

Pahang State History: A Review of the Published Literature and Existing Gaps

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Abstract: This essay argues on the need to focus on state history—in this case, Pahang state history—as a way of enhancing the national history. As a starting point, a review of the existing literature highlights gaps which require attention in the writing of such history for Pahang. The review starts with the traditional texts relating to Pahang history followed by the major works that have been written thus far: the 1891–1895 anti-British uprising; the Orang Asli in state history; migration; change before 1957; the post-1957 in Pahang history; museums and state history; and gaps in both the visual and printed narratives on Pahang history. The discussion is based on secondary works on Pahang published in both Malay and English.

Keywords and phrases: state history, national history, review, gaps, secondary works

Introduction

Since the last 400 years, there has been a cyclical interest in state history in the Malay peninsula. Quite often its importance is displaced by a much wider history or historical themes that transcend more than one state. The earliest form of state history comes in the form of chronicles like the *Sejarah Melayu* (Cheah and Abdul Rahman 1998; A Samad 2003), *Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa* (Siti Hawa 1991) and the *Hikayat Seri Kelantan* (Mohd Taib 2004). However there is little interest in this form of state history although the *hikayats* affected the way history is projected in the state museums and the National Museum as well (Abu Talib 2015). Despite the use of modern Malay in these texts, many Malaysians find these state histories irrelevant and full of myths and legends although scholars like Siti Hawa and Maier have argued on their relevance to the contemporary period. On the *Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa*, Maier finds it still relevant as it touches on "the dual nature of man, the tensions between ideology and practice and the uneasy relationship between politics and religion" (Maier 1988, 197).

By the early 20th century more modern form of state histories began to appear like the *Hikayat Pahang* (Muhammad Yusoff and Gopinath 1992) which

chronicled the rise of the family of Bendahara Tun Ali in Pahang since the early 19th century, the Pahang civil war of 1857–1863, the British intervention in 1888 and the Bahaman uprising of 1891–1895. For Kedah, there was the *Salasilah atau Tarekh Kerja-an Kedah* (Wan Yahya 1928) which criticised the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid (1882–1943) and the Siamese interference that subsequently led to British rule in 1909 while the *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* (Muhammad Hassan 1928) is more sympathetic to Kedah rulers since the 12th century when the present Kedah ruling house was established. The former was banned by the state while the latter was revered as Kedah's official state history. For Johor there was the *Hikayat Johor dan Tawarikh Almarhum Sultan Abu Bakar Johor* (Mohd Said 1926) and the *Hikayat Johor dan Tawarikh Sultan Ibrahim sehingga 1941* (Mohd Said 1951). This type of state history is closer to the modern reader. They were written by senior state officials although one might disagree with their interpretations of history.

By the 1930s, the state as a geographic entity in Malaysian historical writing has attracted the attention of colonial officials. In fact these officials had given state histories a big push when Winstedt and Wilkinson published their work on Johor in 1934, Winstedt on Perak in 1936 and Linehan on Pahang in 1936. To attest to their importance, all three were reprinted by Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (MBRAS) (Winstedt and Wilkinson 1974; Linehan 1936/1973; Winstedt 1992). These state histories follow the way history was written in the West but the authors have made copious references to the traditional chronicles. Their works influenced Buyong Adil to write his series of state histories covering all states of the federation which were published by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka since the 1970s (Buyong 1971; 1980; 1981; 1984). Buyong's series of state history were in fact a continuation of his earlier *Sejarah Alam Melayu Penggal V* which was published in 1939 which was used as history text at the Sultan Idris Training College. *Sejarah Alam Melayu Penggal V* covers briefly the history of Perak, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Pahang which formed the Federated Malay States. Buyong was not the only one fascinated with state history as notable works were also published by Assad (Sa'ad) Shukri (1962; 1969; 1971) on Kelantan and by Muhammad Salleh (1983) on Terengganu. For Kedah there was Wan Shamsuddin (1992a; 1992b) who focused on Kedah nationalism since the late 18th century.

Historical studies that cover specific themes that transcend more than one state like Khoo (1972) on the western Malay states on the eve of British intervention or Mahani (2007) on Malay secret societies in the northern Malay states might have garnered much attention but the state as a geographical entity for historical research remained attractive to historians. Even Khoo and Mahani have diverted their attention to the states, Perak for the former (Khoo 1981; 1982) and Penang and Kedah for the latter (Mahani 2003). As seen from a list of works beginning

with Fawzi (1978) on modern Johor, Rahmat (1970) on Kelantan during the 18th and 19th centuries, Sharom (1984) on Kedah during the late 19th century to the early 20th century and Shaharil (1984) on Terengganu during the late 19th century to the early 20th century, state histories have never ceased to attract scholars although they tend to focus on specific aspects or certain period in the history of the states. Fawzi (1986) had also written on Perak, Shaharil (1995) on Kelantan while Abdullah (1996; 1997a; 1997b) on Perak, modern Johor and Terengganu, Gopinath (1991) on Pahang in the 19th and early 20th century and Mohd Isa (1990; 1992; 2001) on Kedah during the colonial period.

As noted earlier there is cyclical interests in state histories while the national history since 1957 have dominated other types of histories including state history. In recent years, national history which has proven useful for nation building, has come under siege or even "outlived its usefulness" (Thongchai 2007, 3–29). Thongchai believes that the challenge of globalisation was partly responsible for this situation while other interested groups like the media and public intellectuals are clamouring for more say in the history enterprise. As alternative he suggested the writing of history at the interstices which to him is not a form of history from below or nationalised local history. Rather it seeks to focus on the history of the margins and the history of localisation of transnational elements. Thongchai was advocating a paradigm shift but he accepts, despite its limitations, national history will be around for some time.

This essay argues the need to go back to state history with Pahang as case study. I believe that any attempt to rewrite the national history must begin with its components, the states and the districts. Why Pahang? This is an interesting question. In its long history, this state has shown many aspects that are significant to the national history while parts of her history and those from the state had actually enhanced the national narrative. For a start, the essay reviews the published literature on Pahang history with the discussion covering traditional texts on state history, major works on Pahang history, the 1891–1895 uprising, the Orang Asli in state history, migration, change during the colonial period, the post-1957 period, museums and state history and the gaps in the visual and printed narratives. Serious attention to these aspects would result in a more holistic state history that would impact on the national history notably the post-1945 and 1957 period. The discussion is based on secondary works published after 1957 in both Malay and English besides selected theses/academic exercises.

Traditional Texts and State History

Unlike *Hikayat Seri Kelantan* or *Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa*, Pahang's well-known traditional text the *Hikayat Pahang* describes events that took place in the

19th century. It attempts to justify the contest for power by Wan Ahmad against his brother Bendahara Wan Mutahir and to legitimise his ascendancy as the Pahang ruler. It discusses Wan Ahmad's reign under British rule and the Pahang uprising led by Dato' Bahaman, Tok Gajah and Mat Kilau. Wan Ahmad was central to the narrative which covered from 1800 to the 1930s. Around him, the historical and cultural episodes were woven besides anecdotes on other members of the royalty and local chiefs while Tun Mutahir or his children were marginalised.

