

Visualising Nationhood: Defining National Identity of Malaysia Day Stamps through Semiotic Analysis

Nur Aiza Zainol Abidin*

*Faculty of Art & Design,
Universiti Teknologi MARA,
Malaysia,
Visual Arts & Entertainment,
Universiti Kuala Lumpur Malaysian Institute of Information Technology (UniKL MIIT),
Malaysia
Corresponding author
Email: nuraizaz@gmail.com*

Mastura Mohd Jarit*

*Faculty of Art & Design,
Universiti Teknologi MARA,
Malaysia
Email: mastu841@uitm.edu.my*

Neesa Ameerah Mohamed Salim*

*Faculty of Art & Design,
Universiti Teknologi MARA,
Malaysia
Email: neesa@uitm.edu.my*

Received Date: **01.05.2025**; Accepted Date: **01.08.2025**; Available Online: **29.08.2025**

**These authors contributed equally to this study*

ABSTRACT

Stamps can act as ambassadors or windows for countries, serving as miniature forms of visual communication that effectively convey political ideologies, and cultural narratives. Although postage stamps in Malaysia have significantly shaped the nation's identity since 1957, research on Malaysia's visual culture's significance on Malaysia Day stamps remains limited, highlighting a gap in understanding. This research investigates how Malaysia Day-themed postage stamps, issued from 2013 to 2024, construct and project Malaysian national identity. Malaysia Day, observed annually on 16th September, is of immense significance to Malaysia, marking the establishment of the nation since 1963. Understanding these series of stamps is important for national identity because they are miniature canvases of the nation's evolving self-image. They reveal how Malaysia has visually represented its values, aspirations, and historical narratives. This research employs a semiotic framework, and strategic content analysis, this study examines 24 stamps encompassing eight distinct Malaysia Day themes, sourced from various philatelic archives. The analysis is focusing on visual, and textual components: imagery, colour palettes, symbolism, and typography, to decode the underlying meanings and intended messages. Recurring themes of national unity, cultural diversity, and socio-economic progress are identified, and analysed through semiotic theory analysis. The findings reveal that these stamps are not commemorative artefacts, but as a message in reinforcing government-sanctioned ideologies of multicultural harmony, and national pride. Furthermore, the analysis highlights a gradual shift in

iconography that mirrors the change in the political, and cultural landscape of Malaysia. This research contributes to a more profound understanding of visual culture, semiotics, and nation-building, specifically the role of postage stamps in shaping collective memory, and identity formation. Moreover, it sheds light on how Malaysia leverages visual culture to project a particular image of nationhood both domestically, and internationally.

Keywords: *Malaysia Day, National Identity, Semiotic Analysis, Stamps, Visual Culture*

INTRODUCTION

Postage stamps, often overlooked as mere functional objects, have a remarkable capacity to represent and express national identity. These diminutive artworks, imbued with carefully crafted imagery and symbolism, act as "ambassadors," communicating a nation's history, principles, and aspirations to a global audience (Reid, 1984; Kirman & Jackson, 2000). In Malaysia, postage stamps have significantly influenced and reflected the nation's developing identity since its independence in 1957. Despite existing studies on Malaysia's visual culture and the significance of Malaysian Day, a considerable gap persists in understanding how the design of postage stamps, particularly those commemorating Malaysia Day, has developed to reflect and shape perceptions of Malaysia's national identity. Malaysia celebrates Malaysia Day annually on 16th September, commemorating the nation's founding in 1963. This research explores an unexplored area, employing semiotics as a theoretical framework to examine the visual elements of Malaysia Day stamps issued from 2013 until 2024. Semiotics—the study of signs and symbols provides a comprehensive framework for deciphering the complex meanings embedded in these tiny artefacts. This research conducts a semiotic analysis of Malaysia Day postage stamps, examining their visual components—symbols, emblems, images, and colours—to elucidate the embedded ideologies and their role in the articulation of Malaysian national identity. The research objectives are to identify the constituent semiotic elements and determine their respective significance.

The research objectives are to discover the visual features of national identity in Malaysia Day-themed stamps and to interpret the meanings contained within these stamps. This research conducts a comprehensive examination of Malaysia Day stamps to investigate the following research questions: What visual elements symbolise national identity, and what messages do they convey? This scholarship significantly contributes to the domains of visual culture, design history, and Malaysian studies. This research deepens the understanding of how postal stamps, despite their ostensibly trivial dimensions, function as instruments for conveying national identity and experience.

Malaysia Day

While the nation widely celebrates Malaysia's Independence Day on 31st August, Malaysia Day, observed annually on 16th September, holds equal weight in the nation's historical narrative. This day commemorates the establishment of the Malaysian federation in 1963, when Sabah, Sarawak, and Singapore joined Malaya to form a new nation. Despite Singapore's subsequent separation from Malaysia in 1965, the event continues to be a fundamental aspect of Malaysia's national identity. Malaysia Day is a significant day for Malaysians, honouring the formation of their country and serving as a powerful reminder of the nation's commitment to pluralistic integration. The federation's formation exemplified the vision of a nation where diverse ethnicities, cultures, and religions could coexist harmoniously and strive for collective progress. It is a time for Malaysians to celebrate their unity and diversity and to reflect on the country's progress and contemplate its continued development. The day also serves as a reminder of the importance of peace and cooperation. As Batra (2023) notes, the formation of the Malaysian

Federation was a major achievement, a testament to the commitment of the country's leaders to building a better future for all Malaysians.

The Premier of Sarawak, Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Abang Johari Tun Openg, asserted in his speech at the Malaysia Day 2023 celebration that 16th September should hold equal significance as 31st August, as both dates are intrinsically connected to the nation's existence (Malaysia). Moreover, it is imperative that the celebration of Malaysia Day acts as a reminder to all Malaysians that Malaysia encompasses areas from Kanger to Kuching, including Kota Kinabalu and the eastern region (Buletin TV9, 2023). Professor Dr. Sarjit Singh Gill, an anthropologist from Universiti Putra Malaysia, emphasises the significance of comprehending the narratives of National Day and Malaysia Day for purposes of nation-building. In a special report segment for Buletin Utama TV3, on the eve of National Day 2024, Professor Gill addressed the need to recognise the distinct contexts of major events to cultivate loyalty, patriotism, respect, love, and national pride. Prof. Gill promotes a Malaysian national narrative that acknowledges the historical intricacies of national identity development. Analysing the events of 1957 and 1963 together is crucial for fostering a united, inclusive national identity. He contends that promoting understanding across communities about these historical dynamics is essential for developing a collective sense of belonging and national pride (Buletin TV3, 2024).

In conclusion, Malaysia Day celebrates the birth of a nation based on the principles of unity, diversity, and cooperation, while Independence Day commemorates Malaysia's liberation from colonial rule. Both narratives are essential for understanding the complexities of Malaysian identity, and fostering a shared sense of national pride and purpose.

