter four while chapter five discusses Johore's relation with Holland, Jambi and Pahang, chapter six on Raja Kechil and the Bugis, chapter seven on Riau and the Bugis, the sultanate at Riau under the Dutch in chapter eight, the last phase of the historic kingdom in chapter nine, Sultan Husain and Temenggong Abdul'r (Abdul) Rahman in chapter ten, chapter eleven on Temenggong Daing Ibrahim and the last chapter on Sultan Abu Bakar and his demise in Mayfair, London in June 1895. Onto these themes are described each and every one of the Johore rulers beginning with Sultan Alaudin Riayat Shah whom Winstedt cited as the founder of Johore and ends with Maharaja Abu Bakar who was recognised as sultan in 1885.

There is much information on the attempts of these rulers' to come to terms with various foreign threats involving the Portuguese, the Dutch, Bugis, Aceh and later the British besides having to deal with petty wars and claimants to the throne. There are a number of notable personalities among them. One was Sultan Mahmud II, a homosexual who prefer young men from the nobility. This sultan was killed in 1699 by an enraged official in revenge for the killing of his pregnant wife thus ending the Melaka lineage with the following rulers coming from the Bendahara line. Earlier in the text Winstedt had explained the special position of the Bendahara in the Melaka sultanate and within the Johore-Pahang-Riau-Lingga sultanate as a person of power and privilege with power to enthrone the sultan. Another ruler was Temenggong Abu Bakar who had to defend his position and Johore state being usurped by the descendants of Sultan Husain. Abu Bakar was elevated to Maharaja, similar to Indian potentates, in 1868 before he was conferred sultan by the British in 1885.

After 1641 the Portuguese threat had come to an end and through treaty relations with the Dutch (1662, 1685 and 1689), Johor managed to expand her trade through the export of damar, copra, goglets, tin and gold. By the 18<sup>th</sup> century Johore had to face a new round of

dynastic quarrels, commercial and racial rivalries with the Bugis. In the meantime Dutch encroachment in Riau had impacted on the old Johore-Riau-Lingga sultanate. Through the 1787 treaty, the rule of the Riau sultan effectively came to an end while the Anglo-Dutch treaty of 1824 divided the old historic sultanate of Johore, Pahang, Riau and Lingga. The enthronement of Sultan Husain in Singapore was done by a British official instead of the Bendahara as mandated by customary practices. The other issue is the struggle for the control of Johore between Sultan Husain and Temenggong Abdu'r Rahman who was favoured by the British. Abdu'r Rahman was succeeded by his son Temenggong Ibrahim who won the contest for the control of Johore, a position that was further solidified by his son Temenggong Abu Bakar who was later bestowed the title of Maharaja and later sultan. Abu Bakar was also involved in Pahang through mining in Belat (near Kuantan) and the Pahang civil war through the provision of military and financial support for Bendahara Tun Mutahir and his son Tun Koris. This civil war came to an end in 1863 with victory to Wan Ahmad but to Winstedt, it only ended in 1868 when governor Harry Ord ceded the islands of Tioman, Sribuat, Kaban and others to Pahang with the consent of Abu Bakar. Winstedt's sources were impressive utilising both local ones including chronicles and European sources notably the Dagh-Register (daily journal of events) kept by the Dutch and travellers' account.

Buyong's books are popular with those who need quick references among history students and the laymen. But his texts manifest many weaknesses ranging from the sources used, its contents and emphasis. There were shortcomings in the way he cited his sources and quoting from the chronicles or earlier works. The state history is actually dynastic history and about the sultans and their struggle to stay in power. To a certain extent it is political history. This means the idea of the Nusantara history series is political. This is evident from the preface and introductions for a few of them. On Johore which was the first to come out, the Director General of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka wrote "its author had utilised many local sources. Through this approach it would be able to come up with new history writing which put local history in its correct position." For the Perak volume the same official reiterates "after reading this book, as is the case for the other volumes, our patriotism should be increasing as Malaysian citizen who are ready to devote ourselves to the nation and government for progress, peace and prosperity."

Buyong had echoed similar sentiment in his introduction for the Johor volume "hoping all those events that had taken place in Johore history would encourage Malaysians to preserve independence and sovereignty of Malaysia for all ages." Two politicians were roped in to write the preface for the other volumes. One was a deputy minister who was also the chairman of the Dewan Bahasa board and the other the chief minister for Selangor. The former stress the need for local historians to write the nation's history to prevent the void being filled by foreign scholars just like before independence while the latter in giving his comments on the republication of *Sejarah Selangor* reiterates the "importance of the book as reference to know and understand the background history of Selangor."

