

## BOOK REVIEWS

**The Closing of the Frontier: A History of the Marine Fisheries of Southeast Asia c. 1850-2000. John G. Butcher, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), Singapore, 2004, 442 pp, ISBN 981 230 259 X**

The book comprehensively outlines the history of marine fisheries in Southeast Asia from the period of the late nineteenth century to the start of the twenty first century. The greatest value of this book lies on its central theme of discussion that sets apart from other historical literature on marine fisheries. Instead of studying on the general history of marine fisheries, the central theme of the book highlights the movements of fishing grounds in the region's oceanic waters. Based on long and extensive research stretching over 11 years, the focus of the book is on the historical aspect of captured marine fisheries. The author chooses the year 1850 as his starting point of discussion. His selection of periods is justified due to the lack of available historical literature and other written sources on regional fisheries prior to that particular period.

The book is organized into seven chapters. In each chapter, the author has adopted periodization that highlights a number of historical stages in the extension of fishing ground in the oceans of Southeast Asia. These chapters deal with (in the order in which they appear in the book): basic concepts, source and scope of the book; survey of fisheries in the mid-nineteenth century; the influence of political and economic transformation on the expansion of fishing industry from mid-1800 to 1930s; The growth of fishing through the utilization of existing fishing method and technology from the period of late 19<sup>th</sup> century to 1930s; technological change and the extension of fishing frontier; from 1890s to 1930s; the great fish race due to the growing population demand, and significant changes in the political structures of nations-states between post-World War II to 1970s; and the last chapter examines on the closing of new fishing grounds in Southeast Asia.

Appropriately, in the first chapter, the author begins by highlighting the exceptional diversity of marine and coastal ecosystems, and the abundance of marine living resources in the oceans of Southeast Asia. Based on the available scientific data, the author provides clear and concise explanations on the dynamic interplay between geological, meteorological and oceanographic processes that influence marine environment in the regional seas. Readers will find the following four chapters of the book as the most valuable. Each chapter covers the main theme of the book with detail narratives on the histories of how the relationship between socio-economic, technological, political and ecological transformations affected the extension of fishing grounds and the general development of marine fisheries sector in the region. While chapter 6 examines the great race to explore the new fishing grounds in the regional oceans during the period of post-World War II era to 1970s. In the last chapter, the author concludes that there is no new fishing ground in the oceans of Southeast Asia. To find new fishing grounds with abundance fish stocks in the regional seas is now impossible. Pressures from the

growing population and rapid economic development have given rise to the closing of the fishing frontier. Certain areas of the regional oceans are facing severe depletion of fish stocks as a result of marine environmental degradation and uncontrollable fishing activities. Perhaps the author's most significant observation is that the future challenge in the region's marine fisheries sector is how to exploit marine fisheries resources in a sustainable manner. With the effect of global warming, increasing pressure on fish population and the internationalization of fish trade, this task will certainly be a daunting one particularly to those who are involved in fishery management. Another issue that the author highlights is the need to ensure the continuous supply of marine fish to the growing people of the region as a source of food.

One of the limitations of this book is the lack of in-depth discussion on the phenomena of 'ocean enclosure' movement among coastal states of Southeast Asia since the late 1960s. The enclosures of vast oceanic space under the coastal States' extended maritime jurisdictional zones (i.e. 12-nm territorial sea and 200-nm Exclusive Economic Zone) have already gained momentum even prior to the conclusion of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Such movement has significant impact on the development of the region's marine fishing activities. Coastal states' extended maritime jurisdictional claims in the adjacent seas have subsequently given rise to the closing of many fishing grounds to foreign fishing vessels. It would be better if the author could include in the book some in depth discussions on the impact of coastal states' extended maritime jurisdictional zones on marine fishing activities in the region. The author should also give particular focus on coastal states' practices concerning the access of foreign fishermen to fishery resources in the EEZ.

