

ULASAN BUKU/BOOK REVIEW

Johor, 1855-1917: Pentadbiran dan Perkembangannya, oleh Ahmad Fawzi Basri, (*Fajar Bakti: Kuala Lumpur, 1988*). Lampiran, bibliografi dan index, 200 pp.

Antara negeri-negeri Melayu pada akhir abad ke-19, hanya negeri Johor sahaja yang mempunyai perlembagaan yang bertulis. Pada tahun 1911 negeri Trengganu juga ingin mempertahankan kemerdekaannya dan melarang campur tangan Inggeris dan dengan tujuan itu telah memperkenalkan suatu perlembagaan yang telah disadur atas perlembagaan Johor. Siapakan yang bertanggungjawab bagi pengenalan perlembagaan Johor pada tahun 1895? Fawzi Basri dalam bukunya hanya merujuk kepada keterangan yang diberikan oleh Dr. Eunice Thio bahawa Sultan Abu Bakar telah mengisytiharkan "Undang-Undang Tubuh Kerajaan Johor 1895" itu atas nasihat setiausaha peribadinya, Datuk Seri Amar Diraja Abdul Rahman Andak.¹ Tetapi mengikut ahli sejarah, Buyong Adil, pada 14 April 1895 (Eunice Thio menyebutkan tahun 1894, tetapi ini kurang tepat), Sultan Abu Bakar dalam suatu istiadat di Johor Baharu telah menandatangani dan mengisytiharkan perlembagaan Johor itu "yang telah disediakan oleh Jemaah Menteri-menteri baginda yang dibantu oleh syarikat peguam di Singapura yang bernama Rodyk dan Davidson."²

Apakah sebabnya negeri Johor telah dapat mencapai taraf berperlembagaan ini tanpa Penasihat Inggeris yang hanya dilantik pada tahun 1910 (tetapi tidak bertugas seperti Residen Inggeris di Negeri-Negeri Melayu Bersekutu sehingga tahun 1914)? Perkembangan penting ini jarang disentuh dalam buku-buku sejarah Malaysia. Tetapi bagi pertama kali dalam bukunya Fawzi Basri telah memberikan tumpuan besar kepada persoalan ini. Beberapa halaman telah dimuatkan oleh Fawzi Basri dengan petikan demi petikan daripada perlembagaan Johor itu. Usahanya harus dipuji. Kita patut mengetahui usaha-usaha negeri Johor merintis tahap-tahap perkembangan politik ke arah perlembagaan. Saya hanya menyesali bahawa analisa dan perbincangannya atas tajuk ini di beberapa bahagian tidaklah begitu memadai seperti diharapkan.

Misalnya, Fawzi Basri tidak memberikan tafsiran atas persoalan mengapa "Undang-Undang Tubuh Kerajaan Johor 1895" diperkenalkan. Ini adalah perkara penting, dan saya akan cuba membuat suatu tafsiran. Pada pendapat saya, pengaruh Datuk Seri Amar Diraja Abdul Rahman atas Sultan Abu Bakar memang tidak dapat dinafikan, tetapi saya percaya seorang lain juga mempunyai pengaruh atasnya - iaitu, C.B. Buckley, seorang peguam Inggeris yang dikenali sebagai "Penasihat Am Kerajaan, Hakim dan Pengadil Besar bagi Mahkamah Besar" (Fawzi Basri, m.s. 98). Mengikut Eunice Thio, Buckley juga telah dilantik oleh Sultan Abu Bakar sebagai Ahli Kehormat Mesyuarat Kerajaan. Dari Januari 1904 ia memegang jawatan "Penasihat Am dan Kewangan kepada

Kerajaan Johor". Oleh kerana pegawai-pegawai Inggeris telah mendesak kerajaan Johor melantik seorang agen Inggeris atau memasuki persekutuan Negeri-Negeri Melayu Bersekutu (yang akan dibentuk pada 1896), maka beberapa orang Menteri Johor telah menyedari bahawa mereka harus bertindak untuk menghalang Inggeris menggunakan paksaan atas Sultan Abu Bakar untuk menyerahkan negeri Johor kepada mereka.