The preponderance of political history means there is nothing much on socioeconomic history. There is nothing on the laity or their activities. The models that Buyong had referred to ie the works of the scholar officials were much better although all of them were also political history with nothing on the laity and their activities. In short there is an urgent need to update the works of scholar officials and Buyong to encompass the laity and other aspects of history – social, economic or cultural history.

### **Paddy farmers under colonial rule, 1888-1941: the case of Pahang**

Perhaps a brief discussion on paddy farmers is in order as Buyong did not discuss the colonial economy or the plight of the peasantry. In the case of Pahang these peasants were left

to their own devise to negotiate the new administration while serious efforts to ameliorate their conditions were only undertaken in the late 1920s and 1930s. Before the Japanese Occupation Pahang was the most backward state with regards paddy production in the Federated Malay States if not the peninsula.

Until 1941 Malays made up the majority of paddy farmers in Pahang with each working 3-5 acre plots of paddy fields or *sawah*. In 1932 there were a total of 37,932 acres of *sawah*. With 16,852 acres Temerloh was the leading rice producing district while Bentong had 1924 acres (Annual Report on the Economic Progress of the People of Pahang for the year 1932). In the 1880s Pahang produced paddy, areca nut, coconut, maize, bananas and various fruits. Some of these items were exported but Pahang had to import rice from Kelantan. Paddy was planted once a year for family need while cash was obtained through the sale of jungle produce like rattan and gutta percha. Paddy production was outmoded and colonial officials were unconvinced of Pahang being able to meet her rice needs. Failure to deal with the problem of pests effectively have also impacted on paddy production. Paddy planting was done all year round through paddy *sawah*, paddy *tenggala* (mud flat) and hill paddy while the dates for planting and harvesting were fixed by the 1897 Paddy Planting Enactment. There was little use of irrigation with the best one (pretty rudimentary actually) found in the Gali valley in Raub. In other areas paddy planting was dependant on the rains. Colonial officials found the Malays were not amenable to use irrigation, invest in its development or to apply new cultivation techniques. Paddy seeds were brought in from outside the state but its suitability in terms of weather and soil have to be rigorously tested before its distribution to farmers.

By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century paddy cultivation was still unsatisfactory. In Pahang there was no large expanse of *sawah* as in Kedah or Kerian while there was still no plan to put in place an irrigation scheme until 1925 when one was constructed in Pulau Tawar, Jerantut and in 1932 in Paya Besar, Kuantan. Due to poor planning the Pulau Tawar scheme failed to benefit farmers and in 1926 it was destroyed by flood. By the late 1930s Pahang was the least developed in paddy production with productivity between 200-250 *gantang* per acre. The Agriculture Department attempted various means to increase productivity by 25 per cent but the suggested measures, such as procuring new seeds and the use of fertilisers, were beyond the means of the average farmers (Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the People of Pahang for the year 1938). Farmers were also urged to adopt new cultivation techniques as in the west coast while demonstrations were conducted at the *mukim* level to introduce new techniques to farmers. In 1937 a government mill was opened in Temerloh but only operated at 50 per cent capacity due to the lack of paddy although it did increase paddy production in the Temerloh district.

Many factors had contributed to the plight of the paddy farmers. One is colonial neglect as colonial priorities were directed towards mining and infrastructure developments besides the attitudes of farmers themselves. Since early colonial rule attention was given to mining in Hulu Pahang (Lipis and Raub) through various measures including encouraging Chinese immigration, road connectivity with Selangor through the Kuala Lipis trunk road that link Pahang and Selangor and the 1889 Mining Regulations which streamlined mining activities in the state. After the Pahang uprising (1891-95) Chinese miners like Loke Yew began to open mines on Bentong and Kuantan by bringing in capital and Chinese labour (Annual Report for the state of Pahang for the year 1898). In Raub the Australian Syndicate (later Australian Gold Mining Company) had already started its operation by 1895 while in Sungai Lembing the Pahang Corporation had produced tin which were taken to Kuantan by tram and river and later steamer to Singapore (Pahang Consolidated Company Limited, 1966).

