ETHNOHISTORY STUDY ON THE MALAYSIAN SOCIO-CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION IN THE 1990'S MAHATHIR'S LEADERSHIP

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ABSTRACT

This paper traces back the Mahathir's leadership and his influential power in shaping the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1990's, which successfully created the new Malay middle class and social transformation. An ethnohistoric study was conducted to seek information about the new Malay middle class which who live in the new urban environments. Mahathir's leadership is analyzed by understanding historical background and the function of New Economic Policy (NEP) of Malaysia and exploring the new Malay middle class and social transformation. Since the state-led modernization and the emergence of the new Malay middle class in Malaysia are two important factors of the historical process in post May 13 1969, in which the social transformation keeps moving on. This result of this study showed a portrayal of the new Malay middle class; the way of this class to adapt to urban society with Islam values, career preferences, globalization, and reinvente the symbolic idea of "balik kampung/ backhome in Islamic celebration holidays.

Keywords: *ethnohistoric study, leardeship, transformation, Mahathir's government*

INTRODUCTION

Malaysia or formerly known as Malaya, is regarded as one of the most successful examples of a multi-racial society (Mokhtar et. al, 2013:12). An incredible phenomenon of Malaysian development during the Mahathir's tenure (1982 -2003) was inspiring me to write his leadership and its powerful effect of the social economic transformation on the increase of the new Malay middle class. It brought me to keep reading the Malaysian development history from 1980 to the 2005 before the economic crises hit this country in 1997. By finding the correlation between the New Economic Policy (NEP) and the new middle class society together with social transformation in Malaysia, this paper heavily explores a rapid change of the Malaysian society under Mahathir's leadership. While identifying the economic strategic factors which led the modernization in Malaysia during two decades, I would analyze an ethno historical journey of ethnic Malays and Malaysia transformational development since 1990. Importantly, the exploration on the role of the NEP shows the way of creating two things; the new middle class and restructuring of Malaysian society.

In contrast to British colonial in Malaysia (Matondang, 2016) which designed the Malays as peasants in rural areas and only the Chinese who mostly enjoyed the economic benefits, Malaysia under Mahathir boosted the economic power of the Bumiputra (*Sons of the soil*) by providing education facilities and creating public companies as well as promoting modern Islamic values. Malaysia entered the new world by restructuring the social and economic features; moving from rural areas to urban areas and shifting from non-economic oriented to economic one. This paradigm shift is a moderation factor within the NEP and it would be highlighted in this paper. Additionally, here I explore the NEP restructuring programs in which the change of Malaysian social class structure was seen, especially in the new Malay middle class by 1990. The focus of the NEP restructuring society was to promote the poverty eradication and get rid of the economic disparity between the Chinese and the Malays. In relation to the change of the Malaysian middle class after the NEP successfully shifted the Malays from agriculture to industrial oriented, this paper presents the specific identity of the new Malay middle class in urban areas.

The New Economic Policy (NEP) is a Malaysian master policy, and was introduced in 1971 in response to the May 13 1969 riots. The NEP has two aims; to eradicate poverty and to restructure the

Malaysian society. The NEP was embedded to the Second Malaysian Plan (1971-1975). The NEP has a number of programs to be achieved by 1990. Within the NEP's programs we find that the distribution of opportunities based on the ethnic proportion formula; the Bumiputra- Malay and Orang Asli (indigenous people) enjoy 55 percent of opportunities and equity, the Chinese have 30 percent and 10 percent goes to the Indians, as well as 5 percent for the rest. Because the target did not meet the expectation by 1990, the government extended the NEP with a new version 'The National Development Policy (NDP)'. Jawan reveals that "by 1990 only 20 % of NEP target was achieved" and the government kept continuing the economic growth and just distribution (Jawan, 2003:185-186). Although the NDP is the extension of the NEP, but the NDP does not have fixed target as the NEP did.