There are three versions of the *Hikayat Pahang*, with one Jawi version kept at the University of Malaya library while the two typed romanised versions are held at the Sultan Abu Bakar Museum in Pekan (the state museum) and the National Archives in Kuala Lumpur (Muhammad Yusoff and Gopinath 1992: 20). These were written between 1883 and 1932. Historian Muhammad Yusoff believed the 1932 version was written by Haji Muhammad Nor Haji Abdul Hamid who witnessed the political conflict of the mid-19th and early 20th century. Muhammad Nor held no official position but ran errands for Wan Ahmad (Khoo 2001, 106–107). He played a crucial role in the Pahang civil war on the side of Wan Ahmad. As advisor to the Bendahara (in 1884 Bendahara Wan Ahmad was appointed Sultan by the Pahang chiefs) after 1863, he organised the Pahang forces in the Klang war, handled the case of Wan Mansur, the sultan's brother who was planning rebellion, took part in the campaigns against Bahaman and dealt with concessionaires that flooded the state in the 1880s to the detriment of local chiefs and the laity.

Kalthum Jeran had combined the Jawi version of the *Hikayat Pahang* with the romanised text from the National Archives, to produce a master text (Kalthum 1997). This text begins with the rule of Bendahara Tun Ali (1806–1867) and ends in 1884 when Bendahara Wan Ahmad was elevated to sultan (Kalthum 1997, v–vii). Muhammad Yusoff was displeased with the amalgamation as it failed to accord justice to both texts since each had its own strengths and different world views. He also claimed the mandatory filological requirements were abused (Muhammad Yusoff and Gopinath 1992, 10).

Hikayat Pahang focuses on wars, court intrigues, state ceremonies and the interplay of personalities at the highest level (Muhammad Yusoff and Gopinath 1992, 11–13). The text is divided into stories starting with number one and ends at number 41. Some of these stories are brief while others are lengthy. Muhammad Yusoff provides a synopsis of each beginning with Bendahara Seri Maharaja Ali's visit to Lingga to attend the appointment of Tunku Mahmud as the Tengku Besar of Johore-Riau-Pahang while his son Wan Mutahir was accorded the title Engku Muda. Tun Mutahir was subsequently married to the daughter of the Johor-Riau-Pahang ruler. The story ends with the appointment of

Tengku Sulaiman as Tengku Besar Pahang. The focus however is on the conflict between Tun Mutahir and Wan Ahmad followed by Wan Ahmad's involvement in the Selangor civil war and the Pahang uprising. *Hikayat Pahang* made the disparaging remark that the Semantan chief took up arms because of financial gains (Muhammad Yusoff and Gopinath 1992, 139; Kalthum 1997, 113) which might not go well with diehard Bahaman supporters.

Another traditional text the *Syair Tanah Melayu* was written in 1899 by Muhammad Hassan Haji Jan (Muhammad Yusoff and Gopinath 1992, 24–25). It was first transliterated by Yaakub Isa and published in the Pahang Museum journal (Yaakub 1982, 42–138). The *Syair Tanah Melayu* comes in 1,036 stanzas. It has much coverage on Johor Bahru and Muar, other events that had taken place during the reign of Sultan Abu Bakar and Sultan Ibrahim, Sultan Abu Bakar's visit to Europe, and official etiquette in receiving state guests and royal funeral ceremony. The Pahang section (40 percent of the text) revolves on the civil war, Pahang-Johor relations and Johor's involvement in the civil war and the introduction of the residential system. Another text, the 30-page *Hikayat Pahang serta Johor* covers: (1) the history of Johor since the reign of Sultan Mahmud who died in 1699 until the reign of Sultan Abu Bakar (1862–1895); (2) the history of Pahang beginning with the Bendaharaship of Abdul Jamal until the reign of Sultan Abdullah (r. 1917–1932); and (3) on the royal ceremonies and protocols of Johor and Pahang. The text's authorship is unknown (Muhammad Yusoff and Gopinath 1992, 28–29).

There are intrinsic weaknesses with these texts. Hence the need to use them with other sources notably the British colonial records. Despite these weaknesses, the *Hikayat Pahang* was extensively cited by Linehan, Gopinath and Buyong Adil. One writer, Suzana M. Othman criticised this text. Her book *Mencari Sejarah: Tun Mutahir Tun Ali, Bendahara, Seri Maharaja Pahang (1857–1863M)* seeks to clarify various issues about the Pahang civil war and to present the war from the perspective of Tun Mutahir. Suzana referred to the letters of Temenggong Abu Bakar of Johor and Sultan Baginda Omar of Terengganu which show British involvement in the civil war on the side of Wan Ahmad. She claims that the assassination of Wan Embong, son of the Maharaja Perba Jelai, represents power struggle that involved the rulers of Riau and Terengganu. Suzana was unhappy with the way the Pahang state museum foregrounds Wan Ahmad's actions as justified since Tun Mutahir had transgressed their father's will to give Endau and Kuantan to him.

To Suzana, the *Hikayat Pahang* was mere propaganda harping on selective presentation, character glorification and grossly unfair to Tun Mutahir. She was unhappy with Buyong Adil and Gopinath. Buyong relied heavily on the *Hikayat Pahang* and his text is biased towards Wan Ahmad while Gopinath had

questioned Mutahir's maternal descent. Suzana highlighted Mutahir's paternal and maternal descent to the Melaka rulers and the family of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Whatever its weaknesses, the book is useful when negotiating the official history that is based on the *Hikayat Pahang*.

Historians have not paid much attention to the *Hukum Kanun Pahang* (Pahang laws) which was already in place by the early 17th century although it has attracted attention from philology and literary studies (Abu Hassan 2001, 16–42; Yaakub 2003; Jelani 2008) or other traditional texts including those related to indigenous medicine located in the Sultan Abu Bakar Museum in Pekan (Aripin 1987). Influenced by Melaka the *Hukum Kanun Pahang* combines both Islamic influences and *adat*. Behind detailed provisions on ceremonial matters, settlement of social conflicts, maritime matters, Islamic laws and general matters, it is possible to reconstruct Pahang society for the 16th–18th centuries.

Pahang History: A Review of the Published Literature

There is a small number of published works on Pahang history written by academics and non-academics. We begin with early history. Although research in this aspect lagged behind other states, the findings had important consequences to Malaysian cultural history (Adi 1997, 29). The Kota Tongkat site in Jerantut indicates evidence of the beginning of agriculture. The lack of animal bones at the site led archaeologists to postulate that the society then was not entirely dependant on hunting but had ventured into farming (Adi 1997, 34). The Upper Tembeling valley furnished the "Tembeling knife" which was believed to be used to cut paddy stalk. The bronze dongson drum found in Upper Tembeling indicates Pahang's linkage to an international trading network. The evidence gathered from Gua Kecil in Raub seems to indicate the change from hunting, gathering and fishing to a more sedentary life that had taken place 4,800 years ago. The Gua Kecil site also indicates that those involved in hunting and gathering were also involved in agriculture. Other archaeologists are more cautious; they believed these require further research including relooking at the findings of earlier archaeologists (Ahmad Hakimi 1997, 51–59; Leong 1997, 61–67). Earlier in 1996, Ahmad Hakimi voiced out the need to review the findings of B. A. V. Peacock who had worked on the Kota Tongkat site by relooking at the research notes which were submitted to the National Museum and to rework the site (Ahmad Hakimi 1996, 238–246). Peacock had taught at the History Department, University of Malaya from the mid-1960s until 1976. Indeed there was nothing new to Adi's hypothesis. His colleague from the Museum Department had presented similar finding in a seminar on Pahang history which was held in Kuantan in 1992. Unfortunately this essay which focuses on the Tembeling Valley in upper Pahang along with the other 13 papers were only published in 2001 (Zulkifli 2001).

