

Barbara Watson Andaya

# PERAK: THE ABODE OF GRACE

A Study of an  
Eighteenth Century Malay State



EAST ASIAN HISTORICAL MONOGRAPHS

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A Study of an Eighteenth-Century  
Malay State

BARBARA WATSON ANDAYA

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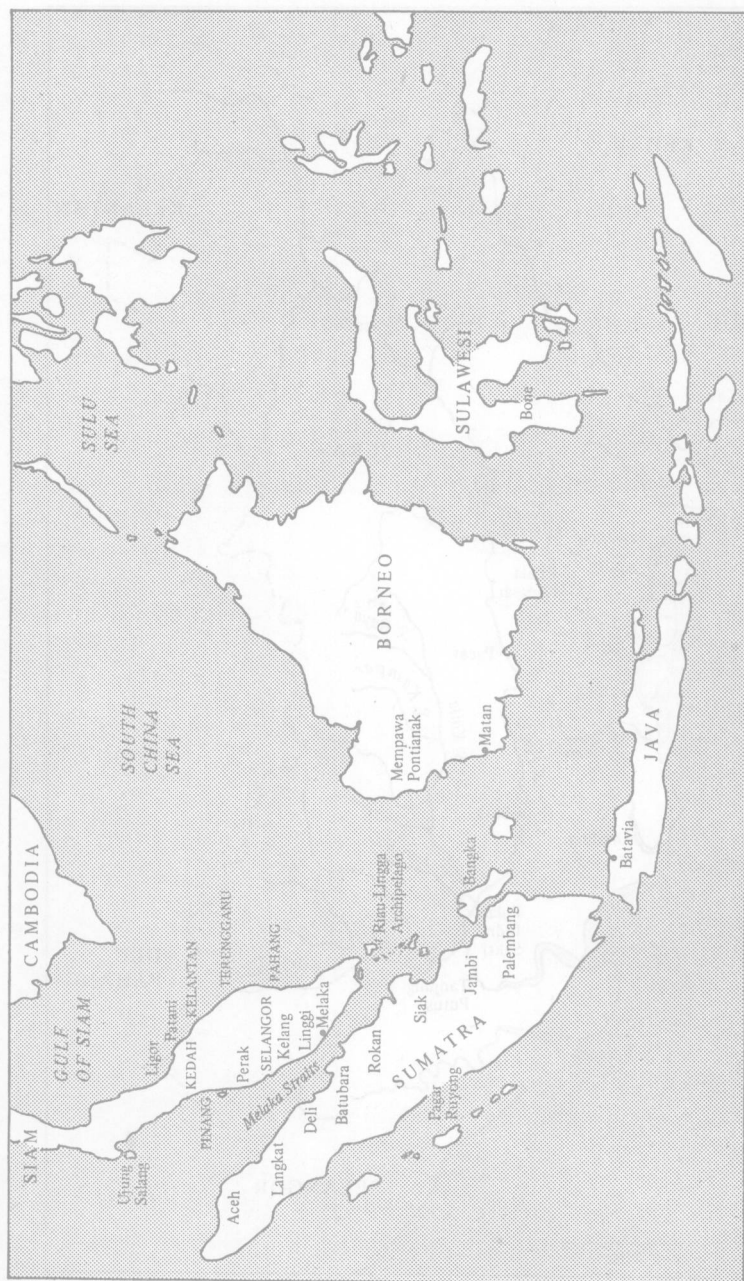
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## ABBREVIATIONS