The New Economic Policy (NEP) and the New Malay Middle Class Society

Apart from negative reactions to the New Economic Policy (NEP) during Mahathir's leadership, actually Malaysia already experienced a miracle economic development from the middle of 1980 until the 1995, before the 1997 Asian Financial crises. The urbanization and migration of the laborers supported a rapid economic and social transformation. Structurally the NEP played a very important role to direct Malaysian Development which resulted in the economic growth and social transformation. Leete (2007: 45) says that "*The New Economic Policy (NEP) became the center pillar of the Malaysia's development planning and the basis for supporting affirmative action development planning*". The government direct intervention in financial and business sectors and the proliferation of public enterprises as the engines for Malaysian economic growth, Malaysia has shown the government within state-led economic model was a vital factor in Malaysian context. In contrast to liberal economic which suggests non-intervention of government, Malaysia has experimented in applying 'in house -style' to encapsulate the Malaysian share ownership in economic and business. If the public enterprises were registered only 10 (ten) in 1957, by the end of 1986 Malaysia owned 841. Gomez (1996: 135-136) categorizes two major groupings of a new structure of Malaysian social economic agents. The first group is Non-Financial Public Enterprises (NEFEs), and the second one is Bumiputra trust agencies. As special privileges of Bumiputra suggested, these public enterprises recruited educated Malays to fill the formations in. The Malays' privilege also gives the Bumiputra biggest quota to get financial aids, licenses, job opportunities and scholarship in tertiary education. Those factors are increasing the number of educated Malays and creating the new middle class from the Bumiputra group from 1980 to 1995.

Defining the New Malay Middle Class Society

Although in Sociology neo-Weber's theory and the works of neo-Marxist have explained the position of the middle class in modern society, but the concept of middle class is complicated and debatable in those approaches. Reading their approaches to analyze the correlation between the new Malay middle class to modern Malaysia, I found it is hard to meet an appropriate definition for the emerging new class in modern Malaysia. Avoiding a great variety of defining middle class among the Western sociologists, this paper sees the new Middle class society as the intermediate class which commonly categorized as *orang bergaya korporat*, *orang Melayu baru* or *orang kaya baru* (new rich) in Malaysian idioms. The educated Malays who work for the national public and private as well as multinational enterprises are addressed as Malay middle class. Or those who are assigned in key positions of enterprises or work as professionals could be categorized as new Malay middle class. They are not peasants as their parents were in the earlier period of post independent Malaysia.

The increase of the new Malay middle class in the modern Malaysia context significantly correlates to the economic design of the government. Quota in Education and public enterprises has already played important role to raise the Bumiputra participation. This system created more educated Malays who could fill the formations in government agencies and corporates. As a result, the Malay middle class rose from 13 percent in 1970 to 28 percent in 1993. It was the government policy which created more Bumiputra in economic sector. The rise of the Malay middle class was the result of the NEP. One of the NEP programs was to change the proportion of population in urban areas. By providing facilities and opportunities to move more the Malays to business centers and urban areas, the Malaysian developments created a number of paths to upward the Malays from lower to middle class. Abdul Rahman Embong characterizes the new Malay middle class as "new occupational positions, namely managers, professionals, and administrators, which were rare in Malaysia society and in Malaysia in

the earlier historical periods, but becoming more common today (Embong, 2002:12)". A number of Malays have been already in move to modern economic oriented professionally because the modern Malaysia developments recruit them to fill the government offices and public corporates as well all multinational enterprises. In 1995, the composition of Malaysia population showed that the Chinese middle class was 54 percent and the Malay group was 36 percent.

Ethnohistoric Study on the new Malay middle class

Regardless to the difficulty of defining the concept of middle class, this part describes the characteristics of the new Malay middle class. The new Malay middle class refers to educated Malays that enjoy upward mobility and lives in new urban areas. Tertiary education graduates who become professionals in Malay society represent the new Malay middle class. Not only occupational position that does show the differences of the new Malay middle class from lower one as their parents had in previous generation, but also the cultural capital accumulation. Skills and technical knowledge as well as managerial experiences are apparent here. To support the new economic model of state-lead modernization of Malaysia, the capabilities of the new Malay middle class are required. This shift shows a progressive picture; as their parents who mostly as peasants who lived in rural, but this new Malay middle class live in cosmopolitan culture.

Parents of the new Malay middle class mostly lived in poverty. The NEP provided a new mental shift from the rural poverty to wealth urban society. As what myth of Malay laziness characterizes, the Malays poverty is related to the unwillingness to change and to adopt modern technology changes. Aziz's (in Hashim, 1997: 43) study on the poverty among the Malays identifies low productivity, exploitation, and neglect as the main factors of Malay poverty. Education and economic oriented were two factors that the NEP offered to change this kind of mentality. A survey on the Malay middle class that was conducted in 1997 by Abdul Rahman Embong reveals that "not only do most members of the new Malay middle class come from humble class backgrounds and large families, but also that their parents had experienced little or no education. In fact, the overwhelming majority (95.2 per cent) was the first-generation college or university graduates (2002:69)".

