

consequences; the separatist challenges in Aceh and Irian Jaya; and ethnic and religious violence in Eastern and Central Indonesia and in Kalimantan; the changes within the Indonesian military since the fall of Soeharto; and the challenges of decentralization. There is also a useful chapter on the Muslim separatist movements in the Philippines and Thailand. The value of much of this writing is unaffected by the events since 11 September 2001. The authors must be commended for putting so much useful information and analysis into so few pages.

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***Malaysia: Mahathirism, Hegemony and the New Opposition.* By John Hilley.** London & New York: Zed Books, 2001. 305pp.

John Hilley's book on Mahathir and the Malaysian leader's construction of a number of hegemonic identities in the course of his leadership of the country and the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) is a theoretically sophisticated and articulate rendition of Malaysian politics in the last two decades from a Gramscian perspective. The book is thoughtful, meticulously researched, and coherently delivered.

Divided into nine chapters and an appendix that clarifies the Gramscian terms used, the book takes the reader through the various forces that shaped Mahathir's early thinking on Malay motivations and inadequacies, including the early challenges that he had posed to Tunku Abdul Rahman (Malaysia's first prime minister) and UMNO. It then traces how Mahathir assumed political power in 1981 and set about the task of fashioning an all-inclusive Gramscian-styled hegemony that covered the political, ideological, and economic spheres. There is also a sophisticated treatment of what social forces and agencies were utilized to shape this hegemonic discourse and the challenges that the hegemony faced.

Mahathir's early motivations and vision are described as a "... reformist, growth-driven agenda conducive to modern Islamic thinking; one that would give impetus to bumiputera competitiveness and lift Malays out of their 'dependent' socio-economic condition" (p.50). The very early engines of *bumiputera* economic upliftment that had obtained from the New Economic Policy (NEP) "... was now being constrained by the reluctance of Malays and Malay capital to compete in a more open-market environment" (p.50). In response to this ethnic

malaise, Mahathir utilized state capital and appropriated non-Malay capital as well to fashion a policy of rapid state-led growth (p. 51).

The new strategy of state-led growth, however, led to a number of contradictions. The first contradiction was to decouple Malay vested interests and the subsidy mentality from modernity and industrialization. This process involved a denial of all Malay economic advances that had been achieved till then. Additionally, this decoupling had to accommodate the significant Malay rural voters who depended on the NEP infrastructure (p. 58). Accordingly, beginning from 1990, when the National Development Policy (NDP) was implemented, "... a more assertive language was emerging, giving cautionary notice of a scaled-down system of Malay privileges" (p. 58). The new language and mission also allowed Mahathir to appropriate control and disbursement of resources away from the NEP architecture to the corporate sector and state agencies. As a result, UMNO became more directly involved in entrepreneurial activities and acquired greater access to resources and their distribution. This new configuration wedded the Malay political élite to the state purse.

The Asian financial crisis of 1997 threatened Mahathir's hegemony in its entirety. Challenges appeared at the ideological level both at home and abroad. International institutionalist prescriptions of the sort administered by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank would have challenged Mahathir's model of involving politics with economics and using precious state resources to bail out ailing and debt-ridden firms, directly dismantling the hegemony that had been painstakingly engineered. Hence, the Indonesian and Thai decisions were clearly untenable in the Malaysian case. Additionally, the international financial community appeared to have a staunch local supporter who was part of the Mahathir power élite: Anwar Ibrahim. Hence, Hilley concludes that Mahathir made the bold decision to uphold his domestic political hegemony by imposing capital controls, detaining Anwar on a variety of charges, and pruning the mass media that appeared to be in support of Anwar. The hegemony that had been carefully constructed by neutralizing alternative centres of power in the judiciary and the Conference of Rulers, which had earlier been taken to task, was simply too valuable to surrender. The strategy of destroying the new challenge was, however, not without its own contradictions. While lambasting Western financial institutions and George Soros, Mahathir conveniently ignored Bank Negara's role in widespread currency speculation (p. 68). Similarly, in moving against Anwar, Mahathir invoked the analogy of the revolution devouring its own children, an act that would in turn weaken the hegemonic construct by alienating loyal supporters and making important domestic institutions

like the judiciary and the police force lose considerable respect and legitimacy. This loss of credibility was most aptly illustrated when the state had to re-enact the arms heist of the Al Ma'unah Islamic deviationist group in 2001 to lay to rest widespread rumours that the entire episode had been engineered by the state to stage a crisis.

