Journal of Al-Tamaddun, Vol. 17 (2), 2022, 25-38
https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol17no2.3

Itqan Al-Muluk bi Ta'dil As-Suluk: The Implication of Terengganu Institution 1911 Promulgation

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Abstract

The concern felt by Sultan Zainal Abidin III (1881-1918) ("the Sultan") over the entry of a British agent in Terengganu pursuant to the agreement entered into between Terengganu and Great Britain on 22 April 1910 had led to the enactment of *Itqân al-Mulûk bi Ta'dîl Al-sulûk*, or the Law for the Self-Government of Terengganu, on 2 November 1911. The Sultan attempted to protect Terengganu from foreign interference despite having to abide by the terms of the said agreement, which required a British agent to be stationed in Terengganu. The establishment of the said law appears to be an attempt to maintain the dominance of the local government in Terengganu's governmental system, and this move also affected its socio-economic development throughout the stated period. The interesting element about this law is the presence of a very strong Islamic influence, which shows that the Sultan strictly adhered to the teachings of Islam during his reign in Terengganu. This study aimed to analyse the extent to which the presence of British agents in Terengganu had influenced the actions and thinking of Sultan Zainal Abidin III in enacting and establishing *Itqân al-Mulûk bi Ta'dîl Al-sulûk.* It also aimed to examine how far *Itqân al-Mulûk bi Ta'dîl Al-sulûk* played a role in empowering the political and socio-economic sectors in Terengganu during the specified period and the extent to which the teachings of Islam embedded within it were used to protect and preserve the sovereignty of Terengganu against British intervention at the time. This research adopted a qualitative method that involved the collection and analysis of data from primary sources obtained from the Terengganu State Museum and the National Archives of Malaysia, such as the Manuscript of *Itqân al-Mulûk bi Ta'dîl Al-sulûk,* CO 840/1 (*Terengganu Administration Report, 1910-1930*), CO 840/2 (*Terengganu Administration Report 1931-1940*), The Terengganu Secretary of State File, and the Terengganu British Advisor File. In addition, secondary sources such as journals, books, chapters of books, and magazines were also used to further reinforce the study conducted. The findings proved that the enactment of *Itqân al-Mulûk bi Ta'dîl Al-sulûk* managed to fortify the political system in Terengganu, which projected a very strong image of Islam. In fact, it is this strengthening of the political system which led to the development of the economy, due to the availability of stable sources of income for the Malay farmers and female entrepreneurs at the time.

Keywords: Terengganu, *Itqân al-Mulûk bi Ta'dîl Al-sulûk,* Sultan Zainal Abidin III, British, Law, British, Malaya, Unfederated Malay States (UFMS)

Introduction

> *Allah SWT has bestowed on every human being a source of revelation and intellect that teaches them to think, create, and analyze how to live their daily lives.*[1]

The above statement seems appropriate to describe the actions of Sultan Zainal Abidin III (1881-1918) of Terengganu ("the Sultan"), who had enacted and established *Itqân al-Mulûk bi Ta'dîl Al-sulûk* or the Law for the Self- Government of Terengganu on 2 November 1911. This was a law created, enacted,

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[1] Rahimin Affandi Abd. Rahim and Abdullah Bukhari Abdul Rahim (2016), "Perlembagaan Itqan Muluk dan Nasionalisme Melayu-Islam," *International Journal of the Malay World and Civilisation (IMAN)*, Vol. 4, No. 2, p. 1.

and implemented in Terengganu based entirely on Islamic teachings.[2] Its enactment was consequent to the signing of an agreement between Terengganu and Great Britain on 22 April 1910, which required a British agent, Walter D. Scott, to be stationed in Terengganu.[3] Article I of the said agreement clearly stated that the Kingdom of Siam had surrendered to Great Britain four Unfederated Malay States (UFMS), namely Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan, and Terengganu.[4] Initially, the Sultan was concerned about foreign intervention in Terengganu. He worried that Terengganu's sovereignty would be threatened if the appointed British agent interfered with the Terengganu system of government and brought about reforms that were contrary to Terengganu's traditional customs and the teachings of Islam. Based on the situation which existed at the time, it was understandable that the Sultan, at an early stage, rejected the decision made by the Kingdom of Siam to accept a British agent, since Terengganu had continued to send gold flowers to the Kingdom of Siam.[5] This clearly shows that the Sultan was attempting to protect Terengganu despite knowing the risks of deliberately creating friction with the British and the Siamese. The Sultan's actions also troubled the Governor of the Straits Settlements and the High Commissioner of the Federated Malay States. Both of them had come to Terengganu to offer explanations regarding the agreement signed between the Kingdom of Siam and the Great Britain.[6]

In fact, another session of negotiation was held in Singapore to discuss this matter. As a result of the agreement between Terengganu and Great Britain, Terengganu did receive a British agent.[7] Nonetheless, the Sultan, being a well-known religious leader who strictly adhered to the teachings of Islam, considered that there was still opportunity to protect Terengganu from foreign influence. This demonstrated that the Sultan was an insightful man who wanted to uphold the sovereignty of Terengganu despite having to accept the presence of an appointed British agent. In line with his character, the Sultan enacted *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk* in preparation of facing British intervention, and strived to maintain the state's identity (Terengganu Centric). The Sultan's strong adherence to Islamic teachings seems to have greatly impacted his actions and thoughts, and manifested in his struggles to protect Terengganu from foreign powers. This study aimed to find out how far the presence of a British agent in Terengganu influenced the actions and thinking of Sultan Zainal Abidin III in drafting and establishing *Itqân al-Mulûk bi Ta'dîl Al-Sulûk*. This study also aimed to examine the role of *Itqân al-Mulûk bi Ta'dîl Al-Sulûk* as a law in protecting and empowering the political, economic, and social sectors in Terengganu from 1911 to 1918. It also sought to discover the extent to which the teachings of Islam through *Itqân al-Mulûk bi Ta'dîl Al-Sulûk* were used to protect and preserve the sovereignty of Terengganu from British intervention during the stated period. Nonetheless, the aim of this article is not to analyze the entire content of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*. Instead, this paper only focuses on the issues raised.