On Pahang history before the 20th century, *A History of Pahang* by W. Linehan (1936/1973) is the best thus far. The book covers Pahang history from the prehistoric period to the 1890s ending with the surrender of leaders of the Pahang uprising to the Siamese. The first five chapters cover Pahang before the 18th century. As reiterated by Profesor Khoo Kay Kim in the preface of the 1973 edition, not much had been written on this period while a number of European travellers had recorded their observations but these were widely scattered. To his credit, Linehan had located them. He had also written essays on the early history which were published in respectable journals. Linehan had suggested the need to look at both the Dutch and Portuguese sources. For 19th century Pahang, he had referred to C. Gray and Abdullah Munshi, while on the civil war he cited the *Hikayat Pahang* and papers of the Maharaja Perba Jelai. For unknown reasons, he did not consult the Colonial Office records when discussing British intervention and colonial rule in Pahang.

The other strength of the book is the appendices which take up almost half of the text. Besides the papers of the Maharaja Perba Jelai which are a very useful collection of document that are no longer extant, the other appendices include the descent of the early sultans, the family of the Bendaharas and modern sultans, the principal chiefs of Pahang and an extract from a 1929 Portuguese account of Pahang.

Aruna Gopinath was equally fascinated with 19th–20th century Pahang. Her book *Pahang, 1880–1933: A Political History* was published in 1991 by MBRAS and translated into Malay in 1993. Originally an MA thesis, *Pahang, 1880–1933* examines the major political development in the state between 1880 and 1933, particularly the rise of Wan Ahmad, his attempts to hold on to power before and after 1888 until his abdication in 1909.

The book includes 17 appendices including the letter from the British governor in Singapore to the Sultan of Pahang dated 29 June 1888, a list of the Pahang men, their wives and children who surrendered to the Siamese and the allowances for the traditional chiefs and headmen for the year 1902. Gopinath had referred to the Colonial Office records, the High Commissioner's Office Files, Hugh Clifford Diaries of 1887 and 1888 besides files of the Temerloh District Office, Kuantan District Office and the Pahang Annual Reports.

She begins with the political structure and administration of the state prior to 1888. Wan Ahmad's policy of elevating non-aristocratic favourites to high position resulted in rivalry with the more entrenched hierarchy. The internal crisis involving the older chiefs and the new ones precipitated British intervention. Also highlighted were Wan Ahmad's efforts to secure the title of Sultan. The study looks at the inauguration of British rule and western concepts

of power and administration and how these had impinged the independence and political-cum-economic power of the Malay chiefs and subsequent attempt to drive out the British. The move gained support from the major and minor chiefs including Sultan Ahmad. Gopinath discusses Sultan Ahmad's attempt to avoid being completely deprived of his prerogatives in his advancing years. In 1902 he was honoured with a knighthood but abdicated in 1909 because of old age. He died in May 1914. With his demise, British control of Pahang was completed.

The epilogue examines the primary features of Pahang political history between 1915 and 1933. In 1914, Tengku Mahmud was appointed sultan. He was succeeded by Tengku Abdullah in 1917. In 1932 Tengku Abu Bakar was declared sultan by the British High Commissioner. According to Gopinath (1991, 215), "The transition from traditionalism to modernism was a discomfiting process to the territorial chiefs while the British entry had a detrimental effect on the traditional local bases of authority." Under the reign of Sultan Ahmad's successors the chiefs accommodated themselves to British administration while earlier expressions of resentment had given way to one of cooperation (Gopinath 1991, 216).

One significant attempt to rewrite Pahang history came from a sociologist who suggested a deconstructivist approach that goes "into psychoanalysis, critical theory and post-structuralist theory." According to Farish Noor, the aims were to prove the constructiveness of Pahang as an idea, and how the very notion of the state and identity and place in the world was invented, revised, contested and recontextualised. He contends Pahang's story had resulted from a host of variable factors that worked with it, and sometimes against each other, pushing along with it a tide of humanity whose collective burdens shifted from one generation to the next (Farish Noor 2007, 2–3). He argues there are limits we can rationalise the past and to prescribe to history a teleology and determinism that was not there. Farish hopes "to rekindle the interest and memory of modern Malaysians who might otherwise think that ours is a national history that has had a foregone conclusion from time immemorial."

Farish Noor's *From Inderapura to Darul Makmur* covers specific themes like the entity that was yet to be known as Pahang and the many developments associated with it; the invention of Pahang by the colonial authority complete with a fixed political boundary, stable sense of identity and belongings, with writings and narratives that sought to lead a sense of fixity and finality to the meaning of Pahang and its identity, and how it was framed as an exotic land—a frontier state which later Pahang nationalists challenged with their concept of a larger Malay world. He also looks at postcolonial Pahang, from its domestication and pacification during the Emergency until the 1980s and 1990s. Through these

themes he hopes "we can do some justice to the complex questions of Pahang and its identity."

In 1972, amateur historian Buyong Adil published *Sejarah Pahang* which was reprinted in 1984. Buyong refers to secondary texts besides the *Hikayat Pahang*. The way he cited them is confusing although the text comes with a useful index. *Sejarah Pahang* covers Pahang history from the stone age until 1970 with a focus on the 19th century—the Pahang civil war, the rise of Wan Ahmad as Bendahara and sultan, his involvement in the Selangor civil war, the challenge from Wan Mansur, British intervention and colonial rule, the subsequent resistance to British intervention and Pahang from 1895 until 1970 focussing on political developments. The text ends in 1970 which coincides with the demise of Mat Kilau, one of the prominent leaders of the Pahang uprising.

Buyong discusses the resistance to British rule that involved almost all the chiefs but sidestepped the question of the sultan's involvement. It began in 1891 after Bahaman took retaliatory measures on the actions of the Temerloh district officer who had erected a police station in Semantan. Buyong provides details on the forces and casualties on both sides, of military movements, the personalities involved and major skirmishes at Batu Balai, Kuala Cheka, Jeram Kangkung and Kuala Tembeling. British forces were augmented by police personnels from Perak and Selangor.

By the end of 1892, Bahaman and his group had taken refuge in Kelantan and Terengganu. While many had returned to Pahang following the October 1892 amnesty, efforts to get the leaders to surrender failed. In fact they were reinvigorated through contacts with an influential religious teacher in Terengganu Sayyid Abdul Rahman al-Idrus or Tok Ku Paloh (1817–1917) who had infused the *jihād* element (Mohamad 1991, 184–187). The conflict dragged on until 1895. In March 1895, Clifford scoured the hinterland of Terengganu and Kelantan but failed to apprehend them. In the end it was the Siamese who took Bahaman, Mat Lela, Mat Kilau, Awang Nong and Teh Ibrahim into custody although another account claims the fugitives surrendered to the Siamese and subsequently taken to Bangkok.

There were conflicting accounts on the death of Mat Kilau. Nothing was heard of him until he reappeared in 1969 at Pulau Tawar which caused excitement in the country. In January 1970 the Pahang state government set up a committee to investigate the issue and in August of the same year declared the man as Mat Kilau. Ten days later Mat Kilau passed away at the age of 122. He was given a normal burial befitting a Muslim in Pulau Tawar.

The 1891–1895 Anti-British Uprising in State History

The 1891–1895 Pahang uprising attracted not only Linehan, Gopinath and Buyong Adil but also Abdullah Zakaria, Jang Aisjah Muttalib, Abdul Talib Ahmad and other less known writers. Abdullah Zakaria (1995) discusses it as part of the anti-colonial uprisings that erupted in the peninsula, Sarawak and Sabah in the 19th and 20th centuries. His extensive study is based on British colonial records. To him, these resistance shows locals did not easily accept the colonial presence although it is not quite certain if these individuals are nationalists as well. Jang Aisyah (1972) attempted to reconstruct the episode based on local archival materials and those located at the Singapore National Library. Originally an MA thesis, the book focuses on traditional Pahang society before the uprising, the contact with the west and subsequent changes to the traditional society and the uprising itself. Other studies are much shorter and are repetitions of earlier ones (Ahmad Rizal 2000). There is much less on other leaders like Mat Kilau (Talib 2007).