Overall, this well-researched book will be very useful to scholars and historians who are concerned with the history of marine fisheries, in particular on the frontier of fishing in the oceans of Southeast Asia. Furthermore, the chapters of the book are well written and easy to understand even for the layman who possesses limited knowledge on marine fisheries. To assist the reader's understanding of the discussions in the book, it has well-illustrated maps, clearly drawn figures, extensive lists of bibliography, explanatory notes and concise glossary.

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**Malaysia and South-South Cooperation During Mahathir's Era: Determining Factors and Implications by Ahmad Faiz Abdul Hamid with foreword from Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publication 2005. ISBN 967-978-885-7**

This book examined the determining factors and implications of Mahathir's policy towards the South-South Cooperation with emphasis on the Malaysia's relation with Indochinese countries and South Pacific Islands. Among the objectives of this book are examining Malaysia's involvement in South-South cooperation – 1986 till 1996, explaining Mahathir's role in the making Malaysia's foreign policy especially in relation to Malaysia's involvement in South-South cooperation, explaining the factors which influenced Mahathir's involvement in articulating the North-South issues and the implications of his actions on Malaysia and identifying the prospects and problems of Malaysian economic relations with developing countries particularly with the Indochinese states and South Pacific countries.

In the first part of the book, author provides good discussion on the shift of Malaysia's foreign policy by comparing the approaches of prime ministers before Mahathir and Mahathir himself. Author argued, Mahathir's policy was different compared with his three previous predecessors who were more concerned with their diplomatic ties with the West. Mahathir's policy, instead, emphasized on the South-South relationship in which he was applauded as one of imminent voice in the South. In addition, author stressed on the significance of Mahathir's contribution in establishing programs for developing countries namely South Investment, Trade and Technology Data Exchange Centre (SITTDEC), the Bilateral Payment Arrangements (BPA), the G15 Centres of Educational Excellence, the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP). However, the author's discussion is limited. For instance, further discussion can be raised from his discussion i.e. how much do these programs contribute significantly to the development of these developing countries and how do these programs mutually benefit the countries involved and to what extent.

The author chose two regions of developing countries as its case studies; Indochinese and South Pacific islands. He provided good historical account on Malaysia's relationship with these countries. However, the author's discussion was limited since his discussion only emphasized on Malaysia's perspective and very little on the other party's perspective. Hence, the author did not provide good understanding of the real situation of what happened in this countries' relation. His conclusion is that national interests, external factors and leadership variables are the determining factors that contributed to Malaysia's participation in South-South cooperation.

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**Discourse of Political Islamic Thought, Lukman Taib, Universiti Malaya Press, 2006 128 p.p, ISBN 983-100-289-X.**

In Islam, there is no separation between religion and politics. According to the famous Muslim scholar, Al-Ghazali, he said that Islam (religion) and politics are twin and inseparable. He elaborates further more in describing relation between Islam and politics as “religion and temporal power are twin”.

With this book, the author has the same argument how Islam and politics are compatible and complementary each other. The relationship between government (politics) and shariah (religion) should be highlighted because the concept of political Islam cannot allow the idea of conflict between religion and politics. Politics such as a vital and important thing to Islam when Prophet Muhammad SAW migrated with Muhajirin to Madinah to establish an Islamic state after spending almost 13 years in Mecca. Until the present time, Madinah are considered as the first Islamic state ever in Muslim world.

This book covered many topics related to political Islamic thought with simple explanation. Among of them are the emergence of Islamic political thought (al-siyasah al-shar’iyyah) as a separate discipline in Islamic studies, Islamic state in Multiethnic societies, what type of system of government of an Islamic state could be call, the concept of political authority in Islam, legal sources of political representation in Islam, the basis of political representation in Islam, the majority principle (al-hukm al-ghalabiyyah) as decision making procedures in Islam, the legitimacy of political authority in Islam, al-shura as mechanism for political representation in classical Islam and eligibility of non-muslim and women as members of parliament in an Islamic or Muslim state.

Finally, this book is very significant and considered as a comprehensive reading for those who interested in mastering politics from Islamic perspectives.

