

ANIMAL THEMATIC POSTAGE STAMPS:
STATE NARRATIVES FROM THE COLONIAL
TO THE POSTCOLONIAL

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CULTURAL CENTRE
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KUALA LUMPUR

2019

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TO THE POSTCOLONIAL**

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**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS (VISUAL ART)**

**CULTURAL CENTRE
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR**

2019

UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
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Name of Degree: MASTER OF ARTS

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ANIMAL THEMATIC POSTAGE STAMPS: STATE NARRATIVES FROM THE COLONIAL TO THE POSTCOLONIAL

ABSTRACT

This research exemplifies the postage stamps as part of the visual culture that facilitates the State narratives. It explores visual representations of animal thematic postage stamps that has so far been issued in North Borneo, Sarawak, British Malaya and Malaysia. Since animal thematic stamps were introduced in the colonial era and persisted into the postcolonial era, this research aims to record and analyse the change of visual representations in both main subject matter (animals) and periphery of the subjects (decorative art and languages). It demonstrates how decorative elements evolved across eras as well as how the animals being represented in official disseminations, which consequently reflect that the ways of seeing animals are culturally or socio-politically specific.

More than hundreds of animal thematic stamps that has so far been issued in Malaysia, included different definitives, commemorative stamps or special issues have been examined ranged from years 1867 to 1991. In order to get a bigger picture on the visual changes, the researcher looked and compared the animal stamps between different nations, as well as studied the different thematic stamps issued within the nation. Besides that, all animal thematic stamps of Malaysia that issued before 1992 are rearranged in different categories to understand the selection tendency of subject matters. Following that, this research is conducted in 2 phases. First phase is the data collection / background studies via digitalised databases as well as museum, archive centre and library visits. Second is the theoretical analysis and visual methodologies.

This research reflects the visions of the Federal governments in different eras and reveals how the visual culture contributes to the formation of colonial or national identities.

Keywords: Malaysia, postage stamps of animals, state narratives, colonial stamps, postcolonial stamps.

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SETEM POS BERTEMA HAIWAN: NARATIF NEGERI DARI KOLONIAL KE PASCAKOLONIAL

ABSTRAK

Kajian penyelidikan ini menunjukkan setem pos adalah sebahagian daripada budaya visual yang dipergunakan untuk memudahkan naratif Negeri (State). Kajian ini turut meneroka penyampaian visual setem pos yang bertemakan haiwan di Borneo Utara, Sarawak, British Malaya serta Malaysia. Sedangkan setem bertema haiwan diperkenalkan semenjak era kolonial dan berterusan ke era pascakolonial, maka kajian penyelidikan ini bertujuan untuk merekod dan menganalisis perubahan penyampaian visual di antara subjek utama (haiwan) dan subjek sampingan (seni hiasan dan bahasa). Ia menunjukkan bagaimana unsur-unsur hiasan berubah secara berperingkat sepanjang zaman serta pelbagai cara penyampaian haiwan dalam produk rasmi, yang bakal mencerminkan cara-cara kita menterjemah haiwan adalah khususnya di bawah pengaruh, budaya atau sosio-politik.

Lebih daripada ratusan setem bertemakan haiwan yang pernah dikeluarkan di Malaysia dari tahun 1867 hingga 1991, termasuk pelbagai jenis setem yang merangkumi setem definitif, setem peringatan atau isu khas telah dikaji. Penyelidik meneliti dan membandingkan setem haiwan antara negeri yang berbeza, serta mengkaji setem yang berlainan tema dalam negara untuk mendapatkan gambaran yang lebih besar mengenai perubahan visual secara umum. Selain itu, setem bertemakan haiwan yang pernah dikeluarkan di Malaysia dikumpul dan disusun semula kategori yang berbeza untuk mengkaji faktor pemilihan. Sehubungan itu, kajian ini dijalankan dalam 2 fasa. Fasa pertama adalah pengumpulan data / kajian latar belakang melalui data digital atas talian serta lawatan muzium, pusat arkib dan perpustakaan. Fasa kedua ialah analisis teoritis dan metodologi visual.

Penyelidikan ini mencerminkan visi kerajaan-kerajaan Persekutuan yang didukung dalam era yang berbeza serta mendedahkan bagaimana budaya visual menyumbang kepada pembentukan identiti kolonial ataupun identity kebangsaan.

Kata-kata Kunci: Malaysia, setem pos haiwan, narative Negeri, setem kolonial, setem pascakolonial.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation is a long writing journey. I would like to thank Cultural Centre as well as express my greatest gratitude to both of my supervisors, Dr. Geneviève Gamache and Dr. Simon Soon. They taught me to be a researcher, to write properly and to think critically when dealing with massive unfamiliar information. Their comments lead me a different way to apprehend things and theories. Special thanks to the committee members – Dr. Emelia Ong, Dr. Roslina Ismail and Dr. Luqman Lee for the constructive feedbacks during my presentations.

Besides that, I would like to grab this opportunity to sincerely thank every individual who has contributed to this dissertation whether in direct or indirect ways. First of all, I am much appreciated to get know with all the friendly members of Philatelic Society of Malaysia (PSM). I also wish to thank the Malayan Study Group (MSG) for their persistence in publishing *The Malayan Philatelist*. They teach me some basic philatelic knowledge and the passionate about stamps collection. Moreover, I am indebted to the blogger or stamp collector from “my North Borneo stamps” blog for granting me the permission to reuse his/her private collection’s images in the research.

Thanks to my peers who willing to share their writing experiences to us. I feel grateful to have friends to talk with, even only occasionally, to exchange our research progress and motivate among each other that you are not alone in the journey. Last but not least, my deepest appreciation goes to my family members and my fiancé. They are my greatest buoyant force that keeping me afloat against the pressures and challenges. Thanks for their supports along the time, though they might not really understand my research topic.

This research might not be the perfect writing, nevertheless, I am truly appreciated for everyone who provide helping hands to me so that I can accomplish my writing mission.

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

FDC : First-Day-Cover

NBCC : North Borneo Chartered Company

FMS : Federated Malay States

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Animal thematic stamps in this research included definitive, commemorative and special issue type of stamps. Postage stamp is a product of government institution. It has a distinctive visual form and perforated edges. The largest portion of their frontal surface usually shows images or themes issue by the State. Every piece of them recorded details of the State (language preferences, price units etc.) as well as images that ought to represent the State, territories or nations. Hence, despite serving as a pivotal mean of delivery, postage stamp is also a part of ideological narrative constructed by the State during the colonial to post-colonial eras. In this research, the researcher studies Malaysia stamps, focus on the animal thematic stamps, in term of its visual representations and relative narratives envisioned from the State.

According to the definition in Oxford dictionaries, the State connotes “a (single) nation or territory considered as an organized political community under one government.”¹ This general definition is used in describing the Malayan Sultanate States during the colonial era and eventually fosters the concept of *negeri* in the postcolonial era. The *negeri* of Malaysia refers to the province or a regional member of Malaysia that deployed with its own council. However, the definition of the State during colonial era, is upon a more complex superstructural “organised political community” that underlying the imperial influences and straddling across the seas. After the Independence and federation 1963, government of Malaysia has taken over all the administration of this new-born nation, hence, the meaning of the State in postcolonial era refers to “the civil government of a

¹ *Oxford Living Dictionaries online*, s.v. “state,” accessed May 2, 2018. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/state>

country”². In short, the term of “State” that using in this research is referred to the federal or political regimes who governed the lands and issued postage stamps at the era.

The postcolonial era in this research implies the period that “existing after the end of colonial rule”³. Thus, the time frame of this research begins with the colonial era under British rule, further into the date of January 1, 1992 as when the postal department of Malaysia being corporatized to a government-linked company.

Animal stamps are the study focus of this research. This is because the visual representations of animals in State’s official dissemination reflects the ways of seeing animals are culturally or socio-politically specific. Moreover, animal thematic issues were favoured by the State across eras. The presence of various animal species in postage stamps indicates the State valued animals as the veritable natural representations across the eras. In addition, animal metaphors are very common in the myths and legends of the peoples since early years. Hence, this research study how these animals being represented in official dissemination such as stamps, regardless those recurrent animal stamps that were issued in both eras, or selective animal stamps that only issued in either colonial or postcolonial era. Nuances in these visual representations can be compared to observe how the State’s ideological constructs changes from the colonial to the postcolonial. Recurrent thematic stamps that issued in both the colonial to the postcolonial are my priority consideration in analysis of chapter 3. While chapter 4 and chapter 5 focus on the animal thematic stamps that being issued in colonial and postcolonial respectively.

² Ibid.

³ Oxford Living Dictionaries online, s.v. “postcolonial,” accessed May 2, 2018. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/postcolonial>

1.2 Background of Research

1.2.1 The States and the Formation of Postal Department

Postage stamp is an important delivery tool that is broadly used across the states since it was first implemented in England on 1840. As one of the Commonwealth countries, the postal system of Malaysia was brought in by the British governors during the colonial era. Before that, Malaysia or Malaya did not exist as a State in the pre-colonial era. It was part of a region that has since been described as *nusantara*⁴ which consist of peninsula, islands, vassal lands of Siam, Brunei and Sulu. The appearance of British administration had delineated the preliminary mapping of Malaya, which made up of 11 Malay Sultanates, as well as the provinces of Sarawak and North Borneo.

According to Cavendish, the history of British involvement in Malaya traces back to 1786, started “when the East India Company established a trading post on Penang Island.”⁵ During colonial era, the establishment posting servicing in the Malay States of Malaya, North Borneo and Sarawak were crucial for economic activities as well as provided convenience for the liaison to the domicile country. The data of post offices and postal activities was well-recorded in official documents. The increasing numbers of postal interaction between British domicile and territories was used as an indicator of tracking economic activities and level of literacy.⁶ In fact, likewise any other British

⁴ Based of Hans -Dieter Evers, *Nusantara: History of a Concept*, the meaning of ‘Nusantara’ may be defined as the region ‘Indonesia’ (in Indonesia) and ‘Malay World’ (in Malaysia) in dictionaries. The term was originally been recorded in 1334, Gadjah Mada, the chief minister of the Majapahit Empire, used it to refer to the maritime fringes (the nusantara) of the Majapahit Empire. Nevertheless, as time goes by to the anticolonial or decolonization era, this term captured the imagination of writers, novelists, poets, and politicians in Indonesia and in British Malaya.