To spur mining activities, the Kuala Lipis trunk road was started in 1891 initially as a cart road before it was upgraded. Its completion in 1898 caused much excitement among colonial administrators of the possibility of economic progress in the state although Pahang

could never catch up with Selangor in terms of its tin mining output. By the end of the 19th and first quarter of the 20th century, roads construction was well in place like Tras (Raub) to Bentong, Bentong to the Selangor border, Kuantan-Benta, Bentong-Telemong, Bentong-Temerloh, Temerloh-Triang and Kuantan-Pekan. Their opening facilitated the planting of rubber notably in Lipis, Raub, Bentong and Triang. As for railway construction, it began in 1910 from Gemas: it was completed in 1929 with the last station at Merapoh near the Kelantan border. For colonial officials, funds spent on infrastructure would benefit all while money spent on irrigation would only benefit Malay farmers (Annual Report for the state of Pahang for the year 1895). They were unconvinced of the ability of the farmers to change their traditional mode of paddy cultivation and to meet the rice needs of the state (Annual Report on the state of Pahang for the year 1891: 6-7). Consequently productivity remained low and until the 1930s Pahang only managed to produce 60 percent of her rice reeds (Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the People of Pahang for the Year 1932: 19).

### The labouring class of the 1930s

The labouring class formed an important segment of the colonial economy. In Pahang they were located in tin mines, rubber estates and government departments. Neither Buyong nor the scholar officials made any mention of them while the earlier Pahang annual reports, although made much reference to infrastructure development, mining and sanitary boards, mentioned very little of them until the depression of the late 1920s and early 1930s which witnessed labour retrenchments in the peninsula on a major scale. For Pahang much information on this class that cover Chinese, Indians, Javanese and the small number of Malays first appeared in the 1930s annual reports which also provide information on their accommodation, wages and the cost of living. Below are the 1939 figures of the various labouring classes in Pahang.

**Table 1:** Labour based on ethnicity, 1939

Labour type	Males	Females	Ethnicity
Estate worker	5,582	2,221	South Indian
	6,203	2,191	Chinese
	271	93	Javanese
	527	84	Malays
	117	17	Other races
Mine worker	256	-	South Indians
	4,116	379	Chinese
	3	-	Javanese
	598	1	Malays
	229	1	Other races
Factory worker	-	-	South Indians
	97	1	Chinese
	-	-	Javanese
	6	-	Malays
	-	-	Other races
Government departments	1,938	257	South Indians
	357	63	Chinese
	2	1	Javanese
	555	5	Malays
	68	-	Other races

Source: Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the People of Pahang for the Year 1939: 29.

Factory here refers to sawmills which were owned mostly by Chinese entrepreneurs while government departments cover the Public Works Department, the Railway Department and the Sanitary Boards. Malay mine workers were located in Bukit Koman and Sungai Lembing undertaking various assigned duties: in Bukit Koman these include handling drilling machines, electric motor and lorries.

The annual reports provides a variety of accommodation for these labourers (Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the People of Pahang for the Year 1937: 16-18). For government employees, lines or barracks were provided free and erected according to plans approved by the Public Works Department and the Health Department. They were either of permanent or semi permanent. Periodic inspection were undertaken to ensure no overcrowding. Such lines have cement drains, wells and latrines with usage on a communal basis. They were also provided with a small piece of land where the labourers grow vegetables and other products. As for the other labourers their houses may be either permanent Chinese shop houses or the semi permanent Malay houses. The former are of good designs and periodically checked by the Sanitary Board to prevent over crowding. The Malay houses were built on piles with plank floors and walls with attap roof, either erected by the owner and rent out or by the tenant themselves. All wage earners living in Sanitary Board have the benefit of sanitary services in respect of water, drainage, anti malaria works, lighting, scavenging and conservancy.

For labourers on estates under European management, accommodation was provided free in the form of lines with a dozen or more rooms or detached or semi detached hut. These has cement floors, drains, plank walls and tile roofs with an adequate drinking and bathing water supply and latrines with usage on a communal basis. Things are quite different in Chinese owned estates where the labourers are housed free in small huts or large kongsis with plank or palm frond walls and attap or corrugated iron roofs. Routine inspection of all estates over 25 acres were carried out by the Health and Labour Department and suitable advice were given verbally or in writing for the improvement of sanitary conditions.

As for those wage earners living outside the Sanitary Board, the situation was a little different. For Malay wage earners living in kampong, they lived in their own houses on their own land. The houses were built off the ground on piles with plank floors and walls and atap roof with good ventilation. These houses were visited by the district officer from time to time and on the whole the general health was good. The Chinese wage earners who lived outside the Sanitary Board engaged chiefly in gardening, timber cutting, pig rearing or in the cultivation of rubber, tapioca and other products. The vegetable gardeners lived in small temporary huts while timber cutters in large temporary kongsis which were sets of rough cubicles in a building with thatched roof and wattle walls. The sanitary surrounding left much to be desired as they were not inspected by Health Officers.