Hilley also carefully reconstructs how the Anwar affair changed the political landscape in Malaysia and allowed Parti Islam SeMalaysia (PAS) and the Democratic Action Party (DAP) to capitalize on a unique window of opportunity to unseat UMNO and the Barisan Nasional (National Front) coalition government. However, it would appear that the philosophical motivations of both parties are sufficiently divergent for the opportunity to be squandered. Mahathir's ability to locate the new hegemonic discourse within an admixture of developmentalism, consumerism, and a more inclusive national culture in the NDP also proved useful in deflecting challenges to the hegemony in the 1990s. Although Hilley acknowledges that broad-based populist agendas that have the potential to dismantle Mahathir's hegemony are difficult to construct, given local idiosyncratic conditions, he correctly notes that the Anwar affair has indeed challenged Mahathir's hegemony and led to higher levels of political and social consciousness.

The last chapter identifies a number of stages that Mahathir's constructed hegemony has undergone. These include an "Early Mahathirism" from 1981 to 1985, described as a "project striving to negotiate the tensions between Malay nationalism and economic developmentalism" (p. 254). "Mid-Mahathirism", spanning the period from 1985 to 1990, is described as the building of a neo-liberal corporate consensus through deregulation and privatization (p. 255). "Late Mahathirism" from 1991 to 1996 is identified as the construction of a more inclusive concept of nationalism. And finally, "Crisis Mahathirism" is identified as the period from 1997 to 2000 and said to involve recourse to emergency economic measures and the utilization of coercive instruments to contain the "organic crisis of hegemony" (p. 256).

From 2000, a period that Hilley describes as the "New Political Landscape", the state can be expected to employ more coercive strategies to retain hegemony. The recent ban on *ceramah* (rallies) held by PAS, and the ensuing confrontations between the police and PAS in Kedah, are presumably indicative of this approach. Hence, it is arguable that Hilley's construct provides a useful landscape to understand recent developments in Malaysian domestic politics. Nonetheless, it is conceivable that the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, the ensuing multilateral crackdown on radical Islam, the discovery of terrorist cells in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore, and the

detention of Nik Adli (the son of Kelantan Chief Minister Nik Aziz) for having trained in Afghanistan and subscribing to militant Islam could well weaken the counter-hegemonic discourse of PAS. In this regard, UMNO can be expected to capitalize on recent developments and project itself as the vanguard of a liberal and tolerant variety of Islam that is more suited for practice in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious state.

Whereas Hilley's book is a major contribution to the recent scholarship on Malaysia, especially from a left-of-centre perspective, one wonders whether the hegemonic construct that he attributes to Mahathir's conscious construction is entirely a conscious and self-directed effort. Moreover, even if it is, whether his successor, if such an individual does indeed exist, will be able to retain and exercise the construct. In other words, is Mahathir's person interactive with the existence of Gramscian-styled hegemony?

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***Self-Determination in East Timor: The United Nations, the Ballot, and International Intervention.* By Ian Martin.** London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001. 171pp.

Ian Martin, former Special Representative of the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General for the East Timor Popular Consultation and former head of the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET), is the first UN senior staff member to publish his "account of events and own analysis of them" (p. 13). (Jamsheed Marker, former Personal Representative of the UN Secretary-General for East Timor, will probably be the next.) This book begins with a brief background description of the East Timor question, in particular between Indonesia's regime change in May 1998 and the signing of the 5 May 1999 New York agreements, which set the conditions for the Popular Consultation in East Timor. Martin describes how the dynamics of the negotiations evolved during that period, particularly the 27 January 1999 announcement when Indonesia caught Portugal — and probably everybody else — by surprise, when President Habibie stated that he was prepared to accept the independence of East Timor if the special autonomy proposal was rejected. Martin points out that when the Indonesian Government announced that it was prepared to accept the territory's independence,