⁵ Richard Cavendish, “The Independent Federation of Malaya Came into Being on August 31st, 1957,” *History Today* 57, no. 8 (2007), <http://www.historytoday.com/richard-cavendish/malayan-independence>.

⁶ Keith Jeffery, “Crown , Communication and the Colonial Post : Stamps , the Monarchy and the British Empire” 34, no. 1 (2006): 45–70, doi:10.1080/03086530500411290, 49.

colonies, the introduction of postal system in the British Malaya, North Borneo and Sarawak was significantly an expanding imperial control in term of governmental bureaucracy.

Interruption of British administration took place between 1943 and 1945, when the Japanese armies invaded and occupied the region. However, there were not many Japanese stamps production during this period. Stamps of the previous State, such as King George VI series, Malayan Postal Union series and Malayan Sultanate series were still in used but stamped with Japanese characters, *Kanji*.⁷

After World War II, the British came back to Malaya, North Borneo and Sarawak. They formed the Malaya Union in 1946 and following by the replacement of Federation of Malaya in 1948. These plans of states federation aim to prepare the Malays politician into construct a postcolonial State, together with the participation of other ethnic leaders.

Following that, the “Posts and Telegraphs Department of the Federated Malay States became the Postal Services Department of the Malayan Union in 1946” and subsequently converted to the “Postal Services Department of the Federation of Malaya in 1948.”⁸ In fact, postage system or stamp of Malaya Federation and Malaysia has not been study a lot by scholars. However, one can observe that the postal institution was changed with the transformation of the Federal government. There is a parallel between the reformation of the Federal government and the department of the postal institution.

⁷ Edward B. Proud, *Japanese & Siamese Occupation Stamps of Malaya*. (Sussex: The Brighton Philatelic Company, 1970), 3.

⁸ “*Malaysia, Libraries Australia Authorities- Jabatan Perkhidmatan Pos*,” National Library of Australia, accessed April 10, 2017, <http://nla.gov.au/anbd.aut-an35759473>.

The Federation of Malaya gained independence on August 31, 1957. In 1961, the Federation of Malaya envisioned to congregate the nation of Malaya with Singapore, North Borneo and Sarawak.⁹ The united states were claimed to incorporate better political development and economic plans sharing between these nations. The formation of Malaysia took twenty-eight months. These States' formation fostered the national consciousness in North Borneo and Sarawak. The idea of belonging to an independent State had triggered the decolonization and accelerated the development of political parties in these two states.¹⁰

Meanwhile, the development of postal service agency moved in tandem with the Nation and State formation. In September of 1963, the Postal Services Department continued serving as an agency of the Government of Malaysia, only the name changed to Malay as *Jabatan Perkhidmatan Pos* on September 1, 1967.¹¹ The *Jabatan Perkhidmatan Pos* experienced transformation during 1991 as it was privatized to become the *Pos Malaysia Berhad* starting on 1 January 1992.¹²

⁹ James P. Ongkili, "From Malaya to Malaysia," in *Nation-Building in Malaysia 1946 - 1974* (New York and Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1985), 137–10.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ "Malaysia, Libraries Australia Authorities- Jabatan Perkhidmatan Pos," National Library of Australia, accessed April 10, 2017, <http://nla.gov.au/anbd.aut-an35759473>.

¹² "Laporan Tahunan 1993" (Kuala Lumpur, 1993), i.

1.2.2 Stamp Making across the Eras

During colonial era, stamp production of Malaya, North Borneo, and Sarawak were supplied by the Waterlow and Sons Ltd. and De La Rue & Co. Ltd, Blades, East and Blades which all based in London.¹³ The first stamps issued in Malaysia were the stamps of the Straits Settlements dating back from 1867.¹⁴ The earliest issued stamps were in 1883 for North Borneo and 1869 for Sarawak.¹⁵

According to the excerpts of Wood's writing, Survey Department of the British Malaya which was responsible for preparing different designs for new stamps.¹⁶ They had collected some issued essays and well-kept them in the special folders of Department. Upon on the formation of the Malayan Postal Union, each (Malay State) administration had its own issue of stamps which bearing the superscription of 'Malaya'.¹⁷ Meanwhile the Malayan Postal Union would ensure the benefit of the participating administrations and to the public.¹⁸ Hence, the colonial stamps' making was an official documenting that underwent numerous processes by the State's administrating department. The colonial administrator would have to decide certain thematic designs by preparing the samplings in various colours through lithographic process, before submitting their print order to

¹³ Stanley Gibbons Publications Ltd., ed., *Stanley Gibbons Stamp Catalogue Part 1: British Commonwealth 1981*, 83rd ed. (London: Stanley Gibbons Publications Ltd., 1980).

¹⁴ Gerben, "Postal History Malaysia," Stamp World History, accessed April 16, 2017, <http://www.stampworldhistory.com/country-profiles-2/asia/malaysia/#comment-843>.

¹⁵ "Postal History Sarawak," Stamp World History, accessed April 16, 2017, <http://www.stampworldhistory.com/country-profiles-2/asia/a-sarawak/>.

¹⁶ F.E. Wood, *Straits Settlement Postage Stamps* (Kuala Lumpur: Selangor Stamps Club, 1961).

¹⁷ F.E. Wood, *Straits Settlement Postage Stamps*. 126.

¹⁸ Ibid.

England.¹⁹ On the other hands, Sarawak and North Borneo Company, the British Protectorate states, were in charge of their respective administration included postage stamp's design during colonial era.

The Postal Services Department or *Jabatan Perkhidmatan Pos* continued to serve as one of the State governmental department after the Independence era until the end of 1991. On 1960 onwards, The Postal Services Department started to seek for alternative choices of printing and lithography companies, such as Japanese Government Printing Works, Harrison and sons, Asher & Co, (Australia), J.Enschede, J.Waddington and B.Roserbaum (Austria).²⁰ It was then eventually contracted to the (National) Security Printer in 1983. Meanwhile, the stamp designs were decided by the Postal Service Department, selected from wide range of artworks, posters as well as logo and emblems designs.²¹

During the colonial era, there were differences in terms of the visual designs as well as the selection of subject matters represented on the postage stamps. For instance, the royal portraits or stamps of monarch were the most issues concerned by the British Malaya, as compared with the North Borneo. Each of the Malayan States issued a new design for portrait stamp when there was a new Sultanate reign, despite that stamps of Queen Victoria, King George and Queen Elizabeth were consistent issues for the Malayan States. On the other hands, Sarawak stamps of portrait were more focused on the Brooke family. The stamps of administrator or royal portrait were the majority number of colonial stamps as they are the explicit representation of the State power. Nevertheless, the animal stamps

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Steve Tan, ed., *Standard Stamp Catalogue Book Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei 30th Edition*, 30 ed. (Kuala Lumpur: International Stamp & Coin Sdn. Bhd, 2016).

²¹ Ibid.

had a more average issues distributed in different States and in between different eras, though their number were lesser than portrait stamps. As compared to the portrait stamps, the animal thematic stamps are more likely to be the implicit representations used by the State for representations of (territorial / national) patrimonies.

The production of stamps in the colonial era was closely connected to the overseas' residents that frequently posting letters and postcards outward. Besides the stamps printing, Great Britain allowed privately printed postcards from the 1890s.²² According to the statistic for outgoing and incoming postcards of the North Borneo Annual Report from 1894 to 1912, the number of outgoing postcard always surpassed the number of incoming postcards.²³ During the period of WW I (1914-1918), the number of postcards dwindled since many European staffs residing in North Borneo had temporarily returned to their home countries for army duty or other commitments.²⁴ Being a part of the postal stationaries, postcard delivery also includes postage stamps while photograph embedded on the other side. Postcard's photograph is considered as a historical evidence, but they are not official propogandas from the State, as their random productions were beyond State's control or monitor.

1.3 Statement of Problem

In the case of pre-Independent era, the illiteracy rate was very high. Therefore, visual propogandas or imageries were a main channel to project the State narratives since they were more influential and provocative. The State narratives are studied in political

²² Foh Chin Chai, *Early Picture Postcards of North Borneo and Labuan* (Kota Kinabalu: Opus Publications Sdn. Bhd., 2007),.1.

²³ Chai F.C., *Early Picture*,3.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

science, social science and other theories. Nevertheless, very few of them recognised the important role that visual culture played in facilitating the construction of the imperial state or nation-state and its ideologies.

Postage stamps are part of the visual elements. Besides that, postage stamps are one of the ideal means of transmitting political propaganda until today. Although there are philatelic societies and catalogue publishers are studying the stamps, their focus mainly pressing on the limited issues or other technical matters such as printing errors, printing varieties (retouches, design re-engraved, colour shift etc.) and overprints (or stamping). The most attractive part of stamps, visual illustration or design, however, are rarely analytically studied among the philately enthusiasts, especially for the case of Malaysia's stamps. This is because the philately knowledge is esoteric and the price value of an 'old stamp' is attributed to its rareness in philatelic market but not upon its visual attractiveness.

Moreover, the advent of telecommunication impacted the traditional postal services. Philately is no longer a popular pastime for nowadays generation. As a result, the historical value of stamps might be neglected as there are not much analytical studies of nation narratives related to the Malaya and Malaysia stamps.

1.4 Purpose / Importance of Research

One of the main purposes of this research is to examine the visual representations on Malaysia's postage stamps. It focuses on the interpretation of Malay(sia)'s animal stamps as an element of visual culture. Hence, this research also raises awareness to the values of postage stamps since they are proven to be one of the important historical evidence for visual culture by scholars overseas. In fact, visual culture is a role player of nation's formation. The elements of visual culture live and grow with the nation.