As for the wages of these labourers, the majority of Chinese whether employed in agriculture or tin mines almost always work on contract or piece work although in some rubber estates were paid with a percentage of the receipt derived from the sale of the rubber. However it is difficult to get an exact figure for their wages but the annual report estimated they were paid 50-60 cents a day. As for Indians and Javanese, the rates differ according to the inland districts and the coastal districts as seen in the following figures for 1933.

**Table 2:** Wages for labourers in 1933

	Inland districts cents per diem	Coastal districts cent per diem
Stores and factories (men)	47-50	35-40
Stores and factories (women)	37	28

Tappers (men)	40-47	2 and half cent per lb
Tappers (women)	30-40	2 and half cent per lb
Weeders (men)	37-47	30-40
Weeders (women)	30-37	25-32

Source: Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the people of Pahang for the Year 1933: 26-28.

As a rule lower rates were paid to men and women labourers who did morning work only. For the inland districts the standard rates of 47 cents for men and 37 cents for women were prescribed but not for Kuantan and Pekan districts. Employers were also bounded by law to provide work for Indian labourers for 24 days in each month. As for their monthly wages the average was calculated at \$8.50 for men for a 20 day work and \$5.50 for women 17 days work. As for government departments the average wage was calculated at \$11 per month for men (with average wage of 47-50 cents and working for 24 days with 8 hours each day) and \$7.50 for women (average wage of 37-40 cents working for 23 days). Rice remained the staple food for these labourers with an able bodied male labourer requiring 6 gantangs while a married couple 10 gantangs per month. Indians used the parboiled rice imported from India or Burma with the price of 25 cents per gantang in 1933 while Chinese consumed Siamese rice with an average cost of 30 cents a gantang. Based on the average wage of \$8.50 per month, an Indian labourer would be able to buy 34 gantangs of rice or 6 times more than his requirement while for the Javanese 28 gantangs or 5 times more than his requirement. Taking other expenditure on food, clothing et. cetera but excluding the money remitted to India, the cost of living for an adult South Indian labourer was around \$6.50 per month, while for the Javanese and Malay labourer was about the same but 10-15 per cent higher for the Chinese labourer.

### **Proposal for a state history: the case of Pahang**

This section and the following ones are some ideas on the possible history of Pahang which might be useful for those interested in doing research on state history. The new state history must necessarily be an improvement to the existing ones. It had to be different and inclusive covering the peasants, labouring classes and the Orang Asli. Other than political history, it should also cover economic, social and cultural aspects which have been neglected thus far. The proposed product would also encompassed the many ethnic groups found in Pahang although to consult Chinese or Tamil written materials require mastery of the relevant languages.

What I am proposing is a two volume state history for Pahang with volume one covering the earliest period to the end of the Japanese Occupation while the second covers the period after 1946 until the year 2000 or to the first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In terms of topics volume one would begin with a discussion on the issues in Pahang historiography followed by the state history from the earliest time possible until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the arrival of Islam and the society, Pahang society during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, British intervention and the Pahang uprisings, colonial administration and social change, 1888-1941, economic development during the colonial period and ends with the Japanese Occupation. Certain themes that are controversial require more evidence than presently available such as on the involvement of the Orang Asli in peninsula international trade thousands of years ago, the arrival of Islam in Pahang, the nature of its absorption among the laity before the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century or the role of the sultan during the Pahang uprisings. One theme that is currently neglected and sorely missing is colonial socioeconomic development which would be amply covered in this volume.

The proposed second volume would be a mixture of history, socioeconomic aspects and culture which have not been done thus far. In terms of themes these cover Pahang history for the tumultuous 1946-1957 period, the socio-politics of Pahang between 1957-2000, followed by one chapter on socioeconomic development after 1957 which discuss education, health, agriculture (both lowland and highland), fishery and fish rearing, FELDA and rural development in the state, and regional development authority like DARA and JENGKA. This is to be followed by another chapter on socioeconomic development that cover the shift to industrialisation, communication, urban and village development, public and private housing, estate fragmentation and its impact, flood as in 1971, tourism, environment and development, and Orang Asli in state development. The last chapter looks at culture and state development. The idea is to look at change, how Pahang had changed since 1957, from its colonial backwardness to a more developed state in line with the aspirations for independence. The last chapter is meant to examine the role of culture and its location in state development. However one could not neglect developments that had taken place outside Pahang but had impinged on the state such as Malayan independence in 1957, the formation of Malaysia in 1963, the Indonesian confrontation, the 1969 riots and the National Economic Policy. All these have to be integrated into the text but without overpowering Pahang post-war history.