Oleh itu, pada tahun 1895 perlembagaan "Undang-Undang Tubuh Kerajaan Johor 1895" telah diperkenalkan. Antara 64 Fasal dalam perlembagaan Fasal 15 adalah paling penting kerana melarang Sultan Johor menyerahkan negeri kepada "sebarang kerajaan atau kuasa bangsa Eropah":

Raja tiada sekali-sekali boleh menyerahkan atau berbuat sebarang perjanjian atau ikhtiar hendak menyerahkan akan negeri atau sesuatu bahagian daripada negeri dan kerajaan Johor itu kepada sebarang kerajaan atau kuasa bangsa Eropah atau sebarang lain kerajaan atau bangsa sama ada oleh kerana pada fikirannya susah atau keberatan padanya menjadi Raja atau oleh kerana tiada suka dia memerintah atau oleh kerana hendak mendapat mengambil dan menerima sebarang bayaran atau pencek daripada bangsa atau kerajaan lain....

Walaupun ahli sejarah Buyong Adil tidak menerangkan siapa yang mempengaruhi Sultan Abu Bakar dan Jemaah Menteri untuk membuat perlembagaan Johor 1895, namun saya bersetuju Datuk Seri Amar Diraja Abdul Rahman telah memainkan peranan besar, tetapi dalam hal ini kemungkinan besar juga ia mendapat sokongan dan nasihat daripada Buckley.

Buckleylah yang muncul sekali lagi sebagai orang berpengaruh apabila tambahan dibuat untuk perlembagaan pada tahun 1908. Dalam bukunya *Sejarah Johor*, (m.s. 317), Buyong Adil memberikan gambaran yang berikut:

Dalam bulan April (1908) pula, mengikut syor C.B. Buckley, yang telah dilantik oleh Sultan Ibrahim (anak Sultan Abu Bakar) menjadi penasihat peribadi baginda kerajaan Johor juga, dengan persetujuan ahli-ahli Majlis Mesyuarat Kerajaan dan telah diperkenankan oleh Sultan Ibrahim, beberapa tambahan telah dimasukkan dalam Undang-Undang tubuh Kerajaan Negeri Johor untuk menyesuaikan perkembangan di negeri itu dengan aliran zaman. Dalam pada itu, nampaknya, dari semasa ke semasa, beberapa tambahan lagi telah dimasukkan juga ke dalam Undang-Undang Tubuh Kerajaan itu.

Sungguhpun Fawzi Basri tidak merujuk kepada buku Buyong Adil, namun ia dapat memperkukuhkan gambaran itu dengan memberikan penjelasan berikut mengapa tambahan telah dimasukkan dalam Undang-Undang Tubuh Kerajaan pada tahun 1908:

Mengenai kehakiman di Johor, pegawai-pegawai Inggeris berpendapat *the Sultan regards the whole state, its courts, its gaols and all branches of administration as his private property to be administered for his personal benefit*. (Petikan ini dari Eunice Thio). Bagi mengatasi pendapat tersebut, Mesyuarat Kerajaan yang bersidang pada 22 April 1908 telah membuat tambahan kepada perlembagaan negeri yang melaksanakan konsep *Rule of Law*, dengan itu mahkamah dapat menyempurnakan pentadbiran kehakiman secara teratur.

Tambahan 1908 ini adalah jelasnya bertujuan untuk menyesuaikan sistem perundangan Johor dengan Negeri-Negeri Selat serta Negeri-Negeri Melayu Bersekutu. Ia adalah sangat penting kerana ianya bukan sahaja menegakkan konsep *Rule of Law*, iaitu, Raja dan Kerajaan Johor mesti memerintah mengikut undang-undang tetapi ianya juga menetapkan bahawa Raja tidak boleh memerintah mengikut "kehendak dan kesukaan hatinya", juga Raja mesti menunjukkan "kasih sayang dan timbangan" kepada rakyat dan Raja "hendaklah memelihara agama Islam yang ada itu serta hak-hak dan kemerdekaan-kemerdekaan rakyat-rakyat negeri ingatlah yang Sultan itu telah dilantik atas tempat yang tinggi itu oleh rakyat-rakyat negeri dengan kepercayaan mereka itu yang ia boleh menyempurnakan harapan mereka itu atasnya." (Fasal 4).