Furthermore, this is an interdisciplinary study that intersects with political science, history, social science, anthropology, art and humanities. In the academic viewpoint, this research has the potential to establish the visual representation of State disseminations in colonial and national discourse.

Although there are researches that studied colonised or national identities between colonial and postcolonial eras of Malaysia, very few of them focus on the ideological construct via visual representation. Unlike the national policies and law, ideologies are not overtly enforced toward the peoples. Nevertheless, they are being instilled and ingrained into the people's minds without realisation. Hence, it is crucial to decode the visual representation and their ideological constructs.

Hence, this study extends past researches the State narratives on Malaysia, and examines the research topic differently, visual representation and ideological construct. This research is filling the gap of a State or national narrative with the study of ideological construct, and the study on visual cultural element as the historical evidences. Postage stamp is part of both constructs, as it is a product of the political regimes. Last but not least, it is the key item for traditional mailing system that reaching out to the peoples day-to-day.

By comparing the similarities and differences in the visual representation of recurring animal thematic stamps, this research identifies the ideologies that branding the territories or nation in both colonial and postcolonial eras. In other words, this research reflects the visions of the State and how the identities of nations were being created. The postage stamps are not only projected outwards to the other nations, but also presented towards the citizens within the nation as well. Hence, this research provides us a deeper understanding of the wildlife resources or animal issues as the continual patrimony of these lands, which were projected in different forms based on the State narratives.

1.5 Research Objective(s)

1. To identify and compare the animal species in postage stamps of Malaysia between the colonial and the postcolonial.
2. To study the relationships between visual representation of animal thematic stamps and state narratives as an ideological construct.
3. To examine the types or symbolisms of patrimony (land and animals) that were fostered by the federal government during different eras.
4. To compare the nuances of the stamp's decorative art between the colonial and the postcolonial.

1.6 Research Question(s)

1. What are the recurrent animal species issued on postage stamps in both the colonial and the postcolonial, and how they represented differently by the State?
2. How did the animal stamps contribute to the colonial narratives for the regions of Malaysia nowadays?
3. How did the animal stamps contribute to the national narratives of Malaysia?
4. How did the postage stamps' design or decorative art change across the eras and how their changes imply different state narratives.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

The State narratives is a continual process in order to solidify the power of the State. Ideological construct of State narrative exists in every time period, but they perform differently correspond towards State-formation in different eras. Hence, in order to study the ideological constructs represented on postage stamps, the researcher focusses on the representation and meanings related to State narrative based on Malaysia's historical context. Furthermore, this research examines the visual representation of animals in official disseminating medium of postage stamps. In the writing of "Why We Look at Animals", John Berger explains that looking at animals in the zoos who trapped (framed) cage-to-cage, is likewise contemplating paintings displayed in a gallery.²⁵ Zoo is the "study centre" to observe those "distant and wild" animals closely, presented in an artificial space. On the other hands, animal's illustration that reproduced in postage stamps is another "human construction" as well, which virtually represented to lead the viewer how to see the animals as they ought to be.

In the case of Malaysia, there are hitherto two major changes of the State formation from the years 1867 to 1991. First part is the unification of Malay-sultanate states in peninsula by British government during colonial period. Second part is the unification of nations and ethnic groups during post-colonial period. The State narratives involved efforts of the federal government to represent their power of sovereignties, defining the national identities as well as constructing a sense of nationhood among the peoples. Hence, this research studies the relationship of the State narratives and formation of territorial or national identities from various perspectives, such as anthropology, mythologies, cultural

²⁵ John Berger, "Why We Look at Animals," in *About Looking* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 1–26.

forms, symbol representation and so on. In depth study of state narrative, colonialism, orientalism, postcolonialism, and national narratives are extended in chapter 3, 4, and 5.

Connected to the research study, narrative from the State considers as a kind of ideological construct, emanated by the State institutions. The researcher studies the theoretical concept of ideology and the State structure as purposed by Louis Althusser. According to Althusser, the State is indispensable from the ideological apparatus. This ideological state apparatus (ISAs), mostly represented by institutions, are instilling ideologies in the peoples.²⁶ Based on his words, ideology is more likely a 'representation' of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence. The post office is an official State institution of Malaya and Malaysia until the 1990s. Within this time period, the institution potentially produced and reproduced products that instilling colonialism and nationalism. Postage stamp is one of its significant products. The peoples used the stamps in daily basis. Meanwhile, postage stamps act as the means to represent the lands / nation to its peoples as well as towards the other nations.

Last but not least, different ways of representation reflect different visual meanings. Based on the explanation of Stuart Hall, meaning can be produced or constructed based on systems of representation. This process involves the use of language, signs and images. A same image can deliver different meanings if it is represented in other forms or elements. The symbolic meanings may change due to the ways of presentation. Hence, these meanings are produced by the process of representation.²⁷

²⁶ Louis Althusser, "On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, ed. Ben Brewster (London: NLB, 1971), 149-155.

²⁷ Stuart Hall, "The Work of Representation." In *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices*, ed, Stuart Hall, Jessica Evans and Sean Nixon. (New York and California: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2013), 1-5.

This research studies representations as a visually constructed practice. Postage stamps service is a system that introduced by the Federal governments to represent their concepts. According to Louis Althusser explanation, ideology is a structure of ideas and representation that work at the level of our subjectivity.²⁸ Hence, when the certain sign is then represented and repeated, it integrated into our everyday acceptable norms or adoptable ‘consciousness’. Visual representation submitted to theoretical analysis is particularly emphasized in this research.

1.8 Method of Approach

This is a qualitative research writing. Hence, prolonged qualitative observations, theoretical framework and visual methodologies are adopted for this research writing. The researcher conducted 2 phases of methodological approaches: data collection / background understanding and visual methodology.

In first phase, the researcher accessed to the printed catalogue of postage stamps, selected and rearranged the postage stamps issued from years of 1867 to 1991. There is a two-rounds categorisation works for the postage stamps. Firstly, all postage stamps that issued between the time frame are garnered, then arranged them based on their State and topics to get a basic understanding of the overall distribution. Following that, the animal thematic stamps are being rearranged again to respective categories of species, states, and year issued.

The researcher’s main reference are the *Malaysia’s standard Stamp Catalogues* and *Stanley Gibbons Stamp Catalogue Part 1: British Commonwealth 1981*. Besides that, the

²⁸ Louis Althusser, “On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,” 149-155.

researcher also refers to the philatelic published books and related scholar articles, dissertations as well as journal published by the philatelic society. Therefore, frequent library visit is a must (For example, University of Malaya's Main Library and Za'ba library) as well as UM online database.

The researcher is likely to scan and obtains a digitalised version of postage stamps, in order to zoom-in and observe the detailed and tiny part of delineation. Apart of that, the writing statements are often attached with the definition of concept and contextual content avoid lapsing vagueness and obscurity. Therefore, site visits to Stamps Museum Melaka, Philately Society Malaysia, Pos Office Malaysia, Malaysia National Archive and other philately private collectors are necessary in order to garner philatelic knowledge.

In second phase, the categorised stamps are further analysed in relation to the visual representation by the State. Hence, the researcher refers to the critical visual methodologies proposed by Gillian Rose.²⁹ The researcher examines the animal images and think about its related natural and cultural condition such as the species' natural distribution and cultural association. Following that, the researcher studies the historical background, garners relative historical evidences and contextualise tentative arguments regarding the State's narratives in different eras.

1.9 Delimitations and Limitations / Scope of Research

The major delimitation for my research is the postcolonial period of the State narrative. Since the Malaysia post office has been privatized and becoming one of the Government-Link Companies in the 1st January 1992, the selection of postage stamps is restricted

²⁹ Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies* (London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2001).

before that date. This is because the privatization signifies that the post office is no longer fully deployed under the Federal government.

My second delimitation is the selection of region. Singapore was one of the main port of Straits Settlements during the British colonial era. Hence, the researcher studies the stamps of Singapore (if relevant) during that particular time period to understand the colonial State construct. However, after the British rule era, Singapore was a partnering founder of Malaysia for only two years. Thus, Singapore's stamp study is excluded during post-colonial era.

Third delimitation is the focus of animal thematic stamps. Since there are many different themes of stamp design, postage stamps with animal illustration are my main study material in this research.

An important limitation of my research is the collection of the actual stamp series for my primary data, especially for the old stamps. Since the old stamps are no longer been reprinted, most of them are untraceable and scattered in museum, archives, different philatelic enthusiast's collections or even destroyed. Hence, the researcher obtains the illustration of postage stamps from catalogue book instead of looking for the real stamps.

Moreover, image copyrights are another major limitation for this research writing as well. According to the Copyright Act 1987 (Malaysia), works of the Government, Government organizations and international bodies entitled with copyright protection of fifty years after its first published.³⁰ Published editions and other artistic works (photograph) share

³⁰ Intellectual Property Corporation of Malaysia, "Copyright Act 1987" (1987), <http://www.myipo.gov.my/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Copyright-Act-1987-Act-332.pdf>.

the same copyright duration as well. Hence, the researcher has to make sure no profit is derived from the reproduction works and only for educational purpose only.

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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 How Postage Stamps are being Studied across the Timeline

Early publications of the postage stamps were very diverse and random in term of topics. Edward J. Nankivell (1902) was among the earliest authors that came out with philatelic publications. He wrote *Stamp Collecting as a Pastime* upon his passionate plea as a philately collector. He ascertained that philately or stamp collecting is a time worthy hobby, not only suitable for children, but a serious pastime for everyone. Following that, there were similar newsletter, journal or books published based on philatelic theme. Many of them provided comprehensive knowledge regarding the postal history as well. William brothers, contributed to philatelic journals worldwide since 1943, published book entitled *The Postage Stamps* in 1956 provide comprehensive information of stamp making and its history. Bernard Feldman wrote a dissertation in 1950 providing a guide for young stamp collectors. In chapter 4, he emphasised how to classify the various stamps based on their nationality, divisions or types and other simple specializations.