### **Writing a state history: the sources**

Writing the early history of Pahang (before the 18<sup>th</sup> century) is quite problematic due to the paucity of the sources. For the early period of Pahang history four types of sources are identifiable namely archaeology including gravestone, Chinese sources, European sources covering Portuguese, Dutch and English sources and local chronicles and legal treatise like the Hukum Kanun Pahang (Pahang legal digest). Linehan had referred to most of these sources notably archaeology and the European sources. After the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century there are much less problem with the sources as British records notably the Pahang annual reports proved to be most useful for the researcher.

However the sources are not without its inherent shortcomings. We begin with archaeology and gravestone. Archaeology is most useful to indicate cultural development over a long period of time. Linehan had undertaken this kind of research which he later incorporated in the earlier chapters in his *A History of Pahang*. Others like Frederick L. Dunn have examined Gua Kecil in the Raub district in the first half of the 1960s indicating different stages of cultural developments. To Dunn, these indicate the increasing dependence on agriculture instead of shell collecting. He estimated this took place between 6,300 and 3,250 years ago (Dunn, 1975: 19). Much more specific are the findings of another archaeologist B. A. V. Peacock who had worked the Kota Tongkat site in the 1970s. His finding was publicised by the Department of Museum and Antiquity which claim this site was connected with the beginning of agriculture some 4,000 years ago with society no longer entirely dependant on hunting (Adi, 1997: 26-43). As evidence the Tembeling knife which was used to cut paddy stalk was adduced.

In the early 1990s another staff of the department claimed of similar far reaching development that had taken place in Hulu Pahang, from nomadic life to a more settled life. Zulkifli looks at the evolution of techniques for making pottery which were used for keeping food, cooking and carrying goods and water. Since 4,000 years ago he asserted the Tembeling valley Neolithic society was already using fire and undertaking agricultural pursuits (Zulkifli, 2001: 1-15). However archaeologists from the University of Malaya were more cautious on these findings. They suggested further research should be conducted on the results of earlier archaeologists. They even suggested Peacock's finding on Kota Tongkat be re-examine by relooking at his notes which were deposited at the National Museum (Ahmad Hakimi, 1996: 238-246; Ahmad Hakimi, 1997: 51-60; Leong, 1997: 61-68).

The divergent views might confused the laymen but is quite normal in social science research. Such different viewpoints are noticeable also with regards gravestones. For Pahang we have the 1028 AD gravestone which was unearthed in Pekan besides the hundreds of Aceh stones (Batu Aceh) which were used as grave markers. Batu Aceh are found in various parts of the Malay peninsula in Perlis, northern Kedah, central Perak, Terengganu, Pahang and Johore especially the Kota Tinggi area. In Pahang 13 locations along the Pahang river from Jerantut, Temerloh, Dusun Pinang, Pulau Tambun, Pekan and Kuala Pahang are identified with Batu Aceh (Othman, 1987). The Batu Aceh which is associated with the nobility were brought into Pahang in the 15<sup>th</sup> century like the gravestone of Sultan Muhammad Syah I dated 1475 (800 hijri) or the gravestone of Ziarat Raja Raden also in Pekan dated 1511. In the 1630s many more of these stones were brought to Pahang by the Acehnese ruler Raja Iskandar Thani who was originally from Pekan. Othman Mohd Yatim associated four important points to these gravestones. First, the 1028 AD gravestone was the first stage of the arrival of Islam in Pahang but not much information on the arrival of Islam or its practice among the local population other than a gravestone marking the grave of an evangelist or trader (Othman, 1997: 133-147); second, the gravestone of Sultan Muhammad Shah I as evidence of the existence of Pahang as an Islamic state ruled by descendants of the Melaka rulers; third, the Ziarat Raja Raden gravestone refer to Melaka influence even after 1511; and fourth, the Makam Condong mausoleum complex is associated with Aceh influence in Pahang in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Othman, 1997: 145). In fairness, the 1028 AD gravestone probably need to be re-examined further to shed more light on Islam in Pahang.