National Identity

National identity, a complex tapestry of shared values, symbols, and traditions, finds a powerful medium of expression in the often-overlooked postage stamp. As Smith (1991, p. 16–17) argues, nations strive to cultivate social bonds through shared symbols like flags, coinage, anthems, uniforms, monuments, and ceremonies that evoke a sense of belonging, and common heritage. Butler et al. (2012) also define "national identity" as a sense of belonging and shared identity in Malaysia, transcending ethnic or cultural differences and encompassing the feeling of being Malaysian first and foremost. Although national identity is a multifaceted concept, Stupples (2003) suggests that one way to understand it is through the lens of "synthetic memories." Shared visual images or icons, imbued with cultural meaning, foster a sense of belonging or affiliation within a group. These memories can be positive, fostering a sense of unity. Stupples' (2003) concept of "synthetic memories" provides a compelling lens through which to understand the relationship between stamps and national identity. Stamps, often featuring iconic landmarks, historical figures, or cultural motifs, become repositories of these synthetic memories, establishing a national historical construct. Khatijah et al. (2017) highlighted the strategic use of visual language in shaping perceptions of national identity. Similar to national branding, stamps are carefully chosen for their design elements—such as icons, symbolism, colours, and imagery—to project a specific image for both domestic, and international audiences. These visual choices reflect a nation's history, cultures, values, and aspirations, as seen in Malaysia's own stamps, which have evolved to reflect the country's diverse heritage and aspirations for unity. Gusevskaya & Plotnikova (2020) address that a nation's historical contributions play a significant role in shaping one's identity. They argue that a shared understanding and interpretation of past events, achievements, and struggles contribute to a sense of collective belonging and define the nation's character. It also discusses how historical memory, which includes interpretations of historical contributions, can be manipulated or selectively prioritised to serve political agendas and influence national identities.

Reid (1984) aptly describes stamps as "valuable historical artefacts" that shed light on the construction and projection of national identities over time. Farooq (2023) also agrees that the state uses postage stamps to promote particular socio-political ideas, showcase cultural heritage, shape national identity, and commemorate important events. By analysing the visual elements and messages conveyed through stamps, historians can trace the evolution of a nation's self-perception and its relationship with the wider world. The shifting iconography, stylistic changes, and thematic choices on stamps offer a fascinating glimpse into the dynamic nature of national identity itself.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Malaysia Day stamps, which depict a nation's culture, history, values, and achievements, provide a unique perspective on Malaysian national identity. An analysis of commemorative and special issue stamps documents this evolution, preserving this valuable visual history for future generations. Syed Md Najib, Group Chief Executive Officer of Pos Malaysia, stated that stamps are the best medium for educational purposes, especially for the younger generations, as they frequently celebrate significant national events and serve as reminders to uphold heritage and culture (Saadiyah, 2020). By highlighting stamps' role in preserving and promoting national narratives, this research raises public awareness of their cultural significance (Raento, 2009). Despite their small size, postage stamps serve as miniature canvases that imprint and circulate these symbols, acting as powerful reminders of national identity (Reid, 1984). According to Loh (2013), national commemoration, especially National Day stamps, shapes historical narratives and builds a collective memory for the nation and its people. Stamps create a curated history that supports the national narrative by highlighting certain historical events and figures. This research seeks to emphasise the significance of seemingly insignificant detritus in shedding light on specific aspects of historical inquiry. Postage stamps function as cultural texts, providing valuable insights into the mechanism by which nations project and commemorate their self-representation in domestic and international spheres (Loh, 2013). Though small, postage stamps are national symbols with deep meaning and messaging. Thus, this research illuminates how Malaysia strategically uses visual symbols to express its identity and heritage (Kirman & Jackson, 2000).

The evolution of visual symbols in Malaysia Day stamps helps us understand how they shape collective memory and cultural identity (Loh, 2014), highlighting the intersection of art, history, and identity in Malaysian nationhood. This research demonstrates the use of national symbols and icons in both official and popular contexts within Malaysia's philatelic art (Baines, 2023). Digital humanities projects could digitise this research and its findings to make cultural artefacts accessible worldwide and foster cross-cultural understanding. Baines (2023) highlights how visual representations can shape national consciousness and instil a sense of shared identity and belonging. Stamps depict a state's territory, people, history, and identity and have historical value (Brunn, 2023). O'Connor (2019) emphasises the political act of choosing which to be represented on a stamp, shapes the nation's perception both domestically and internationally. Loh (2013) agrees that the iconography of the stamps reflects the government's chosen narrative of the state's history, progress, and values. This research uses Malaysia Day-themed postage stamps (issued between 2013 to 2024) to examine how visual culture, particularly stamp design, shapes national identity. Butler et al. (2012) reinforce this idea by demonstrating how heritage attractions, when promoted effectively, can foster a collective national identity. Stupples (2003) emphasises that visuals actively shape our worldview. Loh (2013) discusses iconography and symbolism in the context of National Day stamps, examining how these visual elements contribute to narratives of nation-building and evolving national identity. In essence, postage stamps offer a fascinating window into the complexities of national identity (Reid, 1984).

This research utilises a semiotic framework to analyse the multifaceted symbolic repertoire embedded within the philatelic corpus, thereby elucidating the communicative strategies employed by the issuing authority. Semiotic, as discipline, provides the theoretical tools for the systematic examination of signs and symbols, and their contextualised interpretation. It is an effective instrument for comprehending the communication process and its underlying significance (Nor Arseha et al., 2023). A semiotic analysis of postage stamps reveals their symbolic meanings. Every element—from historical figures and events to colour palettes and compositional techniques—tells a story about the nation and its values (Farooq, 2023).

While existing research has explored Malaysia's visual culture and the significance of Malaysia Day, a substantial lacuna remains in understanding how the design of postage stamps commemorates this occasion. As Loh (2013) observes, there is a deficiency in academic research concerning commemorative stamps and nation-building, especially in Southeast Asia. This research addresses this gap by focusing on Malaysian stamps. Loh (2013) contends that comparative analyses with other countries, especially those sharing analogous postcolonial experiences, may provide significant insights. Investigating the receipt and interpretation of these stamps by various demographic segments may illuminate the intricacies of national identity creation (Loh, 2013). Farooq (2023) asserts that additional analysis and examination of postal stamps is crucial for a thorough comprehension of a nation's historical and cultural evolution. Examining the depiction of national identities on stamps worldwide may reveal transnational socio-political trends (Farooq, 2023). Analysing its postal stamps may deepen our understanding of Malaysia's historical and current context.