Literature Review

Numerous studies have been conducted on *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk* or the Law for the Self-Government of Terengganu. This is not surprising as this law can be analysed and discussed from various viewpoints, such as history, law, constitution, economics, social, and others. Most of the researchers have conducted content analysis of *Itqan Al-Muluk As ta'dil Bi-Suluk*, and concluded that the said law was constitutionalism of contemporary Malay Muslims in Terengganu in the 20th century. Among the scholars involved in the writings related to *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk* were Haslinda Nik Hussain (the Law for the Self-Government of Terengganu, 1911 and The Preservation of the Status of Terengganu Malay Muslims),[8] Abdullah Zakaria Ghazali (Terengganu Across Three Centuries: Sultanate, Politics, Economy, Religion and Culture),[9] Md Hanif Lateh (Malay Islamic Constitutional

[2] Abdullah Zakaria Ghazali (2012), "Politik dan Pemerintahan: Tiga Abad Kesultanan Terengganu," in Abdul Rahman Embong (ed.), *Terengganu Merentasi Tiga Abad: Kesultanan*, *Politik, Ekonomi, Agama dan Budaya*, Kuala Terengganu: Yayasan Diraja Sultan Mizan, p. 88.
[3] Ruhaizan Sulaiman@Abd Rahim, Ishak Saat and Ruzaini Sulaiman@Abd Rahim (2019), "Pentadbiran Kesultanan dan Kolonial British Di Negeri Terengganu 1910-1941," in Ishak Saat and Ku Boon Dar (eds.), *Sejarah & Rencana Warisan Alam Melayu*, Johor: Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, p. 60.
[4] Mohd Firdaus Abdullah and Arba'iyah Mohd Noor (2019), "The 20th Century Domestic Water Supply in Alor Setar, Kedah," Jebat: Malaysian Journal of History, Politics & Strategic Studies, Vol. 46, No. 2, pp. 240-271.
[5] Abdullah Zakaria (2012), "Politik dan Pemerintahan," p. 88.
[6] Nik Haslinda Nik Hussain (2014), "Undang-undang Bagi Diri Kerajaan Terengganu, 1911 dan Pengekalan Status Melayu Islam Terengganu," *Jurnal Antarabangsa Dunia Melayu*, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 42-43.
[7] Abdullah Zakaria (2012), "Politik dan Pemerintahan," p. 87.
[8] Nik Haslinda, "Undang-Undang Bagi Diri Kerajaan Terengganu," pp. 41-43.
[9] Abdullah Zakaria (2012), "Politik dan Pemerintahan," p. 89.

Heritage Model Through *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil Al-Suluk*),[10] Siti Hajar Abu Bakar Ah and Zulkanain Abdul Rahman (The Social Welfare of the Terengganu Malay-Muslim community based on the copy of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil Al-Suluk*),[11] and Hashim Musa (The Terengganu State Legal Text of 1911 Analysis of Islamic Influence in Statecraft and the Authority of the Ruler in a Malay State).[12] In relation to these studies, this article argues that there are still new aspects of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk* that can be highlighted, primarily from the perspective of historiography of Terengganu and Malaya. In fact, the establishment of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk* proved the capable character of Sultan Zainal Abidin III in upholding the image of Islam amidst the political, economic, and social development which took place in Terengganu during the time.

Figure 1: Sultan Zainal Abidin III (1881-1918)

Source: Courtesy of Terengganu State Museum

Background of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk* or the Law for the Self-Government of Terengganu

Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk was a set of written law introduced by Sultan Zainal Abidin III together with the *ulama*' (Islamic scholars) and *umara*' (leaders) of Terengganu. Among the scholars involved in the drafting of this law were Engku Syed (Syed Abdul Rahman) bin Muhammad al-Idrus (Tok Ku Paloh) and Tuan Dalam (Syed Mustafa) bin Muhammad al-Idrus. Tok Ku Paloh, during the time of drafting the constitution, was appointed by Sultan Zainal Abidin III as Shaikh al-Islam, while Tuan Dalam was recognized as a scholar and a Mufti.[13] Apart from these figures, drafters who were skilled in Islamic knowledge were also involved. Besides Sultan Zainal Abidin III himself, these drafters included Haji Wan Mohd Salleh Muhammad, Haji Wan Mohd Salleh Ismail, Haji Wan Sulaiman Daud, and Haji Ngah bin Mohd Yusof (Datuk Seri Amar). The involvement of 'ulama' and 'umara' in drafting this law made it complete with Islamic content.[14] This law was established with two key purposes, namely to protect the Terengganu government from the domination and influence of the British and to embed the characteristics of Islam in the politics and socio-economy of Terengganu.[15] This law is made up of a *mukadimah* (introduction), a set of 53 clauses, as well as a *khatimah* (closing). Interestingly, its Clause 2 and Clause 8 made it compulsory for the ruler of Terengganu to be a Malay and Muslim, and all appointments to become Terengganu government officials must first be screened by the Sultan, even appointments involving a British officer.[16] In fact, all appointments of the Sultan, the procedure of meetings, method of governance, appointment of Minister and Chief Minister, Government meetings, state laws and customs, and the position of Islam as the state religion are among the most important aspects emphasized in this law, which must adhere to Islamic teachings.[17]

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[10] Hanif Md Lateh (2018), "Model Warisan Ketatanegaraan Melayu Islam Melalui *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk'*," *Jurnal BITARA International Journal of Civlization Studies and Humanities*, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 2.