Much more significant is the book by Abdul Talib Ahmad (1975) which combined two different volumes that were published earlier. The 1975 edition carries a review of one of them which had appeared in *Berita Harian* in January 1961. This particular reviewer had taken note of the earlier writings on Bahaman which he claimed were "superficial, careless and in certain places were dishonest and demeaning to Dato' Bahaman." To him, Bahaman's significant role in Pahang modern history included "his success in establishing a state with a ruler and hierarchy of chiefs, to make Pahang a sovereign state vested with its own power and to assist the Selangor sultanate that was under threat by a civil war." To him, Bahaman was the "Father of Pahang independence" (Abdul Talib 1975, 2–3). The book is based on the oral narration of Imam Mat Diah whose father was one of Bahaman's henchmen.

Abdul Talib claims that Wan Ahmad's push for the Bendaharaship was based on Tun Ali's will. He had little kind words for Wan Tanjung who ruled in the name of his father Tun Mutahir. Abdul Talib took a swipe at the ulamas who were unable or unwilling to preach the true Islamic teaching while the chiefs were more concerned with their positions (Abdul Talib 1975, 16–17). He criticised the chiefs for their failure to restrain Wan Tanjung in plundering the state. Wan Tanjung's major sin included the assassination of Wan Embong and Che Seni (the wife of his grandfather Tun Ali) on false charges.

Bahaman played a crucial role in elevating Wan Ahmad as Bendahara Sewa Raja in 1857. He was aided by Malays recruited in Singapore. However, his opponents regrouped in west Pahang while Chenor, Semantan, Kerdau, Ulu Gali, Sega, Durian Tawar, Lipis and Jelai were held by chiefs who were loyal to Tun

Mutahir. They mounted a challenge and recaptured Pekan forcing Wan Ahmad and Bahaman to flee to Terengganu and later Kelantan. In late 1862 Wan Ahmad launched a second attack. This time he had strong support from local leaders from Jelai, Lipis, Pulau Tawar, Sega, Ulu Gali, Raub, Batu Talam and Semantan. Entering Ulu Pahang his force took the river route to Pekan facing stiff opposition along the way. Wan Tanjung was killed while defending Pekan and following Tun Mutahir's withdrawal, Wan Ahmad secured the royal capital. Abdul Talib attributed this victory to Dato' Bahaman and his friends. As a result, "Pahang became a state under a sultan, and was accepted by the Siamese and the British as an independant state." The feudal chiefs in the new order included Ungku Ngah. A son of Wan Tanjung, he was appointed Raja Bendahara while Bahaman was elevated to one of the minor chiefs.

On British intervention and the post-1888 period, Abdul Talib's narration contradicted the official historiography. He does not touch on British intervention but dwelt on the British overtures to persuade Pahang to join the Federated Malay States. One important post-1888 issue was the position of the lesser chiefs who were denied any form of state remuneration that led to a loss of social status. It became the focal point for resistance which started with the Dato Setia Raja Kuala Lipis, Haji Wan Daud Wan Pahang (one of the Orang Besar Berlapan) who opposed the change of the capital from Pekan to Kuala Lipis as he believed the move could affect his territorial holding. For his intransigence he was shot dead in 1889 on the pretext that he was mad (Zakaria 1991, 84–86). A more violent opposition was led by the Tok Muda Jengka, followed by Tok Gajah and his son Mat Kilau in Pulau Tawar. Bahaman was the last to take up the anti-British cause because of his relationship with Sultan Ahmad. The narrator blames Hugh Clifford and Malay chiefs who had sided with the British. Abdul Talib highlights the involvement of outside Malays from Perak and Selangor. He recorded many skirmishes but in most of them Bahaman was comprehensively outflanked.

Locating the Orang Asli in Pahang History

Pahang state history does not accord much space for the Orang Asli although for the pre-Melaka period Linehan had touched on them. The Orang Asli came into prominence during the Emergency (1948–1960) when they were courted by the colonial authority and the Malayan Communist Party. Since then, not much of their history has appeared in the state or national narrative. It seems their history has remained within the confines of the Orang Asli Museum in Gombak. In recent years, scholars like Leonard Andaya, Geoffrey Benjamin and Farish Noor have argued the need to relook at the position of the Orang Asli in the national (and state) narrative. It is interesting that both Andaya and Farish Noor have referred extensively to Benjamin. Through publications and seminars the Centre

of Orang Asli Concern (COAC) highlights the plight of the Orang Asli amidst rapid development that posed a threat to their traditional way of life.

Benjamin discusses Pahang ethnohistory that focuses on the Orang Asli and their dominance before the state was appropriated by Melaka. His argument starts with the ancient river-valley trade routes that crossed Pahang. This trade was supported by the availability of gold along the Tembeling and Jelai rivers, the presence of tradable forest products and the Orang Asli who were skilled at getting them and the suitability of most of the state for long-distance travel (Benjamin 1997, 83–87). Through this trading and other networks both Khmer and Thai influences found their way into the interior of Pahang.

Benjamin reiterates that ancient Malaya was subjected to influences from at least two different regions. One is the Mon-Khmer connections from the north that resulted in the present day Aslian languages (Mon-Khmer languages spoken in southern Thailand and peninsular Malaysia including the Orang Asli). He believed the early civilisations were initially Mon in speech and Mahayana Buddhist in religion but changed to the Malay language and Islam at a later period. Place names like Benom, Chenor, Reman, Kampung Dong and Singhora village suggest an early involvement with present day Thailand. Two, is the influence from the south involving the Austronesian speaking cultural input including Malay and pre-Malay components as attested by the presence of non-Muslim but Malay speaking Orang Asli (Temuans and Jakuns). Austronesian speakers had probably intruded further north into the Mon-Khmer speaking areas as indicated by the many Austronesian loan words in the Aslian languages (Benjamin 1997, 93). Benjamin argues that Malay settlements in Pahang proceeded from west to east and that it post-dated the founding of Melaka in 1403. He postulates some degree of intermarriages with the Orang Asli who were already present in the region (1997, 97).

When the first Austronesian speakers arrived, the early Aslian speakers were probably living mostly in the west of the peninsula. Coming from the coast they would have found their way up the Pahang river into the Tembeling valley. At the same time the Aslian speakers would have been moving eastward across the Main Range as the linguistic evidence suggests and would have absorbed any Austronesian speakers as evidence by the Austronesian loan words in contemporary Aslian languages. The Malay language came 2,000 years ago from northwest Borneo. By then these Malay speakers would have been too socially ranked to have been easily absorbed into the existing Aslian speakers. This led to the formation of ethnic boundaries between the Orang Melayu and the Semelais at Kuala Bera (Benjamin 1997, 104–105).

Benjamin makes a strong case for the Orang Asli. He writes, "It is primarily through close attention to Orang Asli life and culture that we have come to realise just how complicated is the peninsula's past. A re-emphasising of the mainstream position of the Orang Asli in their country's culture-history is timely and this is specially relevant to Pahang, the state that has the largest and the most varied Orang Asli population" (Benjamin 1997, 112–113). This reminds us of the call made by O. W. Wolters (1982) to historians to incorporate art history, linguistics and literary theory in historical research.

