

The End of Empire and the Making of Malaya

Modern Malaya was born in a period of war, insurrection and monumental social upheaval. This study is the first of its kind, and it examines the achievement of independence in 1957, not primarily through the struggle between Imperial Britain and nationalist elites, but through the internal struggles that late colonial rule fostered at all levels of Malayan society. In this unique study, Dr Harper argues that the late colonial state was a pivotal force in Malaya after the Second World War, particularly in British attempts to mould Malaya's plural society into a viable nation-state. Through new research on the Malayan Emergency, social policy and rural development, and urbanisation and popular culture, this study charts the responses of Malaya's communities to more intrusive forms of government and to rapid social change. Dr Harper emphasises the conflicting visions of independence which emerged in this period, and suggests that although the experiments of late colonialism were frustrated, they left an enduring legacy for the politics of independent Malaya. Thus this book sheds new light on the dynamics of nationalism, ethnicity and state-building in modern Southeast Asia.

T. N. HARPER is a Fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge and is a University Lecturer in History. He has written for many publications including *Modern Asian Studies*, *Southeast Asian Affairs* and the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*.

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T. N. HARPER



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'And he felt, through the brandy, that this was perhaps the only country in the world
for any man who cared about history.'

Anthony Burgess, *Beds in the East*.