[11] Siti Hajar Abu Bakar Ah and Zulkanain Abdul Rahman (2013), "Kebajikan sosial masyarakat Melayu-Islam Terengganu berdasarkan naskhah Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil Al-Suluk, 1881-1918," *Jurnal Jabatan Sejarah Universiti Malaya*, Vol. 21, No. 2, pp. 77-98.

[12] Hashim Musa (2012), "The Terengganu State Legal Text of 1911 Analysis of Islamic Influence in Statecraft and the Authority of the Ruler in a Malay State," *Editorial Board*, p. 683.

[13] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*, p. 21.

[14] Hanif Md Lateh (2018), "Model Warisan Ketatanegaraan Melayu Islam," p. 2.

[15] Nik Haslinda (2014), "Undang-undang Bagi Diri Kerajaan Terengganu," pp. 42-43.

[16] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*, pp. 3-5.

[17] Nik Haslinda (2014), "Undang-undang Bagi Diri Kerajaan Terengganu," pp. 42-43.

Figure 2: The Front Cover of the Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*

Source: Terengganu State Museum Board

***Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*: Towards the System of Government in Terengganu**

The interpretation and understanding of sovereignty differ significantly between Western thinking and Islam. Western thinking places sovereignty upon human beings or entities, such as parliament, which is typically the holder of sovereignty for a western country. Meanwhile, according to the Islamic view, sovereignty refers to Allah SWT alone, since everything belongs to Allah SWT. As leaders who are entrusted to hold important government positions (as stated in Clause 2), it is obligatory for them to adhere to the teachings of Islam.[18] In fact, a leader is prohibited from performing acts that are forbidden in Islam.[19] In today's era, it is obvious how the leaders elected by the people do not adhere to the teachings of Islam. Even those who are supposed to fight for Islam are being swept away by the luxuries and ranks they have earned. This situation is saddening, especially when compared to the greatness and credibility of Sultan Zainal Abidin III. Through the establishment of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*, he had placed the position of Islam in life as supreme. Although the Sultan was at the top of the social hierarchy in Terengganu, he did not forget Allah, always adhered to the teachings of Islam, and had formed close relationships with the *ulama'* (Islamic scholars) and *umara'* (leaders) in Terengganu.

It is clear that applying the teachings of Islam to the political and socio-economic system in Terengganu, which aimed to reduce British intervention, was the accurate move for the Sultan to make. In fact, for him, the sovereignty of a state is a reflection of the true religion of Islam. This is consistent with the nature of the enacted *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*, which is regarded as a written constitution for Terengganu. This law appears to have been used to streamline administrative affairs, particularly those involving the appointment of key positions in the state government. Since this law was enacted to preserve and maintain the sovereignty of Islam, hence all appointments made would have to directly go through the Sultan first. This is because, based on the views of Sultan Zainal Abidin III, individuals holding high positions such as Chief Minister, members of *Majlis Mesyuarat Negeri* and other important officials are the caliphs or representatives of Allah SWT on earth.[20] In fact, it was mandatory for those holding positions among the upper classes to be Muslim and Malay.[21] Based on Clause 25 and Clause 26 of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*, the Sultan prohibited Malay officers from committing any act which goes against the laws of Terengganu, such as lying and cheating. In fact, Malay officers appointed to hold any post must pledge their loyalty to the Government of the State of Terengganu, and they were not allowed to forge any form of relationship with Europe or any other country that harboured intentions of colonising Terengganu.[22] This shows how entrenched Islamic teachings were in the government of Terengganu during the time.

[18] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*, p. 3. Please also refer to Ali Mohammad (2008), "Sumbangan Tamadun Islam Dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat Di Alam Melayu Hingga Abad Ke-17 M," *Jurnal Al-Tamaddun*, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 68-84.
[19] Wan Ahmad Fauzi Wan Husain (2021), "Kedaulatan Watan Teras Jati Diri Bangsa Dari Perspektif Perlembagaan Terengganu," *UFUQ International Journal of Arts and Social Science Research*, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 39.
[20] Wan Ahmad Fauzi (2021), "Kedaulatan Watan Teras Jati Diri Bangsa," p. 39.
[21] Abdullah Zakaria (2012), "Politik dan Pemerintahan," p. 89.
[22] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*, p. 11. Also refer to Ilyas Abdullah and Nurul Saadatun Nadiah Mohd Ngah (2019), "Perkembangan Awal Gerakan Sosio Politik Melayu di Terengganu: Tinjauan daripada Aspek Persejarahan," *Jurnal Sains Insani*, Vol. 4, No. 1, p. 70.