METHODOLOGY

This research employs a semiotic approach to analyse Malaysia Day-themed stamps issued in the 21st century between 2013 to 2024 and investigate how their visuals reflect and shape Malaysia's national identity. Historical, political, and socio-cultural contexts inform the content analysis that interprets the stamps' symbols and meanings. This section outlines the research design, theoretical frameworks, and methodological paradigms. It first details the data collection methods, including the criteria for selecting stamps, archival research procedures, and the compilation of philatelic materials. The analysis uses Ferdinand de Saussure's structuralism approach—the sign (*signe*), signifier (*signifiant*), and signified (*signifié*) (Stawarska, 2015)—to decipher the visual components and symbolic content of the stamps (Farooq, 2023). It can be summarised as follows:

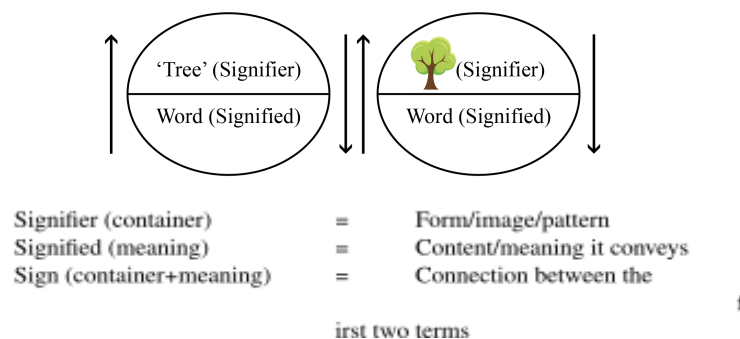


Figure 1. Saussure's presumed intent as illustrated by Stawarska, (2015, p27-28)

Drawing on Raento's (2009) and Loh's (2013) work, this analysis has uncovered how seemingly straightforward imagery conveys intricate messages about national identity. This holistic approach will

illuminate how Malaysia Day stamps have contributed to the construction and evolution of Malaysian national identity and memory. The research will find the hidden messages, ideas, and stories in these stamps by identifying and interpreting the images they contain (Baines, 2023). The following section details the specific steps involved in the framework for analysing research processes from Elo et al. (2014)

Table 1. Research Process

<p>Phase 1 : Data Collection</p>	<p>This phase has examined a selected collection of Malaysia Day-themed stamps, including both commemorative and special editions, from 2013 until 2024. The origins of these stamps were gathered from several resources, including philatelic catalogues, websites, and digital platforms: Myfdc.me, Colnect.com and Stampdata.com, blogs like Stamps A La Carte, and the private collections of stamps collectors but cross-checked with Pos Malaysia philately unit (Raento, 2009). The investigation concentrated on identifying and reviewing the key design features used in these stamps. 24 stamps were selected for this research.</p>
<p>Phase 2: Data Analysis</p>	<p>Visual Identification and Meanings The second stage involves a comprehensive semiotic analysis to identify and interpret the symbols and meanings embedded within the selected stamps. This analysis has drawn upon Saussure's structuralist approach—the connection between the sign, signifier, and the signified. These frameworks provide valuable lenses for understanding how stamps, through seemingly simple imagery, can convey complex messages. Guided by the research questions, which seek to uncover the evolving symbolism and meaning within these stamps, this step aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the visual messages conveyed.</p> <p>Categorisation and Coding Scheme This third stage is developing a coding scheme to categorise the identified symbols and meanings into meaningful themes. The content-analytical approach was both quantitative and qualitative. Attention was directed towards the primary theme of each stamp to attain exclusive categorisation (Raento, 2009). Research questions and objectives guided the coding scheme, which provided a systematic framework in analysing the stamp's visual content. The process involved grouping similar symbols and meanings into broader themes, which enabled a more organized and insightful analysis. The stamps have been rigorously analysed, and the coding scheme has been refined to ensure consistency and accuracy when categorising visual data. Once everything is set, the chosen stamps are carefully examined to make sure they match the established scheme for assigning codes and groups, as illustrated by Nor Arseha et al. (2023).</p> <p>Analytical Analysis The fourth stage of this research entails a rigorous analysis of the visual narratives embedded within the philatelic corpus. This investigation involves a comprehensive examination of the iconography, indexes, and symbols employed in the stamp designs. Utilising Saussure's semiotic frameworks, the analysis elucidated the identified symbols and meanings, revealing the complex levels of visual communication inherent in these miniature works of art.</p>

Phase 3: Findings	The final phase of this research involves interpreting the findings derived from the preceding analytical steps. This interpretation consolidates all the gathered information, including insights gained from examining the meanings and context of the stamps. Based on the main research questions, this stage aims to shed light on the complex meanings hidden in the stamps and how they relate to Malaysian national identity.
--------------------------	---


A structured, semiotic approach is employed to analyse the visual components present in Malaysia Day-themed stamps. The content analysis methodology consists of distinct stages: data collection; visual identification and interpretation of meanings; categorisation and coding schemes; visual analysis of symbols and meanings; and interpretation of findings (Nor Arseha et al., 2023). This comprehensive methodological approach has given us new important information about the visual parts of the stamps, and how they represent and communicate the complicated meanings connected to this national holiday. Notwithstanding the application of historical and cultural contextualization, the interpretive process within semiotics remains subject to inherent subjective variability. While the sample aims to be representative, further research could explore additional themes and interpretations.


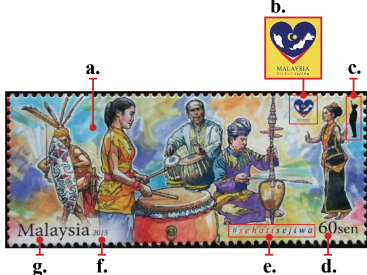


ANALYSIS AND RESULTS





Observed annually on 16th September, Malaysia Day represents a pivotal historical juncture, marking the establishment of the Malaysian Federation in 1963. Subsequently, Pos Malaysia has released commemorative postage and special issue stamps to commemorate this significant national event (Reid, 1984; Akpang, 2015). As of 2024, Pos Malaysia has issued 11 Malaysia Day focused stamp series, with a total of 33 distinctive designs, each distinguished by distinct visual aspects and thematic representations. This research focuses on stamps released from 2013 to 2024, covering eight topics and comprising a total of 24 designs. To look at how these stamps show Malaysian national identity, many important factors must be considered: themes, visual narratives, semiotic elements (signifiers), and interpretations (signified) that are built into each stamp. This detailed visual exploration of Malaysia's national identity as represented on these stamps highlights the importance of semiotic analysis in comprehending stamp design. The table below presents the semiotic analysis performed on the contents of the stamps.



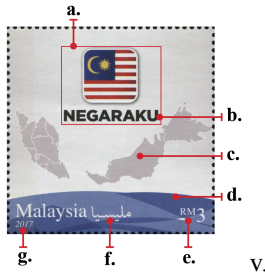
Table 1. Semiotic analysis of Malaysia Day-themed stamps 2013 to 2024





Code reference: S = Size | D = Denomination



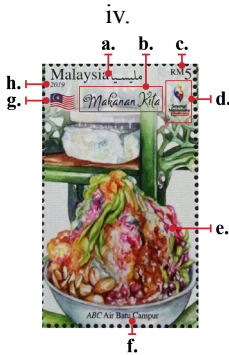


No	Stamp Design	Symbols Category	Semiotic Analysis	
			Visual Components (Signifier)	Visual Narratives Meanings (Signified)
Theme 1: 50 Tahun Malaysia / 50 Years Malaysia Date issue: 16.09.2013 Commemorative				
1	 <p>Figure 2. S: 50x30mm D: 60sen (Source: Colnect.com, 2013)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anniversary• Jubilee• Flag• Map• Historical figure• Typography	Waving Malaysian Flag	Patriotic sentiment
			Map with border lines	14 states borders Malaysia territory/geographical
			Portrait of Tunku Abdul Rahman	The father of independence and the first Prime Minister