Adalah jelas juga bahawa Fasal 4 bermaksud bahawa dengan persetujuan baginda sendiri, Sultan Ibrahim ingin tunduk kepada rakyat dan meletakkan kuasa politik dalam tangan mereka. Matlamat untuk memperkenalkan kedaulatan *Rule of law* adalah untuk menunjukkan Inggeris atau kakitangan Inggeris yang berkhidmat di Johor bahawa mereka dan rakyat Johor akan dilindungi oleh undang-undang seperti dibuat oleh pentadbiran Inggeris di Negeri-negeri Selat. Dengan diberikan pengiktirafan bahawa mereka mempunyai hak-hak dan kebebasan, rakyat Johor telah mencapai suatu kemajuan politik yang belum tercapai oleh rakyat Melayu di negeri-negeri lain. Penawaran oleh Sultan Ibrahim ini menyebabkan suatu "revolusi mental" tercetus di kalangan rakyat Johor. Kesedaran politik ini dapat kita lihat selepas Pendudukan Jepun. Pada bulan Februari tahun 1946 orang Melayu Johor menghadiri suatu mesyuarat Persatuan Melayu Johor dan mengambil keputusan untuk melucutkan Sultan Ibrahim daripada takhta atas sebab baginda telah menyerahkan negeri Johor kepada Sir Harold MacMichael dengan menandatangani Perjanjian Malayan Union. Sultan dituduh melanggar Fasar 15 dalam perlembagaan negeri Johor. Hanya di negeri Johor sahaja orang Melayu telah berbangkit untuk membantah Rajanya dengan suara yang begitu lantang. Secara ironis, Sultan Ibrahimlah Raja Melayu pertama mengiktiraf hak-hak dan kebebasan-kebebasan rakyat Johor.

Saya telah lama menikmati tulisan-tulisan Fawzi Basri dalam bidang Sejarah Malaysia. Ia seorang ahli sejarah yang bersungguh-sungguh mencari dan menggunakan maklumat dari berbagai sumber pribumi yang jarang dijumpa dalam buku-buku sejarah Malaysia dalam Bahasa Inggeris. Ini adalah suatu sifat kekuatannya. Tema buku *Johor: 1855-1917*, iaitu proses perkembangan dan

perubahan dalam pentadbiran, telah dikaji secara kronologi dan deskriptif. Tiga tahap diuraikan: (i) 1855-1917; (ii) 1875-1895 dan (iii) 1895-1917. Ramai tokoh pentadbiran dan peranan mereka ditonjolkan. Maklumat yang disampaikan diambil bukan sahaja daripada rekod-rekod Penasihat Inggeris di Johor, tetapi juga daripada tulisan-tulisan beberapa orang ahli sejarah Johor seperti Mejar Datuk Mohd. Said Sulaiman, Mohammad Haji Alias, Daud Sulaiman, Musa Haji Yusof dan Onn Jaafar. Malangnya, saya tidak dapat jumpa nama Buyong Adil serti Shahrom Hussain, yang mengarang *Tawarikh Johor*, dalam bibliografinya.

Walaupun bagaimanapun, saya mengakui buku ini merupakan suatu sumbangan yang penting bagi persejarah Malaysia. Dengan terbitnya buku ini Fawzi Basri dapat mendedahkan betapa kagumnya pemodenan yang tercapai bagi pentadbiran negeri Johor atas dorongan orang bumiputera sendiri secara berperingkat-peringkat sehingga tahun 1909 apabila sistem berseiring (parallelism) wujud dengan perlantikan Penasihat Inggeris. Walaupun kuasa-kuasa penting meningkat di tangan beberapa orang pegawai Inggeris, pengaruh dan peratus penglibatan pegawai bumiputera dalam pentadbiran. Tetapi kedudukan ini tidaklah dapat dicapai oleh orang bumiputera di Negeri-Negeri Melayu Bersekutu.