> Know for yourself that this is a Law for the Self-Government of Terengganu which states the sources of goods that depend on it and determines all the rules and regulations that are imposed on us and our anti-substitutes and on the Ministers and Chiefs, the officials and the people of the state and all their anti-substitutes… and this law should not be changed, altered, broken, or destroyed.[23]

Therefore, all actions taken or policies implemented must be based on Islamic law and order. *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk* also stated that although a British agent must be present in Terengganu, the said agent cannot infringe on the powers of the Sultan, cannot make any decisions, and has no power except as a British consul. In fact, the appointment of a British agent was only as a "representative of the British Government."[24] It was clearly stipulated in *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk* that foreign powers were not entitled to some of the provisions stated therein. In fact, if there was no "seal" issued by the sultan, then there would be no official position or duty given. This "seal" serves as proof that the Terengganu government was an independent and sovereign government.[25]

When Sultan Zainal Abidin III left for Makkah to perform the Hajj in 1913, the Yang Dipertuan Muda of Terengganu temporarily assumed the throne. He was given full authority to govern Terengganu during the absence of Sultan Zainal Abidin III. Sir Arthur Young, who was the Governor of the Straits Settlements and the High Commissioner of the Federated Malay States, came to know about this. However, the *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk* clearly outlined that all administrative matters cannot be carried out by outsiders despite the absence of the Sultan in the state.[26] In the event where a Cabinet meeting was to be held, a British agent could only attend as an advisor and not as a legal member. This means that a British agent could not oppose any proposal made during the meeting. Even if there were British agents in the state, domestic and foreign powers remained firmly in the hands of the Yang Dipertuan Muda of Terengganu at the time.[27] Based on the explanation provided, the "power" available to a British agent could not go beyond in any field including the judiciary, because Terengganu's judicial law is entirely based on the "Muhammadan Law."[28]

Apart from that, in order to clarify the jurisdiction of a British Agent, a Joint Court body of the British agent and the Judge was established in 1910. This body had affirmed that the decision-making powers of the sultan remained at the highest position even in matters involving, for example, the Chinese. British agents were only supposed to act upon decisions that had been made by the superiors. At that time, Islamic scholars were appointed as judges and also served as trustees and the highest authority in the field of law and the judiciary. For example, the Commissioner for Religious Affairs and Justice also held the portfolio as the Minister of Justice and Religion for Terengganu.[29] W. L. Conley (who was appointed as British agent in 1910 or thereabouts) acknowledged that Sultan Zainal Abidin III was indeed a most wise ruler. Prior to accepting any proposal from the British agent, he would seek the advice of State Council Meeting members. This was observed by W.L Conley who also noted that the Sultan would not make any decision alone. It is said that Sultan Zainal Abidin III would not even offer his opinion without the presence of his state officials.[30] Although it is stated in Clause 39 that State Council Meeting members need not necessarily be Muslim, they do not have the right to alter the decision made by the said Council.[31] This clearly portrays how the Sultan strictly adhered to methods of *syura* (Article 37) when making any decision relating to the administration of the state of Terengganu.[32]

Within the context of Terengganu's Malay Muslim community, the law of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk* also affected aspects of social mobility. The social mobility that existed among the Malay community in Terengganu had gone through a process where an individual could shift or move from

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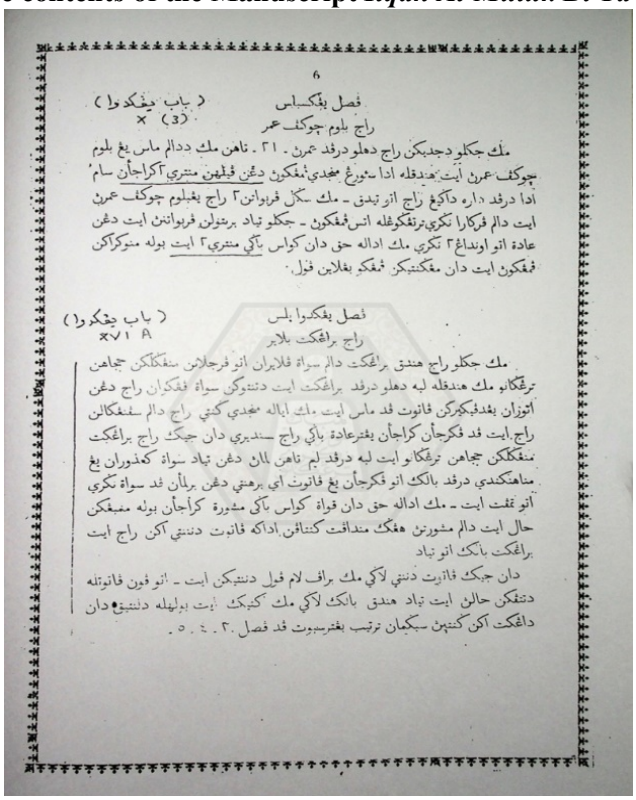
[23] Abdullah Zakaria Ghazali (1985), "Terengganu 1909-1922: Pentadbiran British dan Kesannya," in *Monograf Lembaga Muzium Terengganu (PESAKA)*, Vol. 3, p. 62.
[24] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk,* hlm. 10.
[25] Muhammad Yusoff Hashim (1991), *Terengganu Darul Iman: Tradisi Persejarahan Malaysia*, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, p. 99.
[26] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*, hlm. 7.
[27] Abdullah Zakaria (1985), "Terengganu 1909-1922," p. 69.
[28] *Report On The State Of Trengganu For The Year 1910*, p. 10.
[29] *Report On The State Of Trengganu For The Year 1911*, p. 5.
[30] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk,* hlm. 14.
[31] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*, p. 15.
[32] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*, p. 14.