Many scholars have made reference to Chinese sources and there are much information regarding Pahang in ancient times (Wheatley, 1980). But Chinese sources have its own weaknesses that stem from the Chinese world view of countries in the region. There is also a tendency of these sources repeating earlier sources on a particular locality while Pahang in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and after was spelt Peng keng, P'eng-k'eng, P'eng-feng, P'eng-heng and Pang-hang. The most recent is Poh Huang which is also the name of a gallery within the Sultan Abu Bakar Museum in Pekan which keeps Song dynasty (960-1279) ceramics that were found on Tioman island. Pahang (he called it Peng-keng) was described by Wang Ta-Yuan who was in Southeast Asia in the 1330s and 1340s as a land surrounded by mountains, with fertile land suitable for planting crops, the weather as not too hot, colourful clothing and lavish accessories for the women of wealth, its people distilling salt from sea water and making alcoholic drink from coconut. Pahang was also known for its huang-shu (a form of agar wood), cloths of various colours, lacquerware and music (Wheatley, 1980: 28-29). Almost similar description of Pahang appear again through Chinese officials like Fei-Hsin who came to the region with Admiral Zheng-he in 1436 (Wheatley, 1980: 90).

European sources especially Dutch and Portuguese sources are important for Pahang history during the 16<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> centuries. As seen through various scholars like Ingrid Mitrasing, Radin Fernando, Nordin Hussin, Barbara Andaya, Leonard Andaya, and before them Richard Winstedt (for his history of Johore) these sources provide more details to the period otherwise not found elsewhere. However their usage especially the Dutch materials is very dependent on the mastery of the Dutch language and the writing style of those period while it would probably take some time for Malaysians to familiarise themselves with the European world view as found in Dutch sources.

With seemingly insurmountable difficulties it is not surprising that writers like Buyong have made copious consultation to the chronicles like the Hikayat Pahang which was probably written in 1932 by one of the protagonist of the Pahang civil war other than giving his state history its indigenous character. The Hikayat Pahang touches on the ascendancy of the Bendahara family beginning with Tun Ali and ends with the reign of Sultan Abdullah. It highlights the contest for power between Tun Ali's sons – Wan Ahmad and Bendahara Tun

Mutahir that led to the civil war of 1857-63, Wan Ahmad's involvement in the Selangor civil war, the British intervention in Pahang in 1888 and the Pahang uprising of 1891-95. The chronicle focuses on war, palace intrigues, official ceremonies and relations between various individuals in the upper strata of traditional society. It begins with the voyage to Lingga by Bendahara Siwa Raja Tun Ali to attend a ceremony that placed his son Tun Mutahir as Engku Muda or successor as Bendahara. The text ends with the appointment of Tengku Sulaiman ibn al-marhum Sultan Ahmad Shah as Tengku Besar in 1922. As in the previous Johor-Riau-Lingga sultanate Tunku Besar was designated successor to the sultan. The appointment was made by his brother Sultan Abdullah. In 1928 the arrangement was changed with Hugh Clifford playing a big hand. Scholars like Anthony Milner have consulted the Hikayat Pahang although local historians are quite slow in doing so.

That ambivalent is also traceable with regards the Hukum Kanun Pahang. This legal text served as the judicial reference for the Pahang chiefs for 250 years before it was superseded by British laws at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This legal text comes in various versions: one version was published in 1948 by John E. Kempe and Richard Winstedt in JMBRAS while another one is kept at the Royal Asiatic Society Library in London. In 1951 another version was published by W. Jakeman, also in JMBRAS, while the last version is presently kept at the Pahang State Museum in Pekan. In 2003 the last version was transliterated by Yakub Isa and published by the Pahang State Museum. Briefly the Pahang State Museum version covers the following aspects: court etiquette, solutions to social problems (like amok, slaves, role of witness and oath), procedures and regulations relating to maritime matters, matters relating to marriage, adultery, rape, relations between slaves and their owners and general matters relating to diplomatic relations with Siam. It also touches on royal adat. Hukum Kanun Pahang mentions of sending the *bunga mas dan perak* to Siam, how this was undertaken and contributions of Pahang vassals including the amount they had to submit. These vassals include Tambang, Dungun, Batang Pahang, Endau, Rompin, Tioman and Pulau Aur, Bandar, Tebing, Sedili, Krau, Mentiga and Bebar (Yaakub, 2003: 27-28).

### **The Pahang Annual Reports**

In the discussion on paddy farmers and the labouring class of the 1930s references were made to the Pahang annual reports which had remain underutilised by history students or Malaysian researchers. These reports were started in 1888 with six pages covering administration, income and expenditure, area and population, communication, natural resources and general information. In 1914 it came in 22 pages covering among others finance, the State Council, forest, land and agriculture, mining, public works, police and crime, prison, medical and health, education, wild animal, military and general information besides 21 pages of appendices relating to finance, land, agriculture and mining, commerce, the courts, health, population, climate and prison. The format was retained for the 1920s. In the early 1930s the subtopics were reduced to 18 while information on the geography of the state, its climate and history were included in the early part of the reports.

