



Palace, Political Party and Power

A Story of the Socio-Political
Development of Malay Kingship

Kobkua Suwannathat-Pian

“A historian’s fresh and timely look at the development of Malay kingship in its present form, with a sharp focus on the position and power of royal authority in Malaysia’s state affairs, and the sometimes acrimonious relations of the Rulers with the state executive.”

Cheah Boon Kheng
Retired Professor of History
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang

“*Palace, Political Party and Power: A Story of the Socio-Political Development of Malay Kingship* by Kobkua Suwannathat-Pian is a well-documented study focusing on the palace and its power during the pre-colonial period, the colonial period and the post-1957 period. It examines the love-hate relations between the palace and the people, the *rakyat*, before 1874 and after; how British colonial rule relegated the Malay Rulers to mere titular heads of their states; how the Japanese military stripped bare the palace of its remaining dignity; and how the Malays turned away from the Rulers as they resisted the Malayan Union. Between 1948 and 1957, UMNO appropriated the label ‘Protector of the Malays’ and the party also managed to restore the dignity of the Rulers, but subsequent palace-*rakyat* relations were neither always smooth nor predictable. This book is a useful reference to scholars, researchers and those interested in Malaysia’s evolving constitutional monarchy.”

Professor Abu Talib Ahmad
Universiti Sains Malaysia

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Kobkua Suwannathat-Pian

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Contents

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	vi
<i>Genealogical Tables of the Malay Ruling Houses</i>	x
<i>Abbreviations</i>	xix
<i>Preface</i>	xxi
CHAPTER 1 Introduction: The Monarchy	1
CHAPTER 2 Malay Kingship under British Colonial Rule: Only Form and No Substance, 1874–1930s	20
CHAPTER 3 Malay Kingship under the Japanese Occupation, 1941–1945	87
CHAPTER 4 Malay Rulers and Malay Subjects, Round One — Malayan Union, A Draw, 1946	123
CHAPTER 5 And the Real Contest Began, Round Two — Advantage to the Rulers, 1948–1951	184
CHAPTER 6 The Battle Royale, Round Three — UMNO, The Ultimate Victors, 1951–1955	243
CHAPTER 7 Roles Reversed: UMNO, Rulers and Constitution or a March Toward Independence and UMNO Supremacy	282
CHAPTER 8 Living Happily Ever After? The Rulers-UMNO Post-Independence Relations	330
CHAPTER 9 A Concluding Note	406
<i>Appendices</i>	412
<i>Glossary</i>	430
<i>Bibliography</i>	431
<i>Index</i>	441

List of Illustrations*

Chapter 2

- Plate 2.1 Sultan Sulaiman Shah. 44
- Plate 2.2. Sir Hugh Clifford in the full dress uniform of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George. 62

Chapter 3

- Plate 3.1 Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra with his soccer teams for the District Championship during the Japanese Occupation, Kulim, Kedah. Tunku was sitting in the second row between two Japanese officers. 94
- Plate 3.2* Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah, Tunku's father. 95

Chapter 4

- Plate 4.1 The famous UMNO logo. 125
- Plate 4.2 Dato' Onn bin Jaafar receiving the "Honourary Knight Commander of the British Empire" from Sir Gerald Templer, Kuala Lumpur. 126
- Plate 4.3 Sultan Badlishah of Kedah, Tunku's elder half brother. 131
- Plate 4.4 Sultan Abdul Aziz, Perak, flanked by Sir Edward and Lady Gent, Kuala Kangsar, 1948. 148
- Plate 4.5 Sultan Ibrahim of Johor (1895-1959) and his Chief Minister Dato' Onn Jaafar. 158
- Plate 4.6 The signing of the Federation of Malaysia Treaty on 21 January 1948 between Sir Edward Gent and the nine Malay Rulers. 163

- Plate 4.7** Plenary Conference of the Constitution Proposals for Malaya to replace the hated Malayan Union, King's House, Kuala Lumpur, 20 November 1946. Front row (left to right): Sultan Ibrahim of Kelantan; Sultan Abu Bakar of Pahang; Yang di-Pertuan Besar Tuanku Abdul Rahman of Negeri Sembilan; Sultan Hishamuddin Alam Shah of Selangor; Sir Edward Gent, Governor of the Malayan Union; Mr Malcolm MacDonald, Governor-General; Raja Bendahara Abdul Rashid representing the Sultan of Perak; Sultan Badlishah of Kedah; Sultan Ismail of Trengganu; Tuanku Syed Putra Raja of Perlis and Tuanku Mahkota Ismail representing the Sultan of Johor. Second row (left to right): Mr A.T. Newbould and Sir Ralph Hone standing behind Sir Edward and Mr M. MacDonald while Mohamed Shariff Osman and Onn Jaafar were standing behind the Rulers of Kedah and Johor respectively. 165
- Plate 4.8** High Commissioner Sir Edward Gent at a tea party given in his honour by Mr and Mrs Tan Cheng Lock, 5 April 1948. Front row, fourth from the left: Mrs J. Falconer; Sir Edward Gent; Mrs Tan Cheng Lock; Mr J. Falconer; Resident Commissioner; Mrs Ee Yew Kim and Tan Cheng Lock. 168
- Plate 4.9** A group picture of representatives of the Rulers and UMNO on the working committee of the Conference of the Constitutional Proposals, 20 November 1946. Dato' Onn was standing third from the left, flanked by Dato' Nik Ahmad Kamil bin Mahmud Dato' Sri Setia of Kelantan and Haji Mohamed Shariff Osman, State Secretary, Kedah, the latter two representing the Rulers. 170

Chapter 5

- Plate 5.1** An official group photo taken after the Conference of Rulers at the Residency, Kuala Lumpur, 1951. 189

Pages 235 to 242

Sultan Ibrahim of Kelantan.	235
Dato' Onn Jaafar, MP, Kuala Trengganu, 1959–1962.	235
Sultan Abu Bakar, Pahang, 1937.	236
Their Majesties the third Agung, Tuanku Syed Putra Jamalullail and the Raja Permaisuri Agung, accompanied by Inspector General of the Police, Tan Sri Sir Claude Fenner.	236
Sultan Abdul Halim Muadzam Shah, the sixth Agung and nephew of Tunku Abdul Rahman, together with his royal consort, Raja Permaisuri Agung Tunku Bahiyah, at the trooping of the Colours, Stadium Merdeka, Kuala Lumpur, 2 June 1971.	237
Sultan Ahmad Shah, Pahang, the seventh Agung, and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Istana Negara, 1984.	237
The state visit of Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko of Japan to Malaysia. Their Imperial Majesties were flanked by the ninth Agung Sultan Azlan Shah and his royal consort, the Raja Permaisuri Agung Tuanku Bainun.	238
The tenth Agung Tuanku Jaafar Tuanku Abdul Rahman. With him were Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his deputy Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim.	238
Sir Gerald Templar, British High Commissioner, 1952.	239
Sultan Yusoff Izzudin Shah, Perak (1948–1963).	239
Malaysia Day celebrations: The Agung leading the Rulers and Governors to the dais, Stadium Merdeka, Kuala Lumpur, 17 September 1963.	240
Tunku Abdul Rahman reading the Proclamation of Malaysia, Merdeka Stadium, 16 September 1963.	240
Merdeka Day in London: Dato' Nik Kamil, Ambassador to the United Kingdom, inspecting Malayan cadets as part of the Merdeka celebrations, 31 August 1957, Whitehall, London.	241