Gradually, authors who wrote on postage stamps were more on reorganising or classifying regional postage stamps based on different themes or regions. Brief of background information was included as well. Similarly, James J. Finley's dissertation (1962), gleaned and rearranged the information on administrative aspects of United States postage stamps programs. Florescu and Spineanu (1966) recorded the various earlier themes of Romanian postage stamps, such as economy, literature and art, science and sport that were issued with different national events. Similarly, F.E. Wood and Edward B. Proud recorded the postal stamping information during colonial era in Malaya, published on 1961 and 1971 respectively. Moreover, there were periodical publications such as the *Gibbon Stamp Monthly*, *The American Philatelist*, and *The Malayan Philatelist* that focused on regional stamps' issues. These publications eventually became

important sources of information for historians and researchers. Reviewing of the past philatelic magazines, Alan Teh (2017) in the newspaper article of *New Straits Time* recognised the postage stamps as an important evidence for some historical incidents in British Malaya. For instance, the overprint of BMA MALAYA on the postage stamps of 1945s reflected the British military administration of Malaya after the Japanese occupation.

A breakthrough in postage stamps writing had taken place when the scholars, historian and researchers started to probe the visual meanings of postage stamps. As early as 1953, Harrison and Armstrong published *A New Approach to Stamp Collecting*, explored potential meanings in stamps in relation to stories or political propaganda. In other words, scholars studied stamps by looking at their symbolic meanings and visual representation.

Following that, scholar and researchers also studied the visual representation of thematic postage stamps in relation to different nations. For instances, Debra (1998) compared the higher education's visual representation in stamps of Japan, Kenya and Soviet Union. The relative representations of tertiary institution (university or literature) in stamps corresponded to how significant the Higher Education was to their respective countries. Christopher B Yardley (2015) and Don H. Smith (1963) both investigated on the visual representation of science and scientist on postage stamps. On the other hand, Smith studied the Science and Mathematics stamps from different countries and presented them as an additional data acquisitions for science, mathematics, and medicine subjects. Lin (2017) studied and compared the affinities of coconut definitive stamps among different states of the world such as Zanzibar, Kenya, Cayman Island and Malay states. Researcher Lin had presented a comprehensive study on the Malay state's stamps during colonial era. Das (2014) published a journal article namely *Herpetological material in philately issued from Malaysia* which drew attention to postage stamps of herpetofauna (reptiles and

amphibians) species that had so far been issued in Malaysia. The researcher pointed out that philatelic products featuring indigenous biodiversity of Malaysia, nevertheless, certain herpetological species (marine turtle as an example) are overrepresented while many more species in herpetofaunal group are underrepresented. This journal shares the similar interest of study with my research on animal thematic stamps, but its scope specified to stamps of herpetofaunas only.

Overall, there are different themes and topics of definitive, provisional and commemorative stamps were being studied over different eras and regions, nevertheless, very few researches and analytical studies focus on the animal thematic postage stamps.

2.2 Postage Stamps: Tools of State Narratives?

There are much more researches of postage stamps that associated with the different State narratives. This may due to the postage stamps were recognised as the product of the State's apparatus, the ministry or department that governed by the State in early years.

Many scholars discussed the topic of nation and the State narratives via visual representation of the postage stamps. They approached their researches via comparative studies of postage stamps across different nations. For example, David Scott (1955) studied how were the role plays of stamps in shaping and reflecting national identities for five European countries. Donald M.Reid (1984) elucidated the representation of the colonization and postcolonialism in Middle Eastern nation stamps. He looked into the stamps of Ottoman Empire (Turkey), Syria, Egypt and Lebanon, and found that there were mixture of Western and indigenous traditions embedded in those Islamic states' stamps. Similarly, Jack Child (2005) used semiotic approach to analyse the popular cultural art in different nations of Latin America. Child explained that the representation of collectively popular art in stamps contributes to the national identity constructs. Kevane (2008) analysed on the imageries on postage stamps related to the topics of nation

narratives of Sudan and Burkina Faso. He examined the topics from different perspectives such as political, multi-ethnic, ideological civil society aspects.

There are statements that related the design of postage stamps to the representations of British imperialism. Catherine J. Golden (2012) narrated the visual representation of Queen Elizabeth's stamp series. She proposed this stamp series conveyed a sense of symbolic meaning of the British Empire's longevity. She used the examples of postage stamps issued in Britain, Hong Kong, Uganda and so on. Keith Jeffery (2006) regarded the production and usage of Imperial Penny postage stamps as a working world system for consolidating the British Empire. He further exemplified his statement with the stamps of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Bahamas, Jamaica and so forth. Moreover, Dudley Stamp published a journal in *Geography*, 1966 that studied on maps in stamp's representation with special reference to the Commonwealth. He used historical representations of maps on stamps to trace historical claims on different territories. Their arguments have mainly exemplified the British imperial powers onto its territorial lands.

Yardley (2015) attributed that the relative representations issued in China, Soviet Russia and East Germany stamps were instilling techno-nationalism, whereas those issued in Antarctica nations appeared to be a political mean by the colonizers to demonstrate the Antarctic Treaty and encouragement on populating the area. Furthermore, Dawson (2016) studied the postage stamps in the aspect of imperialistic propaganda effect in 20 selected territorial claims in Europe, European Colonies and Asia.

Apart from that, some other scholars studied on different thematic stamps that issued or produced by the State. For examples, Peter Jones (2004) researched the Post Office commemorative thematic stamps that issued in Great Britain during 1960s, especially

those featuring British scientific and technological achievements. Jones argued that these series of stamps became a supporting part of the Labour's project to construct a mythic Britain identity that forging in the 'white heat' of the scientific revolution. Raento and Brunn (2005) discerned more than thousand visual representations of Finland stamps issued between 1917 to 2000, to study how the state's focus shifted from war to peace in the continental Finland. Similar with them, Sheila A. Brennam (2009) looked into different thematic stamps issued in 1880s to 1930s to build the American collective memories. These studies are recording the transformations encountered in particular regions.

Following that, researches also recorded the national transformation via different subject matters presented on stamps. The subjects changed, from colonial or imperial regimes towards the blossoms of new national identities reformation. Karen Lemiski (1999) who examined on Ukrainian postal system and stamps, showed that the national representation was much inherited from Soviet imperialism. Nevertheless, that the state government of Ukraine promoted another facet of national identity through the adoption of diasporan traditional symbols in postage stamps. Besides that, Elwyn Jenkins (2012) wrote on the representation of South Africa Rock Art on the stamps. It appeared to be a marginalized art that decorated colonial stamps and transformed to becoming national symbols in postage stamps.

Some of the scholars studied stamps as a representation of hegemonic power indeed. Albert Lawrence Moore (2011), in his master dissertation, studied postal propaganda of the Nazi in German. Alison Rowley (2000) also stated that the postage stamp is one of the main media to deliver gender messages and visual propaganda in Soviet 1930s. On the other hands, Ivan Greenberg (2015) investigated on United Stated "Bicentennial" and "Americana" stamps series. He therefore explained that both stamp series were aimed to

shape some specific historical memory and mythology. In some sense, it was intended to restore pride in government and frame the nation's founding as a triumphal heroic struggle.

Although researchers from different countries attributed the postage stamps to respective State's propaganda, there is still lacking analytical study on the postage stamps in relation to the State narratives for the regions of British Malaya, North Borneo, Sarawak as well as the Malaysia nowadays.

2.3 How State Narratives are being Studied via Visual Culture

State narratives are well-studied via different visual cultural form. Some researchers used stamps as one of their study materials. For instances, Vida Zei (1995) who worked on the case of Slovenia, examined the cultural-historical and social political representation of currencies, stamps, flags and anthems in a time of social and political change took place in Yugoslav and Slovene. Harcourt Fuller (2010) who studied on the case of Ghana elucidated the attempts of nationalist leader for constructing a homogenous national identity in between 1951 to 1966, via the strategy of visual propaganda as well. Other similar authors included Cesar Villalobos, the researcher analysed on archeological imageries in stamps, coins and museum brochures and bank notes, and associated them with the Mexican post-revolutionary in 2011. Apparently, postage stamp is one of the important sources of references for the national narratives.

Since the post offices are considered one of the government agencies, they are seen as the institutions of spreading political or national ideologies. The State is the locus of governmental construct, while stamps are the products of it. Hence, Stamps are part of the State narrative as well. However, the researcher found that there is a few of similar research studies worked on stamps study in Malaysia.

Many of the researches on Malaysia's national identities are rooted in a colonial or postcolonial perspective. The consensus finding is that the ideologies are instilled from the various policies implemented by State government. Hirschman (1987) researched on the census classification in Malaya and Malaysia. The different terms using in census table such as races or communities signifies different meanings too. Sheila Nair (1995) published her study based on the aspects of State's power and nation coercion in between Malaysia and Singapore. Danny Wong (2015) also conducted researches on the new identity formation of Sabah, which was the former state of North Borneo, shifted to be a part of the Malaysian nation. Based on the research collected, majority of them addressed or reflected the issues of communalism.

As mentioned above, there is a few researches studied on postage stamps of Malaysia. Instead, scholars studied the narrative of Malaysia's states in other visual forms. Some scholars conducted case study on the National Museum of Malaysia. For examples, Harris (2006) explored the considerations of constructing national identity in National Museum of Malaysia. He discussed on the displays in cultural gallery. Similarly, Hosseini (2016) approached visual analysis on the Museum's exhibitions to examine its role plays as the national cultural institution. Besides that, Nur Hanim, Yong and Sabapathy (2015) edited *Narratives in Malaysian Art: Imagining identities* to promote a greater understanding toward Malaysian Art, meanwhile documenting the social and cultural development. Ong and Ahmad (2015) examines on selected artworks produced by Malayan artists of Chinese descent between 1950s-60s to discuss the concept of national and cultural identity on the early stages of Malaya's Independence years. The artists employed non-essentialists concepts and the expressions of hybridity as their strategies to imply the Malayan nationalism. Lai (2007) studied the independent period of Malaysia via architecture. He selected 10 iconic national buildings that are built in between 1957 to 1966, and examined their structures, design concepts as well as their symbolic functions.