			Gold text, map & frame	Golden Jubilee
Theme 2: Hari Malaysia 2015: Malaysia Sehati Sejiwa / Malaysia Day 2015: One Heart One Soul Date issue: 15.09.2015 Special Issue				
2	 <p>Figure 3. S: 30x25mm D: 60sen (Source: Colnect.com, 2015)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Day logo & slogan • Heart • Map • Illustration • Others 	Malaysia <i>Sehati Sejiwa</i> logo #sehatisejiwa Pictogram Yellow background	Showcasing the theme of the 2015 National Day celebration 2015 National Day slogan Silhouette of Tunku Abdul Rahman Essence of the Malaysian flag
3	 <p>Figure 4. S: 60x25mm D: 60sen (Source: Colnect.com, 2015)</p>	a. Traditional/culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costumes • Dance • Music Diversity Art & heritage b. National Day logo & slogan c. Others - Pictogram d. Denomination e. Text/slogan f. Year issued g. Country of origin	Malaysia <i>Sehati Sejiwa</i> logo #sehatisejiwa Orang Ulu - traditional dance. Chinese girl - Chinese drum Indian is playing tabla Malay man is playing rebab Kadazandusun girl - Sumazau Pictogram	2015 National Day theme 2015 National Day slogan A distinct multicultural nation abundant in art and culture – music and dance Silhouette of Tunku Abdul Rahman
4	 <p>Figure 5. S: 30x25mm D: 70sen (Source: Colnect.com, 2015)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Day logo & slogan • Flag • Unity • Others-pictogram 	Malaysia <i>Sehati Sejiwa</i> logo 9 figures (male & female) are carrying a giant flag Coloured <i>Jalur Gemilang</i> Pictogram	2015 National Day theme Spirit of unity and patriotism embodied by all Malaysians Emphasize the visual of flag Silhouette of Tunku Abdul Rahman
5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Day logo & slogan • Diversity • Traditional/culture 	Malaysia <i>Sehati Sejiwa</i> logo #sehatisejiwa Kadazandusun man playing <i>Rampanau</i>	2015 National Day theme 2015 National Day slogan Multi-racial Malaysian in

	<p>Figure 6. S: 60x25mm D: 70sen <i>(Source: Colnect.com, 2015)</i></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costumes • Headgear • Traditional games • Art & heritage • Text/caption • Others 	<p>Man playing <i>gasing uri</i></p> <p>Iban man (at the back)</p> <p>Chinese and Indian girl playing <i>Congkak</i></p> <p>Pictogram</p>	<p>traditional attire representing various traditional games.</p> <p>Silhouette of Tunku Abdul Rahman</p>
6	<p>v. Format: Miniature sheet</p>  <p>Figure 7. S: 70x45mm D: RM3 <i>(Source: Colnect.com, 2015)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart • Flag • Diversity • Unity • Text/caption • Others 	<p>Big red heart shape</p> <p>#sehatisejiwa</p> <p>Pictogram</p> <p><i>Jalur Gemilang</i> in colour</p> <p>Diverse figures waving the <i>Jalur Gemilang</i>,</p>	<p>Emphasized love</p> <p>2015 National Day slogan</p> <p>Silhouette of Tunku Abdul Rahman</p> <p>Emphasize the visual of flag</p> <p>Unity, understanding, togetherness, and collaboration</p>
<p>Theme 3: <i>Negaraku</i> Date issue: 14.09.2017 Special Issue</p>				
7	 <p>Figure 8. D: 50sen <i>(Source: Colnect.com, 2017)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Day logo & slogan • Flag • Diversity • Traditional/ culture • Unity 	<p><i>Negaraku</i> logo</p> <p><i>Jalur Gemilang</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iban • Kadazandusun girl • Indian girl • Malay man • Chinese girl 	<p>2017 National Day theme</p> <p>National identity/Patriotic</p> <p>Diversity and unity</p>
8	<p>ii.</p>  <p>Figure 9. D: 50sen <i>(Source: Colnect.com, 2017)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Day logo & slogan • Flag • Traditional/ culture • Diversity • Unity • Significant figure • Flower • Monument 	<p><i>Negaraku</i> logo</p> <p><i>Jalur Gemilang</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woman wearing <i>pallu</i> • Woman with Chinese fan • Man in wearing <i>baju Melayu</i> and <i>tengkolok</i> <p>Portrait of Tunku Abdul Rahman</p> <p>Silhouette of the National Monument</p>	<p>2017 National Day theme</p> <p>National identity/Patriotism</p> <p>Multi-culture and diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indian woman • Chinese woman • Malay man <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Father of independence • First prime minister • Initiated the formation of Malaysia <p>A monument dedicated to the</p>

				remembrance of fallen heroes
			Hibiscus / <i>Bunga Raya</i>	National flower
9	 <p>iii. Figure 10. D: 60sen <i>(Source: Colnect.com, 2017)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Day logo & slogan • Flag • Traditional/culture • Diversity • Unity • Flower • Art & heritage • Architecture • Typography 	<p><i>Negaraku</i> logo</p> <p>Flag – <i>Jalur Gemilang</i></p> <p>Text - '<i>Negaraku</i>' (my country)</p> <p>Hibiscus</p> <p>• Chinese • Malay • Iban • Chinese girl • Indian girl</p> <p>Background line illustration - mosque, Petronas Twin Tower, <i>Wau Bulan</i>, Lion dance mask</p>	<p>2017 National Day theme</p> <p>National pride/icon</p> <p>2017 National Day slogan</p> <p>National flower</p> <p>Multi-racial and ethnic groups Proud to be Malaysian Coexists in harmony.</p> <p>The abundance of diversity and culture in Malaysia.</p>
10	 <p>iv. Figure 11. D: 60sen <i>(Source: Colnect.com, 2017)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Day logo & slogan • Flag • Diversity • Unity • Townscapes • Architecture • City views • Typography 	<p><i>Negaraku</i> logo</p> <p>Text - '<i>Negaraku</i>'</p> <p>3 figures cycling on the street.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue shirt with songkok • Red shirt • Purple shirt bearing the flag <p>Classic colourful shophouses typically found at Georgetown and Malacca</p> <p>Roadside hawkers – <i>Putu Bambu</i> & fruit/vegetable</p> <p>People watching by the street</p>	<p>2017 National Day theme</p> <p>2017 National Day slogan</p> <p>Multicultural Malaysia society coexists in harmony.</p> <p>Cultural heritage and modern-day accomplishments, socio-economy.</p> <p>Unique everyday culture</p> <p>Participants in the celebration that honours patriotism.</p>
11	 <p>v. Figure 12. Format: Miniature sheet D: RM3/RM6</p>	<p>a. National Day logo & slogan</p> <p>b. Typography</p> <p>c. Map</p> <p>d. Others-Blue wave</p> <p>e. Country of origin</p> <p>f. Year issued</p>	<i>Negaraku</i> logo	2017 National Day theme logo and slogan, translated 'My Country'.
12			Map	The map of Malaysia with 14 state borders. Malaysia territory/geographical

