

SHAHARIL TALIB

AFTER ITS
OWN IMAGE

The Trengganu Experience
1881-1941

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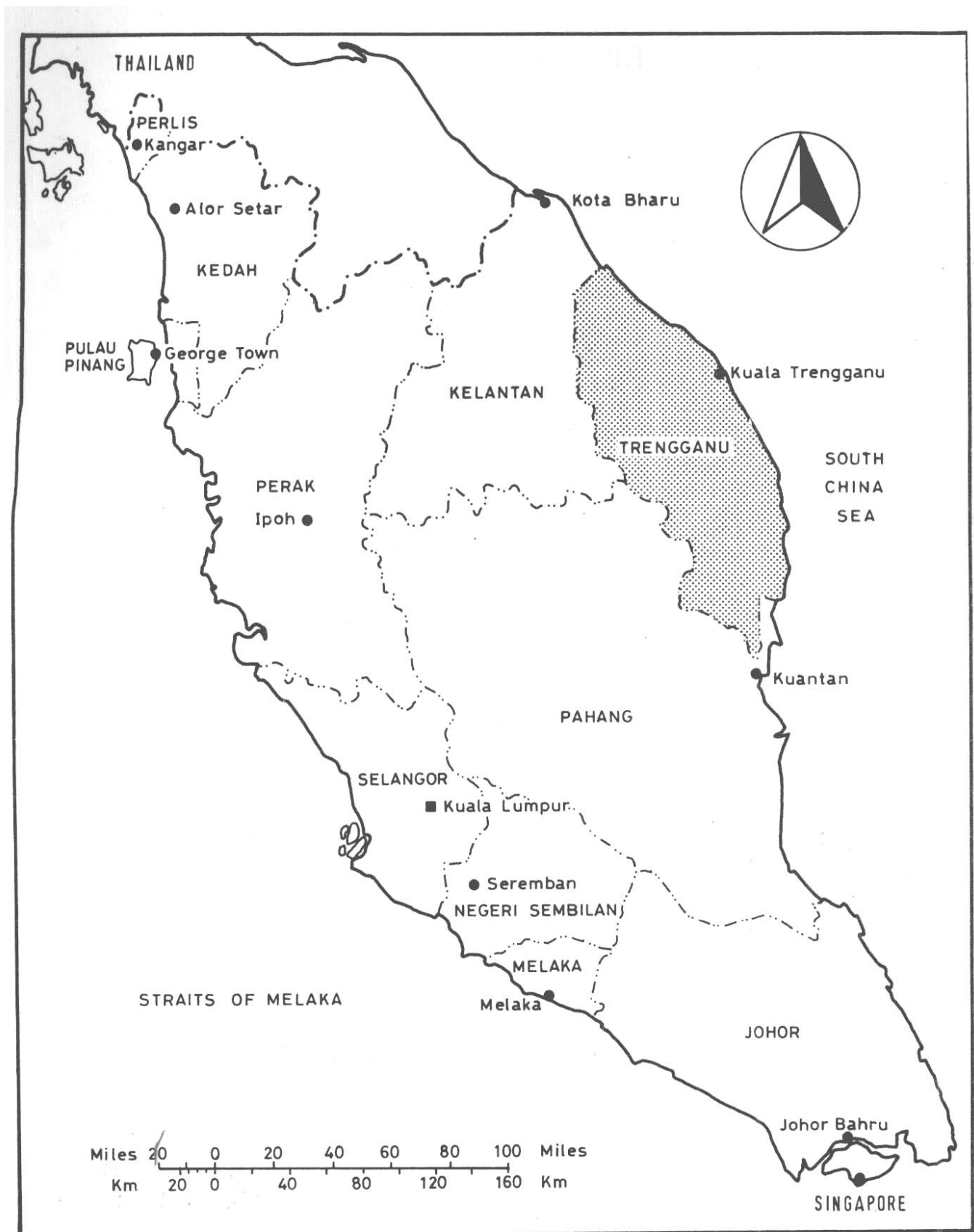
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AFTER ITS OWN IMAGE