one development to another.[33] According to Lipset and Bendix, there are two factors why social mobility exists in society. The first is a change in demand for achievement or improvement and survival, and the second is the surrounding factors.[34] Of the two factors, based on the views of Lipset and Bendix, the surrounding factors are more significant. Applying this view to the Kingdom of Terengganu, spiritual stimulation occurred among the Malay Muslim community in Terengganu through the leadership of Sultan Zainal Abidin III.[35] Additionally, Islamic institutions that had been established proved to be effective in producing people who were very sound in Islamic knowledge. This was one of the Sultan's most prominent successes. For example, a *pondok* institution in Kampung Pulau Manis set up in the 18th century still remained during his reign, whereby this institution highly emphasized the components of Islam. Its students were provided with Islamic education related to *usuludin*, *fiqh*, *tafsir*, and *hadith*. In fact, to create social mobility among the Muslim community, the values of Islamic civilization were inculcated through *tarbiyah*, *ta'lim*, and *ta'dib*. These were among the strengths of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*. This law not only prevented the British from gaining administrative power in Terengganu, it also prevented Muslim leaders from committing prohibited acts. As the "king maker" and the drafter of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*, the Sultan also maintained close relationships with famous scholars such as Tok Ku Paloh and Tok Sheikh Duyong,[36] who were both model and certified teachers. By inviting these two scholars to the palace, the Sultan had a direct opportunity to study religion in depth because the characteristics of Islamic leadership were regarded as highly important. This was the social mobility that existed among the Islamic leaders in Terengganu during the time.[37]

Figure 3: The contents of the Manuscript *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*



Source: Terengganu State Museum Board

[33] Nor Hayati Sa'aat (2011), "Mobiliti Sosial dalam Kalangan Komuniti Pesisir Pantai: Kajian Kes di Kuala Terengganu," *Jurnal Kajian Malaysia*, Vol 29, No. 1, p. 103.
[34] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*, p. 15.
[35] Nor Hayati (2011), Mobiliti Sosial dalam Kalangan Komuniti Pesisir Pantai," p. 103.
[36] During the coronation of Sultan Zainal Abidin III, Tok Syeikh Duyung performed the *hajat* prayers with fervent invocations for the Sultan's safety, and for all the people and the government under his rule. An Islamic government will only be safe and blessed when the Islamic scholars are able to give advice to the government, and dare to speak the truth even against tyrants. For more information, please refer to Engku Ahmad Zaki Engku Alwi (2012), "Peranan Ulama dan Instutusi Raja Memartabatkan Pendidikan Islam di Terengganu," in Abdul Rahman Embong (ed.), *Terengganu Merentasi Tiga Abad: Kesultanan*, *Politik, Ekonomi, Agama dan Budaya*, Kuala Terengganu: Yayasan Diraja Sultan Mizan, pp. 213-214.
[37] Mohamad Abu Bakar (2012), "Ulama, Ustaz dan Ulul Albab: Pendidikan Islam dan Pembentukan Masyarakat Terengganu," in Abdul Rahman Embong (ed.), *Terengganu Merentasi Tiga Abad: Kesultanan*, *Politik, Ekonomi, Agama dan Budaya*, Kuala Terengganu: Yayasan Diraja Sultan Mizan, pp. 201-203.

Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk: Towards the Socio-Economic Sector in Terengganu

Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk, which was regarded as a written constitution of Terengganu, also impacted the economic growth of Terengganu in the 20th century. This is clearly seen when the Sultan's offsprings helped people in need through utilizing their "living expenses or monthly allowance." Based on Article 20 and Article 21 of the *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*, living expenses have been allocated to the princes and princesses of the Terengganu royalty, who will receive such 'living expenses' for various purposes.

Table 1: Monthly Living Expenses for the Prince and Princess of the Sultan of Terengganu

Month	Total Monthly Amount of "Living Expenses" ($)
January	-
February	-
March	2,290.00
April	1,145.00
May	1,145.00
June	1,145.00
July	1,090.00
August	1,090.00
September	1,125.00
October	1,145.00
November	2,290.22
December	1,145.00

Source: SUK 2/1357 Amount of money given to the Prince and Princess of the Sultan of Terengganu

However, such living expenses were not to be regarded as monthly allowances to meet their own needs. Instead, it was one of the ways the royalty can help those in need amongst their people in society.[38] For example, we can see the action taken by Tungku Aisah@Tengku Ngah Aisyah binti Zainal Abidin and Tengku Nik Maimunah binti Tengku Zainal Abidin.[39] The allowance allocated for them, which ranged between $1,145.00 and $2,290.22 per month, were utilized to buy agricultural land, and this purchase brought about a big impact.[40] Among the agricultural land successfully purchased were 23,000 acres of paddy field in Ulu Terengganu, for purposes of planting paddy. Meanwhile, half of the land area was utilised for the plantation of rubber. As a result, job opportunities were made available to 154,000 people in Terengganu in various economic fields, including paddy plantation, in 1913.[41]

Apart from that, Article 46 also provided a clear definition of the customs and culture of the Muslim society in Terengganu, which includes people's involvement in matters related to Islam.[42] Given that Islam is a pure religion and the people of Terengganu must follow the Islamic culture, thus it makes sense that the women in Terengganu began to dress themselves in more modest and concealing clothing in their daily lives. As a result, the development of textile manufacturing activities occurred amongst the Malay female entrepreneurs during the time. In fact, the Malay female entrepreneurs began to produce more decent and modest clothing for sale.[43] The Sultan also implored his people, especially

[38] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*, pp. 9-10.