With 88 pages, the 1937 annual report was the biggest which covers geography including climate and history; government; population; health; housing; production; commerce; labour; wages and the cost of living; education and welfare institutions; communication and transport; public works; justice and police, legislation; banking, currency, weight and measures; public finance and taxation; miscellaneous; and general. The miscellaneous items cover the Electrical Department, wild life protection in Krau and Gunung Tahan, volunteering (related to the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the FMS Volunteer), cooperative society and Cameron Highlands. There is also another 25 pages of appendices covering statistics on medical, climate, forest, the courts, prison, finance and land and agriculture and mining. These

report were accorded various names including *Pahang Administration Report* and *Annual Report on the State of Pahang*. From 1932 onwards, and perhaps reflecting the post depression period in Malaya, the report were denoted as *Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the Peoples of Pahang*, similar to Selangor and Kelantan.

The annual reports are indispensable in understanding Pahang's development or underdevelopment during colonial rule, the 1926 floods and other aspects of Pahang colonial history. For the 1926 flood the annual report briefly mentioned it as "the most disastrous flood ever known in Pahang" when at Kuala Lipis the water rose to a height of 65 feet and at places down the Pahang river the flood attained a height of 100 feet (Pahang Administration Report for the Year 1926: 14). It was caused by heavy and continuous rain with Kuantan receiving 24.85 inches in 24 hours on 27 December 1926. All districts were affected although for Raub and Bentong the damage caused was much less. For Pekan district the flood waters only receded in February 1927. Houses and trees were washed away, live stock had to be abandoned, communication was broken. The material damage to public and private property was enormous. Heavy losses were incurred by the post office, schools and even the Kuala Lipis prison. Police stations in Chegar Perah, Kuala Krau, Lubuk Terua and Sungai Lembing were washed away. Many schools were destroyed. The Lubuk Terua Malay School, the Kampung Tengah Malay School, the Government English School in Kuala Lipis and the Burau Malay School were all swept away. The receding flood water left a thick deposit of silt and sand in some places. In the Ulu Tembeling such deposit was 20 feet deep. The loss of life stood at 55 while the lost of property was enormous reaching many millions of dollars.

A fuller picture of the damage appears in the 1927 annual report (Pahang Administration Report for the Year 1927: 2-3) which is quoted here.

In some of the riverine villages not a single house was left; thousands of coconut and fruit trees were destroyed; stores of paddy were washed away; and growing crops buried under sand, while thousands of buffaloes, cattle and sheep were drowned or died of starvation. Some sections of the road were completely destroyed; others blocked by land slides; much damage was caused to the permanent way of the railway and the Pahang Consolidated Company's tramway. Telephones and telegraphs had been interrupted as well. Motor boats and rice were sent to Triang and put on the river to feed the central districts. Rice was sent to Kuantan and Pekan by sea while for the upcountry districts it was sent in small bags which could be carried over places where wheeled traffic was impossible. Planters, miners and others took charge of distribution and assisted in the work of reopening the roads. Commandeering of food stuffs and rationing was necessary and rations were short for some time, but fear of general starvation was removed.

The annual report took note the numerous assistance to the state to alleviate the sufferings of the laymen. The government of the Straits Settlements gave a large quantity of rice, the government of Selangor a large sum of money for replacing and repairing mosques and the government of Kedah 150 buffaloes, while the general public of Malaya subscribed lavishly to the Malayan Relief Fund which has helped thousands of the poorer sufferers with money, provided a fund for supplying young fruit trees, and for supplying buffaloes. The peasant proprietor many of whom lost everything they possessed bore their losses with fortitude and set to work with energy on rebuilding houses and planting rice, and maize with seeds provided by the government. A second, though smaller flood in March (1927) destroyed much of the earlier planting and a drought later in the year did much damage while rinderpest and foot-and-mouth disease added to the already heavy loss of buffaloes. To keep buffaloes in the state, the

1931 Buffalo Enactment was amended and in 1932 a centre for breeding buffaloes was set up at Batu Talam in Raub (Pahang Administration Report for the Year 1931: 3). Following the destruction of paddy seeds at the Dong Research Station, new strains were brought in from Kerian. After a series of rigorous tests, 2-3 rice strains were found suitable for Pahang including Radin 13 and Seraup Kecil 36. These were introduced to farmers in Dong, Kechau, Penjom, Tanjung Besar and Budu and by 1930 had produced very satisfactory output (Pahang Administration Report for the Year 1929: 4; Pahang Administration Report for the Year 1930: 2).