1. Malaya

To Azanin

Preface

SOME words are necessary to explain the scope and intention of this book. It forms part of an on-going research on the dissolution and reconstitution of the Malay social order by capitalist penetration backed by the coercive apparatus of the colonial state to serve the needs of the global expansion of capital. Each was determined to order social life after its own image. Central to this enquiry is the underlying belief that the history of a society is first and foremost the production of man. It is the interplay of man, his toil, the fruits of his labour, his consumption and natural reproduction that is the basic concern of human experience through the ages. Each historical epoch, however, shapes its own social order in which man the producer is placed.

The movement from one historical epoch dominated by production for use value to another dominated by production for exchange value greatly altered human experience. By the late nineteenth century Trengganu society was captured in the vortex of changing historical epochs. Its world of yesterday differed immensely from that of today. In the brief period of a half century Trengganu was incorporated into the world capitalist system at its periphery, mediated by the colonial state.

Contrary to established views local society did not simply cave in to external pressures. Nay, for a short period of time the natural ruling class was favourably entrenched wielding the existing instruments of state power to further their interests in an expanding economy. They succeeded—until the colonial state that understood land, labour and produce as wealth-creating and marketable commodities enforced its will. The producing classes on the other hand were brought to serve larger imperial interests.

Written from the standpoint of the working masses the historical experience of this period could be best articulated by an old Malay

saying: 'Raja itu berlangkah mara rayaat itu menyembah kubor'—literally, 'The ruler [natural, colonial and others] advances [their interests], the *rayaat* [peasant, commoner and working man] is left worshipping his grave' (encl. 1, Syed Hussein bin Ghalam to SUK, 6 July 1930, in CLM 48/1350).

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SHAHARIL TALIB

Acknowledgements

THE roots of this book, which is a revised version of my Ph.D. dissertation submitted to Monash University, Australia, can be traced from as early as 1970 when I was warmly invited by a group of zealous Malaysian graduates to teach in their newly established private school, Sekolah Kadir Adabi, in Kota Bharu, Kelantan. They were bent on providing educational opportunities to those previously deprived. My brief teaching experience there fortified my sympathy with victims of historical processes. It led more immediately to my MA research on Kelantan which traced the state's changing government institutions and concluded with the impact of British colonial policies on Kelantan society. This book, which is an extension of the previous study, seeks, however, to examine the response of the indigenous ruling class and peasantry of Trengganu society to the British imperial advance.

In preparing this work, I have incurred a great many debts of gratitude to individuals as well as institutions and I welcome this opportunity to acknowledge them formally. I am deeply indebted to Professor J. D. Legge who supervised my Ph.D. dissertation. His unending patience and understanding will always be remembered. Special thanks must be made to Professor M. G. Swift who generously gave of his time to read my earlier drafts and gave me the benefit of his specialized knowledge. The same gratitude goes to my colleagues in the social sciences, especially Dr Wan Zawawi Ibrahim of Universiti Sains Malaysia and Dr Shamsul Amri of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, who shared with me their anthropological insights. Much is also owed to Dr B. Harvey, Dr G. Dunkley, and Professor John A. Larkin who read the manuscript and offered valuable suggestions and criticisms.

To the numerous people who shared with me their personal knowledge of Trengganu, I must express my warmest appreciation. I would like to thank in particular Haji Muhammad Saleh bin Haji Awang, Haji Su bin Datuk Amar, Tan Sri Dato Haji Mubin Sheppard, and Abdullah bin Embong. The skill of Wan Omar bin Wan Ahmad has been invaluable. He helped in transliterating stacks

of documents in *jawi* script, often virtually illegible, into *rumi* script for my benefit.