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**Confessions of an Economic Hit Man, John Perkins, Plume, London. 2005. pp. 313. ISBN 9781576753019**

Much has been said and written about the role of multinational corporations (MNCs) in the development of third world countries. While some thrive out of genuine competitiveness and opportunities created by the capitalist system, there are those who did so for very disturbing motives and through a devious group of people; the economic hit men (EHM). Perkins knows what he is talking (or rather writing) about for he was one of them. His job was to influence leaders of developing nations to support U.S. commercial interests. In the process, the leaders would often be deeply ensnared in a web of debt that they could never repay and would, thus, ensure their cooperation in advancing America's global empire.

In his words, the EHM's tools include "fraudulent financial reports, rigged elections, payoffs, extortion, sex and murder." Where the EHM failed to convince leaders to support American corporatorcracy, as in the case of Ecuador and Panama, the CIA-sanctioned jackals would step in. Perkins believes that President Jamie Rold\_s of Ecuador and President Omar Torrijos of Panama, who died in a fiery airplane crash on May 1981 and July 1981 respectively, were assassinated because of their unwillingness to allow American oil companies into their country. In cases where this type of hit men (the jackals) also failed, then the military would step in as evident in the case of Iraq.

The EHM were active in Iraq since the 1980s not solely for her rich oil supply but also for her water resources and strategic location. The Tigris and Euphrates rivers flowing through Iraq enables her to control the water resources in the continent. Similarly, Iraq's strategic location is the key to controlling the Middle East. American's energy, engineering and construction companies as well as military equipment manufacturers saw huge investment possibility in the country. Nevertheless, Saddam Hussein was not buying into any of the EHM's infrastructure and industrialization programmes. Saddam's stand was a deep embarrassment to Bush Sr.'s administration. What happened to Iraq today is, in fact, an accumulation of U.S. strategies to take control of the country.

Besides the above countries, the EHM's were also present in Indonesia and Saudi Arabia. As an EHM for MAIN, an American international consulting firm, Perkins was among the team responsible for developing a master plan for the electrification of Java in the 1970s. The plan was to be designed in such a way to ensure that Indonesian's oil industry and related businesses like ports, pipelines and construction would rely heavily on electricity supply for the duration of 25 years. The project was not only MAIN's strategy of getting U.S. investment into Indonesia but was a comprehensive plan to promote U.S. foreign policy and dominance in Southeast Asia. The U.S. Government was trying to lure Indonesia away from communism.

MAIN also served as an adviser to the U.S. Treasury Department and was given the task to develop forecasts of Saudi Arabia's economy if huge American investments

were poured into the country. Perkins, in particular, was required to find ways that would assure that a large portion of petrodollars found their way back to America and that Saudi Arabia's economy would be dependent on the U.S. It is distressing to learn that Saudi Arabia had failed to see the trappings of the deals offered by the American in the project discreetly known as Saudi Arabian Money-laundering Affair (SAMA). Most insulting though is to know that a key player in the Saudi government has let his weaknesses for beautiful blondes affect his better judgment and, in the process, secured the deal for the Americans.

Perkins quit his job as an EHM when his conscience got hold of him. He could not stomach the man he had become – a slave to an organization that was responsible for using debt to draw poor countries into America's global empire. He tries to make sense of 9/11 from America's own shortcomings and a reminder that: "Empires never last. Every one of them has failed terribly. They destroy many cultures as they race toward greater domination, and then they themselves fall. No country or combination of countries can thrive in the long term by exploiting others." This book is a great read for those wanting to understand the workings of American MNCs and their role in helping the U.S government to promote American foreign policy and dominance.