There are a lot of literatures and researches on the State narratives span across the different visual forms. Nevertheless, there is apparently few of studies on visual representation of Malaysia, that focus on the ideological construct between the colonial and postcolonial eras. Hence, the researcher works on the visual representation on Malaya and Malaysia in postage stamps, straddles between colonial and postcolonial eras.

2.4 Conclusion

This literature review session records how postage stamps being studied since 1900s onwards. Massive numbers of dissertation papers and academic journals indicated postage stamp is a noteworthy historical evidence. Besides that, it exemplifies postage stamp as a part of the state narratives regardless eras or nations. However, Malayan, North Bornean, Sarawak and Malaysian postage stamps have not been analytically studied by the scholars yet. If any, there are anecdotal writing by the private collectors, via their personal or society's blog pages, website as well as journals. Hence, this research attempts to contribute further understanding on discourse of colonial and postcolonial state narratives via the study of visual representations in postage stamps.

Despite of being non-academic references, journals of Philatelic Society Malaysia, Malayan Study group and blog page of "my North Borneo stamps" are my source hubs as they garnered large numbers of private collectors' discussion topics on miscellaneous thematic stamps. Discussion topics are surrounded on overprints and frequent definitive stamps, nevertheless, rarely discuss on the visual representations of stamps. Discussion on animal thematic stamps occurred sometimes, but only a few paragraphs of description, introducing the animal species that issued in postage stamps. By gathered the animal thematic stamps that had so far been issued by the British Colonial and Malaysia State, the researcher would like to record the changes of animal representation in these visual materials of the State across different eras. This is due to numerous researchers studied

on the visual representation of national identities for Malaya Federation or Malaysia, very few of the analytical researches span of colonial North Borneo or Sarawak. Whilst animal thematic postage stamps are the common visual materials of these lands, this research aids to underline the parts of ideologies envisaged by the State in a more general way.

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CHAPTER 3: ANIMALS STAMPS ACROSS THE ERAS

This chapter generally recaps the significant changes of my subject matters and decorative art across eras. It records the overall distribution of animal species issued on postage stamps from the colonial to the postcolonial. Besides that, it also jotted down a broader overview of stamp's decorative art internationally to discern any remarkable design trend. By further comparing the visual representations of the same thematic stamps across eras, the research able to identify the difference versus similarities in relation to mode of perceptions or artistic approaches between the Colonial and Postcolonial State.

3.1 Framework of State Narratives

Narrative is “a representation of a causally related series of events” as explained by Richardson.³¹ In addition, Fotis Jannidis summarised the gist of ‘narrative’ is the representation of a certain object which exhibits a certain set of properties.³² Thus, this research refers to the animal stamps issued by the State as the core study object, narrating the changes of federal ideologies via visual representations in the animal species.

Since “narrative” shed light on a series of related events, state narratives on the stamps must involve at least two events or temporal moments that communicated by State. Hence, although the visual representation is my main narrative study, contextual study and historical background are equally important to support the depicted statement. Other than examining different visual representations of the main subject (animals), the researcher also takes account of the changes of art styles and decorative art on the stamps.

³¹ Fotis Jannidis, “Narratology and the Narrative,” in *What Is Narratology?: Questions and Answers Regarding the Status of a Theory*, ed. Tom Kindt and Hans-Harald Muller (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003), 35–54.

³² Ibid.

3.2 Selection of Animals Species from the Colonial to the Postcolonial

Before the 1st January 1992, selective animal species were featured in the stamps despite of their populations. According to the Encyclopedia of Malaysia Volume 3 Animals, Malaysia's equatorial climate has resulting diversified living species of flora and fauna that are far more than ten-thousand kinds.³³ There are numerous of them are endemic species that natively found in the regions of Malaysia only. Despite of ten-thousands more species are recorded in the Encyclopedia of Malaysia (first published in 1998), there are roughly 80 species in overall are presented in postage stamps until the 1990s. Table below is the summarized animals species distribution that had so far been issued on postage stamps prior to 1 January 1992:

Table 3. 1: Animals Thematic Stamps Distribution from 1860s to 1991.³⁴

<i>YEARS</i>	<i>1880-1908</i>	<i>1909-1928</i>	<i>1929-1948</i>	<i>1949-1958</i>	<i>1959-1978</i>	<i>1979-1992</i>
<i>MAMMAL</i>						
<i>Felidae</i>	(1) 1883 - Lion		(4) 1931 –	(5) 1957 –	(6) 1961 –	(7) 1979 - Tiger
<i>Big Cat</i>	(1) 1881 - Tiger (2) 1895 - Tiger (3) 1900 – Tiger		Clouded leopard	Tiger	Cd. Leopard (North Borneo)	(8) 1987 Cd. leopard Golden cat Flat-Headed cat Marbled cat

³³ Hoi Sen Yong, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Malaysia Volume 3 Animals* (Singapore and Kuala Lumpur: Archipelago Press, 1998).

³⁴ Information collected from *Standard Stamp Catalogue Book Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei 30th Edition* and *Stanley Gibbons Stamp Catalogue Part 1: British Commonwealth 1981*. Since some of the animal stamps were on sales for than a year or reprinted after several years with minor changes on the price statement and decorative designs, the researcher categorised them based on their first issue year only.
*Species that are not specific.

Deer	(1) 1894 - Sambar				(2) 1961 - Sambar (North Borneo)	(3) 1979 – Mousedeer
Primate	(1) 1897 - Ape		(2) 1931 - Orangutan (3) 1939 - Proboscis	(4) 1950 – Western tarsier (Sarawak) (5) 1955 - Orangutan (Sarawak)		(6) 1979 – Orangutan (7) 1979 – Flying Lemur (8) 1985 – Slow Loris (9) 1989- Gibbon
Bear	(1) 1897 – Bear				(2) 1961 – Sun bear (North Borneo)	
Elephant	(1) 1985 – Elephant	(2) 1909 – Elephant				
Tapir		(1) 1909 - Tapir				(2) 1979 – Tapir
Rhino		(1) 1909 - Rhino			(2) 1961 – Rhino (North Borneo)	
Cow		(1) 1909 – Buffalo (2) 1909 – Cow (3) 1912 – Buffalo			(4) 1959 – Buffalo (5) 1961 – Buffalo	(6) 1979 - Gaur
Pangolin				(1) 1950 – Pangolin (Sarawak)		(2) 1979 - Pangolin
Others		(1) 1909 – Boar				(1) 1985 - Linsang

						(1) 1985 – Flying Squirrel
BIRDS						
Hornbill		(1) 1909 - Hornbill		(2) 1955 - Hornbill (Sarawak)	(3) 1961 – Hornbill (North Borneo) (4) 1965 - Hornbill	1983 – Hornbill Series (5) Helmeted Hornbill (6) Knobbed Hornbill (7) White Crowned Hornbill (8) Rhinoceros Hornbill
Partridge (Roul Roul)				(1) 1961 – Partridge (North Borneo) (2) 1965 – Partridge		
Pheasant	(1) 1894 – Pheasant				(2) 1965 – Great Argus Pheasant	1986 – Pheasant Series (3) Great Argus (4) Bulwer’s Pheasant (5) Crested Fireback Pheasant (6) Malaysian Peacock Pheasant (7) 1986 – Pheasant
Others		(1) 1909 – Parrot (1) 1909 – Cassowary*			1965 – Nasional Birds Series (1) Irena puella (1) Asian Paradise Flycatcher (1) Gold-whiskered Barbet (1) Black-naped Oriole (1) Zebra Dove	(1) 1988 – Passerine Series - Black-naped Monarch - Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker - Crimson Sunbird - Black & Red Broadbill
REPTILE						

<i>Turtles</i>				(1) 1955 - Turtle (Sarawak)		(2) 1979 – Turtle Series (2) Leatherback Turtle (3) Green Turtle (4) Olive Ridley (5) Hawksbill
<i>Others</i>	(1) 1894 – Crocodile					
<i>INSECT S</i>						
<i>Butterfly</i>				(1) 1950 – Troides Brookiana (Sarawak)	1970 Butterflies Series (2) Euploea leucostictus (3) Zeuxidia amethystus (4) Polyura athamas (5) Papilio Memnon (6) Appias nero (7) Trogonoptera brookiana (8) Narathura centaurus (9) Terinos terpander 1971 Butterflies Definitives (10) Delias ninus (11) Danaus m.hegesippus (12) Parthenos s. lilacinus (13) Papilio d. malayanus (14) Hebomoia g. aturia (15) Precis o. wallacei	

				(16) Valeria v. lutescens	
<i>Others</i>					<p>1991 – Wasps Series</p> <p>(1) Eustenogaster calyptodoma</p> <p>(2) Vespa a. indonensis</p> <p>(3) Sceliphorn javanum</p> <p>(4) Ampulex compressa</p>
UNDERWATER					
<i>Fishes</i>					<p>1983 – Freshwater Fish Series</p> <p>(1) Tilapia nilotica</p> <p>(2) Cyprinus carpie</p> <p>(3) Puntius ponionotus</p> <p>(4) Ctenpharyngodon idellus</p>
<i>Others</i>					<p>1988 – Marine Life I</p> <p>(1) Glossodoris atromarginata</p> <p>(2) Phyllidia ocellata</p> <p>(3) Chromodoris annae</p> <p>(4) Flabellina macassarana</p> <p>(5) Fryeria ruppelli</p> <p>(6) Pomacanthus annularis</p> <p>1989 – Marine Life II</p>

						(1) Dainty crab
						(2) Porcelain crab
						(3) Little shrimp
						(4) Pistol Shrimp

Table 3.1 continued.