This research was made possible by a scholarship grant from Monash University and travel allowances to Kuala Lumpur by the Centre of Southeast Asian Studies. I would like in particular to express my thanks to the members of the Centre and its former Director, Professor J. A. C. Mackie, for creating a lively environment for the expression and exchange of thought. I wish them well in their endeavours. The staff of a number of archival centres and libraries too have helped me enormously. In particular, I wish to express my appreciation to those of Arkib Negara Malaysia, Monash University Library, and University of Malaya Library. Special thanks are due to Tengku Ismail bin Tengku Su for the loan of his personal photograph collection and Muzium Negara Malaysia for the coin collection.

Writing a book demands great sacrifices from family members. Azanin, in particular, is one without whom this work could not have been written. In spite of her academic, professional and artistic commitments, she constantly found the time to offer intellectual stimulation and suggestions and the energy to help with typewriter and blue pencil. Needless to say, the responsibility for the actual contents, including views expressed as well as errors, is solely my own.

Abbreviations

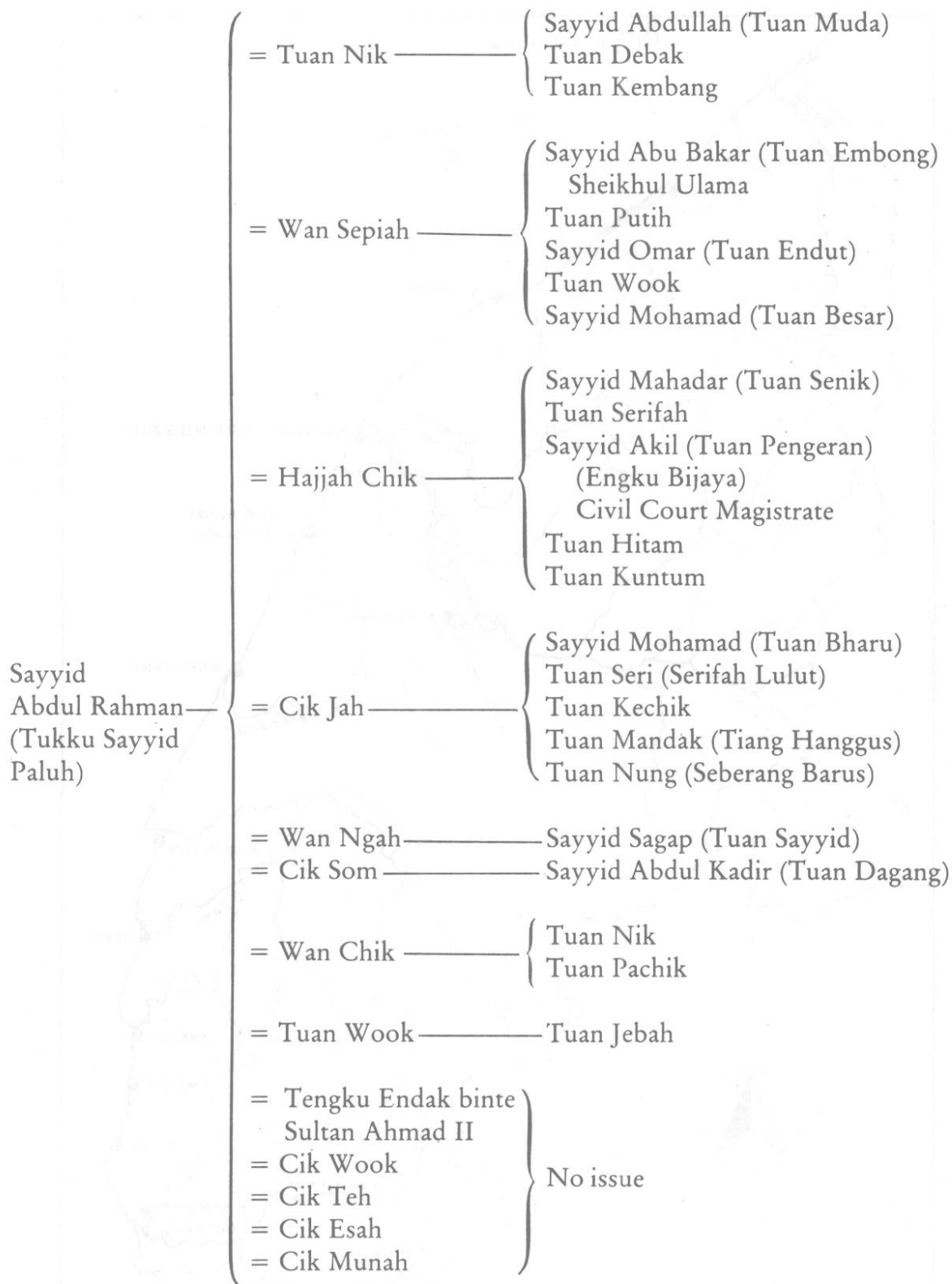
AAK	Assistant Adviser, Kemaman
ADT	Arkib Di-Raja Trengganu
ART	<i>Annual Report Trengganu</i>
BAT	British Adviser, Trengganu
BOP	Baginda Omar Papers
BP	<i>The Burney Papers</i>
CLM	Pesuruhjaya Tanah dan Galian (Commissioner of Lands and Mines)
CLR	Pejabat Collector of Land Revenue, Kuala Trengganu (Guaman Tanah)
CO	Colonial Office
DID	Pejabat Parit dan Tali Ayer, Trengganu (Drainage and Irrigation Department)
DOD	District Office, Dungun
FMS	Federated Malay States
FOCP	<i>Foreign Office Correspondence Papers</i>
FWCP	Fort William Council Proceedings
HCO	High Commissioner's Office
JIA	<i>Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia</i>
JMBRAS	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Malayan Branch</i>
JSBRAS	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Straits Branch</i>
JSEAH	<i>Journal of Southeast Asian History</i>
LOD	Land Office, Dungun
LOK	Land Office, Kemaman
LOT	Land Office, Trengganu
MBAM	Mahkamah Besar, Trengganu—Appeal Mal (Appeal Court)
MBGM	Mahkamah Besar, Trengganu—Guaman Mal (High Court)