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NOTA

¹Lihat Eunice Thio, *British Policy in the Malay Peninsula, 1880-1910*, (University of Malaya Press: Singapore, 1969), m.s.226.

²Haji Buyong Adil, *Sejarah Johor*, (Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka: Kuala Lumpur, 1980) m.s.288-289.

Kerajaan Aceh Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636) by Denys Lombard, Jakarta, Balai Pustaka, 1986, 404 pp.

This work is the integral translation by Winarsih Arifin of a book originally published in French in 1967 by the Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient in Paris. In a long English language summary (40 pages), prepared in 1975 and eventually made available by the Pusat Dokumentasi dan Informasi Aceh, I wrote: "Ideally, Lombard's work should also be... fully translated in Indonesian". Thanks to the Balai Pustaka, it has finally been done: an important analysis of a crucial period in the history of Aceh and, one could add, of Southeast Asia, is now available to readers of Bahasa Indonesia and of Bahasa Malaysia.

Lombard's book represents a brilliant reconstruction, on the one hand, of the geographical, political and economic foundations of the power of Aceh under Iskandar Muda and, on the other, of the limits and drawbacks of this power. It also illustrates how a solid historical study provides a vision extending well beyond the limited temporal and spatial span of its focus: 30 years and a sea-trade empire whose land base was confined to the northern tip of Sumatra.

The book's long introduction contains a review of the literature on Aceh's history. Included are sources in Malay, such as the *Bustanus-Salatin*; in European languages whether Dutch, English, French or Portuguese; and in Chinese. In this survey, which also refers to epigraphical and cartographical sources, the author demonstrates his masterful handling of all these languages. Here, as well as throughout the book, the sources are cited abundantly, in the appropriate script where necessary (for example Chinese or Arabic). Essentially confined to footnotes and to very extensive appendices (150 pages), the author's *apparatus criticus* is impressive while never superfluous. The main text remains eminently readable and so are the very useful maps, diagrams and photographs which illustrate it.

The last part of the introduction is devoted to a summary of the history of Aceh before the 17th century. It is made quite evident that during the course of the 16th century, Aceh was a sea power, with which the Portuguese had to reckon, particularly with regard to the control of trade in the Malacca Straits.

The first chapter focusses on the city of Aceh and on its harbour at the outset of the 17th century. The author shows clearly the urban character of Aceh's population and activities and the weakness of its agricultural hinterland (*masalah pedalaman*) particularly with regard to rice production. Nevertheless, local forest products, silk production and pepper plantations were important. The eventual need for Aceh to extend its control of pepper production to both shores of the Straits, as well as of all trade passing through, meant that it had to devise a maritime policy. It also necessitated, on the part of the Sultan, a solid control of his city whence was based the powerful army and fleet he had to maintain.

Entitled "*Tatatertib dalam Negeri...*", the second chapter analyses how Iskandar Muda achieved this internal control. The Sultan gained access to power and consolidated it by establishing a ruthless hold over the *orang caya* and by extracting a steady revenue for himself. To do so required severe taxation of agricultural products, particularly rice, the local production of which actually increased during his reign, and taxation or confiscation of the riches of his wealthier subjects. It also included various levies exacted from seafarers. Social control was ensured by means of elaborate legislative, administrative and judicial systems. These were sophisticated with, for example, four distinct jurisdictions: civil, criminal, religious and commercial. The latter was particularly crucial, considering Aceh's dependence on external trade.