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**Ketuanan Politik Melayu : Pandangan Kaum Cina. Thock Ker Pong.**  
**Penerbit Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 2005, 317 hal., ISBN 983-100-303-9.**

Kewujudan hegemoni politik Melayu telah menerbitkan pembentukan persatuan-persatuan Cina di Malaysia sebagai wadah perjuangan dan mempertahankan identiti budaya dan pendidikan masyarakat Cina. Kajian penulis banyak merintis sejarah perjuangan persatuan-persatuan Cina berdasarkan hasil tindakbalas dari penguasaan politik Melayu yang dianggap sensitif oleh masyarakat Cina. *Huatuan* dijadikan sebagai landasan perjuangan masyarakat Cina dalam menyusun strategi percaturan hegemoni politik Melayu meliputi isu kerakyatan, bahasa dan pendidikan sejak 1941 sehingga pasca merdeka. Perjuangan *Huatuan* mendapat tempat dalam masyarakat Cina dan terus menjadi pertubuhan yang berpengaruh memperjuangkan hak dan kepentingan. Namun, *Huatuan* turut mengalami tansisi perubahan sejajar dengan identiti kenegaraan masyarakat Cina selepas merdeka. *Huantuan* turut membawa kepada kemunculan pertubuhan lain seperti *Dongjiaozong*, Persekutuan Dewan-dewan Perniagaan dan Perindustrian Cina Malaysia.

Penulis memaparkan perkembangan hegemoni politik Melayu dikaitkan dengan bermulanya zaman Kesultanan Melayu Melaka lagi, akhirnya terus menterjemahkan kedudukan masyarakat Melayu adalah sinonim dalam persada politik. Di ambang kemerdekaan memperlihatkan pakatan UMNO-MCA sebagai parti Perikatan mewarnai dan mendominasi arena politik tanahair, namun konsep politik permuafakatan ini lebih ketara dikuasai oleh parti UMNO berbanding MCA. Kemunculan hegemoni Melayu lebih ketara dengan pelaksanaan Dasar Ekonomi Baru (DEB) rentetan dari peristiwa 13 Mei, 1969. Melalui perspektif ini, ia merupakan satu menifestasi politik ekonomi kerajaan dalam usaha meletakkan landasan mengimbangi serta menaikkan indeks sosio-ekonomi masyarakat Melayu setanding dengan masyarakat bukan Melayu walaupun akur tentang kewujudan desakan dari persatuan-persatuan Cina yang lebih dikenali sebagai *Huatuan*. Aspek urus tadbir negara sebenarnya dikuasai oleh elit Melayu dan ia sekaligus memenuhi agenda perjuangan Melayu dan ia secara tidak langsung membawa kepada proses penghegemonian Melayu dalam bidang politik ekonomi mahupun sosio-budaya. Fenomena ini terus menjadi dilema masyarakat minoriti Cina dalam meletakkan agenda perjuangan mereka selari dengan kepentingan mereka di Malaysia.

Dilema masyarakat Cina terus mencengkam dalam aspek ekonomi pasca DEB sehinggalah kepada kemelut isu-isu pendidikan yang berpanjangan. Lantaran itu *Huatuan* dianggap nadi kebangkitan masyarakat Cina dalam memperjuangkan isu dan kemelut serta menjaga kepentingan agenda pendidikan dan kebudayaan masyarakat Cina. Dalam perjuangan *Huatuan* yang berterusan telah mengundang kepada tindakbalas penentangan daripada kaum Melayu. Fenomena ini merupakan satu menifestasi membangkitkan nasionalisme terutamanya di kalangan kaum Melayu yang melihat dogma gerakan *Huatuan* seperti Gerakan Perpaduan Orang Cina, *Sanjiehe* seolah menyaingi kedudukan dan menyamatarafkan hak istimewa orang Melayu dengan mereka. Kemelut perjuangan

Huatuan lebih bersifat komunal dan kelesuan matlamat terjadi ketika berdepan dengan hegemoni Melayu. Perjuangan aktivis Huatuan mula cenderung kepada tuntutan hak demokrasi dan sivil ekoran kegagalan mengemudi kepentingan dalam aspek pendidikan sekitar 1990-an namun perjuangan kumpulan tersebut dihambat oleh Operasi Lalang yang memperlihatkan kehampaan agenda berterusan.