ABBREVIATIONS

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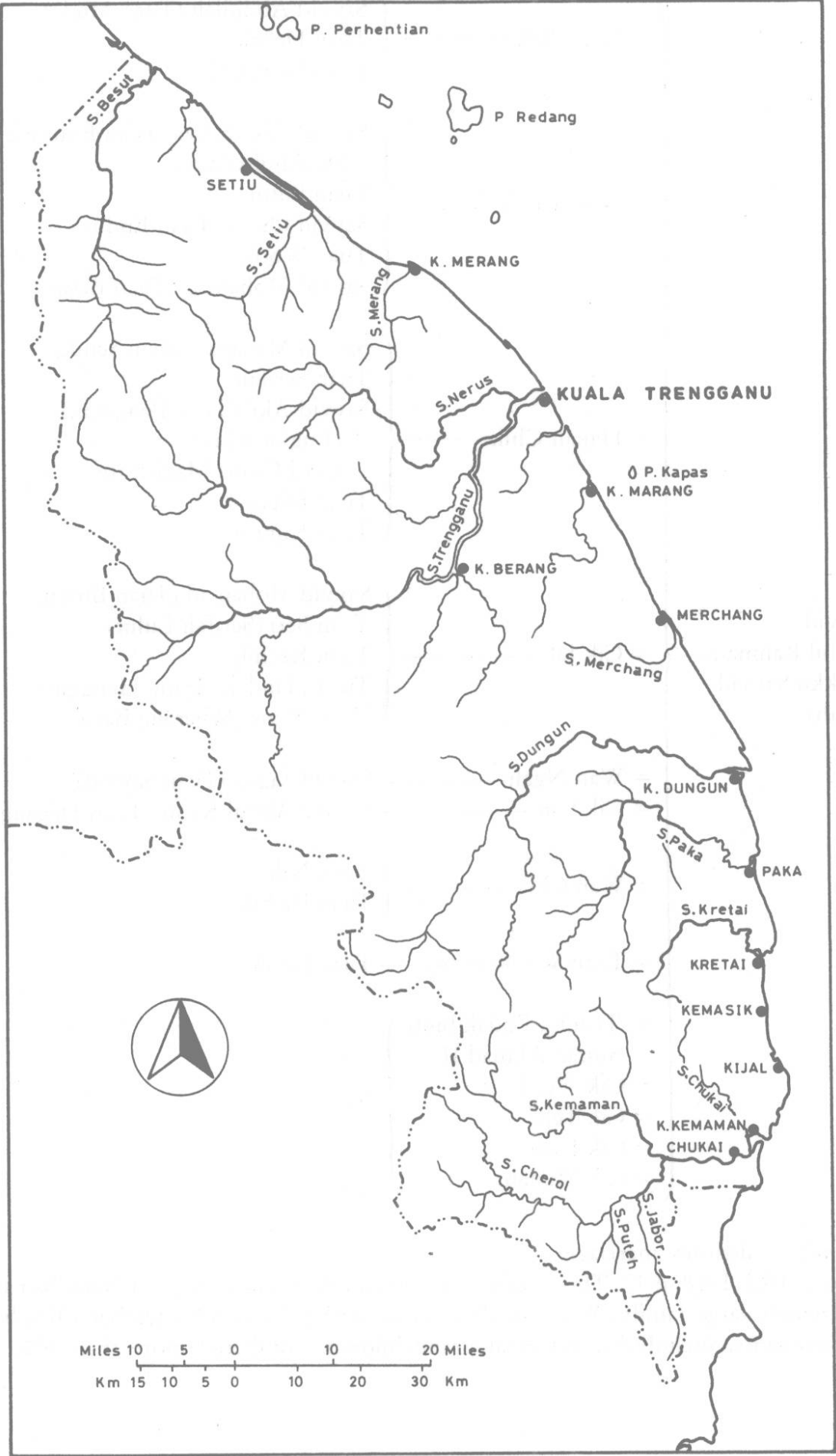
MBO	Jabatan Mentri Besar, Trengganu (Mentri Besar's Office)
MD	Mines Department, Trengganu
<i>MIH</i>	<i>Malaysia in History</i>
MU	Malayan Union
SSR	Straits Settlements Factory Records (Great Britain, India Office Library)
STT	Perbendaharaan Negeri Trengganu (State Treasury)
SUK	Setiausaha Kerajaan Trengganu (State Secretary)
SUK (SCAO)	Setiausaha Kerajaan Trengganu (Senior Civil Affairs Officer)

