

A new bangsa Melayu
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Azly Rahman

"History is bunk": Henry Ford, American inventor

What if the Malays undergo a conscious and mandated name-change - from Melayu or Malay to Sawojaya? I believe this is possible as a preamble to a suggestion of a planned evolution of the name "Malay".

I think we are at an exciting historical juncture in which human creativity is at its highest point, given the power of the advanced digital communication technologies such as Web 2.0 and the like.

It is time that the Malays are "rebranded" into something less contentious as the name of a race or ethnic group or even a political entity. It would be an exciting idea in postmodern anthropology' - one that will signify a discovery of the grounded theory of the Malay philology. The anthropological challenge might be to erase all the prefixes, affixes, and suffixes of "Malay" in all existing documents that have ever existed about the Bangsa Melayu.

An exercise in rebranding

Why this proposal?

Consider these, within the context of the syntagmatic perspective of history, within the paradigm of the political-economy of change, and the archeology and philology of language analysed within the context of class and the post-modern caste system.

The word "Malay" or "Melayu" in the modern and post-modern times has carried its connotation of "malaise", "withering", "wilting" "backwardness", "paranoia", "disempowerment", and even "laziness".

Me-layu = wilting

Malays = malaise

Mel-ange = range of differences/fragmentation

Malas = lazy

In Malaysia, particularly wherein Malays form a substantial majority and political power is in the hands of a "Malay" party called "United Malays National Organisation", concepts related to the word "Malay" have been hovering to indicate the "malaise-ness" of ideas:

Notions such as *ketuanan Melayu* successfully marketed by the Malay propaganda outfit, Biro Tata Negara (BTN), *kedaulatan Melayu* trumpeted by Malay blind nationalists and ageing sloganeers, and *tak Melayu hilang di dunia* (Malays will never be extinct) vainglorified by one-dimensional historians and inscribers on meaningless statues propped in front of a national museum - all these have been the reason behind the bad publicity the Malays have been getting over the last 500 years.

In fact the founding of Melaka itself has been a historical accident that has catapulted the word Malay into a situation of historical problems and contributed to the feel of the malaise-ness of the Malays.

Politicians no Malay paragons

The biggest culprits in contributing to the malaise have been the Malay politicians.

Of late, there is confusion amongst the Malays themselves as to who is representing who in the struggle to "liberate" the Malays. Many are confused why there is a small segment of the Malays supporting the continuation of the use of the repressive tool of the state, the Internal Security Act.

Many are confused why the Malay linguistic nationalists are insisting that Mathematics and Sciences are taught in the Malay language. Many are even more confused about which Malay political party is actually representing the Malays.

In modern times much has been written about the Malays and what is happening to this ethnic group. Works such as *The Malay Dilemma*, *The Malays: Their problems and their future*, *Revolusi Mental*, *Tuntutan Melayu*, *Quo Vadis Bangsaku*, are amongst those that address the Malay racial and political-economic problems.

Might is right seems to be the notion that governs which political entity or entities will guide the Malays. It is as if the leadership of the Malays has undergone a process of *salah pimpin* (bad leadership) in the process of leading due to the fact that they have undergone *salah tuntut* or wrongly following the philosophy of leading. In the culture of the Malays, *salah tuntut* is a serious matter – entailing a life relegated to following this or that cult that produces deviant teachings.

Institutions and ideologies that have permeated the psyche of the Malays, create misrepresentation, and exacerbate the malaise-ness of the Malays abound. Consider these:

- Biro Tata Negara
- PLKN
- Malay-only institutions
- Malay centric curriculum
- Malay Rights doctrine
- Malay centric notion of a "social contract"
- Malay postmodern bourgeoisie class
- Malay media power that monopolises the indoctrination of the Malay mind
- UMNO or United Malays National Organisation

The Malays are generally considered a people of a dark brownish skin color. In the language it is called "sawo matang" drawn from the kiwi/mango-looking brownish fruit popular in the island of Java.

The word "Jaya" is a Sanskrit word meaning "Victory"; the core idea of The Mahabharata.

The assassin-prince of Melaka, had a name of a Hindu god, Parameswara.

I consider the suffix "Jaya" as a successful idea that can be used in hybridizing the word "Sawo" ("brownish-skin") to replace the word Malay.

Examples abound, especially in the names of places-- symbols installation of the ideology of "victory" : "Cyberjaya", "Putrajaya", "Petaling Jaya", "Subang Jaya", "Kelana Jaya" "Seberang Jaya", "Nusajaya" "Johor Jaya". There is also a Malaysian mall that uses the word "Jaya": Jaya Jusco. There is also a favourite 1980s composition called "Raja Jaya" by the Malaysian percussionist Lewis Pragasam's band Asiabeat Percussion.

A new race is born

In the age of biogenetics, cloning, nanotechnology, embedded journalism, casino-capitalism, stimulus packages, this or that "-nomics" Web 2.0, deconstructionism, and cultures that undergo re-enculturalisations, a name-change of the Malays is necessary. A new identity, a karma, a rebirth, a renaissance, a cure for this linguistic myopia in the form of a construction of a brave new world is necessary.

I hereby call upon the Malays to agree on a name change.

Viva Bangsa Sawojaya!

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