Similarly, historian Leonard Andaya (2008) looks at the Orang Asli and their relationship with the Malays (he used the term *Malayu*) since 1,000 BC. The complementarity of their economies over the centuries had encouraged the maintenance of their differing lifestyles with the interior groups as principal collectors of forest products while the *Malayu* provided the facilities for international trade besides products that could only be secured from outside. Andaya stresses that this maritime trade in forest products had taken place during the Hoabinhian period and continued to be strong from 500 BC until the 15th century. Initially the trade involved coastal shells in exchange for rattan, resin, tree bark and stone for making tools. In the Melaka and post-Melaka period the products were camphor, benzoin, damar, gaharu, bezoar stones, resins, rattan as well as wax and honey in exchange for iron, salt, cloth, ceramics and other necessities. Through long years of practical experience, the Orang Asli was able to preserve community secrets in collecting profitable forest products. It was the shift in trade in the 19th century, according to Andaya, that led to the assessment of ethnic boundaries notably the transformation of the land from forests to agricultural export plantations which removed the relevance of the Orang Asli as the suppliers of highly desired forest products. This development was followed by the change of attitude among the Malays. Increasingly the Orang Asli became commodities to be sold as slaves notably the Semang. As he writes, "pressures of modernity, the nation state, and the competitive global economy made the lifestyle and economic pursuits of the forest and hill people increasingly irrelevant and undervalued" (Andaya 2008, 217). Andaya's discussion refers to the Orang Asli for the whole peninsula including the Orang Asli of Pahang.

Farish Noor (2007, 15–17) argues the need to look at other sociopolitical systems including the Orang Asli who had settled down thousands of years ago. He asserts that the early states that emerged were fluid and complex trading communities and indifferent to racial differentiation. With the rise of the Malay polities in the 15th century, the Orang Asli communities were pushed deeper into the jungle. Farish claims "cultural and religious differences along with economic-strategic necessities and demands, made contacts and cooperation between the Orang Asli and the Malays increasingly difficult." Farish too had pointed out that the increase in slave trade had resulted in the Orang Asli becoming targets of

raids while negative perceptions of them among Malays and colonialists were prevalent during the 16th–19th centuries. But they were still respected. Malay chiefs who vied for power during this period claimed their right to lead and rule on the basis of both territorial and genealogical claims all the way to the Orang Asli communities to fortify their claim to belonging (2007, 22–23).

Migrations in State History

There is very little study on migration although Cant had taken note of Chinese and Malay migrations soon after British intervention. There are a few published works on Malay migrations while studies on Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA) have touched on the migratory movement of the Malays into land schemes like Bilut, Mempaga, Kota Gelangi, Lepar Utara, Lepar Hilir, Ulu Jempol, Keratong, Selancar, Kecau, Jengka and Triang. For the Bilut scheme, the composition of its 616 settlers is as follows: 199 from Pahang, 130 Selangor, 53 Perak, 41 Penang, 39 Kedah, 27 Kelantan, 12 Terengganu, 52 Perlis, 41 Negeri Sembilan, 15 Melaka and 7 from Johor (Nik Haslinda 1998, 119–120). By 1986, 40 percent of FELDA settlers in Pahang came from within the state, 24 percent from Johor, 10 percent from Negeri Sembilan, 6.5 percent from Terengganu, and 4.7 percent from Perak while the rest originated from Kelantan, Kedah, Perlis, Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Melaka (Nik Haslinda 1998, 95–96). The coming of the Malays from other states with their dialects was an unforgettable phenomenon in the 1960s and 1970s notably in the schools. Mahayudin, on the other hand, looks at Arab migration into Pahang and their role in the socio-political developments in Pekan, Kuantan, Raub, Temerloh and Jerantut. They were part of the Alawiyahs from Hadramaut who came to Southeast Asia in stages beginning from the 16th century directly from Hadramaut. Many also came through India and Indo-China (Mahayudin 1984).

The Pahang *syeds* came from Singapore, Johor and Terengganu. Their arrivals were both for commercial purposes and to proselytise (Mahayudin 1984, 37). The earliest was Syed al-Habsyi who came between 1803 and 1806; he later married a sister of Bendahara Tun Koris. Over the years the al-Habsyis maintained close connection with the palace. They were followed by the al-Yahya, al-Iderus and al-Khirid. By the early 1980s the Pekan *syeds* were composed of the al-Habsyis, al-Yahyas, al-Khirids, al-Junids and al-Saggafs while for Temerloh they were the al-Yahyas, al-Khirids and al-Habsyis. For Jerantut the *syed* plurality was made of the al-Yahyas, al-Khirids, al-Baytis, al-Habsyis and al-Jifris (1984, 73). The *syeds* were well known religious leaders and had established the madrasah al-Attas Ketapang in Pekan in the 1920s besides holding penghuluship for *mukims* like Semantan, Sungai Karang, Jenderak, Sega and Pahang Tua until recent times.

The Rao (Rawa) migration into Raub was the focus of Zaffuan's study which is based on a Jawi manuscript written by Imam Haji Ishak bin Muhammad Arif (1908–1992) from Dong. Haji Ishak had written similar manuscripts which were kept by his former students and family members. Zaffuan had edited them into a single text without changing the language style or historical content. To complement the text, he referred to the National Archives, the National Library and limited Dutch records on Pagaruyung (Zaffuan 2007, vii–x). This book highlights the linkage between the Rawas in Dong and the Minangkabaus of Sumatra and Perak. It is the story of their migration into Temau village (Dong), their spread to other areas, the Rawas' involvement in the Pahang civil war and the Bahaman uprising while the 1866 Rao uprising was downplayed. The book provides the lineage of these early migrants with Rawas from Raub having extended families in Sungkai and Lambor Kanan in Perak.

Since the end of the 15th century Ulu Pahang had been frequented by Minangkabau aristocrats. The Orang Kaya Perba Jelai traced his descent to these Sumatran aristocrats. After the Pahang civil war more Rawas came to Raub (Sega and Hulu Semantan). Many more came from Perak. They later intermarried with those from Kampar and Minangkabau. This is reflected in the strong Perak dialect among these newcomers. In the Pahang civil war the Rawas took the side of Wan Ahmad (Zaffuan 2007, 91–92). Other groups like the Banjarese settled in Temerloh, Korinchis in parts of Bentong and the Minangkabaus in Janda Baik and Simpang Pelangai but there is little study on them.

Change during the Colonial Period

Equally lacking is the study on socio-economic transformations during the colonial period although R. G. Cant (1973) who covers the period from 1888 until 1939 by looking at changes at periodic intervals is most useful. The sources consulted ranged from departmental files including those from the districts, Mukim Registers, Indexes of Settlement works, annual reports, land records and maps.

Mining was a major push for British intervention but it only concentrated in Raub, Bentong and Kuantan—three districts that witnessed tremendous population expansion and rapid urban development. In the Bentong district, mining activities are still evident in Ketari and Karak (one mining site managed by the Karak Tin Company was sited adjacent to the Bentong river). Bentong town expanded in late 1897 with the arrival of 700 Chinese miners who worked for the Selangor towkay Loke Yew. Loke Yew's legacy in Bentong remains to this day with his name gracing a major road in the town. The Malays took part in jungle clearing, timber cutting, boat poling or trading. They grew their own food

with the surplus put on sale. Many chose to remain as agricultural settlers, quickly settled down and merged with the existing Malay population.

Initially, commercial agriculture was centred in Raub, Bentong and Kuantan with the first rubber estates opened by outside companies. The construction of the Pahang Trunk Road linking the state to Selangor was a boon to agricultural expansion. By 1909, the growth of new roads and new towns had produced a pattern of change in west Pahang similar to what had taken place in Selangor earlier.