THE FAMILY OF TUKKU SAYYID PALUH



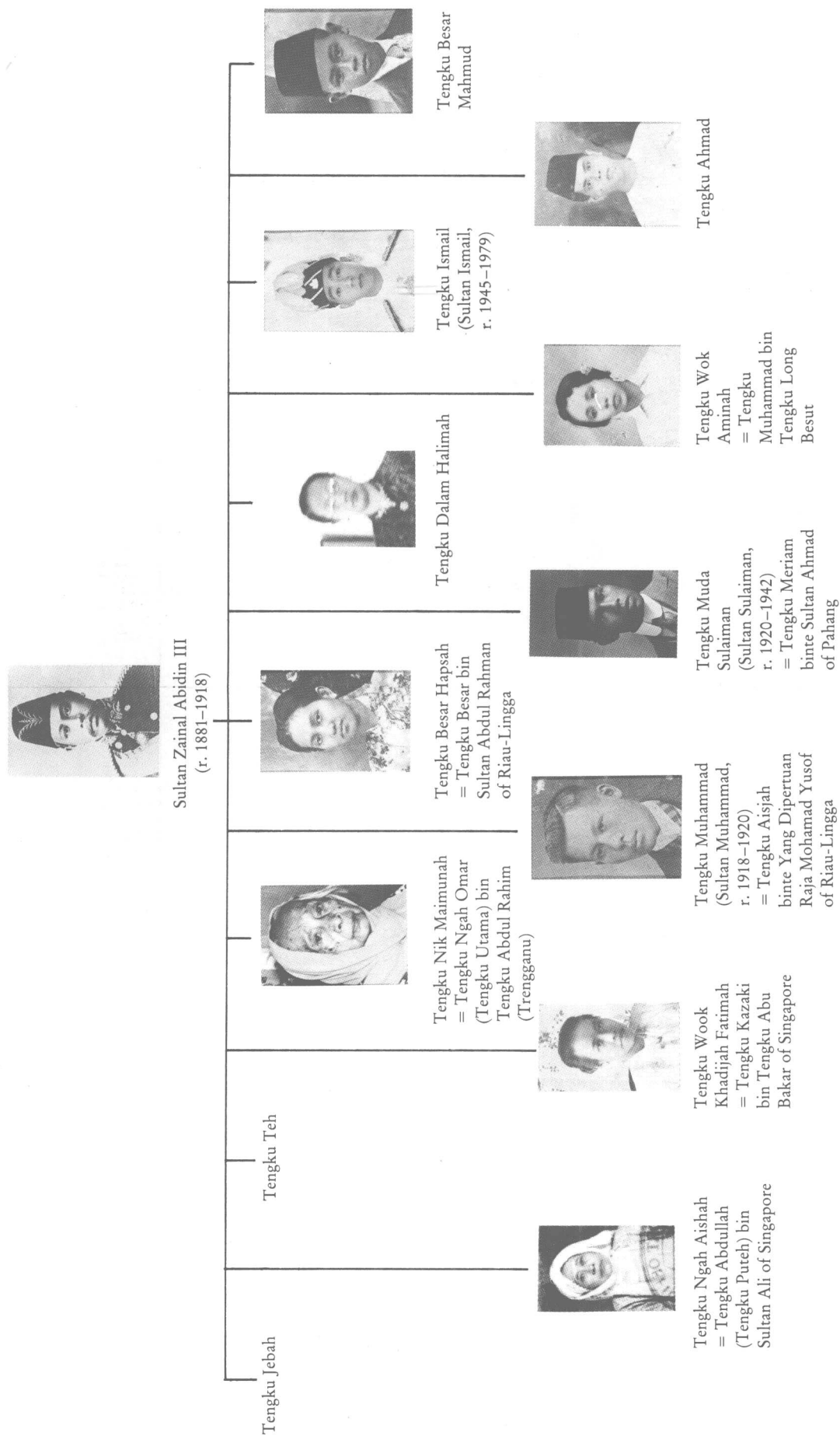
Legend: = denotes marriage.

Source: ART, 1918, p.17. This family tree is incomplete. Tukku Sayyid Paluh had an extremely large family. When he died—a centenarian—on 6 September 1918, his descendants, including great-great grandchildren, numbered more than 100.



