Islam, Modernity and Entrepreneurship among the Malays: The role of entrepreneurship in establishing and legitimising Malay identity and representing Malay ideals of morality, egalitarianism, harmony, and tradition in the context of rapid social and economic change is discussed. It is demonstrated that through its seemingly endless incorporative process, the process of material and affective ties in networks, Malay entrepreneurship, to its actors, symbolizes diminished eliteness and Malay classlessness, and impinges openness, shared power, and free access to opportunity. What was learned from the informants can be described as a Malay theory of entrepreneurship, one which foreshadows Malay entrepreneurial success, validates the pro-Malay policies of NEP, and connects Malay development to a global culture of capitalism. Then a theory of Malay entrepreneurship is elucidated. A description is given of the way in which entrepreneurs aspire to wealth and power who are open to the pages of the book. Moreover, it is argued that the theory of Malay entrepreneurship conceals the crucial role of state in creating and supporting high-level, politically influential individuals, closely the group that I then went on to study in later periods of research in Malaysia.

Research among Malay entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurship is, in Malaysia, what NEP intended it to be: a middle-class, even elite, phenomenon. It seems to public at-
tention in the Malay community, the government
honours individuals who are deemed successful entrepreneurs, bestowing titles and honorary positions on them, while mosques and the media report endlessly on the lifestyles and management secrets of Malay entrepreneurs. Hundreds of Malay entrepre-
nearpeoples, who were participating in the modern economy in Kuala Lumpur or at temporary jobs in the capital, are often used as a metaphor for the concept of Malay economic and social elites. The Malay media and social norms are used to express the voices of political
dissent.

The first part of the book, presented under the rubric of ‘Good Works’, argues that among the Malay middle class, entre-
preneurship has become the main vector of economic mod-ernity and entrepreneurship, that is, how they in-
fuse their altruistic image of ‘good works’ into economic and social action. A description is given of the way in which networks and rela-
tionships in the Malay world have been expressed, how the entrepre-
neurs see themselves as members of a particular social group, and how networks have shaped the Malay understanding of enter-
prise in contexts of social and economic change, and follow or react to different intensifications of Islamic practice in Malaysia since the 1980s.

Entrepreneurship, to its actors, symbolizes diminished eliteness and Malay classlessness, and impinges openness, shared power, and free access to opportunity. What was learned from the informants can be described as a Malay theory of entrepreneurship, one which foreshadows Malay entrepreneurial success, validates the pro-Malay policies of NEP, and connects Malay development to a global culture of capitalism. Then a theory of Malay entrepreneurship is elucidated. A description is given of the way in which entrepreneurs aspire to wealth and power who are open to the pages of the book. Moreover, it is argued that the theory of Malay entrepreneurship conceals the crucial role of state in creating and supporting high-level, politically influential individuals, closely the group that I then went on to study in later periods of research in Malaysia.

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