As the modernization is moving on, the occupations of the Malays change rapidly. Currently in modern Malaysia, professionals and managers are the main occupations of the new Malay middle class. Harold Crouch explains that "the most striking changes have been the rapid growth of urban middle class and the decline in agricultural occupations. By 1990 Malaysia's class profile reflected its new status as advanced middle -income country (1996:181)". The new Malay middle class has changed the old paradigm in which "Malays were predominantly engaged in low paying agricultural and rural occupations, and therefore received below average incomes Hashim, 1997:43)". The new Malay middle class compete to get the positions (professionals and managers) with modern facilities and high incomes. Census in Malaysia uses the social economic status scale to collect the data of the household to classify the Malaysians. Three factors are used in this scale; they are occupations, educational qualifications, and selected objects possessed by the household. Based on census scale, the new Malay middle class already increased significantly. Because Malaysia has the new Malay middle class have incomes ranges from RM 4.000 to RM 10.000 in 2004. Their houses with modern electronic devices and send their children to better schools are indicators of the middle class of the Malay group rising up.

Historically the first generation of Malay middle class experienced a rapid upward social mobility within the NEP programs. Without neglecting the family role, it was showing that education and state financial sponsor operated effectively to increase the new Malaysia middle class since 1990. The movement of class was not easy to be seen in the earlier period of Mahathir. The process of the Malaysian Development in the middle of Mahathir's power to increase the number of Malay middle class was executed intensively. The NEP already was highly influencing the Malays to get skills for industrialization of Malaysia in global context. And the change of class was not directly shown up soon, especially when the economic crises before 1985 made the government in difficulty to create more middle class. The result of the restructure was only clearly seen by 1990.

The new Malay middle class came originally from humble families such as farmers and working class background and then enjoyed upward mobility. As Abdul Rahman Embong's study reveals that only 2 percent of the Malay middle class from capitalist class parents, and 14 percent of old middle class children (2006:159), we could see that the first generation of Malay middle class or Melayu Baru is the outcome of the NEP and exhibiting a collective identity of Malayness. What makes observers worry about the new Malay middle class is their dependency on the government with NEP programs.

The New Malay middle class failed to enter private business. Gomez and Jomo (1997:24-25) criticize the subsidiary mentality of the Malays. By look at the characteristics of the new Malay middle class that might be "a docile, pessimistic, and dependent middle class (Khoo, 2006:14)", we find that they do not creatively work hard, instead of heavily relying on the Mahathir's pro-Malays programs. Abdul Rahman Embong's research which compares the second generation of Malay middle to first one in 2004 shows as follows: the second generation does not too depend on the government for the jobs, add skills to cope with new circumstances, and try not to rely on the tertiary education degrees, instead of joining some trainings (2006 :148-149).

The new Malay middle class in Malaysia does not follow the Western pattern in term of democracy because of government restrictions. Most of the new Malay middle class focuses on maintaining their position as managers in public enterprises. As what Milne and Mauzy argue, the new Malay middle class who enjoys material prosperity tends "to intensify demands for whatever additional benefits can be extracted from government (1999:63)". Khoo (2006) also explains that the new middle class may be embedded with the neo- conservative phenomenon, as he stresses that "It is very plausible that middle class is politically liberal and progressive but socially conservative (Khoo, 2006: 13)".

Career Preferences

At the beginning of Malaysian Development, we find that the educated Malays dominated government offices. Malaysian government decided to increase the numbers of managers and entrepreneurs from the Malays. Soon the Malays' intention was to occupy the higher positions in government services and public enterprises. As Ghosh and M Syukri say that "The Malay labor force was wholly loyal to the state and the authorities (1999:81)". Although the rapid economic growth resulted in the expansion of enterprises in Mahathir's era, the new Malay middle class has not started shifting from government services and public enterprises to the business sector which was already hold by non- Malays groups, mostly the Chinese.