	(Source: Colnect.com, 2017)		Blue wave	Aesthetic decorative element	
Theme 4: Sambutan Hari Malaysia / Malaysia Day Celebration Date issue: 16.09.2018 Special Issue					
13	 i. Figure 13. Format: Se-tenant S: 30x50mm D: 60sen (Source: Colnect.com, 2018)	 ii. Figure 13. Format: Se-tenant S: 30x50mm D: 60sen (Source: Colnect.com, 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Day logo & slogan• Flag• Architecture• Significant figure• Unity• Text/caption• Other-Rubber tree Painting by: Syed Thajudeen Title: Merdeka 2007	Sayangi Malaysiaku logo & slogan	2018 National Day theme
14			Jalur Gemilang	The Malaysian flag	
			Petronas Twin Tower, Seri Perdana Complex	Malaysia's architectural –modernisation	
			Rubber tree	One of the significant agricultural export product (rubber)	
			4 figures with raising hands 2 nd figure in stamp (ii) wearing <i>tengkolok</i>	Tunku Abdul Rahman's iconic gesture. The 2 nd figure is believed to be Tunku himself	
15	 iii. Format: Miniature sheet Figure 14. S: 62x72mm D: RM5 (Source: Colnect.com, 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Day logo & slogan• Flag• Map• Figures• Unity• Text/caption Painting by: Syed Thajudeen Title: Merdeka 2002	Sayangi Malaysiaku logo and slogan	2018 National Day theme	
			Jalur Gemilang	The Malaysian flag	
			3 figures with raising hands	Tunku Abdul Rahman's iconic gesture	
			Map	West and East Malaysia map Malaysia territory/geographical	
Theme 5: Hari Malaysia 2019 / Malaysia Day 2019 – Makanan Kita Date issue: 16.09.2019 Special Issue					
16	 i. Figure 15. S: 35x35mm D: 60sen (Source: Colnect.com, 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Day logo & slogan• Flag• Traditional/ culture• Snacks• Cuisines• Desserts• Beverage• Diversity• Title/Text/caption	Sayangi Malaysiaku –Malaysia Bersih logo & slogan	2019 National Day theme	
			i. Teh Tarik, pudding kelapa, ais krim gula apong, bubur cha-cha	A variety of local beverages and desserts can be discovered in Malaysia.	

17	 <p>ii</p> <p>Figure 16. S: 35x35mm D: 80sen (Source: Colnect.com, 2019)</p>	<p>a. Country of origin b. Typography-Title c. Denomination d. National Day logo & slogan e. Image – Dessert f. Text/Caption g. Flag h. Year issued</p>	ii. <i>Kuih cincin, kuih ketayap, apam balik, kek lapis</i>	A variety of traditional snacks can be discovered in Malaysia.
18	 <p>iii.</p> <p>Figure 17. S: 35x35mm D: RM1 (Source: Colnect.com, 2019)</p>		iii. <i>Roti canai, hinava, mi kolok, nasi lemak bungkus</i>	A variety of traditional main dishes can be found in Malaysia.
19	 <p>iv.</p> <p>a. b. c. h. g. d. e. f.</p> <p>Figure 17. Format: Miniature sheet S: 30x50mm D: RM5 (Source: Colnect.com, 2019)</p>		iv. <i>ABC/Air batu campur</i>	Malaysian favourite shaved ice dessert
			Text – ‘ <i>Makanan Kita</i> ’	Title of the issue
<p>Theme 6: Hari Malaysia 2020 /Malaysia Day 2020 – Malaysia Prihatin Date issue: 16.09.2020 Special Issue</p>				
20	 <p>i.</p> <p>Figure 18. Format: Se-tenant D: RM1.30 (Source: Colnect.com, 2020)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Day logo & slogan• Historical event• Commemoration• Text/caption	Malaysia Prihatin logo & slogan	2020 National Day theme
21	 <p>ii.</p> <p>Figure 19. Format: Se-tenant D: RM1.30 (Source: Colnect.com, 2020)</p>		ii. Proclamation of the Formation of Malaysia, 1963 at Padang Sentral, Kuching, Sarawak	Reflecting on the significant historical event for the country—the proclamation of the Formation of Malaysia at three distinct locations in the same year.


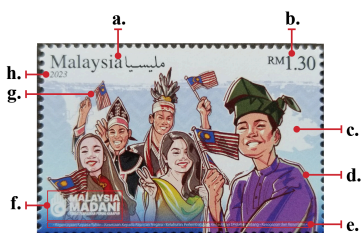
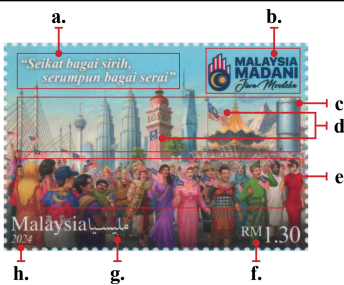
22	 <p>Figure 19. Format: Se-tenant D: RM1.30 (Source: Colnect.com, 2020)</p>		iii. Proclamation of the Formation of Malaysia, 1963 at Jesselton, Sabah	
Theme 7: Malaysia MADANI Date issue: 16.09.2023 Special Issue				
23	 <p>Figure 20. D: RM1.30 (Source: Colnect.com, 2023)</p>	<p>a. Country of origin b. Denomination c. Map - background d. Traditional/ culture, Diversity, Unity e. Text f. National Day logo & slogan g. Flag h. Year issued</p>	<p>Malaysia Madani – <i>Tekad Perpaduan, Penuhi Harapan / Resolution of Unity, Full of Hope</i></p> <p>5 persons in different traditional costumes Four (4) - waving flag One (1) – hand gesture - ‘peace’</p> <p>Map on the background</p> <p>Small printed text at the bottom of the stamp</p>	<p>2023 National Day theme</p> <p>Diverse cultural Malaysians live in peace and harmony.</p> <p>Malaysia territory/geographical</p> <p>The <i>Rukun Negara</i></p>
Theme 8: Malaysia MADANI Jiwa Merdeka Date issue: 16.09.2024 Special Issue				
24	 <p>Figure 21. S: 45x30mm D: RM1.30 (Source: Collection, 2024)</p>	<p>a. Text/caption b. National Day logo & slogan c. Architectures / Landmarks d. Flag e. Diversity Traditional/ Culture, Unity f. Denomination g. Country of origin h. Year issued</p>	<p>Malaysia Madani – <i>Jiwa Merdeka / The Soul of Freedom</i></p> <p>“<i>Seikat bagai sirih, serumpun bagai serai</i>”</p> <p>People in traditional costumes in the parade, observed by fellow Malaysians waving flags.</p> <p>Buildings, skylines, architecture, nature landmarks</p>	<p>2024 National Day theme</p> <p>Unity & togetherness</p> <p>Multicultural and diverse Malaysians living in peace and harmony.</p> <p>Development & modernisation</p>

Table 2. Visual elements (National identity) used in the stamp issued 2013 to 2024