[39] Tungku Aisah@Tengku Ngah Aisyah binti Zainal Abidin was the sister ofTengku Nik Maimunah and she was the eldest child of Sultan Zainal Abdin III (Cik Kalthum or Cik Siti Istana). Tengku Ngah Aisyah had two children, Tengku Hindun Aminah and Tengku Azizah. According to sources, Tengku Nik Aisyah was married three times and her husband was Engku Sulong (Engku Long), and another one was Tengku Abdullah (Tengku Putih) bin Sultan Ali Singapura (who died on 4 April 1915). The marriage between Tengku Ngah Aisyah and Tengku Abdullah (Tengku Putih) bin Sultan Ali Singapura produced three children, namely Tengku Indong @ Hindun Aminah and Engku Busu. For further information, please refer to Muhammad Yusoff Hashim (1991), *Terengganu Darul Iman: Tradisi Pensejarahan Malaysia*, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, pp. 155-156.

[40] SUK 2/1357 Amanah Wang Putera dan Puteri Duli Yang Maha Mula Sultan Terengganu.

[41] *The Annual Report of The British Adviser Trengganu for The Year 1913*, p. 11.

[42] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*, p. 17.

[43] In Terengganu, two clothing patterns refer to women, namely *baju kurung and baju kebaya*. For *baju kurung*, the textile used is silk embroidered cloth with blue background, red and yellow thread standing pattern, calendered, and *pisak gantung*. The famous *baju kebaya* in Terengganu is "Baju Turki", embroidered using the 'tekat' method. This pattern is a direct influence of *baju Riau-Pahang*. The difference is that Terengganu's '*baju Turki'* does not have the *cekak musang* collar. The material used for weaving is plain silk, embellished with embroidery using *kelingkan* (ribbon-like) thread. For further explanation, please refer to Siti Zainon Ismail (1993), Terengganu Pusat Tenunan Satu Pemerian Koleksi, Bengkel Pakaian dan Tekstil Melayu Kerajaan Negeri Terengganu, *Persatuan Muzium Malaysia*, p. 9-10.

Malay women, to display good customs and culture through more modest attire such as the wearing of kain sarong, long dress, and head cover, even when carrying out activities such as weaving. As a result, Malay women began to wear traditional Malay outfits such as baju kurung or kebaya and kain sarong on a daily basis.[44] At the same time, modest dressing upheld the dignity of women and reduced the chances of women being victims of sexual crimes. The aim was to be more attuned to the religion of Islam, as well as to fulfil economic needs, which led to the involvement of 13,937 Malay women in the manufacturing of textiles in 1912.[45]

Figure 4: Malay Woman Clad in Modest Attire such as Kebaya and Kain Sarong

Source: Courtesy of the Terengganu State Museum Board

Further, in order to show adherence to Article 46 which emphasised the need to respect the traditions and culture of Islam, there was a change in regards to the textile patterns produced. For example, fauna patterns were changed to flora patterns. Before the arrival of Islam, fauna patterns (animal patterns) were among the dominant patterns produced on textile in Terengganu. However, once the *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk* came into force, this law brought about significant changes to the traditions and culture of the Malay society in Terengganu at the time. Among the floral patterns seen produced on textile fabrics were *bunga tanjung*, shoot leaves, jasmine flowers and bamboo shoots.[46] If we were to delve deeper, the ruling on wearing clothes and materials with animal patterns when performing prayers was made known through the hadith narrated byAisyah R.Anha, where the Prophet Muhammad SAW had once performed prayers wearing clothing with pictures of flags or marks. He gave it a sharp stare, and then he turned away while saying:

اذْهَبُوا بِخَمِيصَتِي هَذِهِ إِلَى أَبِي جَهْمٍ وَأْتُونِي بِأَنْبِجَانِيَّةِ أَبِي جَهْمٍ فَإِنَّهَا أَلْهَتْنِي آنِفًا عَنْ صَلَاتِي

Meaning: Take it to Abi Jaham and bring to me instead the clothing of Anbijaniyyah Abi Jaham, because it distracts me from my prayers. Sunan Abu Daud (4063)

Narrated by Aisyah R.Anha, The Prophet Muhammad SAW said:

كُنْتُ أَنْظُرُ إِلَى عَلَمِهَا وَأَنَا فِي الصَّلَاةِ فَأَخَافُ أَنْ تَفْتِنَنِي

Meaning:
The pictures are still coming to my mind in my prayers, thus I am worried that it may bring trials upon me (or cause me to be distracted). Riwayat al-Bukhari (373).[47]

[44] Nazirah Lee (1985), "Transformasi Fesyen Pakaian Muslim Di Semenanjung Tanah Melayu, 1930-1940," *Jurnal Perspektif*, Vol. 6, No. 3, p. 78.
[45] Secretariat Selangor 2258/1912, Cencus Returns of Trengganu 1912.
[46] Haziyah Hussin (2004), "Peranan Songket dalam Perkahwinan Melayu: Golongan Istana dan Rakyat Biasa," *Jurnal Arkeologi Malaysia*, Vol. 17, pp. 45-47. Also refer to Norazilawati Abd Wahab, Ruzaini Sulaiman@Abd Rahim, Arba'iyah Mohd Noor and Mohd Firdaus Abdullah (2022), "Perkembangan Negeri Terengganu 1920-1942 Berdasarkan Syair Tawarikh Zainal Abidin III," *Asian Journal of Environment, History and Heritage*, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 87-106.
[47] "Hukum Pakai Pakaian Bercorak Haiwan Ketika Solat," *Pejabat Mufti Wilayah Persekutuan*, accessed on 15 June 2021, https://muftiwp.gov.my/artikel/al-kafi-li-al-fatawi/3074-al-kafi-1075-hukum-pakai-pakaian-bercorak-haiwan-ketika-solat.