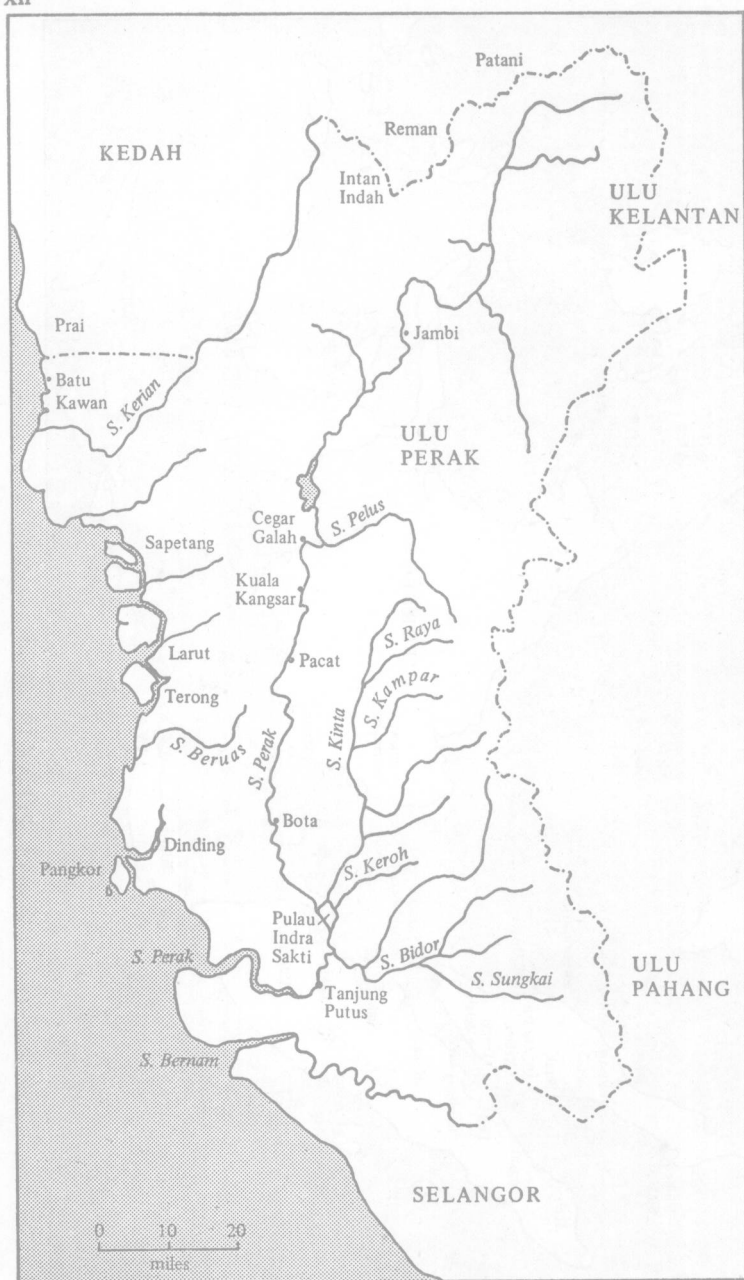
AAC	Archieven de Admiraliteit Colleges
Add. Ms.	Additional Manuscript
ANU	Australian National University, Canberra
AN	Arkib Negara, Kuala Lumpur
BKI	<i>Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indie</i>
B.M.	British Museum
CO	Colonial Office Records
Cod. Or.	Codex Orientalis
fo., foll.	folio, folios.
FCCP	Fort Cornwallis Council Papers
FWCP	Fort William Council Papers
FSGCP	Fort St. George Council Papers
FMJ	Federation Museums Journal
GM	General Missive
Hj.	Haji
Hs.	Handschrift
IESHR	<i>Indian Economic and Social History Review</i>
IG	<i>De Indische Gids</i>
JIAEA	<i>Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia</i>
JMBRAS	<i>Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>
JSBRAS	<i>Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>
JRAS	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>
JRGS	<i>Journal of the Royal Geographical Society</i>
JSEAH	<i>Journal of Southeast Asian History</i>
JSEAS	<i>Journal of Southeast Asian Studies</i>
JSS	<i>Journal of the Siam Society</i>
KA	Koloniaal Archief
Kon. Inst.	Koninklijk Instituut
MJH	<i>Malayan Journal of History</i>
MJTG	<i>Malaysian Journal of Tropical Geography</i>
Ms.	Manuscript

OB	Overgekomen Brieven (Incoming Letters from Batavia)
OIC	Archieven van het Committee tot den Oost-Indische Handel en Bezettingen
OIE	Oost-Indie uit Engeland (Documents concerning the East Indies and the Cape of Good Hope sent to The Netherlands from England)
PMS	Papers on Malay Subjects
r	recto
RAS	Royal Asiatic Society, London
RCS	Royal Commonwealth Society, London
Reg.	Register
RKP	Raja Kamaralzaman Papers, Arkib Negara, Kuala Lumpur
SFR	Sumatra Factory Records
SSR	Straits Settlements Records
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies, London
TBG	<i>Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde</i>
VBG	<i>Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen</i>
VKI	<i>Verhandelingen van de Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkendunde</i>
v	verso
VOC	Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie



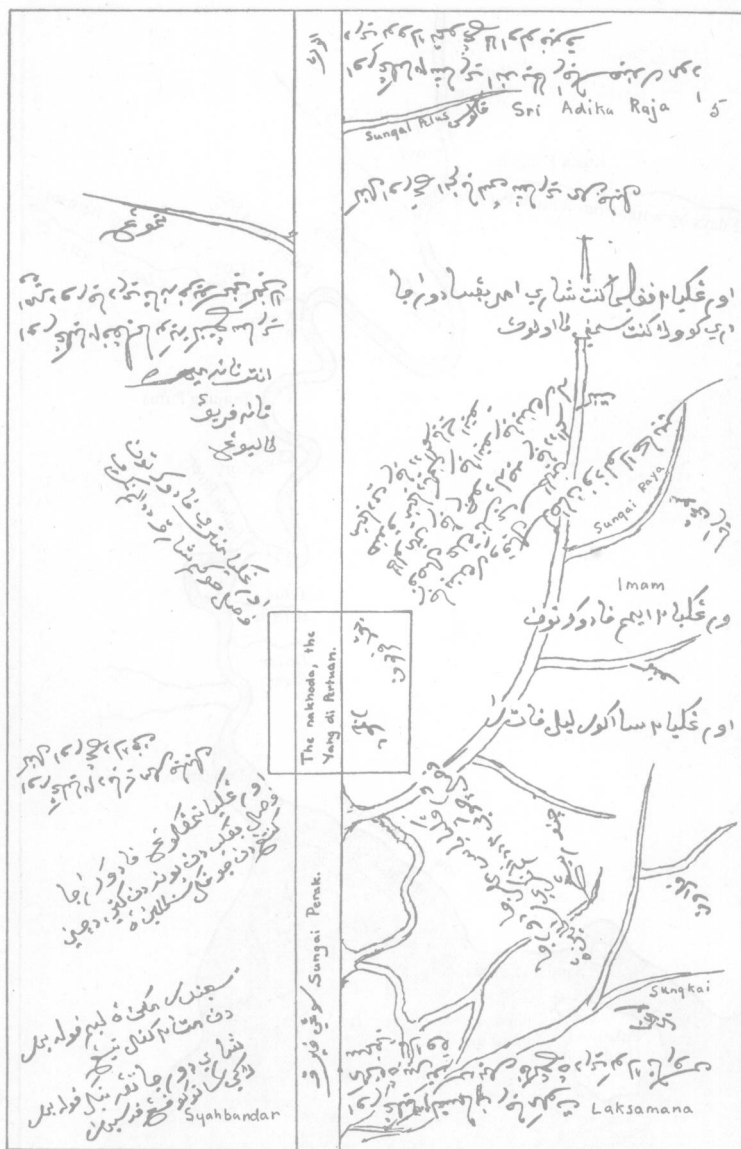


1. PERAK IN THE MALAY WORLD

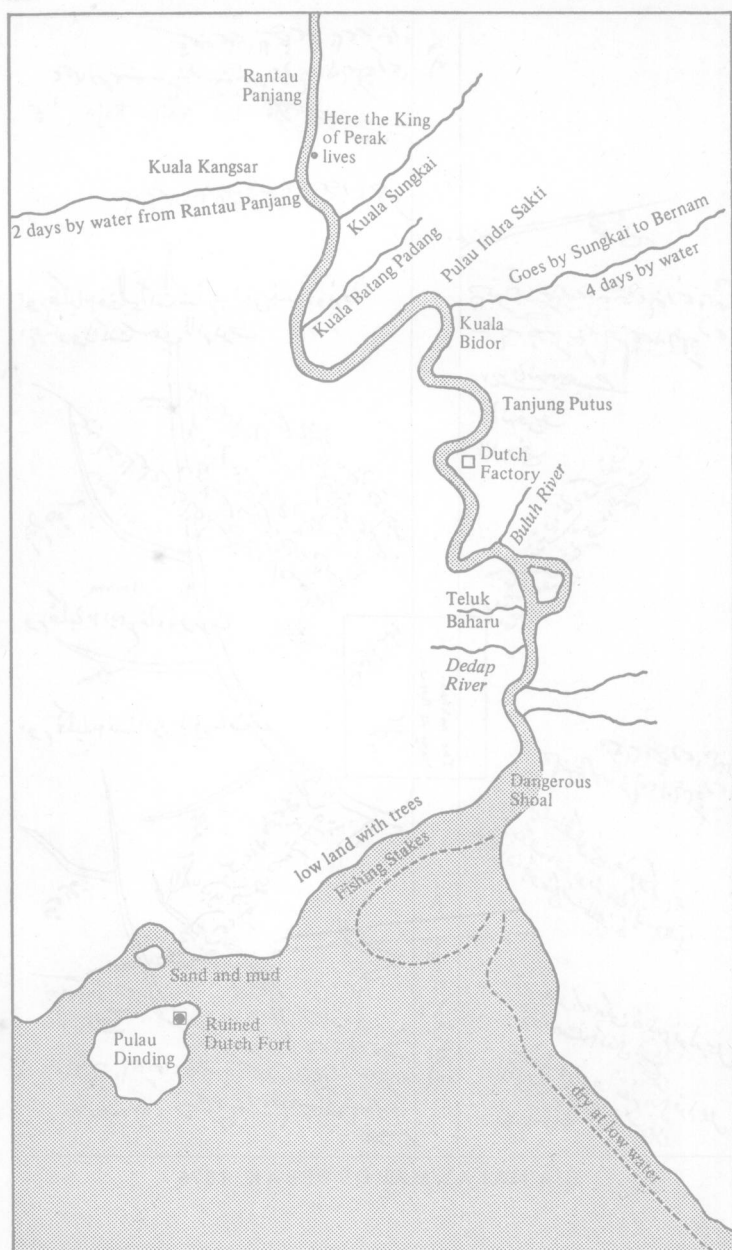


2. PERAK IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

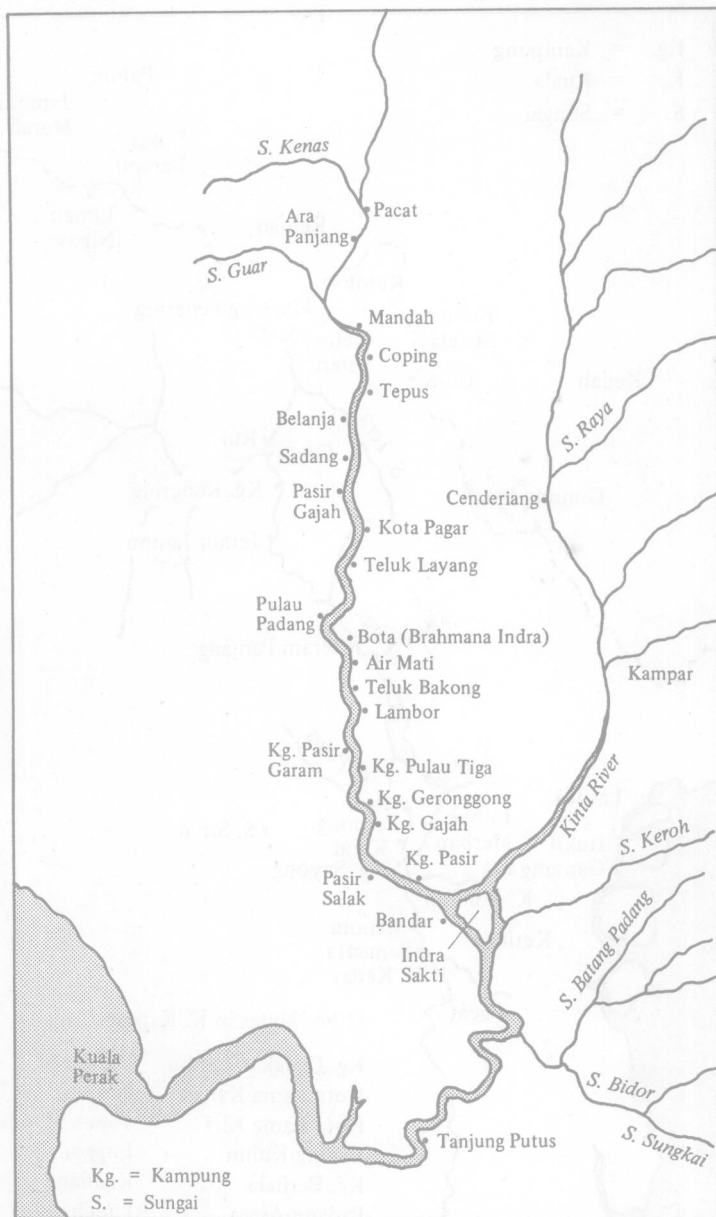




### 3. A MALAY MAP OF PERAK, 1876