The first generation of the Malay middle class was the result of the NEP target to achieve economic inter-ethnic parity between the Chinese and the Malays. The NEP was to restructure the society by increasing the number of Malaysian middle class from Bumiputra. Government classifies the Malaysian occupations into seven ranks. The Malaysian middle class constitutes of professionals, skilled technicians and managers above the working class. Occupational categories in Malaysia show that the new Malay middle class goes to professional and technical as well as managerial jobs. Being the new Malay middle class who enjoys tertiary education this group tends to be professionals, technicians, administrators and managers. Harold Crouch reports that in 1970 only 33.6 percent of the Malays was categorized as middle class Malaysia and increased into 48.1 percent in 1990 (Crouch, 1996: 184). The NEP provided the educated Malays a path from kampung to urban environment. Industrialization in the state-led modernization of Malaysia brings the Malays into a new middle class or *orang kaya baru*. As a Malaysian researcher says that "with state intervention to enhance Malay wealth a key premise of the NEP, state access became an increasingly important means of such accumulation (Gomez & Jomo, 1997:53)".

As the change of the Malaysia trend, as some studies reveal, the new Malay middle class looks toward urban from rural areas. It brought a change in the career preferences. The change made the new Malay middle class deals with three things needed to find jobs in urban areas. They have tertiary degrees, skills and recognize the way to fill the Malays quotas in government offices and public enterprises. The new Malay middle class ventures job competitions as professionals, and skilled workers with ethics.

Avoiding risk-taking factor in private business, mostly the Malay middle class competes to be managers and professionals under the government favor. For the first generation of Malay middle class, they find it hard to follow the global economic trend and adapt to high technology. They entered the Malays quotas public enterprises. As a result, the Malaysia restructuring did not successfully bring more Malays to private business, instead the new Malay middle class remains depending on the NEP schemes.

Although government made an effort to moving Malaysian economic from agriculture sector to manufacture one, it brought only a few of the Malay middle to be entrepreneurs. Dramatically increase of the new Malay middle class is not because of the growth of Malaysian businessmen of the Malays. The new Malay middle class tends to work in the public enterprises because "Bumiputra interests are in a more commanding position in banks and financial institutions, plantations, and mining, but less so in manufacturing, construction, and commerce (Okposin, Hamid, and Boon, 1999: 61)". It indicated that the individuals Malay ownership was very low (5.8 percent), and Crouch analysis shows that by 1990 only institutional channel Bumiputra such as Amanah Saham Nasional (ASN) which gained 6.3 percent of share ownership. The 75 percent of granted Bumiputra licenses in timber was operated by the non-Malay businessmen (Crouch, 1996:213). The economic growth of Malaysia in 1990 did not bring the Malay middle to entrepreneurship mentality. The new Malay middle failed to be independent. The new Malay middle class still preserves the government intervention to get special privileges as Bumiputra.

Malaysian Social Transformation

Generally people use a basic glance at social transformation in Malaysia by concerning with urbanization and demographic change but ignoring the two push factors of this transformation-education, and economic growth. Structurally, the social transformation of Malaysia as seen in the process of urbanization and changing demography composition, as what Malaysians experienced since 1980, never occurred dramatically without the NEP. Currently changing Malaysian society is backed up by the NEP's target almost reached in 1990. It was already providing education facilities and economic orientation of the Malays. The NEP's target is to create more Bumiputra participate in economic and business sectors by emphasizing the Bumiputra education and economic growth in Malaysia development. It made the new Malays made enjoy enormously benefits.

To create more Bumiputra in urban areas, the NEP focused on the education such as sponsorship to Bumiputra with largest quotas among others and favored Bumiputra to gain economic power. The growth of the new Malay middle as seen in 1990 brought a new social transform in Malaysia. Despite of viewing a major transformation of the Malaysia class structure was because of the rapid economic growth, as what Crouch argues, the education of the Malays changes the structure of Malaysian society. For example, by 1998 the number of Bumiputra students in degree courses had more than double since 1980 to 30,085, while the number of Bumiputra studying overseas had almost trebled to 14,531 (Crouch, 1996: 188.). Shamsul A B (as quoted by Abdul Rahman Embong) argued that the new Malay community has already "undergone a mental revolution and a cultural transformation, leaving behind feudalistic and fatalistic values (2002:179)".