Reference: T. = Theme

No	Category	T.1	T.2	T.3	T.4	T.5	T.6	T.7	T.8	Total
1	Anniversary	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
2	Architecture/Landmarks	-	-	3	1	-	-	-	1	5
3	Art & Heritage (music/dance/games)	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	3
4	Traditional/culture (costume/food)	-	2	3	-	4	-	1	1	11
5	Diversity (people/food)	-	4	4	-	4	-	1	1	14
6	Flag	1	2	4	2	4	-	1	1	15
7	Hibiscus	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
8	Historical Event	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	3
9	Map	1	1	2	1	-	-	1	-	6
10	National Day theme (Government's aspiration)	-	5	6	3	4	3	1	1	23
11	Tunku Abdul Rahman (Historical figure)	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	3
12	Typography/title/text/caption/wording	1	4	2	3	4	3	1	1	19
13	Unity/togetherness	-	2	4	3	-	-	1	1	10
14	Other (pictogram)	-	6	2	2	-	-	-	-	10

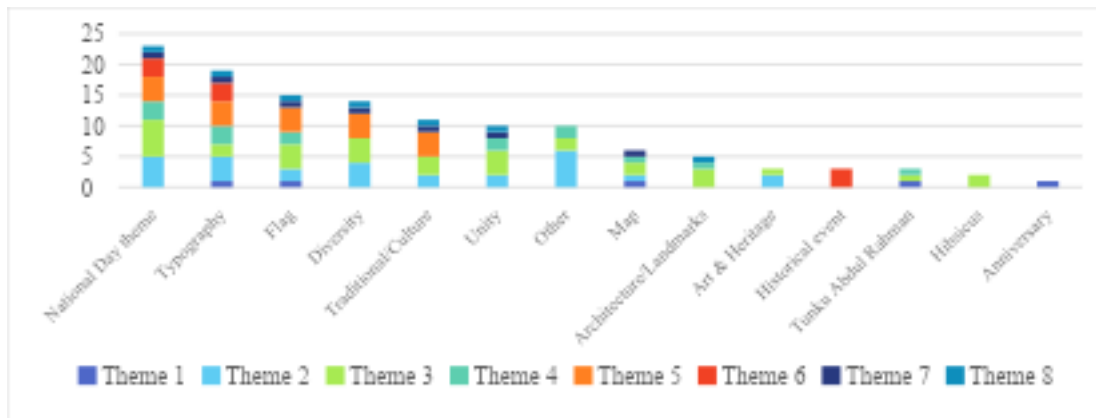


Figure 2. Frequency of visual elements depicted in the stamps

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Since 1963, Pos Malaysia has commemorated Malaysia Day with the issuance of 11 distinct stamp series encompassing 33 unique designs. These symbolic releases serve as a testament to the significant event in fostering unity and patriotism. Following the inaugural issue, Pos Malaysia released the Malaysia Day commemorative series exclusively for the 10th and 25th anniversary celebrations in 1973 and 1988, unlike the more frequent National Day (Independence Day) commemorative and special series. However, following 1988, Pos Malaysia refrained from issuing any Malaysia Day-themed stamps until 2013, which commemorated the 50th anniversary of Malaysia. This research delineates its scope to encompass Malaysia Day postage stamps issued between 2013 and 2024. Employing a semiotic analytical framework, this research aims to define the construction of national identity as curated in the stamp's elements created from 2013 forward in the 21st century. The examination of 24 stamps spanning 8 themes resulted in the establishment of 14 groups of visual features. These groups look at both the things that are literal (signifier) and figurative (signified). They are "Anniversary" (commemorative aspects), "Architecture (or landmark)", "Art & Heritage" (including music, dance, and games), "Traditional or

Culture", "Diversity" (multicultural representations such as people and food), "Flag," "Hibiscus" (the national flower), "Historical events," "Maps," "National Day logo and slogan" (the government's goals), elements (costumes, accessories), portrait and symbol of Tunku Abdul Rahman, "Typography" (text and caption), "Unity" (togetherness), and "Others" (pictograms). The presence of each semiotic feature in the stamp designs is also analysed to identify the most prominent representation.

The analysis of Graph 1 indicates the occurrence of 14 symbolic categories within 8 Malaysia Day-themed stamp series. The three predominant themes are the "National Day logo and slogan," "Typography," and the "Flag." The "National Day logo and slogan" are ubiquitous, appearing in every series with a total of 23 occurrences. Since 2015, these logos, and phrases have embodied the existing government's aspirations, and served as primary topics for National Day celebrations. Slogans like *Sehati Sejiwa* (2015), *Negaraku* (2017), *Sayangi Malaysiaku* (2018), *Sayangi Malaysiaku: Malaysia Bersih* (2019), *Malaysia Prihatin* (2020), *Malaysia Madani: Tekad Perpaduan Penuhi Harapan* (2023), and *Malaysia Madani: Jiwa Merdeka* (2024) were also considered. The essence of togetherness and patriotism were present in each phrase thus, reflecting the nation's goals, and challenges throughout those specific years. The evolution of these themes not only highlights the socio-political landscape of Malaysia but also cultivates a sense of collective identity among its population. This constant integration underscores the stamps primary role as commemorative artefacts that honour Malaysia's nationhood. Typography, which includes national slogans, anniversaries, titles, text, and captions, is the second most common theme, showing up 19 times. It reinforces patriotic feelings through textual elements besides denomination, country of origin, and year of issue. Theme 7 includes a fine print text of the five National Principles (*Rukun Negara*) at the bottom of the stamp. The *Rukun Negara* constitutes Malaysia's national ideological framework, predicated on five that serve guidelines for societal conduct. Each of these principles reinforces essential values, including 'The belief in God,' 'Allegiance to the sovereign and nation,' 'Adherence to the constitution,' 'Rule of law,' and 'Civility and ethics.' Each of these concepts encompasses a profound significance that fosters unity and harmony. In Theme 8, there is an additional tagline: "*Seikat bagai sirih, serumpun bagai serai*," signifying "close relationships and collaboration to establish a robust group." This Malay proverb eloquently illustrates unity and togetherness. The proverb emphasises the need for unity and solidarity, similar to the way *sirih* (betel leaves) intertwines or *serai* (lemon grass) grows in clusters. The proverb conveys that a society derives power from the solidarity and collaboration of its members towards a common goal. The Malaysian flag, formally termed the *Jalur Gemilang*, ranks third with 15 occurrences, highlighting its importance as a powerful emblem of national identity. Every stamp features it, with the exception of the three stamps in Themes 2 and 6.

The Malaysia Day stamp series showcases recurring themes of "Diversity," "Unity," and "Traditional (or cultural)," reflecting the nation's esteemed mixed society. The integration of ethnic components, including traditional attire, cultural symbols, and varied community representations, reflects an awareness of multiculturalism in the stamp design (Kirman & Jackson, 2000). Theme 5 illustrates variety traditional dishes that are famous in Malaysia. The 14 occurrences of "Diversity" and 10 with "Unity" highlight the importance of representing Malaysia's heterogeneous society and the concept of national unity. Themes 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8 frequently illustrate these concepts through pictures of individual congregation, collaborating, or communal cultural activities engagement. The 11 instances of "Traditional culture" and the 3 instances of "Art & Heritage" further underscore the exhibition of Malaysian cultural components. "Traditional culture" includes attire, adornments, and cuisine. Theme 2 also features garments including the *baju Melayu*, *cheongsam*, *saree*, *sinuangga*, *gaung*, *baju burung*, and Orang Ulu's traditional costume, as well as headgear such as *tengkolok*, *songkok*, and Iban's hornbill feather headdress. Themes 7 and 8 similarly exhibit garments that represent the Malay, Chinese, Indian, Iban, and Kadazandusun communities. "Art & Heritage", in Theme 2 is exemplified by the inclusion of dance gestures such as the Ngajat and Sumazau, musical instrument including the twenty-four festival drum, table, and rebab, and traditional games such as gasing, rampanau, and congkak. This progression in theme

representation indicates a transition from generic symbols in previous years to a more inclusive depiction of Malaysia's multicultural background and national aspirations.