Through the statement issued, Sultan Zainal Abidin III clearly knew about the prohibition of wearing attire with animal patterns, especially when performing prayers. He requested for the people of Terengganu to refer to Article 46 of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk* with the intention to educate them to abide by Islamic teachings. This demonstrates the Sultan's love for his people, consistent with his character as a fair and wise leader. In fact, this situation shows how well-versed the Sultan was in Islamic teachings regarding various aspects of life, and he also applied such knowledge in the economic activities of Terengganu during the said time.[48]

Figure 5: Use of the motive of a bird on a piece of sarong which was not encouraged upon the arrival of Islam in Terengganu in the 20th Century

Source: Courtesy of Terengganu Museum

Consequently, this development is believed to have also impacted the spirituality of the women involved in textile production.[49] For example, when weaving activities were ongoing, the women were seen to also be reciting *dhikr* as a way to get closer to the Creator. Apart from the recital of *dhikr,* the sound of "torak dan kir' contributed towards the production of very fine woven materials, and this led to Terengganu-produced textiles receiving high demand within Terengganu as well as from other states.[50] Apart from directly bringing peace to the heart, such practice would also train individuals to implement the Islamic way of life. Puan Ramlah Latif, the Assistant Director of the Terengganu State Museum, fully agreed with this. According to her, the tune of the *dhikr* which was constantly on the lips of the female entrepreneurs and workers was a clear sign of remembrance of Allah SWT. This activity was not done in a group, instead it was done on an individual basis throughout the time they were working.[51]

Implications of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk* on the Government and Socio-Economic System in Terengganu

Indeed, *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk* had a significant impact on the political and socio-economic aspects of Terangganu during the stated period. From a political perspective, it is clear that Sultan Zainal Abidin III had successfully managed to curb and limit the role of a British agent in the political system in Terengganu.[52] The appointment of religious scholars and close relatives also made it easier for the Sultan to monitor every movement in the course of the administration entrusted to him.[53] In addition, his actions had ensured political stability in Terengganu, maintained state sovereignty, and prevented power struggles. Islamic law had been elevated to the highest position in the state of Terengganu

[48] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk,* p. 17.

[49] The Natrah Tragedy which occurred in Singapore in 1950 introduced an important character, namely Che Aminah, who was Natrah's adopted mother. Interestingly, Che Aminah hailed from Kemamam, Terengganu and she was a textile merchant. She is said to have travelled to Japan, Indonesia, Singapore and other states in Malaya for purposes of selling Terengganu textile. Refer to Mohd Firdaus Abdullah, Arba'iyah Mohd Noor, Mohd Shahrul Azha Mohd Sharif, Norasmahani Hussain and Norazilawati Abd Wahab (2021), "Di Sebalik Isu Natrah, 1950 : Reaksi Pembaca The Straits Times Terhadap Tragedi Natrah," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun*, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp. 47-64. Also refer to Mohd Shahrul Azha Mohd Sharif, Arba'iyah Mohd Noor and Mohd Firdaus Abdullah (2021), "Di Sebalik Isu Perkahwinan Nadrah: Tumpuan Terhadap Pandangan Ahmad Luthfi dalam Majalah Qalam (1950–1963)," *Kajian Malaysia (Early view*). Also refer to: Muhammad Nur Arif Abdul Manaf (2022), "Peranan Majalah Sinaran dalam Peristiwa Nadrah, 1950-1951," Undergraduate dissertation, History Section, School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia.

[50] Arba'iyah Mohd Noor and Norazilawati Abd Wahab (2019), "Pengaruh Indonesia Terhadap Tekstil Di Terengganu Pada Abad Ke-19," *Jurnal Pengajian Melayu*, Vol. 30, No. 1, p. 10.

[51] Interview with Puan Ramlah Latif, Assistant Director, Terenggany State Museum Board, 13 January 2020. Also refer to Othman Yatim (1999), "Seni Melayu atau Seni Islam?," *Jurnal Persatuan Muzium Malaysia (PURBA)*, Vol. 18, p. 7.

[52] Nik Haslinda (2014), "Undang-Undang Bagi Diri Kerajaan Terengganu," p. 44.

[53] Muhammad Yusoff (1991), *Terengganu Darul Iman*, pp. 97-98.

through the full involvement of the Islamic scholars in the State Executive Committee. In fact, his actions showed determination to defend Terengganu from foreigners as the Sultan regarded foreigners as *kafir harbi* which could be fought.[54] Clause 51 stipulated that "the religion of the state is Islam while other religions can also be practiced", symbolising that Islam is the true identity and characteristics of the political and socioeconomic structure of the people in Terengganu.[55] For example, it is clearly stated that foreign powers are not allowed to hold positions in the Terengganu administration. In addition, the position of Islam and the Malay race remained very strong despite the entry of the British agent which was seen as an attempt to challenge the system of government in Terengganu. Therefore, it is clear that *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk* had indeed significantly impacted the Terengganu system of government during the stated period.[56]

Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk also had an impact on the *pondok* institution established by Sultan Zainal Abidin III. Equipped with sound religious knowledge, the Malays in the state of Terengganu were able to defend Terengganu's sovereignty and protect it from foreign powers. In fact, the Sultan had also encouraged the use of the *pondok* institutions, mosques, and other similar institutions as a meeting place to discuss issues involving the state administration. The appointed leaders were the *imam*, *bilal*, and *khatib*.[57] The emphasis on the importance of religious knowledge led to the preservation of Terengganu's sovereignty against British occupation because all political, economic, and social policies were subject to and based on the Islamic constitution.[58] The priority given to religion had provided an opportunity for religious officials (such as Sheikh ul-Islam and the Mufti) to be equally involved in religious administrative institutions. Meanwhile, the mosques were used as a marker of the strength of Islam in Terengganu.[59]

Additionally, the signatures given by 24 officers and the Malay ulama signified that Terengganu was a state that was firm and steadfast in holding on to the teachings of Islam. The success of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk* proved that Terengganu had undergone various political and socioeconomic transformations from the pre-colonial to the pre-independence era. Although British influence did reach Terengganu, the political and socioeconomic structure of the Malay society, as set out in the *Itqan al-Muluk* laws, can still be described as strongly loyal to the royal institution and the concept of the Supremacy of the Malays (*Ketuanan Melayu*). The credibility of Sultan Zainal Abidin III, as reflected in Article 24 and Article 44, makes it compulsory for only appointed Malay officers to attend the State Meetings. In fact, the State Meetings must be led by the Chief Minister in the absence of the Sultan and all the agenda of the meetings must be recorded. This was among the steps taken to protect and uphold the sovereignty of Terengganu against any deception in governance.[60]

Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk also had a great impact on the socioeconomy of Terengganu, where Islamic beliefs were strengthened and reinforced in themselves. For example, the melody of *dhikir* in preparing textiles had brought the women closer to Allah SWT. Perhaps this appears to be a rather simple matter from the naked eye. However, if scrutinized more deeply from a spiritual standpoint, the idea was born to create motifs and patterns that were more Islamic in terms of concept. The moving cloud motif, for instance, has a meaning that can be associated with the Creator. The cloud is said to move and this can be likened to a human being who constantly has to accept changes in his surroundings. The acceptance of the Islamic law applied by Sultan Zainal Abidin III showed that Islam was embraced as a more harmonious way of life.[61] Besides the recitation of *dhikr* (constant chanting in remembrance of Allah), the performing arts of Islam were also practiced in the Malay community, such as Quranic recitation, *berzanji* (rhythmic recitation of praise for Prophet Muhammad saw), and others.[62] Also, as stated previously, upon receipt of 'living allowances' by female members of the royalty, they were able to acquire agricultural land that farmers can work on.[63] The agricultural land provided the

[54] Nik Anuar Nik Mahmud (2003), "Terengganu: Benteng Terakhir Melayu Islam," in Kolokium Peradaban Melayu Kawasan Timur Ke-2, organized by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, p. 2.
[55] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk,* p. 18.
[56] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk,* p. 18.
[57] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk,* p. 5. Muhammad Yusoff (1991), *Terengganu Darul Iman*, p. 100.
[58] Nik Haslinda (2014), "Undang-Undang Bagi Diri Kerajaan Terengganu," p. 45.
[59] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk,* p. 5. Also refer to Muhammad Yusoff (1991), *Terengganu Darul Iman*, p. 99.
[60] Manuscript of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk,* p. 11 & 16.
[61] Norwani Mohd. Nawawi (2002), *Songket Malaysia*, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
[62] Othman (1999), "Seni Melayu atau Seni Islam?," p. 7.
[63] Norazilawati Abd Wahab, Ruzaini Sulaiman@Abd Rahim, Arba'iyah Mohd Noor and Mohd Firdaus Abdullah (2022), "Penglibatan Wanita Melayu dalam Memperkasa Sosioekonomi dan Kesejahteraan Hidup Menerusi Penanaman Padi di Terengganu pada Awal Abad 20," *Akademika: Journal of Southeast Asia Social Sciences and Humanities,* Vol. 92, No. 3.

farmers with opportunities to plant crop on royalty land, enabling them to enjoy income ranging from 0.20 cents per acre to 40 cents per acre on a daily basis.[64]

Figure 6: The moving cloud motif which was so close to Islam in Terengganu

Source: Courtesy of Terengganu State Museum

Conclusion

In conclusion, the prioritisation of Islam by Sultan Zainal Abidin III through the enactment of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk* had successfully preserved the sovereignty of Terengganu in the early 20th century despite the intervention of the British. This law also brought about significant changes to the political and socio-economic aspects of Terengganu during the specified period. The Sultan's distinguished credibility weakened the role of the appointed British agent, who served merely as an onlooker with his position stated on paper only, and in fact the agent did not have the power to make decisions regarding affairs in Terengganu. Other Unfederated Malay States, such as Kedah, also made attempts to maintain its identity (Kedah Centric) and preserve the dominance of local government through efforts and actions that could curb the British from controlling its system of government. Nevertheless, what differentiated the situation in Kedah and Terengganu was that Sultan Zainal Abidin III made Islam a priority through the formulation of *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk.* The situation was different in the Federated Malay States (FMS) where the British resident was more powerful than the local government. This shows that the government's position in the Unfederated Malay States was stronger compared to the Federated Malay States. Through *Itqan Al-Muluk Bi Ta'dil As-Suluk*, Terengganu appeared to be more advanced than the other Malay states in terms of the formulation and practice of contemporary Islamic law. The state of Terengganu had successfully demonstrated the important role of Islam in providing solutions to problems in life, and in fact Islam had clearly elevated the position of the state to be better than before.

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[64] *The Annual Report of The British Adviser Trengganu For The Year 1924,* p. 18.

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