The third chapter, devoted to an explanation of Aceh's policy of conquest (*politik penaklukan*), is fascinating. After showing Aceh's need of such a policy, Lombard systematically describes the prowess of its military and particularly of its fleet. The use of elephants both as beasts of burden and for defense purposes is impressively described; and so is the Acehnese's special skill at besieging cities (*teknik pengepungan kota*). This is documented with references to various campaigns carried out by Iskandar Muda's troops against the neighboring Malay states.

The fourth chapter deals with the commercial policy and the handling of foreign traders. The Sultan's power relied on monopolistic trade practices, severe taxation of all ships entering the harbour and price control, particularly over pepper. This was rendered possible by the Sultan's imposition of the use of his own currency. Aceh had become an international city, an emporium visited by traders from China, Java, Siam, India, Turkey and Europe.

However, it was not only a commercial center but also a cultural one. In the fifth chapter, perhaps the most original in the book, Lombard carefully documents the flowering of a culture (*berkembangnya suatu kebudayaan*). The actual physical layout of the Sultan's palace is reconstituted. The same is done for the gardens and places of religious importance such as the great mosque, Bait ur-Rahman, a sketch of which, originally drawn in 1637, is reproduced in Lombard's book. The Sultan's palace appears to have been a hub of cultural activities and feasts which awed foreign visitors. More importantly, Aceh was a centre of intensive literary creation as well as of Islamic study.

Following the sixth chapter, which contains an interesting portrait of the personality of Iskandar Muda, Lombard draws a conclusive summary and interpretation of Aceh's past greatness and eventual downfall. The essential point made is that Aceh remained a city dependent on trade and hence on a series of "hinterlands" on which it could never exert full control. Its preeminence in the Southeast Asian region during the reign of Iskandar Muda required an elaborate and sophisticated civil organisation. It is the merit of Lombard's work to have shown convincingly how this structure was achieved. Knowing this, we can better understand the frequent claims for recognition by the Acehnese nation. For at the time of its greatness it owed little to those who have since overshadowed it, while keeping it under scrutiny.

A few years ago, Siegel pointed to the extent of Dutch writing on Aceh, the strength of which "stems from its antagonism to its subject" (Shadow and Sound..., 1979, p. 14). Aceh has been and still is the object of much attention, considering its limited territorial and demographic weight within Indonesia. Such attention can of course be attributed largely to Aceh's history of resistance to outside control, particularly since 1873 when the Dutch began to invade it. If, as Siegel again argues, the Acehnese, without necessarily knowing much

about it, have a great reverence for their glorious past, when their ancestors controlled the Straits of Malacca, they now have better access to a solid source on the subject. Lombard's book provides them as well as others with a scholarly, dispassionate account of one of the most important, often cited yet insufficiently known city state in Southeast Asian history.

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Land Degradation and Society by Piers Blaikie and Harold Brookfield, London and New York: Methuen and Co. Ltd. 1987. xxiv. 296pp. No price listed. University paperback. ISBN 0-416-40150-3.

This volume is a collection of 20 articles focussing on the issue of land degradation, its impact on society and the role of land management in containing the consequences of soil erosion, deforestation, salination and flooding. Consisting of unpublished papers - a rarity nowadays in a collection of compiled work - the book employs the new multi-disciplinary approach of regional political economy to explain why land degradation takes place, why land management succeeds or fails and how social scientists need to understand both social and technical causation in dealing with this important problem.

Much of this volume is of direct interest to scholars of Malaysian studies who have followed with concern the often reckless large-scale development of land in the country and the attendant adverse impact of agriculture, mining, logging, coastal development and other land degrading activities. The early theoretical and methodological chapters, in particular the first which defines the problem of land degradation within a wide historical and geographical framework, provide a useful framework for local scholars to encase their own work, be that in agriculture, geography or developmental studies, as well as a basis for theory construction and generalization.

The use of a historical perspective in the middle chapters of the book in examining land degradation problems in Africa, Asia, the Mediterranean and the Pacific emphasises the importance of lags between causation and consequence, a point not taken into account by most governments which prefer to leave the medium and long term accounting and costs to their successors and future generations of citizens.