2. Trengganu

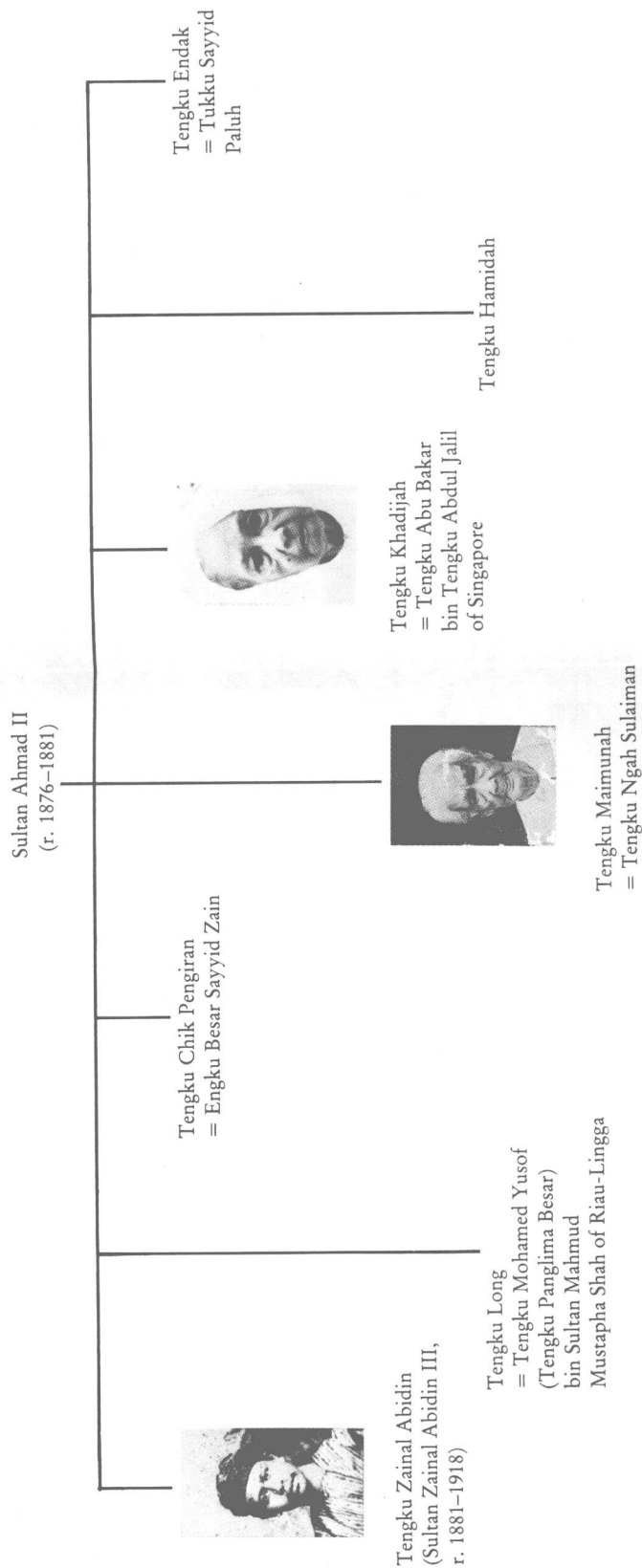
THE FAMILY OF SULTAN ZAINAL ABIDIN III



Legend: = denotes marriage.

Source: Reconstructed from the official genealogy in *Sambutan dan Perayaan Genap 25 Tahun Pemerintahan Duli Yang Maha Mulia Tuanku Ismail Nasriddin Shah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Zainal Abidin dan Yang Di-Pertuan bagi Negeri Trengganu serta Jajahan Ta'aloq-nya Darul-Iman* [Trengganu, Government Printing Office], 1970, p. 75, and another genealogy in encl. 5A in SIT 81/1947.

THE FAMILY OF SULTAN AHMAD II



Legend: = denotes marriage.

Source: This family tree was constructed using the official genealogy found in *Sambutan dan Perayaan Genap 25 Tahun Pemerintahan Duli Yang Maha Mulia Tuanku Ismail Nasiruddin Shah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Zainal Abidin dan Yang Di-Pertuan bagi Negeri Trengganu serta Jajahan Ta'aloq-nya Darul-Iman* [Trengganu, Government Printing Office], 1970, p. 75, and another genealogy found in the files (see encl. 5A in STT 81/1947). Comparing the two genealogies it is found that a number of the Sultan's children are missing from the official version. The marriage links of this royal house were mentioned in neither of the genealogies and were obtained from other sources.

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