

**Dr M's memoirs - a need for appraisal**  
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According to Dr Mahathir his memoir is selling well. This is not surprising. Rarely, if ever, has a work presented an analysis of the varied and complex range of selected topics in the political economy of Malaysia giving details of questions, issues and answers in a reader-friendly manner

But the author concedes that writing it was an "ordeal" because it meant mostly writing about oneself. Accordingly, the memoirs would most certainly have had a more profound impact if the 'yeast' of the material had been presented within specific frames of reference, that theorise, give context, and add overarching perspectives beginning with the title itself and followed through in the respective chapters.

Therefore, it seems that a review of the memoirs encompassing these dimensions might be timely. An attempt to put forward the main theoretical frameworks would make it possible, for instance, to try to link the thread in the respective chapters, and thereby develop the practical application of the theories, in a better and more coherent understanding of the author's contribution in moving the nation forward.

Such a presentation will create the necessity of selecting certain chapters which would set the stage for a detailed analysis of the review material while reference to the other chapters will then fit in like pieces in a jigsaw puzzle and fall into place, in the overall picture.

The selected book chapters could be appraised against the background of broad international and national structural development theories that shaped the social history of the Malaysian multiethnic society, and could specifically focus on how and why the author came to make the kind of contribution he made, towards the deconstructing and reconstructing of the nation state

Within this framework, because of the pivotal and important need for reliance on acceptable methodology for comparability and reliability in the analysis, reference might also be made to the work of other Malaysians in this area that has received documentary recognition for theory building at both the national and international levels

The entire appraisal could therefore, for instance, encompass the following theoretical frameworks, perspectives and contexts.

1. Feudalism
2. Imperialism, colonial capitalism
3. Becoming prime minister (Dr Mahathir was not born great neither did he achieve greatness but had "greatness thrust upon him").
4. He was the "doctor on "perpetual call"- not simply "in the house"
5. "All power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely" becomes endemic.
6. The story of the malays
7. The malay dilemma
8. Frustrations in being second in command
9. looking east
10. The malaysianisation of companies
11. Introducing privatisation

12. The multimedia super corridor
13. Petronas twin towers
14. Education
15. The emergency.
16. Legacy and new dilemmas

Because the appraisal will be directly a sequel to Dr Mahathir's memoirs, perhaps MPH will consider going the extra mile to commission a writer to undertake such an appraisal that I believe will be welcomed by all Malaysians in making the memoirs more meaningful.

I feel certain that Dr Mahathir himself would gladly welcome such a move since it would further add to the "thunder and lightning" impact of his memoirs and will accordingly kindly give the appraisal YAB's blessings.

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