



ISMAIL NOOR
MUHAMMAD AZAHAM

THE
MALAYS
PAR EXCELLENCE
... WARTS AND ALL

An Introspection

049
GM

PELANDUK

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Definition of a Malay—the Malay is a practising Muslim, residing in Malaysia, whose roots go back to his ancestors of the Old Malacca Empire and of those who were the sons of the soil in the other parts of the Malay archipelago, stretching as far back in history as 3000BC. The Malay is endowed with a cultural heritage that has made him known throughout as the “gentleman of the world”. The Malay lives in a sanguine environment that is free from the vagaries of the weather and the harshness of natural calamities. The grace that God Almighty has bestowed upon the Malay has moulded him into a person who follows the path of temperance, making him a gentle and considerate person. His attributes and personality are clearly reflected even in the fine art of Malay cultural dance, which is expressed in slow and graceful movements depicting his affinity with the peaceful surroundings. The Malay is also a wonderful and gracious host to his guests, and this has been depicted in the writings of not a few Westerners, at times putting him at a disadvantageous position when dealing with others. But over time, he has also learned to manage his boundaries, be they physical or psychological, well. The modern Malay is suave, savvy, enterprising and values-driven. The globalised world will be his next battleground.