In details, mammal species had the largest number of varieties founded among the animal thematic stamps, there were approximately 33 mammal species of them were presented from pre-independence era to 1991, meanwhile, North Borneo (nowadays Sabah) contributed majority of the animal thematic stamps during colonial era. Based on Francis and Payne in their *A Field Guide to the Mammals of Borneo*, published by the Sabah Society, indicated that 221 species approximately of wild land mammals have been recorded in Borneo alone, of which 92 species are bats.³⁵ However, the species of bats were never appeared in the thematic stamps. Apparently, the mammal stamps as an example, indicates that those fauna species that we found in the postage stamps of North Borneo, Sarawak, British Malaya and Malaysia were underwent a selection process. Hence, the species on postage stamps were selected by the State (government) intentionally based on their potential meanings qualitatively but not upon their populations in the region. These selected species are significant in some ways to represent the regions, or “express” the state narratives across eras.

3.3 Animal Species across Eras

In overall distribution, certain animal species such as Felidae (big cats), primates, hornbills, and cows were appeared more frequent as compared to the others. These species group were having at least two issues prints by the same State’s publication in both

³⁵ Junaidi Payne and Charles M. Francis, *A Field Guide to the Mammals of Borneo*, 3rd ed. (Kota Kinabalu: The Sabah Society, 1998), 13.

colonial and postcolonial eras. Following that, the presence of these species in both eras enabled the researcher to further study and identify the nuances of visual representations that took place in the stamp's imageries over different time periods.

3.3.1 Felidae Series: Tigers

In this subsection, the researcher scrutinises the Felidae species selections, followed by comparing the visual representations and artistic approach of tigers in stamps, to identify the different mode of perception towards the Felidae group (especially tiger) during the colonial and postcolonial eras.



Figure 3. 1: Felidae species from colonial era (upper row) to postcolonial era (bottom row).

Amongst animal stamps, stamps featuring the tiger are highly favoured and its popularity as a subject goes all the way back to the 19th century. In Figure 3.1, we can see Felidae thematic stamps that arranged accordingly to the timeline, started at 1891: tigers and clouded leopards are issued or reselected in colonial era (upper row of Figure 3.1). The tiger appearances in postal stamps or stationaries are persistently highlighted after colonial era (lower row of Figure 3.1). In example of Figure 3.2, a set issue of smaller Felidae species (Golden Cat, Flat Headed Cat, Marbled Cat and clouded leopard) was

issued in 1987. Although the tiger or the *Panthera tigris* was not selected in this Felidae issue (*Protected Wildlife of Malaysia Stamp Series III*), however, its big head has been illustrated predominantly in the first-day-cover (FDC) envelop along with its four Felidae family (Figure 3.2).



Figure 3. 2: First Day Cover, *Protected Wildlife of Malaysia Series III* issued in 1987.



Figure 3. 3: Tiger stamps in different Malay States, 1891-1895.

Apart from its frequent issues, tiger also became the key plate stamps where its duty plates³⁶, were printed in different colours according to different Federated Malay States

³⁶ Key plate and duty plate stamps were made when the printing process splits into two, firstly is the use of a key plate (or head plate) for the bulk of the design and followed by a separate duty plate for the name

(FMS) such as Sungai Ujong, Perak, Selangor and Pahang (Examples in Figure 3.3 and 3.4). Despite the tigers were frequently featured in postage stamps or postal stationaries, each of them was represented differently as its meanings are changing relentlessly (whether in nuances, detailed or major change) along with the time or the meanings shifted accordingly with different cultural narratives.³⁷ Moreover, the frequent featuring of tiger and how it's representations constantly changed in different stamp issues are explicitly attributed tiger as an expository subject matter from the colonial to the postcolonial.

First of all, its predominant appearances stamp issues in British Malaya might exemplify that tiger binds a special affinity with the lands of Malay Peninsula, or in a broader view of Malay Archipelago.



Figure 3. 4: Tiger stamps in different Malay States, 1895-1899.

In most colonial stamps, only the Sultan were entitled to be featuring in their respective Malay States. The tiger, however, straddled the boundaries of different Malay Sultanate monarchs and became the shared issued stamps of Federated Malaya States (Examples in

of the colony and the value. Hence, the stamps were sharing similar design but varied in different details and values.

³⁷ Stuart Hall, "The Work of Representation," in *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices*, ed. Jessica Evans and Sean Nixon Stuart Hall (New York and California: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2013).

Figure 3.3 and 3.4). Although buffalos and elephants appeared in the stamps of Malay Sultanate States too, their appearances were more likely a supporting role of men's activities. In the stamps showcased in Figure 3.5 and 3.6, elephants are a part of transportation's mean of royal members while the domesticated cows are ploughing the field with the farmer. On the other hand, tigers are endowed the leading role in different stamp issues. They have been showcased in side view (Figure 3.3) and close-up "portrait" view (Figure 3.4) too. On the top of "tiger portrait" stamps of 1895-99, a reverse crescent and stars may possibly symbolise Islamic art decoration too.



Figure 3. 5: Elephant stamp in different Malay States, 1895-1922.



Figure 3. 6: Cow stamp of Kedah States 1912.

The relation of Malay Sultanate and the Tiger might begin with the reverence towards an anthropomorphic and supernatural shaman's myth, *Pak Belang* (Mr. Stripe).³⁸ The myths of were-tiger or *harimau jadian* are rife in Malay and *Orang Asli*'s folklores.³⁹ Malays would not call *harimau* (tiger) its name in the forest, rather, they addressed Him as *Pak*

³⁸ Yong, *The Encyclopedia of Malaysia Volume 3 Animals*, 22.

³⁹ Joane le Roux, "In Pursuit of a Were-Tiger," *New Strait Time*, November 2, 2015, <https://www.nst.com.my/news/2015/09/pursuit-were-tiger>.

Belang (Mr. Stripe), *Tuhan utan* (Lord of the Woods) or other similar synonyms.⁴⁰ These mythological stories that passing from generation to generation may conjure faith and belief regarding mythical tiger among the natives as well as local residents. According to the publication of Sir Richard Olaf Winstedt,⁴¹ the were-tigers did exist and disguised themselves as the “Malay magicians” who guards the princess of Mountain Ophir (more commonly addressed as Mountain Ledang by the locals).⁴² In other words, the tigers were most frequently selected in Peninsula’s postage stamps, possibly because of its common role or “signifier” among different Malay Sultanate States that recalled and united the collective belief of were-tiger as the Malay guardian.⁴³ In some senses, these “well-known” and circulated mythologies attributed tiger with the spiritual representations that safeguard and empowered the State.

Furthermore, the longevity of tiger’s featuring in official publications has gradually established certain national narrative toward the locals as well as foreigners. Tiger is the subject that representing official Malay’s identities. Despite of being the first ever local animal species in stamps since 1891,⁴⁴ tiger is the represented species for Federated

⁴⁰ Sabri Zain, “Tiger Tales from Colonial Malaya,” 2010, www.malaya.org.uk.

⁴¹ Sir Richard Olaf Winstedt (1878-1966) was a former British colonial administrator in several Federated Malay States. He used to be the district officer of Kuala Pilah and became the director of education in 1924. His scholar works included Malay lexicography, folklore as well as history of Malaya. More information: “Richard Olaf Winstedt,” *Singapore Infopedia* (National Library Board Singapore, n.d.), http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/infopedia/articles/SIP_1629_2010-01-30.html.

⁴² Richard Olof Winstedt, *The Malay Magician : Being Shaman, Saiva and Sufi* (Kuala Lumpur & London: Oxford University Press & Routledge, 1982).

⁴³ Hall, “The Work of Representation.”

⁴⁴ Before the tiger stamps of 1891, the England Lion had appeared and first issued in North Borneo’s stamps of 1883. It is one of the Borneo’s earliest stamp, however, the England Lion served as kind of peripheral symbolic representation rather than a subject matter. This Bornean stamps are further discussed on Chapter 4.

Malay States' stamps in 1900, and tiger was also the first animal to associate with sultan's portraits in 1957, during the significant Independent Year of Malaya (Figure 3.7).



Figure 3. 7: Tiger stamps of Malaya 1957 (associated with sultans of different Malay States).

The official recognition of tiger in national narrative is built upon reselection and representation mechanism in the institutions which incorporated in Ideological State Apparatus.⁴⁵ The selection of tiger on postage stamps became more reasonable and “real” when similar practices reproduced again and again in official disseminations. Other than postage stamps, tiger also the preferable choice to be featured on the Federated Malay States’ Flag and coat of arms (Figure 3.8 and 3.9) as well as Kelantan State’s Flag (Figure 3.10). In short, system of reiterating or reinterpretation of tiger in official disseminations whether in postage stamps or flags eventually constructed certain national identities for Malay States. Design concept of the coat of arms for modern Malaysia (Figure 3.11) is similar with previous coat of arms for the Federated Malay States (Figure 3.9), both featuring with two tigers but the later included emblems and representative colours of different states. Relooking the Tiger’s stamps, flag and coat of arms, the researcher discerns there are inscription of Jawi script together with the official dissemination. This might suggest the selection of subject matter in official publications such as postage

⁴⁵ Louis Althusser, “On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,” in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, ed. Ben Brewster (London: NLB, 1971), 171.

stamps or flag goes through a series negotiating process between Colonial administrator and the Malay royal members or elites during colonial era, whereas Malay's representation is possibly one of the main considerations for tiger selection.



Figure 3. 8: The flag of the Federated Malay States (*Negeri-negeri Melayu Bersekutu*) in 1905 to 1950.



Figure 3. 9: The coat of arms for the Federated Malay States also featured two tigers.



Figure 3. 10: Kelantan Flag in 1912-1923 was featuring a tiger shaped in blue calligraphic script.



Figure 3. 11: The coat of arms for the modern Malaysia.