The "Other" and "Map" categories provide valuable insights, despite being less common. The "Other" category, comprising 10 occurrences, includes aspects outside the main themes that would require additional analysis. This category encompasses pictograms, symbols, and icons, like the repeated silhouette of Tunku Abdul Rahman's significant hand gestures chanting "*Merdeka*" in Theme 2. Notable examples comprise the prominent red heart symbol in Theme 2's miniature sheet, symbolising national affection; the blue rippling border for decorative effect in Theme 3's miniature sheet; and the rubber tree depiction in Theme 4, signifying Malaysia's agricultural legacy. Examining these varied components within the "Other" category may uncover further themes and symbols pertinent to Malaysian identity. The depiction of Malaysian maps 6 times graphically reinforces the notion of national territory, and the unity between West and East Malaysia. The map appears in Themes 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7. The map typically serves as the backdrop for the stamp. The stamps depict "Architectural landmarks" 5 times, with iconic structures, skylines, monuments, flagpoles, and natural elements like mountains. Theme 3 presents the silhouette of the Tugu Negara (national monument) for honouring the nation's fallen heroes, along with the Petronas Twin Towers (also known as KLCC) and the colourful shophouses characteristic of Georgetown, Penang (Mydin et al., 2014), and Jonker Street, Malacca (Shawn, 2023). These architectural choices reflect Malaysia's cultural legacy, and modern achievements. Theme 4 also portrays the KLCC and the Seri Perdana Complex. The KLCC reappear for the third time in Theme 8, alongside prominent landmarks: the Penang Bridge, Kuala Lumpur Tower, Sultan Abdul Samad Building clock tower, Merdeka 118, the Merdeka Square flagpole, the Sarawak State Legislative Assembly Building, Mount Kinabalu, and the Tun Mustapha Tower. These structures and landmarks do not only function as significant representations of Malaysian identity; they also encapsulate the nation's pride and modernity throughout the past 60 years since historical formation.

Specific stamp series display themed clusters that emphasise unique aspects of Malaysian identity. Theme 5 exclusively highlights local dishes that can be categorised under the "Traditional cultural" and "Diversity". These stamps illustrate Malaysia's rich culinary legacy derived from different cultures and ethnicities. Syed Md Najib Syed Md Noor, the group CEO of Pos Malaysia, stated that the selection of each dish in this series is determined by its popularity and public recommendations. This decision is due to the fact that food is so closely associated among the Malaysian population (Bernama, 2019). The stamp series collection showcases illustrations of popular local delicacies across Malaysia, including traditional desserts such as coconut pudding, *gula apong* ice cream, *bubur cha-cha*, and *air batu campur* (ABC); beverages, and sweet cakes like *teh tarik*; snacks such as *kuih cincin*, *kuih ketayap*, *apam balik*, and *kek lapis*; and main courses including *roti canai*, *hinava*, *mi kolok*, and *nasi lemak bungkus*. Theme 6 analyses the "Historical event" photographs of the Proclamation of the Formation of Malaysia in 1963, showcasing it from three iconic locations: Merdeka Stadium in Kuala Lumpur, Padang Sentral in Kuching, Sarawak, and Jesselton in Sabah.

The portrait of Tunku Abdul Rahman, featured thrice in the stamp series Themes 1 and 3, along with Tunku's iconic '*Merdeka*' gesture depicted in Theme 4, signifies a pivotal figure, without whom, Malaysia Day would have not happened. Recognised as the Father of Independence, he was the first Prime Minister of Malaysia and contributed significantly to the establishment of the Malaysian Federation in 1963. The inclusion of his image emphasises his importance in Malaysia's history. This tribute honours his efforts and acts as a reminder of the lasting legacy of unity and independence that he advocated. His leadership and vision persist in inspiring future generations in their pursuit of national identity and advancement. The least frequent symbols on the stamps are "Hibiscus," which appears twice in Theme 3, and "Anniversary" (once). The hibiscus flower, referred to as *Bunga Raya*, is integral to Malaysian national identity, particularly the subspecies *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*, which was designated as the national flower on 28th July, 1960. The flower represents courage, vitality, and unity in Malaysia (Cheah, 2018).

The "Anniversary" component is exclusively found in Theme 1, depicting the number 50 and using a "Golden" map within a gold-hued frame to symbolise the golden jubilee and commemorate the 50th anniversary of Malaysia's establishment in 1963.

CONCLUSION

This research investigates the development of Malaysian national identity utilising a semiotic framework, analysing the 24 stamp designs from 8 themes spanning 2013 to 2024. The stamps, released by Pos Malaysia, transcend generic iconography, adopting a more sophisticated, and inclusive portrayal of the nation's heterogeneous background and goals. The persistent application of the National Day theme logo and slogan highlights the government's progressive ambitions for the nation, while the recurring presence of symbols such as *Jalur Gemilang* and representations of various ethnicities, traditional attire, and cultural practices underscores the significance of unity and inclusivity in defining Malaysia's identity.

The research gives a thorough look at the visual appeal, composition, and interaction of these symbols in the actual stamp designs using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Examining the themes in chronological sequence, with Malaysia's historical events, may surface how the stamps reflect or potentially influence national narratives over time. Analysing various periods reveals trends that demonstrate the evolution of national identity along with socio-political changes. The stamps provide significant insight into the values, objectives, and historical consciousness that Malaysia aims to convey both nationally and globally. Stamp design frequently considers historical relevance, as well as social, political, and economic aspects, and cultural elements that influence the nation's identity. Future research may add to this analysis by looking into how people perceived and interpreted these stamps, which would help better understand how they affected the formation of national identity.

This research endorses multiple facets of Sustainable Development Goal 11, "Sustainable Cities and Communities," particularly Target 11.4, which advocates for the protection of cultural and natural heritage. It also supports the goals of the 2021 National Culture Policy (DAKEN 2021), which are to strengthen national unity, and protect national identity through cultural means, as well as to improve communication and awareness so Malaysian nationalism can grow.

The research of Malaysian Day stamps holds significant implications for future stamp design, essentially aiding in the preservation of cultural history, and coincide with international sustainability goals. The results indicate that future stamp designs should integrate more profound historical context, and with a more enhanced visual analysis. Stamps serve as compact historical documents, safeguarding, and conveying cultural heritage to future generations. They function as significant educational instruments, fostering cultural awareness, and increasing community involvement. The digitisation of this research, and its conclusions enhances global access to these cultural assets and promotes cross-cultural understanding.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This paper was presented at the Creative Arts and Social Sciences International Conference (CASSIC 2025), held at the Waterfront Hotel, Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia, from 15 to 17 April 2025. The author wishes to express her sincere gratitude and heartfelt appreciation to Dr. Mastura Mohd Jarit and Dr. Neesa Ameera Mohammed Salim for their guidance and expertise throughout this research endeavour. Their

insightful feedback and unwavering support were instrumental in shaping the direction and content of this paper. Their assistance was essential to the successful completion of this project. Special thanks to industry experts and academic peers for their valuable insights, and contributions to this research.