Penulis turut memaparkan momentum perjuangan Huatuan yang turut mendapat perhatian dari parti MCA yang akhirnya memperlihatkan tekanan dilakukan ke atas kumpulan pendesak itu. Agenda permuafakatan politik yang diamalkan oleh MCA dan kedudukan ekonomi yang baik di kalangan masyarakat Cina pada 1990-an telah berjaya menyerap desakan dan tekanan dari golongan Huatuan. Keadaan ini sedikit sebanyak memberi cabaran terhadap golongan Huatuan yang berjuang atas kapasiti menjaga kepentingan kaum Cina. Namun, konstruksi dan struktur politik yang utuh dari kaum Melayu sebenarnya terus menjadi hegemoni yang mewarnai kekuasaan politik tanahair.

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**Islam dan Demokrasi: Cabaran Politik Muslim Kontemporari di Malaysia, Mohd Izani Mohd Zain. Penerbit Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 2005, 215 hal., ISBN 983-100-260-1.**

Buku ini membincangkan mengenai Islam dan demokrasi. Berdasarkan kepada konsep politik Islam, penulis cuba menghuraikan beberapa isu mengenai hubungan antara Islam dan demokrasi Barat dalam kerangka politik Islam. Bab satu buku ini memuatkan perbincangan secara konseptual dan teoretikal mengenai Islam dan demokrasi. Manakala dalam bab kedua pula, penulis mengaplikasikan konsep dan teori Islam dan demokrasi dalam perbincangan yang menyentuh beberapa isu politik dunia Islam di samping turut mengemukakan beberapa peristiwa sebagai kajian kes yang menarik seperti perubahan politik di Algeria dan Turki yang menyaksikan pembabitan gerakan-gerakan Islam seperti FIS dan Parti Refah dalam kancah politik demokrasi. Bab yang ketiga menyaksikan penulis cuba melebarkan perbincangan mengenai Islam dan demokrasi dalam konteks politik Islam di Malaysia dengan memfokuskan kepada penglibatan Parti Islam SeMalaysia (PAS) dalam politik demokrasi peringkat nasional. Dalam bab yang keempat pula, penulis memfokuskan perbincangan mengenai PAS dengan menyorot perkembangan dan prestasi parti tersebut di Kelantan yang dikuasainya sejak tahun 1990.

Manakala dalam bab kelima pula, penulis cuba menghuraikan dengan lebih lanjut mengenai peranan PAS dan konsep politik bangkangan di Malaysia. Apa yang menarik dalam buku ini ialah di dalam bab akhir, penulis membincangkan mengenai cabaran politik dunia Islam. Umat Islam berada dalam keadaan dilema samada untuk mengamalkan sistem politik Islam secara total, atau mengamalkan sistem demokrasi, atau cuba menggabungkan kedua-dua sistem tersebut. Semua persoalan ini jelasnya menuntut kebijaksanaan umat Islam termasuk para pemimpin politik, sarjana dan ilmuwan Islam dalam mencari jalan yang terbaik bagi memastikan 'survival' politik dunia Islam berterusan tanpa sebarang ancaman daripada Barat.

Secara umumnya, buku ini telah berjaya mengupas dengan panjang lebar mengenai peranan PAS sebagai sebuah parti politik dalam konteks politik Islam di Malaysia. Namun demikian, beberapa perkara yang sering menjadi pertanyaan bagi pengkaji politik Islam di Malaysia mengenai pengaruh luar, khasnya fahaman Syiah, dalam PAS masih agak kabur dan belum terjawab. Di samping isu ini, perbincangan mengenai bagaimanakah PAS dapat menjadi sebuah parti pembangkang yang konstruktif agak kurang jelas.

Walau bagaimanapun, buku ini sangat sesuai bagi para pembaca dan pengkaji yang berminat untuk mengetahui dengan mendalam mengenai hubungan antara Islam dan demokrasi khasnya dalam konteks politik Islam di Malaysia. Buku ini dapat dijadikan sebagai asas dalam memahami sejarah dan perkembangan politik Islam di Malaysia

khasnya yang membabitkan peranan PAS sebagai sebuah parti politik pembangkang di Malaysia.

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