

first time in history, they have been able to choose whether to become mothers. This freedom, together with the contemporary transitions in women's understanding of their role in the world of work, creates great potential for redefining womanhood.

In response to that potential, many of Hammer's subjects are trying to construct a new style of mothering, one in which their own needs are recognized and their daughter's identities are valued as well. In the separation of their own power as mothers from their power as persons, they are overcoming the need earlier female achievers had to be male identified.

Competition and confrontation dominate the chapter discussing adolescence, but the promise of a reconciliation is clear: "... all I can do is to set an example and be my own person, and then she must choose whatever she wants to be" (160). While less intense and personal than the more recent *My Mother, My Self* (Nancy Friday) and *Of Women Born* (Adriene Rich), this examination of mother-daughter bonding is an important contribution to knowledge in this historically neglected area. The major remaining weakness in the literature is the absence of multicultural materials pertaining to the subject.

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**Wan Hashim. *Race Relations in Malaysia*. Asian Studies Series. (Exeter, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc., 1983) xviii, 127 pp., \$4.95.**

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The book encompasses more than race relations as it is concerned with the historical development and interrelationship between race relations and the formation of the nation of Malaysia. By viewing political activity in Malaysia from an historical perspective, the author brings into sharper focus the cleavage between Malays and non-Malays caused by the manipulation of politics, economics, and ethnicity by the colonial power, Britain, during the seventy-year period between the early 1900s

and early 1970s. He sees it as a "politicization of ethnic differences" for the purpose of achieving wealth and influence. This is an emotional issue for a Malaysian, so it is to the author's credit that he has been able to explore it in an objective manner.

Until the advent of British domination, Malaysia had been able to assimilate immigrants with seemingly little difficulty. This was soon to change as the British saw Malaysia as a source of raw materials, mainly rubber and tin, and as a market for finished goods. The Malays resisted exploitation by the British and British attempts to encourage Indonesian migration proved unsuccessful as Indonesians were easily assimilated into the culture. The British solution was to import, without limitation, Chinese and Indian laborers who were not easily assimilated and thus pressured into forming their own ethnic communities for support and protection. The British had created the classic "divide and conquer" situation, pitting one group against another. This plus other strategies developed for the political and economic domination of a people are amply illustrated. The power of the Malay sultans and elite were supported while the Chinese dominated commercial activities. Non-Malays controlled urban areas and the Malays who dominated the rural areas exerted little influence; they were strangers in their own land. Thus, a pluralistic society had been artificially created.

The rise of nationalism with its concern to throw off colonial powers and then foreign domination during the Japanese occupation drew the various ethnic groups into a tenuous alliance, and their differences were subordinated for the common good. After independence, the elimination of the external threat released old racial feelings and created friction among the groups. This resulted in the race riots of 1969. Malaysia has since had to struggle with solutions to the problem of ethnic pluralism.

The government has launched a program to address this issue and create a Malaysian solution. It is worth looking at the discussion and possible solutions to see if they hold any suggestions for ethnic pluralism that is being discussed in the United States today.

Major shortcomings are that the book encompasses too broad an area in a limited number of pages, providing a broad overview but limited depth. And it seems to be geared toward students of political science, sociology, and history rather than the general reader, although reaching the lay reader was one of its goals.

At times the text is enmeshed with sociological and political concepts and terminology and some sections are filled mainly with dates and names. Charts and tables might have proven helpful at this point to provide an overview of people and events within a specific time frame.

These shortcomings can be overlooked, however, when compared with the clarity with which the author is able to interweave the intricacies of politics, economics and ethnicity to illustrate how a colonial power was able to dominate the country of Malaysia. To attempt to cover a seventy-

year period of race relations in Malaysia in 111 pages is a monumental task, but one which the author has carried off with at least a measure of success.

There are extensive footnotes and references, a Subject Index, and a Name Index, but there is a total lack of maps or charts which would have been helpful to provide an understanding of the location and an overview of people and events. Everything considered, this is a book worth reading, especially for anyone unfamiliar with Malaysia and its history and who needs a concise and comprehensive overview.

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**Jamake Highwater. *The Sun, He Dies.* (New York: The New American Library, Inc., 1980) 212 pp., \$2.95.**

How do we ever own our history? How do we ever come to grips with our fairy tales of that history? How do we ever rationalize genocide? *The Sun, He Dies* makes us ask. Aztec Mexico is presented with its intricacies and intrigues, dreams and realities in this fictional piece based on folk history and historical documents. Nanuatzin, the "woodcutter," is the invented character who ties the events together and presents this alternative view of history that we must face. In the "Afterward and Notes on Sources," Highwater states, "History is always the account of events as seen and preserved by the dominant culture . . . *The Sun, He Dies* is an alternative vision of the same history." It is a painful vision from two standpoints: one, to own the *greed*, not *grace*, which prompted Cortes, and two, to examine the conflicting personal state of Montezuma and his impact on Aztec life and history.

In the first case, the fairytale history, as we have read it in standard texts, generally views the spread of Christianity in a positive and portentous manner. The "heathens" are redeemed and live "happily ever after." In reality, as this work suggests, the disease, destruction and death of a people is a more accurate version of events. The book graphically portrays the mass slaughter of the Aztecs and the single mindedness for gold which overrode all sensibility and humaneness of the conquerors.

They fell flat on their bellies and they  
embraced the gold as if it were a woman.  
They made love to the heaping treasure.