On the other hands, North Borneo introduced clouded leopard, the largest wild cat species in Borneo as tiger does not exist in Borneo island. Leopard was always called as small tiger, spotted tiger or black tiger in the early European nomenclature.⁴⁶ Zooming into the

⁴⁶ Ibid, 30.

colonial stamps (Figure 3.12), clouded leopard is exaggeratedly depicted in term of size (almost similar with the tiger) and the researcher discerns this species because clouded leopard is an arboreal species while tiger is unable to climb up tree. Clouded leopard also been called as *harimau akar* (root tiger), *harimau dahan* (branch tiger) and *harimau daun* (leaf tiger) in Malay or Indonesian languages.⁴⁷ Hence, clouded leopard is commonly regarded as one of the subspecies of the tiger by the Malay since early years of the colonial era. Despite of its limited population, clouded leopard is largely restricted to the Malay Archipelago or Southeast Asia lands.⁴⁸ Hence, these might suggest that the clouded leopards, are considered akin to the species of tiger, to being selected and represented one of the species of Malay Archipelago.



Figure 3. 12: Clouded leopards in stamps of North Borneo, 1931 and 1961.

Apart from being the identical species for Malay world, tiger was one of the representations of bigger Asiatic land as well. According to the Descriptive Dictionary of British Malaya in 1894, tiger (*Felis Tigris*) is defined as a “dangerous animal that frequents in the Peninsula, and occasionally found in Singapore, Malacca and Province

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Peter Boomgard, *Frontier of Fears: Tigers and People in the Malay World, 1600–1950* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2001), 35.

Wellesley. The tiger of the Malayan countries is the same as that of India”⁴⁹ The first sentence in this definition enunciates how prominent a tiger featured in Malay (Peninsula) lands. It is a threatening but undisputedly the strongest species ought to be represent Malay lands on the stamps. Following by the second sentence, we may find out that tiger was perhaps, the greatest animal species in Malay lands which once revered as the “Lord of the Woods” by the Malays, nevertheless, similar tiger species (regarded as the same species by the Colonial State) were roaming freely in India too. Reading the definition of “tiger” in the Dictionary of British Malaya again, it probably reflects a two-levels dualism in the statement of tiger. Firstly, the tiger is dangerous and harmful to humans but not vice versa, as this species is pinpointed as the antagonist that threatening the human. Secondly, the Malayan tiger is the same with the Indian tiger because each tiger was the Tiger, they were here and there.⁵⁰ Each tiger is the same dangerous Tiger, as they all belong to the Other’s wild land. In previous paragraphs, we learn that tiger was a prominent figure in the Malay’s culture and its frequent selection for the stamps is not merely a coincidence. Tiger was selected and reselected, most probably its presence was greatly favoured by the Malay royal or elites, and these selections were “approved” by the colonial officers as well since they acted as the sultan’s advisors during colonial era. Therefore, tiger might be selected due to its proximity towards Malay’s culture and it was strongest national representation. However, for a broader colonial viewpoint, Malay Peninsula or Malay Archipelago was regarded as a part of the Asia while the tiger is one of the great Asiatic or Oriental representation in the colonial lens instead.

⁴⁹ Nicholas Belfield Dennys, *Descriptive Dictionary of British Malaya* (London: London and China Telegraph Office, 1894), <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/printheritage/detail/aea703a6-d3b0-4a4e-956b-82390c582891.aspx>.

⁵⁰ Berger, “Why We Look at Animals.”



Figure 3. 13: Recapturing tiger’s illustration in stamps during colonial era.

During colonial era, the tiger illustrative details in postage stamps reflected certain Oriental narratives, where tiger belongs to the species of Other lands. Recapturing the depiction of tigers that issued under British Colonial State, the researcher identifies similarities in the way of delineations: the tiger is growling fiercely and pounces out from bushes, indicating to an action of sneak attack. Unlike the lion’s posture in British stamps of Postal Union (Figure 3.14), strong physical appearance with muscular body to imply solidity, stands still and roars, as a sign to fear the intruders away from encroaching its family pride as well as warns its pride for the potential danger.⁵¹ Although both lion and tiger are considered the harmful predator in Felidae family group, the previous one is incarnated with a positive spirit of strong protector, while the latter is portrayed as a sneak attacker under the colonial lens. During colonial era, certain official representations have suggested a distinction between East and West, where the East or Orient, was the stereotypes of wild and inferior lands.⁵² Comparing the depictions of (British) lion and (British Malayan) tiger on postage stamps, the researcher observes an explicit dichotomy

⁵¹ National Geographic, “About The African Lion,” 2015, <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/a/african-lion/>.

⁵² Edward Said, *Orientalism*, First (London and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1978).

between the representation on these big felines, to which tiger's wild vicious facet was highlighted in official publications while lion upheld an ideal imperial image.



Figure 3. 14: British stamps of Postal Union Congress 1929.

In some sense, these tiger depictions matched the description in Western novels, as tiger is a notorious “stalk and ambush” predator.⁵³ Mary Bradley who joining the big game hunting in India and Sumatra wrote:

“Never in my life had I seen such a picture. Elephants by moonlight, lions at dawn, gorillas at blazing noon I had seen, but nothing was ever so beautiful and so glorious to me as that tiger walking out of his jungle. He was everything that was wild and savage, lordly and sinister.”⁵⁴

The tiger, from the Western point of view, is constructed to be a game killer, cattle-slayer, and the most threatening man-eater.⁵⁵ Regardless of the novel and literature depiction, the Colonial administrators in 1880s did publish an annual statistic reporting the toll of killed

⁵³ Boomgard, *Frontier of Fears: Tigers and People in the Malay World, 1600–1950*, 26.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Boomgard, *Frontier of Fears: Tigers and People in the Malay World, 1600–1950*, 61.

by tigers and leopards in India, Sumatra and Java to showcase how dangerous of this representative species in the land of Asia.⁵⁶ Trophies and rewards (around \$100 each) were given for the tiger hunter as tiger was threatening livestock and particularly “troublesome”.⁵⁷ Hence, the Oriental representative animals, tigers were publicly denounced and it provided a rational reason for the Westerner colonialism or intervention to “rescue” and “civilize” the peoples in the East.⁵⁸ In other words, through the countless representations of tigers in publications and official announcements, tigers were being tagged or labeled as dangerous species in the colonial ideological state apparatuses to rationalize the massive numbers of tiger hunting or execution.

However, despite that tigers were constructed as vicious predators, sneaked out from the bushes and acting to attack the livestock as shown in the official dissemination of postage stamps, the natives of Malaya remained a friendly yet sacred reverence for the tiger. Peter Boomgard described this relationship as “a symbol of the frontier between nature and culture”.⁵⁹ In the Malayan myths, native residents believed some revered shamans could transform themselves into tiger, to whom they called the *Pak Belang*, Mr. Stripe or were tigers.⁶⁰ Moreover, there natives in Java, Bali, Sumatra and Malay believed that the tigers inhabited their ancestral spirits.⁶¹ Therefore, tiger was not considered a menace to the

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ “Untitled,” *The Straits Times*, August 6, 1920, [http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/straitstimes19200806-1.2.34?ST=1&AT=search&k=tiger rewards&QT=tiger,rewards&oref=article](http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/straitstimes19200806-1.2.34?ST=1&AT=search&k=tiger%20rewards&QT=tiger,rewards&oref=article).

⁵⁸ Said, *Orientalism*.

⁵⁹ Peter Boomgard, *Frontier of Fears: Tigers and People in the Malay World, 1600–1950* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2001), 224.

⁶⁰ Yong, *The Encyclopedia of Malaysia Volume 3 Animals*, 22..

⁶¹ Malayan Banking Berhad, *Majestic Stripes : The Malayan Tiger*, ed. Celina May Benjamin and Salt Media Consultancy Sdn. Bhd. (Kuala Lumpur: Malayan Banking Berhad, 2010), 42.

villagers, yet regarded as the “ancestral protectors” to the villages.⁶² Based on the description, the natives seemingly had a spiritual affinity with the tigers. Moreover, some of the locale groups, the Malayan Semang⁶³ were appreciated to the tiger for his (its) help to spare some hunting food with them.⁶⁴ This is because in most case, a tiger could not devour its killed prey in one go, thus, the tribal villagers would have the chances to share its leftovers afterwards.⁶⁵ Figure 3.15 also portrayed an Indian costumed woman adopted tiger cubs as her pet in Penang Island, the Straits Settlement of British Malaya. Hence, the depiction of the attacking tigers and growling face in the postage stamps may represent the vicious and evil semblance of the tiger, it was mainly the narratives from the Colonial State government, nonetheless, official narratives did not utterly reflect the views of their peoples.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Malayan Semang is an ethnic group of indigenous peoples whose settlement in the northern part of Peninsula Malaysia, included Kedah and Perak. They are the oldest ethnic group in Peninsula that arriving at least 25 000 years. For more information: Alias Abd Ghani and Salasiah Che Lah, “The Semang Kensiu Orang Asli of Lubuk Legong, Baling: Their Language And Cultural Endangerment,” *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 208 (2015): 21–30, doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.11.177.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.



Figure 3. 15: Postcard featuring the Indian women and tiger cubs. Source National Archive.

In fact, massive number of tigers had been hunted in the sport games due to the “triumph of Man over the beast” as well as high demand of tiger parts in traditional medicine.⁶⁶ Some Western writers even mentioned that “to meet and overcome a tiger is probably the first great ambition of every young big game hunter”.⁶⁷ Tigers eventually became the target of hunters worldwide to collect trophies, received rewards, and achieved the “triumph over beast”. Hence, the researcher suggests that the visual representations of tiger in the postal imageries were matching the wilderness depiction with those in Western literatures. The writing publications and visual representations were coherent in the

⁶⁶ Malayan Banking Berhad, *Majestic Stripes : The Malayan Tiger*, 46.

⁶⁷ Wardrop and Morris, *Days and Nights with Indian Big Game* (London: Macmillan, 1923), 4.

colonial discourse, which ratified the evil side of tiger, convincing the (Westerner) readers to take up the hunter or ruler role over this (Oriental) land.



Figure 3. 16: Comparison of tiger's closeup depictions in colonial stamps (1895) and in the early postcolonial stamp (Malaya 1957).