The decline of mining, the development of roads and railways, capital investment and activities of the colonial administration further boosted rubber cultivation. The railway brought central Pahang into direct contact with the other states and urban centres of the west coast. By 1921, mining and commercial agriculture was well established and large areas of accessible agricultural land were available for alienation especially along the railway line or the metalled road that were completed (Benta-Gambang, Karak-Kuala Pilah and Karak-Mentakab). There were still reserves of land for expansion although the severity of the December 1926 flood had affected agriculture with the agricultural areas of Pekan remained under water until January 1927. The flood caused widespread damage in the Tembeling valley, Lipis and Temerloh districts; it led to the loss of confidence among the Malays in wet paddy cultivation, the switch to rubber by the Pekan Malays and the internal migration of Malays to the Lipis district (Cant 1973, 116–117).

Based on the 1931 census, Cant estimated the state's population in 1939 at 228,000 composing of 108,000 Malays, 85,000 Chinese, 17,000 Indians, 16,000 Orang Asli, 500 Europeans and others at 1,500. Kuantan, Bentong and Raub-Bukit Koman each had over 5,000 people; Kuala Lipis and Sungai Lembing between 3,000 and 4,999; while Mentakab, Temerloh, Pekan and Beserah between 1,000 and 1,999 each (Cant 1973, 143–144). Malays lived in rural villages along the major rivers cultivating wet paddy and planting rubber on a small scale. The Chinese were permanent settlers who owned fixed assets in the form of land planted with rubber or urban business. They were bringing their families to Pahang.

Equally significant is the study on underground tin mining in Sungai Lembing and its role in the development of this town (Hanita Hanim, 2013). The Sungai Lembing mine began in 1887 through the Pahang Corporation Limited. Unsatisfactory financial position led to the company's liquidation and the formation of the Pahang Consolidated Company Limited which took over the mining operation in 1906 (Pahang Consolidated Company Limited 1966). By 1915 the underground shaft had reached 1,200 feet which required the

installation of large ventilation fan. In the 1920s its multinational labour force totalled 3,000.

The mine faced many challenges. The 1926 flood destroyed 15 miles of its railway track, washed away the mine hospital and destroyed 250 houses. For three months mining operation was suspended. It was also affected by the 1920s world depression and production quota imposed on all tin producers. During the Japanese Occupation, the mine experienced losses of equipment and European personnel while in the postwar period production was dampened by the Emergency.

Other scholars had looked at the districts focusing on the political, economic and social impact of colonial rule. Koch (1992) focused her attention on Temerloh district between 1888 and 1948. She had referred to the files of the British resident, annual reports, state council minutes, files and land records for Temerloh district and oral history. Her findings are significant. While ostensibly protecting Malay society from change, British colonial policy in fact encouraged the ossification of political and economic structures and created a society markedly different from the former pre-colonial Malay society.

Except for the Chenor aristocracy, Koch claims the headmen and chiefs in Temerloh did not constitute a ruling class in the pre-1888 period while four secondary chiefs were accorded recognition. The traditional chiefs who came to power after 1889 were able to use economic, political and educational privileges to become established within the ruling class. They were increasingly distanced from the society due to their identification with the colonial bureaucracy. They were able to build an independent economic base while for other Malays, colonial policy had restricted access to forest and land resources. The introduction of rubber opened a new frontier but few Malays were able to obtain lands before it was closed by colonial policy and the restrictive rubber schemes. As a result the mass of the Malays found their economic option severely limited. After 1945, radical Malay organisations like the Malay Nationalist Party were able to mobilise rural Malay discontent in an incipient movement of opposition to British colonial rule and the Malay ruling class.

The Post-1957 Period in the Published Literature

For the post-1957 period the published accounts do not cover much on the socio-economic transformations that had taken place since independence. The limited literature covers education, the Pahang Veterinary Department, *paya* paddy cultivation in Temerloh, the Jengka Triangle and other regional development bodies, FELDA land schemes in the state and mosques. The study by the Pahang Education Department focusses on schools in the state including a complete

history of many of them (Pahang Education Department 1975) while a more updated version was contributed by the deputy director of the Pahang Education Department (Abu Tahir 2001, 162–181). Another study looks at educational management from 1926 to 1949 based on a document that originated from a Malay school, the Serandu Malay School in Pekan (Yaakub 1996, 110–137). The schools were divided according to region: the western region covering Cameron Highlands, Kuala Lipis, Raub and Bentong; the central region covering Jerantut and; Temerloh and the eastern region covering Kuantan, Pekan and Rompin.

The significant findings of the Pahang Education Department indepth study were: (1) urban schools in the colonial period have better educational facilities than rural ones; (2) rural schools tend to follow the broad settlement patterns of race as the case of Malay and Tamil schools; and (3) geographical influence on the distribution and character of schools. In the coastal areas, schools were affected by the monsoon season and village fishing activity while frequent floodings in the central region had affected schools and schooling. The first school in Pahang was opened in the 1880s. It was meant for the aristocracy and sons of officials. This was followed by Jerantut in 1888. English schools came at the turn of the 20th century in Kuala Lipis, Raub and Bentong. In the central region, English schools were established after 1957. The region was ignored by the Christian mission due to poor communication, poor economic development, the scattered nature of the Chinese rural population and the predominantly Malay population. By 1948 the number of schools had increased to 320 while the 1960s witnessed the mushrooming of national type secondary schools in the smaller towns like Karak, Lancang, Triang, Maran and Jerantut. By the 1980s, land schemes all over the state were adequately provided with schools, both primary and secondary.

The 163 FELDA land schemes in Pahang (out of 422 for the country) were a new phenomenon when it was first started in the late 1950s. They are found in all districts with the concentration in Temerloh, Maran, Kuantan, Rompin, Pekan dan Kuala Lipis. The most well known cluster, the Jengka Triangle, covers a total area of 196,728 hectares straddling four districts—Maran, Temerloh, Bera and Jerantut. In 1983 Jengka's total population was recorded at 156,928 (Hamidin 2001). Jengka covers 30 land schemes involving rubber and oil palm; five of them were established in the 1960s while the rest much later (Nordin 2011). Each scheme covers an average of 3,000–4,000 acres involving 400–500 families who were brought in from various parts of Pahang and the other states.

Nordin (2011) appends photographs to convey the kind of pioneering life the Jengka settlers had to encounter. Undoubtedly FELDA managed to improve the livelihood of rural landless Malays although its urbanisation programme developed at a slower pace than expected even in the Jengka Triangle. Nordin

provides the FELDA success story including settlers who had made it. Many FELDA children were equally successful pursuing professional career outside FELDA. There is nothing on the problems others faced while Nik Haslinda highlights myriad issues faced by the Bilut settlers ranging from settlers without any rubber tapping skill, unfamiliar work schedule, issue of interest in repayment to FELDA and land titles. Due to its overwhelming Malay population, FELDA attracted Malay-based political parties like United Malay National Organization (UMNO), Pan Malaysia Islamic Party (PAS) and Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) that resulted in the increasing politicisation of the rural Malays.

Gading Bersilang: Sejarah Jabatan Perkhidmatan Haiwan Negeri Pahang is probably the only attempt by any department in the state to write about itself (M. Z. Azmie 2006). M. Z. Azmie served as the department's director in the 1990s and early 2000s. He took eight years to write the book which was based on departmental files, documents from the National Archives of Malaysia Kuala Lumpur and Kuala Terengganu and interviews with former staff. The book covers the department's roles and functions, its officers and staff, facilities and services provided to the public in the livestock sector, animal diseases and animal rearing. Starting in 1910 the department had provided vital services to expand animal husbandry in Pahang.