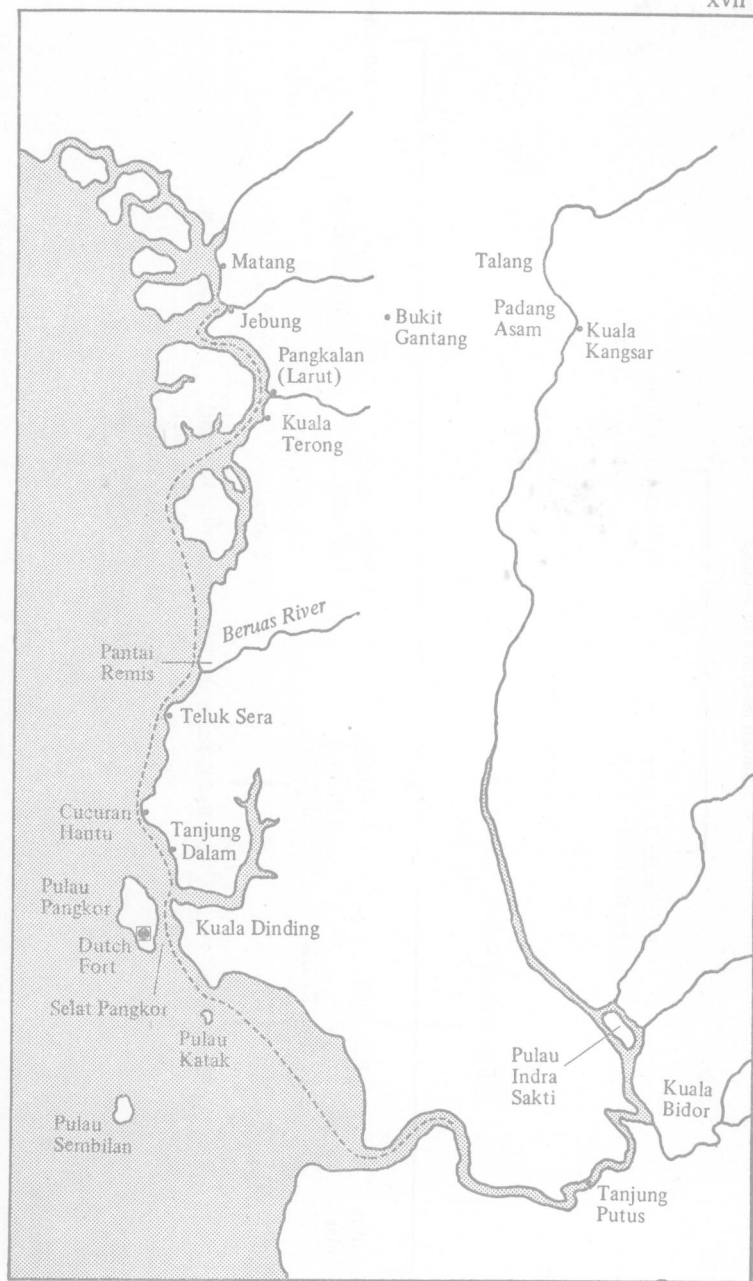
4. A CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN VIEW OF PERAK, BASED ON THOMAS FORREST'S MAP, 1792