Creating Public Sector and the New Malays middle class in urban areas

From the mid-1980 Malay economic growth was very high (above 9 percent). At the same time government decided to expand the Bumiputra ownership in public enterprises. Together with this glorious economic achievement and the establishment of public banks and agencies with the NEP restructuring requirements, the urbanization because of labor migration to centers of economic growth was sharply increased. Consequently, urbanization changes the composition of ethnic groups in urban areas. The previous pattern -the Chinese predominantly lived in urban areas and the Malays in rural areas since the British colonial has been changed as the social transformation brought an extensively effect. The movement of the Malays to urban areas and the reclassification of rural areas as urban are two important factors which create a new population composition in Malaysia. The data of DOS and EFU (in Leete, 2007) show the increasing of the Bumiputra in urban areas reaches 63 per cent. The Malays in 1957 only 11 per cent who lived in urban areas, but in 2005 the Bumiputra were 54 percent (Leete, 2007: 65).

Malaysian government favored the Malays to shift from rural to urban areas by using the public sector emerged as the provider of opportunities for the Malays. Khoo research reveals that the public sector enlarged the existing corps of Malay entrepreneurs, graduates and professionals. These public enterprises proliferated in number from 656 in 1980 and 1,014 in 1985. By 1992, the number had risen to 1,149. The result of this social engineering was a wide range of the Malay middle-class and a considerable Bumiputera participation rate in the professions (Khoo B Teik, 2005: 10-15).

Executing the NEP's restructuring requirements which set a quota of at least 30 per cent Bumiputera equity participation and employment in companies made the ICA followed government direction. State authorities applied an array of the NEP requirements. With the NEP programs, the public sector accumulated state resources to gain its ownership of assets more. State-owned agencies, banks and funds sought to expand their power in business for the Bumiputera. The new Malays middle class works for state-own enterprises and agencies such Bank Bumiputera, Urban Development Authority, Perbadanan Nasional (Pernas, or National Corporation), Permodalan Nasional Berhad (PNB, or National Equity Corporation), Amanah Saham Nasional (ASN, or National Unit Trust Scheme) and the state economic development corporations.

Restructuring the Son of Soil (*Bumiputra*) social class

The change of social structure was seen in the profile of educated urbanites of the Malay group as the result of the NEP programs to favor the Bumiputra. The government facilitated the Bumiputra with education and recruited them in a great number of public corporates. The change of the social structure was related to the urban higher education, new urban centers and public sector employment opportunities that designed by the government within the NEP programs. The NEP programs had provided scholarship to gain the target of restructuring social class. The class formation with education changed the rural focused into urban one. Industrialization in Malaysia recruited the skilled and educated Bumiputra. After the NEP implementation, it was found that the middle class was increasing from 4.8 percent in 1970 to 11 percent in 2000. That middle class who worked as professionals, technicians, and managers constantly rising.

The social structure was changed because of industrialization, expansion of non-agricultural labor force, and the rise of urbanization. In 1990 the migration of people to urban areas made up the composition of urban population increased. To restructure society, the NEP planned to raise the Bumiputera share of corporate equity from 2.5 per cent in 1970 to 30 per cent in 1990, and to create a Bumiputera Commercial and Industrial Community (BCIC). Urbanization and labor migration has already dramatically changed the structure of Malaysian demography. Malaysian government within the NEP considered restructure the prototypical of British colonial segregated racially in which the Chinese were designed as middle men, compradors, who lived in urban areas. This is the main source of traditional prejudice among ethnic groups. The educational system was reorganized to reflect the NEP's priority of producing greater numbers of Malay graduates. Moreover, UMNO's leadership and officialdom identified poverty with rural Malay poverty. The program to restructure the Malaysia was to create more educated Bumiputra that have special privileges to enter urban areas. The NEP's poverty eradication programs were for educational and financial restructuring as the method to create and to increase the Malay middle class.

The New Malay Middle Class & Urban Environments

Housing here is used as indicator of the change that brought with state -led modernization of Malaysia. Parents of new Malay middle class mostly lived in the semi-concrete wooden houses (rumah kampong), but currently the new Malay middle class live in a great variety of modern houses such as apartment, single-unit bungalow, doubled or single- storey terraced house, and condominium. The new Malay Middle class adopts new lifestyles and some of them become cosmopolitan urbanites. Within urban environment the new Malay middle class usually established communities that reflect new Malays socio-cultural model. The new Malay Middle class shows family and community orientations under the Islam values. The image of Malay Kampong brings them to nostalgia of their childhood. Housing developers in promoting their estates still use words that showing nostalgia to villages such *desa*, *kampung*, and *taman*. Residential areas for urbanites of the new Malay middle class are similar to kampong houses environment (*semacam kampong*) but they are not kampong as

past time had. Hybrid culture which combines modernization real estates with kampong nostalgia brings a new neighborhood.