Temerloh is well known for the production of rice on unmodified swampland. The system utilised direct rainfall with the farmer having little or no control over water levels in the fields. The Pesagi farmers near Chenor had experimented with cultivars, adapting new technologies to local conditions and using their own seed selection skills. This form of paddy cultivation is significant as repeated attempts to establish modern techniques did not produce encouraging results because of the heavy rate of siltation or erosion from floods (Lambert 1985).

The Pesagi farmers practiced a form of agriculture adapted to a wide range of diverse habitat covering 96 acres of swampy area. By concentrating on the long grain variety they were not required to make laborious or expensive landform modifications or to devise means for exact water control. They placed little control on improving production method yet were still able to expand production levels and production area by using varieties adapted to existing habitats. According to Lambert (1985, 66), "The wide range of varieties and habitats help to make possible the continuation of successful Pesagi rice production, given the uncertainty of weather, diseases and pests from year to year. There are problems of dry year, wet year and the prolonged inversion of rice in water while pigs and rats caused extensive damage but the damage tend to be limited to small part of the total area planted and farmers could expect good harvests from one portion to another. On average the Pesagi yield was 200 *gantangs* per acre."

The cultivation is dependant on the farmers' adaptation to ecological changes through their skills and knowledge on diversified agriculture production. Each farm is a mixed-garden with a wide range of natural and cultivated species. The kind of farms and their fallow stages serve to increase the biological heterogeneity throughout the entire village lands. Not only do extreme variations of weather not seriously halt production but economic activities are readily shifted by the falls associated with the changes in rainfall, temperature, river levels and so on. Pahang Malay farmers are remarkable for their achievements in seed selection and experimentation leading to a tremendous range of cultivars and ability to utilise a range of available habitats and steady movements of productivity. They have so adeptly managed their relationship with the natural environment that they have been able to live continuously in the same village over many hundred of years and to adjust to economic, ecological and political changes. Despite its viability, professional development advisors, agriculturists or government servants in the district were less impressed with this form of agriculture as this kind of activity did not convey modern agricultural techniques that were being actively promoted.

There are studies on other aspects of Pahang including the history of place names covering all districts in the state (Zakaria 1989; 1991), the natural history of the Pulau Tioman Marine Park (Phang et al. 2008), a tourist attraction well known for its biodiversity, coral reefs and volcanic rock formations and the Endau-Rompin rain forest equally known for its biodiversity (Malayan Nature Society 1988). The study on mosques in the state (Wan Samsiah and Ahmad Izwan 2003) leaves much to be desired as the emphasis seems to be either on state or district mosques. The writeups on them and the other mosques provide very little history while more than a third is without any background information. Most of them were constructed after the 1970s with a third located in FELDA land schemes. Originally a pondok school, the Lubok Kawah mosque (Temerloh), was built in 1898 but was rebuilt in 2001 while the Kampong Bintang mosque (Temerloh) still maintained the shape and architecture as it was originally built in 1930. The Pesagi mosque was built through local efforts (*gotong royong*) aided by a RM150,000 government grant; similarly the Bandar 2 Paloh Hinai mosque (Rompin) was built through *gotong royong* with funding from a regional development authority. The Islamisation of Pahang had taken place much earlier than Melaka, as early as 1028 if one goes by the Permatang Pasir tombstone located in Pekan. But the earliest known mosque following the style of the Demak mosque or the Kampung Laut mosque in Kelantan was built much later in the 19th century including two in Pekan. Both were demolished to make way for a new mosque (Sultan Abdullah mosque) and the Sultan's office. By the end of the 1990s there were only three of these old mosques still standing—all in the Temerloh district—but no longer used for prayers (Halim 1997, 162–182).

This survey is a cursory look at academic exercises by undergraduates that cover various aspects of Pahang history and other disciplines. Most of them remain unpublished and kept in departmental or university libraries. Their accessibility might be problematic although one could always check with the National Archives in Kuala Lumpur. The limited number which has been published, although not necessarily related to Pahang, is certainly impressive. These are supported by a wealth of documentary materials from the local archives and oral history (Thow 1995; Wong 1999; Badriyah 2013; Abu Talib 2015). A compendium on Pahang history and culture edited by Norazit (1996) includes essays contributed by students covering history, archaeology, education during the colonial period, animistic beliefs among Malay peasants in Pahang Tua, relations between the Semais and the Pahang sultanate, traditional games and Pahang traditional dance. These essays touch on three Pahang personalities namely Wan Muhammad Wan Idris (6th Orang Kaya Perba Jelai), Ishak Haji Muhammad and Tun Abdul Razak.

Mention has to be made of the publications issued by the Pahang State Museum. These cover the occasional studies as well as the journal *Pahang dalam Sejarah* (Pahang in History) with essays contributed by museum staff, museum board members and others. The first five issues carry both historical and cultural essays including the Joget Pahang (*gamelan* ensemble brought from Riau in 1835); the Pahang flag; the Pahang *tanjak* (royal headwear); Pahang tops; development of Kuantan from 1850–1970; the Pahang *nobat*; *menggarok* (causing disturbance ceremony) which was started by the Bugis in 1863 in Chenor but later came to be associated with the palace; the making of Pahang *jalur* boats; old manuscripts kept at the museum; the origins of the *Silat Pusaka Desa*; and Pahang cuisines. These essays provide invaluable information on Pahang culture, a few of which are no longer practised.

Museums and State History

There are six museums in Pahang namely the Sultan Abu Bakar Museum, the Sungai Lembing Museum, the Art Museum, the Historical Personality Museum, the FELDA Museum and the Kuala Lipis Heritage Museum. There are not many memorials. The Tun Abdul Razak Memorial Hall in Pulau Keladi is located in a reconstructed Malay house that replicates the one where Tun Razak was born in 1922. Other memorials are related to the Japanese Occupation which were erected by the Chinese community as in Mentakab. Another one was erected in Sungai Lembing for the European employees of the Pahang Consolidated Company Limited who died during the First World War and the Japanese Occupation. The memorial is still standing although the mine has closed down.

How do these museums represent state history? Located in Pekan the Sultan Abu Bakar Museum was officially opened in October 1976. As the state museum, its objectives are "to preserve the historical and cultural heritage of Pahang by acquiring, conserving and displaying objects for the purpose of study, education and enjoyment, to conduct research on various aspects of local culture and to preserve ancient monuments and historic sites and to promote tourism" (Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism 2004, 62–63). The brick building was constructed in 1929 to replace the wooden and thatched structure that was first constructed in 1888 as abode for the British Resident. After 1895 when the capital was moved to Kuala Lipis, it served as official residence whenever the Resident was in Pekan on official business. During the Japanese Occupation the building was requisitioned by the Japanese army but after the war served as official residence of the Pahang ruler. It was renamed the Kota Baram Palace.

The Sultan Abu Bakar Museum is a general museum. Described as an "encyclopaedic museum" it has more than 13,000 items covering history, ethnography, art, video and photographs. These are distributed in 18 permanent galleries. A guided tour is provided to visitors upon request. Some of the exhibits include ceramics from Pulau Tioman which the museum highlights are "important evidence of the early maritime trade of Pahang." Other exhibits include coins, prints and paintings and samples of the natural resources that were traded in the past. The museum has organised seminars, lectures, workshops and demonstrations on top spinning, Malay martial arts, *congkak* and traditional music and temporary exhibitions. There is a small library that keeps 100 books on Pahang. The tapestry of Pahang history begins from the prehistoric period, Pahang under the rule of Majapahit, Siam and Melaka, the Aceh attack of 1617 and the capture of Tengku Ahmad, the rule of the Bendahara following the Johor regicide in 1699, the civil war, the change from Bendahara to Sultan, British efforts to bring Pahang under colonial rule, the change of the capital from Pekan to Kuala Lipis in 1898 and the change from Kuala Lipis to Kuantan in 1955, Pahang joining the Federated Malay States and subsequent rulers of the state until Sultan Abu Bakar.