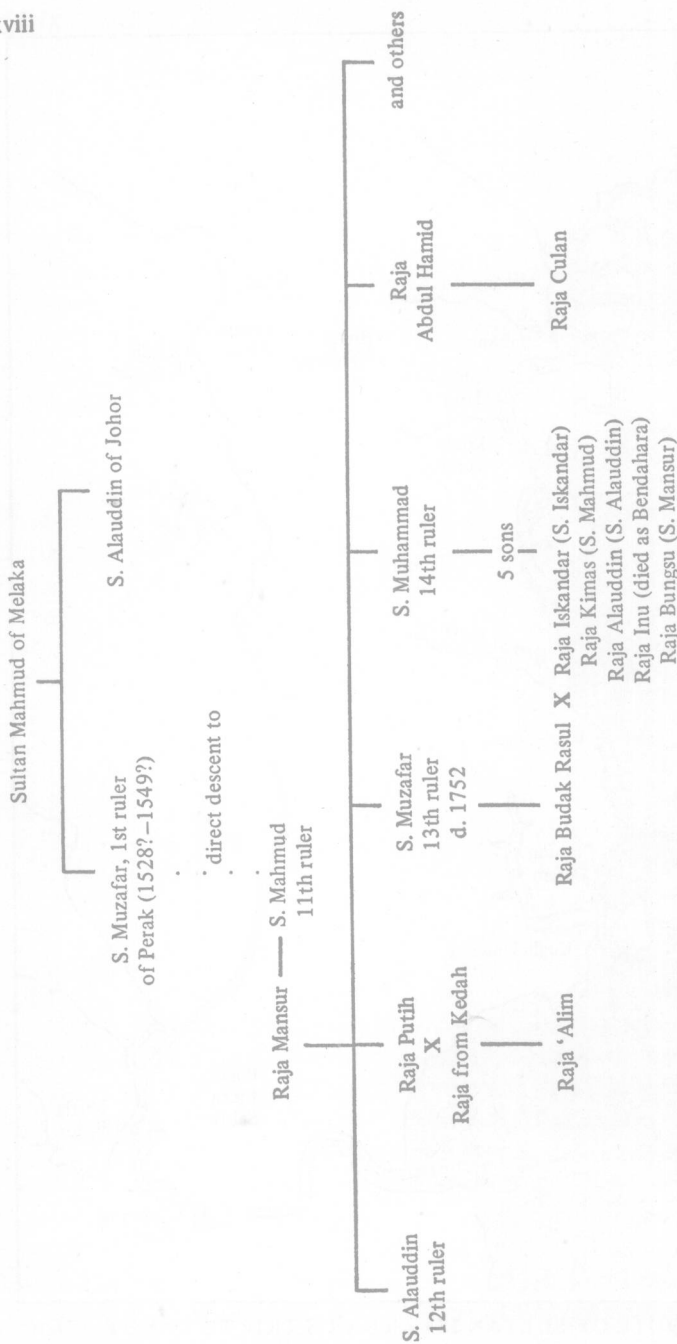
5. PRINCIPAL TIN MINING AREAS IN *HILIR PERAK*  
 (From KA 3166 OB 1770, Werndly's Report,  
 17 September 1768)



6. PRINCIPAL TIN MINING AREAS IN THE KUALA KANGSAR AREA AND ULU PERAK, SHOWING BORDERS WITH PATANI  
(From KA 3166 OB 1770, Werndly's Report, 17 September 1768)



7. ROUTE OF SULTAN ISKANDAR'S TRIP TO LARUT, 1761



X = married  
S. = Sultan



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## INTRODUCTION

IN contrast with the nineteenth or even the seventeenth, the eighteenth-century Malay world has received little attention from historians of the area. For the most part, scholars have been content to depict these decades as a time of slumber, if not of positive decay, when Malays were forced to yield ground to outsiders, both indigenous and European.<sup>1</sup> Yet the ability of many smaller *negeri*<sup>2</sup> to survive the conflicts evoked by the disintegration of the Johor Empire, the incursions of the Bugis, the brief rallying of Minangkabau power, and the loosening of Siamese control over the northern Malay peninsula, does not suggest that they were in a state of decline. Many, indeed, were emerging from centuries of dependency into a period of new autonomy in which they were learning to draw on their own resources rather than acting at the dictates of an overlord. The very insecurity which characterized the eighteenth century made Malay rulers more than ever responsive to the changing balance of power in the area. Aware of the issues dominating Malay politics, they also realized that they lived in a time of uncertainty, when caution was essential.

The state of Perak, on the west coast of the Malay peninsula, is a case in point. Dominated by the court of Aceh during the seventeenth century, it had won a modicum of independence only to become a prey to periodic attacks from pirates and raiders.<sup>3</sup> During the 1720s and 1730s Perak was also threatened by the Bugis and Minangkabau disputes which form a continuing theme in the years that followed. But from the signing of a treaty with the Dutch Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC) in 1746 until the end of the century, Perak's rulers managed to tread the fine line of diplomacy, maintaining domestic peace and equable relations with their neighbours in a period when invasion and civil war were endemic. Malay texts suggest that these five decades were remembered not only as years when *sentosa* (tranquillity) prevailed, but when Perak enjoyed a prosperity previously unknown. The more perceptive members of the Perak court realized that it was the Dutch alliance which had contributed to this unprecedented situation. The degree to which they were pre-