The Malay middle class is heterogeneous. Only a few of Malays who are in the upper Malay middle class. If the small portion of upper Malay middle class owns two houses, and luxury cars –Mercedes, BMW and Volvo, the biggest one has one house and buys Proton or Toyota. For family entertainments, the new Malay middle class has color televisions, videos, hi-fi and Wi-Fi sets. Not all the new Malay middle class could effort or like to live in modern house; because of family orientation.

Islamic Values in Urban Environments

The domain of Malay culture and Islamic practices in urban environments are important factors within the new Malay middle class community. The integration of Malay tradition within family relation and Muslim social network appeals to the new Malay middle class. Spiritual community and communion networks come up among the new Malay middle class. Internet even reinforces the relation to kin, friends, which provides a sense of identity. Malaysia saw a strong Islamic revivalist movement arose around 1970. The work of Embong shows that the first generation of new Malay middle class becomes more religious. He finds 84.5 per cent of the Malay middle class is moderately religious (Embong, 2006:143). Government considered the Malay language was entrenched as the national language. It was decided as the sole medium of instruction in state schools, and it increased the figures of the Malays in tertiary education. At the same time, the Malay-Islamic culture was admittedly as national culture.

Backhome (*Balik Kampung*) Idealism

Malay values encourage the new Malay middle class to follow the idea that children have duties to their parents. Actually, this idea remains familiar today among the Malays in Southeast Asia. For the Malays, visiting their parents in the fasting month (Ramadan) is a very important part of the celebrations. This is the right time to get their parents forgiveness because of misdeeds feeling during the year. They kiss parents and elderly people hands as a sign of respect. *Balik Kampung* is a new trend among the urban people in Malaysia. The new Malay middle class feels in *Balik Kampung* as one of the important moment to pay the filial obligations. It is so important in Malay values. The symbolic meaning of *Balik Kampung* in *Raya Idul Fitri* (Ramadan) is generally understood as one of real expressions of the filial obligations. “*Balik kampung* is a genuine expression of commitment to family ties and closeness of feelings towards family members (Embong, 2006:139)”. The new middle class of Malays think of special duties—specific kinds of actions, services, and attitudes—that children must provide to their parents. Beside annually *balik kampung*, the Malay middle class from urban areas share with their siblings to care for their elderly parents. They send some money regularly to *kampung*.

CONCLUSION

The Ethnohistory Study model on the Mahathir’s leadership which shaped a new form of Malaysian society; where the new Malay middle class increased in Malaysia since the Mahathir’s government provided education and opportunities (the biggest quota) to the Malays. The quota system to enter tertiary education and public sector is given the son of soil (*Bumiputra*) more opportunities to change Malays class position. With the extension of the NEP programs in NDP version since 1990, the rise of the new Malay middle class occurred. Under Mahathir’s policy, the Malay professionals had reached the NEP’s 30 percent restructuring target by 1995. This impressive gain created the new Malay middle class as we can currently see in urban areas, Malaysia. The living standard of the new Malay middle class has dramatically improved, in 2004 was around RM 4,000. It was improved because since 1990 the Malay GDP was high. Malaysia saw the increase of the new Malay middle class and more the Malays experienced social mobility and they found job opportunities because government offices, public enterprises and National Trust recruited the *Bumiputra* who hold tertiary education degrees or skills. Although the Chinese still dominate the Malay middle class (54 percent) but the number of the new Malay middle class as managers was 36 percent in 1995.

The revival of the Malay culture and Islamic values as national identity appealed to some of the new Malay middle class. They established Muslims community. Many village *Suraus* established were in urban areas. It combines and reshapes the Malayness and modernization. It is a hybrid culture in

Malaysia. It seems the filial obligations were also reinforced as the tendency of the Malayness was showing in the middle class. Filial obligations like sending money to their parents in villages or kampung, and balik kampung are the Malay culture that restored in the urban areas. Nostalgia to the kampung environment rose in the new Malay middle class.

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