REFERENCES

- Akpang, C. E. (2015). Images that speak: delineating Nigeria's modernity through the graphic configuration of postage stamps. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(4). <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2015.v6n4s2p47>
- Baines, G. (2023). Propagating Afrikaner nationalism: The Voortrekker stamps as icons of an ideology, c.1933–1949. *Nations and Nationalism*, 29(3), 1024–1040. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12938>
- Batra, N. (2023, September 16). *Malaysia Day 2023: How is it different from Hari Merdeka? Know the Importance of 16 September*. Jagran Josh. Retrieved October 29, 2024, from <https://www.jagranjosh.com/general-knowledge/know-how-malaysia-day-is-different-from-hari-merdeka-1694845436-1>
- Brunn, S. D. (Ed.). (2023). *Stamps, nationalism and political transition*. Routledge.
- Buletin TV3. (2024, August 30). *HARI KEBANGSAAN 2024 | Rakyat perlu hargai sejarah kemerdekaan dalam keharmonian bangsa* [Video]. YouTube. Retrieved August 30, 2024, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQhkPsZTnfY>
- Buletin TV9. (2023, September 16). *[LANGSUNG] Sambutan Hari Malaysia 2023 Peringkat Kebangsaan | 16 September 2023* [Video]. YouTube. Retrieved January 10, 2025, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MMWq-SqlnAI>
- Butler, G., Khoo-Lattimore, C., & Mura, P. (2012). Heritage Tourism in Malaysia: Fostering a Collective National Identity in an Ethnically Diverse Country. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 19(2), 199–218. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10941665.2012.735682>
- Cheah, C. (2018, August 31). How the “Bunga Raya” became Malaysia’s national flower. *Malay Mail*. Retrieved November 15, 2024, from <https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2018/08/31/how-the-bunga-raya-became-malaysias-national-flower/1667877>
- Colnect, connecting collectors: Colnect*. (n.d.). <https://colnect.com/en>
- Dasar Kebudayaan Negara 2021*. (2021, November 2). Official Portal Ministry of Tourism Arts and Culture. Retrieved August 16, 2024, from <https://www.motac.gov.my/en/download/category/123-dasar-kebudayaan-negara-2021>
- Elo, S., Kääriäinen, M., Kanste, O., Pölkki, T., Utriainen, K., & Kyngäs, H. (2014). Qualitative Content Analysis. *SAGE Open*, 4(1), 215824401452263. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244014522633>
- Farooq, H. O. (2023). Decoding history and sociocultural evolution through the lens of era-defining trends in Pakistan’s postage stamp design. *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology*, 20(2), 1

- Goals 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.* (n.d.). UN | Department of Economic and Social Affairs Sustainable Development. Retrieved August 30, 2024, from https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal11#targets_and_indicators
- Gusevskaya, N., & Plotnikova, E. (2020). Historical memory and national identity. *Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Social Science and Higher Education (ICSSHE 2020)*, 505, 1026–1030. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.201214.197>
- Kirman, J. M., & Jackson, C. (2000). The Use of Postage Stamps to Teach Social Studies Topics. *The Social Studies*, 91(4), 187–190. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00377990009602464>
- Khatijah Md Saad & Muhammad Zaffwan Idris. (2017). Exploring Visual Representation of Malaysia Identity as a medium of communication in Nation Brand. *Journal of Applied Environmental and Biological Sciences*, 7(4S), 49–55. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322200002_Exploring_Visual_Representation_of_Malaysia_Identity_as_a_Medium_of_Communication_in_Nation_Brand
- Loh, P. Y. (2014). *Stamp Up for Singapore: Commemoration in National Day Stamps, 1960-1984*. [BA Thesis]. National University of Singapore.
- Maksud peribahasa seikat bak sirih, serumpun bak serai.* (n.d.). Maksud Peribahasa Seikat Bak Sirih, Serumpun Bak Serai. Retrieved November 15, 2024, from <https://peribahasa.maxxmint.com/index.php?x=Seikat+bak+sirih%2C+serumpun+bak+serai&pref=quotes>
- Mydin, M. A. O., Keling, N. A., Sani, N. Md., & Abas, N. F (2014). Assessment of Adaptive Reuse of Heritage Shop Houses for Sleep Lodging in Malaysia: Fulfilment of Conservation Guidelines. *SHS Web of Conferences*, 11, 01014. <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/20141101014>
- MyFDC.* (n.d.). MYFDC. <http://www.myfdc.wordpress.com>.
- Nor Arseha Karimon, Mastura Mohd Jarit, Liza Marziana Mohd Noh, Azahar Harun, & Aidah Alias. (2023). A Content Analysis of A Malaysian Stamp Illustration of a Local Market Scene. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 13(10). <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v13-i10/18980>
- O'Connor, R. (2019). *Paper Emblems - Irish Commemorative Philately and National Identity 2005 – 2018* [Undergraduate Dissertation]. Institute of Art Design and Technology, Dún Laoghaire.
- Raento, P. (2009). Tourism, nation, and the postage stamp: Examples from Finland. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 36(1), 124–148. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2008.10.006>
- Reid, D. M. (1984). The Symbolism of Postage Stamps: A Source for the Historian. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 19(2), 223–249. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002200948401900204>
- Saadiah Ismail. (2020, August 18). Pos Malaysia keluarkan siri Setem khas 50 Tahun Rukun Negara. *BH Online*. Retrieved September 19, 2024, from <https://www.bharian.com.my/berita/nasional/2020/08/722498/pos-malaysia-keluarkan-siri-setem-khas-50-tahun-rukun-negara>

- Shawn. (2023, November 11). Jonker Walk Malacca, capturing the history of Peranakan culture. *Asia Wandering*. Retrieved November 16, 2024, from <https://asiawandering.com/en-my/malaysia-travel-blog/jonker-walk-malacca-capturing-the-history-of-peranakan-culture>
- Siri Setem “Makanan Kita” sempena Hari Malaysia. (2019, September 13). BERNAMA. Retrieved November 16, 2024, from <https://www.bernama.com/bm/news.php?id=1767315>
- SLLiew. (n.d.). *Stamps A La Carte*. <https://smsphilatelic.blogspot.com/>
- Smith, A. D. (1991). National identity. In *Penguin Books* (pp. 16–17). Penguin Books.
- StampData - Organize your collection. (n.d.). <https://stampdata.com/index.php>
- Stawarska, B. (2015). Saussure’s Philosophy of Language as Phenomenology: Undoing the doctrine of the course in general linguistics. In *The signifier and the signified* (pp. 23–70). Oxford University Press eBooks. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190213022.003.0002>
- Stupples, P. (2003). Visual culture, synthetic memory and the construction of national identity. *Third Text*, 17(2), 127–139. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09528820309661>