The museum also organised occasional exhibitions such as the royal exhibition in 1990 (Lembaga Muzium Negeri Pahang 1990). The thrust was the Pahang rulers since Sultan Ahmad and a detailed profile of the present ruler Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah covering his early life, education and schooling, marriage, inauguration in 1974, his installation as the Yang diPertuan Agong (1979–1985), interests and hobby.

However, visitor number to the museum was poor. In 2002 it recorded 15,848 visitors, dismal compared to other state museums. By comparison, the Sultan Alam Shah Museum received 286,135 visitors in 2002, the Kedah State Museum

recorded 122,475 visitors in 2001 and the Terengganu State Museum recorded 73,855 visitors. Distance from the state capital Kuantan might be a deterring factor while museum exhibits and museum story line might be less attractive to the discerning public.

Located in Kuantan, the Historical Personality Museum was opened in 1999. It was based on a renovated building which used to be part of the Kuantan District Office. The building has a unique architecture, one of the few such buildings identified in the Kuantan Cultural Zone. The museum keeps various artefacts, information and documents relating to the heroes of Pahang. Its objectives were "to establish an institution for acquiring and exhibiting the life stories as well as the sacrifices, struggle and achievement made and received by the heroes of Pahang. These heroes are distributed in six galleries, namely Sports Personalities, the Prime Minister, Political Leaders, Champions of the Peace, Religious Leaders and Cultural Elites. The museum keeps 400 artefacts and photos. Unfortunately the 2004 publication did not provide visitor numbers to the museum.

The Sungai Lembing Museums is sited in a two-storey bungalow that used to be the residence of the manager of the Pahang Consolidated Company Limited (PCCL). The bungalow has a colourful history. Originally, it was a small wooden structure with thatched roof but was continually modified since 1911. During the Japanese Occupation it was used as Japanese army headquarters (Jabatan Muzium Malaysia 2012, 87–90).

The exhibition gallery on the ground floor is made up of five segments—the Information Counter, Introduction to Sungai Lembing, Mining Diorama, History of the PCCL and External Exhibition. The Introduction to Sungai Lembing segment foregrounds information panels on the history of the museum building, the objectives for the museum's establishment, the origins of Sungai Lembing, its early development and contemporary Sungai Lembing. The segment of the History of the PCCL is to highlight the role and contributions of this company in developing underground tin mining on a commercial scale that led to the development of Sungai Lembing town. The External Exhibition segment shows fire fighting equipment, water pump, trolley, red box, mini moke, electrical appliances and machines related to mining.

On the second floor, there are seven segments comprising History of Mining, Geology and Geomorphology, the Mining Economy, Mining Methods and Machines and Apparels that were used in the mine. This gallery provides information on the history, mining method as well as machines and appliances used by miners. There is a mining arcade which foregrounds various artefacts used by British officials and the inhabitants of Sungai Lembing including old

telephone, wall clock and kitchen utensils. Visitors have the opportunity to view a video on underground tin mining. The Mining Memoir foregrounds past mine managers from 1887 until 1986. Befitting a mining museum, the Sungai Lembing Museum displays original mining equipments including wooden moulds of various shapes and sizes, the Henjut trolley, the Kiew wheel, winch and fire fighting equipment which is more than 50 years old.

The FELDA museum is located in Bilut which was one of the earliest land schemes in the country. The museum was opened in September 2005 by Prime Minister Dato' Seri Najib Tun Razak. It was based on the former office of FELDA Bilut which was built in 1958. It comes in the shape of a traditional Malay house. The museum is replete with memorabilia and exhibits that were closely connected with the land scheme and the life of the early settlers. The settlers came in batches according to districts using myriad forms of transportation. Some of the interesting exhibits include a Honda C-50 motorcycle and rubber tapping knife used by the settlers.

Gaps in the Written and Visual Narratives

There are many gaps in the written and visual narratives. One is the reign of Sultan Abu Bakar (1932–1974) who was the fourth in the Wan Ahmad lineage. Sultan Abu Bakar's long reign witnessed many important events beginning with the depression, the Japanese Occupation, post-war political ferment, the Emergency, the change of the state capital from Kuala Lipis to Kuantan, the country's independence, the introduction of FELDA and the rapid rural transformation of the Pahang country side. But there is little reference to his rule in the written narrative. There is an outdated biography of him (Sheppard 1957) and an account of his abduction by Force 136 while the Tuanku was on his way to Jerantut from Kuala Lipis in August 1945 (Ungku Nazaruddin 1992).

The plurality of the Malay population since the 1960s is equally fascinating but there is not much information on this aspect. The introduction of FELDA had brought significant changes to the rural landscape in the shape of Jengka, Bilut, Mempaga and Bukit Mendi through a polyglot of Malays from Kelantan, Terengganu, Penang, Kedah, Perlis and elsewhere. The movement also involved landless Malays (and non Malays) from the state. Equally crucial is the position of the Orang Asli, Chinese and Indians and how to locate them in the state history. Not much attention has been directed towards social history notably cultural forms that are unique to the state while popular games and cuisines including those that are no longer practised awaits the diligent researcher. Equally neglected are district and local history including the history of towns, villages and myriad associations. There are very little biographical studies on leading personalities notably those who were active at the state and district

levels. In this regard, the Johor Heritage body has been publishing short biographical accounts of state and district leaders of the 19th and 20th centuries although the attention is mainly directed to those of Malay-Bugis-Javanese descent (Abu Bakar and Md. Ismail 2002; 2003; 2005).

As for the sources of Pahang history, researchers have indicated important local sources located at the Pahang archives in Kuantan notably the collection of letters and files that originated from the Office of the Sultan Pahang (Mohd Kasturi 2015) which throw some light on Pahang of the 1930s and 1940s while at the National Archives Kuala Lumpur there are much more documentary materials that are equally useful (Samsiah 2011). As for foreign documentary materials, Linehan has indicated the importance of Chinese, Dutch and Portuguese sources for the period before the 17th century. More recent studies by scholars (Andaya 1979; Fernando 2003; 2006; Nordin 2007) indicate the importance of the Dutch sources for Malaysian history while the study by Mitrasing (2014) similarly indicates the importance of the Dutch archival materials for 16th–19th century Malay world. Her essay highlights Aceh's attempt to be leader of the Malay world in the 16th–18th century based on the concept of *jihad* while states like Pahang (and Kedah) had to bear the brunt of Acehnese imperialism.

Conclusion

The essay began with the call to relook at state history in Malaysian historiography as a means to enrich the national history. Although many are familiar with the many state histories in the form of chronicles (*hikayat*), at present there is little inclination to relook at state histories that incorporates the post-1957 period. For Pahang history, Malaysian archival sources are adequate although these are scattered in Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Terengganu and Kuantan. The Sultan Abu Bakar Museum in Pekan and the state library keep records or materials that are equally useful. The Pahang State Museum Board has also published studies on history and culture on a regular basis. Equally important sources are located at the British National Archives in Kew, Surrey while the extensive Dutch sources in Holland require a strong foundation in Dutch. Equally useful are Tamil and Chinese materials; due to linguistic inadequacies these sources are beyond the reach of most researchers. All these sources would be able to address the gaps in Pahang state history that have been highlighted in this review.

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