Other chapters contain more contemporary but similarly succinct case studies (including one which examines management, enterprise and politics in the development of tropical rain forest lands) showing that, irrespective of their

ideological system, few countries have been able to "act with awareness for the consequences of (their) actions" as even "in states which enjoy government responsible to an electorate free to exercise its majority will, politicians and bureaucracies can often be subverted to act in favour of powerful sectional interests" (p. 248). The conclusion that land degradation is "often encapsulated in a web of surplus-extracting relations ... wherever there is marked inequality" (p. 242) is a sobering reminder to the land managers to whom the book is especially addressed of the need to be more conscious of the economic, political and social conditions under which they work at the same time that they master and apply the techniques of amelioration and control if any headway is to be made with the protection and enhancement of what has been apply described as "the most basic of all resources."

The main authors, Piers Blaikie and Harold Brookfield, are to be congratulated on their enterprise and skill in producing a thoughtful, integrated and finely structured volume, knitting together a highly complex subject of concern in most parts of the world. A further bonus to the reader is the exemplary section on references which runs to more than 30 pages and offers to the newcomer an invaluable guide to the proliferating literature on the subject.

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The Politics of Education: Culture, Power, and Liberation
by Paulo Freire, South Hadley, Mass.: Bergin and Garvey, 1985.

Here speaks a great teacher, a philosopher, an epistemologist and above all a dialectician *par excellence*. The Politics of Education is a collection of Freire's writings over the past years which have been translated with rigour by Donaldo Macedo. Two chapters in the book, *The Adult Literacy Process as Cultural Action for Freedom*, and *Cultural Action and Conscientization*, which were translated by Loretta Slover have been published in 1970 in the *Harvard Educational Review*. However, rereading these chapters will place into perspective the transformation or recreation of Freire's *conscientizacao*. So far, this is the book which tries to present Freire's ideas in clear and concise fashion without compromising for translation phraseology in English. The revolutionary utopia lingers on but the discourse is more convincing. Despite lagged years since the last book in English the momentum is gaining strength, the struggle continues in the terrains of theory and practice or as Freire prefers to call them, action and reflection.

Paulo Freire has been a controversial figure in his home country, Brazil since 1962 and has been attacked by the leftists and rightists. He was detained by the military regime in 1964. Since that period he has lived his life in exile in Chile, United States, Mexico and Europe. He finally returned to Brazil in 1981 to accept a teaching post at the Pontificia Universidade Catolica de Sao Paulo. His years in exile were tumultuous and productive ones when several books were written crystallizing his revolutionary thinking on oppression and domination.

Freire spent his childhood in Recife and Jaboato in the northeast region of Brazil during the Depression of the 1930s. His family was gravely affected by the economic crisis of that time and he often went hungry in his school days. His adolescent days did not improve very much because hunger and poverty hindered his ability to progress educationally. As the economic condition of his family began to improve, by the age of 18 he began to study the philosophy of language on his own. He then taught Portuguese grammar, and later fell in love with teaching, which were to become his preoccupation to this day. He met Elza whom was then his student and got married. Elza has been his life long companion and inspiration in his struggle for human liberation. He recalled:

The first time I came to the States, I came because of Elza, my wife. When I was invited, I said to Elza, I will not go because what can I learn in such an imperialist country? Elza said to me, smiling, "How contradictory you are, and how naive. It is impossible to think that this country is just imperialist. It is impossible for it to be exclusively like this. You have many things to learn there." Immediately she convinced me and I came. Since then, I never stop coming here. I come every year and I always learn something, even if I only learn how difficult it is to learn about this culture! (Freire & Shor, 1987).

According to Prof. Pieter Furter, Paulo Freire "is more of a 'pedagogue' than an educator, in the great utopian tradition of Jean Jacques Rousseau of revolutionizing everything through education." (Furter 1985).