### **Other sources kept at the National Archives of Malaysia Kuala Lumpur**

The annual reports are further augmented by other sources that are kept at the National Archives of Malaysia Kuala Lumpur like the district files although for the pre 1941 period only files covering the districts of Bentong, Temerloh and Kuantan are available. Another important files are the TBP (the office of the Tengku Besar Pahang, which was held by Tengku Sulaiman ibn al-marhum Sultan Ahmad Shah, handled Islamic affairs and matters pertaining to Muslims in the state) records which I have already discussed elsewhere (Abu Talib, 2021: 111-135). and will only touch its importance here. The TBP records cover the period between 1920 and 1959. They consist of hundred of files which have not been fully utilised by researchers with no attempt made to use them to construct a social history of the 1920s, the 1930s, during wartime or the post-war period. They shed much light on the plight of Malay Muslims in the various districts and Islamic education in the state. These documents also indicate how Islam and the religious elites were used by the Japanese for non-religious purposes.

### **National Archives of Malaysia Pahang**

For the post 1945 period reference must certainly be made to the National Archives of Malaysia Pahang State (Pahang archives) which is located in Bandar Indera Mahkota in Kuantan. With its opening in 2011 almost all files relating to Pahang kept at the Terengganu branch of the National Archives in Kuala Terengganu were transferred to Bandar Indera Mahkota which totalled 122,518 files (Hajah Samsiah, 2011). At the Pahang archives the files are classified according to federal and state departments and federal or state statutory bodies. In Pahang there were 35 federal departments including the Royal Malaysia Police, Department of Orang Asli including the Tanah Rata Department of Orang Asli, Education Department, Election Commission and so forth.

Equally important are files originating from the state departments which are 12 in all including the Land and District Offices, the Sultan's Office, Forestry Department, Agriculture Department and the Office of the Pahang State Secretary. For the Land Office, there are files from the districts of Bentong (1945-82), Jerantut (1959-65; 1967-71), Lipis (1951-38), Kuantan (1967-79), Maran (1980-96), Pekan (1924-81), Rompin (1951-85) and Cameron Highland (1925-67). There are files for the Forestry Department for the period 1920-80 which refer to the districts of Bentong, Jerantut and Temerloh while the Department of Agriculture (1951-88) covers the Agriculture Departments of Kuantan, Bentong and Lipis. Then there are files originating from the Sultan's Office for the 1930-49 period. Many more files are group under the State Secretary's Office (16,750 files) for the period before and after 1945 while both the Chief Minister's Office (1953-78) period and the deputy chief minister (1961-78) also keep a smaller number of files.

There are many other sources that could be usefully consulted. These include biographical studies of individuals from Pahang not just politicians but also cultural enthusiasts

and artists. Equally important is oral history including interviews of Pahang personalities either kept at the National Archives in Kuala Lumpur or the Pahang archives. Museums and memorials are an important source which could be useful like the Museum Tokoh in Kuala Lipis or the Mat Kilau memorial in Pulau Tawar. The state museum in Pekan keeps much materials relating to the state either in manuscript form or in the form of artefact including photographs. They provide a visual glimpse of cultural aspects of Pahang that is not seen elsewhere.

### **Conclusion**

There are a few Malaysian writers of state history like Assad (1970) or Muhammad (1969) but Buyong remains the most well known among them as his state history was widely available. Perhaps these writers of state history including Buyong had taken inspirations from earlier writers notably British scholar officials and like them, have utilised local chronicles and other works by local writers. But these works are outdated while their coverage are limited to sultans and the challenges they faced domestically and from external powers like Aceh, the Bugis, Portuguese, Dutch and later the British that ultimately colonised Malaya. The discussion had taken note of the plight of the Pahang paddy farmers who were left very much on their own to negotiate colonial rule until the 1930s as the colonial administration prioritised mining and infrastructural developments. To colonial officials the expenditure on infrastructure would benefit the whole state while spending on irrigation would only benefit paddy farmers who have yet to increase their productivity and provide 100 percent of the state's rice needs. New archival sources located at the National Archives in Kuala Lumpur or in the states like Pahang have provide new opportunities for Malaysians to write a new form of state history that are more inclusive covering political, social, economic and cultural issues. These sources show that it is possible to write a more comprehensive state history which has eluded Buyong or British scholar officials reflecting a more accurate situation on post 1957 Malaysia. These sources also would enable other Malaysias to venture into many other sides of state history that have not been possible before. Its only through this way that both the state and national history could be strengthened for the betterment of both and for Malaysian historiography in general.

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