The Politics of Education is a construct of Freire's theory and practice presented in a dialectical posit, but is more readable and easier to comprehend than his earlier books. This is a continuation of his previous pedagogical reverberations with a more concise and clear presentation. His subject is human conscientization, for only with conscientization can one transform the world. Unless we know that we are not free from the culture of domination and are immersed in the culture of silence, we cannot distance our moment of existence. To be a liberated human one must know the exploitative conditions one is in and the power relations at play. To do this one must be engaged in a dialogue. Dialogue is the methodology in denunciation of the dehumanizing conditions and annunciation of the transformation process.

In essence *The Politics of Education* is a compendium of dialogues which requires a critical attitude of the reader. In the first chapter on the act of study, Freire maintains that,

Serious studying of a text calls for an analysis of the study of the one who, through studying, wrote it. It requires an understanding of the sociological-historical conditioning of knowledge. And it requires an investigation of the content under study and of other dimensions of knowledge. Studying is a form of reinventing, recreating, rewriting, and this is a subject's, not an object's, task. In fact, a book reflects its author's confrontation with the world..... To study is not to consume ideas, but to create and recreate them. (pp. 2-4)

According to Freire there is no real illiteracy. Every individual in his or her own right is an intellectual, because he or she is involved in some form of intellectual pursuit in creating human history. Illiteracy is a political problem and an expression of an unjust reality within a society. A person who knows how to read and write may not be politically literate whilst learning to read and write is only a mechanistic skill. To be able to have a dialogue or create and recreate history one needs to be politically literate. Transformative literacy and political literacy can bring about conscientization which then lead to action and reflection or praxis. Freire writes:

From the linguistic point of view, if an illiterate is one who does not know how to read and write, a political illiterate -- regardless of whether she or he knows how to read or write --- is one who has an ingenuous perception of humanity in its relationships with the world. This person has a naive outlook on social reality, which for this one is a give, that is, social reality is a fait accompli rather than something that's still in the making. (p. 103).

In chapters 3 and 4 Freire discussed the role of peasants in relation to the oppressive reality being conditioned by the culture of silence. The banking concept of education reinforces the status quo, where the teacher is merely a depository of knowledge. Education is perceived as a transference of knowledge as oppose to problem posing education which views man as a subject in constant struggle with the world. The focalist vision of reality subscribed to by specialists and technicians have distorted the understanding of totality and, in particular, has ignored the economic reality of peasants. This focalist approach also underrate peasants' aspirations and capacity to transform their historicity. They are devoid of radical struggle for change within the infrastructure and superstructure, thus sinking deeper into the culture of silence and domination. He reiterates:

This culture of silence, generated by the objective conditions of an oppressive reality, not only conditions behavior patterns of peasants while they are living in the infrastructure that produces oppression but also continues to condition behavior well after the infrastructure has been modified. (p. 31).

Agrarian reform and transformation entail cultural action instead of manipulation; "cultural synthesis" in place of "cultural invasion". They all have to start with a dialogue and must be dialectical in nature, for peasants must assume the role of change agents instead of employing alien specialists who will dispatch focalist prescriptions for them to be tools of production.

On humanistic education (chap.9) Freire asserts:

Dehumanization is a concrete expression of a alienation and domination; humanistic education is a utopian project of the dominated and the oppressed. Obviously both imply action by people in social reality -- the first, in the sense of preserving the status quo, the second in a radical transformation of the oppressor's world....(p. 113).

The last section of the *Politics of Education* is entitled "Rethinking Critical Pedagogy: A Dialogue with Paulo Freire". This is very refreshing indeed as this part provides an update on Freire's ideological thought and politics of education. It also epitomizes his earlier chapters in the book with a more witty reflection. Henry Giroux also did an excellent job in the introduction of the book by providing a synopsis of Freire's philosophy and ideology. One needs to read minimally this section to be in dialogue with the author and to critically evaluate and recreate the challenge posed by the book.

I certainly think that this book is an invaluable contribution by an eminent pedagogue and should be read by those who have the slightest inclination of overcoming domination and oppression.

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