After reviewing the England lion's stamps and British Malaya colonial tiger stamps, we further delve into the comparison of tiger stamps from the colonial to the postcolonial, to identify similarities and differences in the tiger's delineations in relation to different narratives. During the transitional years of Malayan Independence and Malaysia formation, the tiger thematic stamps were re-introduced with the association of Malay state's emblem or the Malay royal portrait issued in between 1957 to 1960. The closeup tiger stamp in 1957 resembles with the previous colonial tiger stamp issued in 1895 (Figure 3.16), noteworthy similarities in both of their decorative art that embodied the elements of Malay religion and culture. In the colonial tiger stamp of 1896, there is an unusual reverse crescent and star positioning at top of the frame, the star lays within the arch of crescent signifying to the Islamic symbol. Meanwhile, there is some native art decorating the left frame of Malaya tiger stamps of 1957. Again, the supportive Malay native elements in the decorative art has suggested that tiger is similarly associated or represent the Malayan archipelago the colonial to the postcolonial. However, there are nuances between their facial expression when having a closer look on the delineation of

tigers. the colonial stamp's tiger is growling while exposing their canine teeth, its ears is flattening down expressing a hostile and ready-to-attack mode. Meanwhile, tiger in the latter postcolonial stamp bares its teeth too but do not growl, its ears are held upright as usual indicates it is on alert but not attacking. While the close-up tiger head in the first-day-cover of *Protected Wildlife of Malaysia Series III* (Figure 3.2) focused on delineation of the tiger's gaze rather than its canine teeth. Therefore, even though the representation of tigers is similar with each other, the nuances in tiger's expressions might explain that each illustration on the stamps is not a mimesis image that simply copying the instance of real scene, instead of that, each stamp's illustration is an independent narrative image, that depicting tigers with intended meanings.



Figure 3. 17: Comparison of tiger's side view depictions in colonial stamps (1891 and 1900) and in the postcolonial stamp (Malaya 1979).

Similar example is exemplified in the side view depictions in between colonial tiger stamps and Malaysia tiger stamps in 1979 (Figure 3.17). Even though their background setting has similar bushes, the tiger in later stamp of 1979 no longer covered its body part in the bushes. All three tigers are represented as aggressive as they are logging on their target. The earlier colonial tiger sneak or pounce out from the bushes to attack their target. Meanwhile, the later postcolonial stamp's tiger bend down its body, reflected it is on defensive mode. Its tail is lying low and ears are hold upright but not tight, indicated that it is growling or roaring to declare its dominance or defense its territory instead of ready-

to-attack. These nuances of tiger depictions recorded on stamps have suggested several tentative narratives from the Postcolonial Malaysia State: Firstly, the image of tigers has changed from threatening species to protected or endangered animal species due to the dwindling numbers of wild tigers in Malaysia. Secondly, the Postcolonial State intended to demarcate colonial narratives regarding the tigers and its lands by changing the way of tiger delineation in stamps.

3.3.2 Primates Series: Orangutan

Abundant rainforest of Malaysia is the habitat of the various arboreal species. In zoology definition, primates, refers to the species that having flexible hands and feet with opposable thumbs, good eyesight, and a bigger developed brain as compared to its body weight. Hence, primates include lemurs, lorises, monkeys, apes (and humans as well).⁶⁸The frugivorous or omnivorous primates who feed on fruits and insects, are well-adapted with the layering structures of tropical rainforest. They are the good climbers and capable of swinging swiftly in the rainforest's canopy with their long and flexible hands.

Several primate species were selected to feature in the postage stamps the colonial to the postcolonial. They are Orangutan (1897, 1931, 1955 and 1979), proboscis (1939), western tarsier (1950), Cobego or Flying Lemur (1979), slow loris (1985) and monkey gibbon (1989). Orangutan is the most popular selection among them.

⁶⁸ Colin Peter Groves and J.R. Napier, "Primate," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed April 24, 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/animal/primate-mammal>.



Figure 3. 18: Zoom-into primate species of stamp 1897-1902.



Figure 3. 19: Stamp of Orangutan, 1931.



Figure 3. 20: Stamp of Orangutan, 1955-1957.

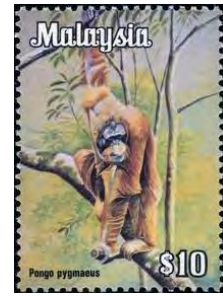


Figure 3. 21: Stamp of Orangutan, 1979.

Orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*) is the endemic species of Borneo and Sumatra.⁶⁹ Its name, *orang (h)utan* is translated from Malay with meaning “forest man”, nevertheless, natives of Borneo called it in different names such as *kogiu*, *kahui*, *kisau* and *maias*.⁷⁰

Four times nomination of Orangutan in postage stamps have captured this species in different angles, whether at close-up shot, long shot, front view and side view (Figure 3.18 to 3.21). Their postures and facial expressions depicted are calm and emotionless along the eras and hence, no noteworthy featuring on the behaviour representation. However, there is an obvious change in the depiction technique. Orangutan featured in the earliest issue 1897 (Figure 3.18) is more likely a mix-breed species of primate. It has no large face, rare but long hairs, round belly and big forehead like the Orangutan does. This creature resembles the thinner body of African chimpanzee but possesses an odd large nose of proboscis monkey. When the researcher compared the Orangutan’s

⁶⁹ “Orang-Utan,” *WWF Malaysia*, accessed October 12, 2018, http://www.wwf.org.my/about_wwf/what_we_do/species_main/orang_utan/.

⁷⁰ Yong, *The Encyclopedia of Malaysia Volume 3 Animals.s*

delineation in its next three issued stamps, the depictions are having closer affinity to the real scenes. Thus, the depiction in the postage stamps is getting more naturalistic and realistic that similar with other animal represented in the postage stamps.

3.3.3 Hornbills Series: Rhinoceros Hornbill

Among the bird species, Rhinoceros Hornbill is the most frequent bird species in postage stamps across the era. The ways of Rhinoceros Hornbills' representation in postage stamps are quite neutral as their perspective views and featuring posture have no much changes across the eras. As shown in Figure 3.22, Rhinoceros Hornbills are depicted in their side views and most of them are resting at the tree branch (though slightly difference in stamps of 1965 where the Rhinoceros Hornbill is feeding its partner near the tree hole). The Rhinoceros Hornbill is featured in the state crest of Sarawak, which is often called "Lands of the Hornbills". This species is eventually become the special representation in the coat of arms for Sarawak State.



Figure 3. 22: Rhinoceros Hornbill featured in postage stamps across era: (from left) Stamp of North Borneo in 1909, stamp of Sarawak in 1955, stamp of North Borneo in 1961, stamp of Malaysia in 1965 and stamp of Malaysia in 1983.

Hornbills are often associated with Sarawak because of its strong cultural significance to the tribes in Sarawak. For example, carved wooden hornbills or *burung kenyalang* (Figure 3.23) display in the *gawai kenyalang* (hornbill ritual) for Iban's festive. Its swirling casque, elongated tails and decurved beak highlighting the features of Rhinoceros, meanwhile, these exaggerated depictions also indicating this creature belongs to the other

world (more precisely is the mythical upper world). In their belief, hornbill represents the god of war for Iban people while these wooden hornbill sculptures are the symbolic amulet that conferring protection from the enemies' souls. Hence, the Iban warriors used hornbill's feathers to decorate their helmets in other traditional ritual ceremonies too.



Figure 3. 23: *Ceremonial effigy of a hornbill [kenyalang], 19th century, sculpture of wood, pigments and cotton, 36.4 (h) x 95.6 (w) x 5.5 (d) cm, National Gallery of Australia.*⁷¹

3.4 Sub-Element in Stamps: Design Changes across the Eras

Apart from the main subjects (animals), the researcher also records the nuances of those sub-elements of postage stamps: languages, titles, overprints, content of First-Day-Cover (FDC) and decorative designs. The researcher suggests they are pertinent to state narratives too as they are parts of the stamp's design. For instance, the stamps of "Sabah"

⁷¹ "Ceremonial Effigy of a Hornbill [Kenyalang] 19th Century," *Life, Death and Magic: 2000 Years of Southeast Asian Ancestral Art*, 2010, <https://nga.gov.au/exhibition/lifedeathmagic/default.cfm?IRN=181989&MnuID=3&ViewID=2>.

overprints on its previous North Borneo (Figure 3.24) is a representational authority declaration proclaimed by the later Malaysia's State in 1963 to 1964.



Figure 3. 24: “Sabah” overprints in the previous North Borneo stamps.

3.4.1 Decorative Art of the Stamps

Besides that, decorative art of postage stamp is another important element for the researcher to study colonial narratives. During colonial era, subject matter of stamps is well-framed with the decorative art such as cartouche and ornamental designs. Researcher Lin (2017) depicts it as an Imperium. The word is originated from Latin, meaning “empire”. He further describes it “a miniature likeness of the monarch framed in an elegant quasi-hyperbolic octagon, poised upon a sturdy hexagonal pedestal flanked by graceful botanical motifs.”⁷² As these decorative arts gradually disappeared after the postcolonial era, the following section discusses on how the changes took place from phase to phase, and deduce the role plays of decorative art on postage stamps.

Tracing the changes of decorative art on postage stamps, decorative art of postage stamps is gradually simplifying and these ‘imperium perergon’ had utterly disappeared around 1965s. When the researcher rearranged all colonial stamps accordingly to the timeline, these imperium decorative art changes show a distinctive pattern where the they are

⁷² Yangchen Lin, “Malaya’s Timeless Design: A Coconut Odyssey,” accessed March 13, 2018, <http://www.linyangchen.com/Philately>.

“deconstruct” from one phase to another. The researcher thus identifies three phases of time period that shaped different decorative art of stamps (Table 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4).

Phase 01: 1890s – 1940s	Phase 02: 1950s – 1960s	Phase 03: 1965 – 1990s
		

Table 3. 2: The different stamps of big cat record the different era of Malaysia. Phase 01 (from left): British Malaya (1895), North Borneo NBCC (1931); Phase 2: Malaya Federation (1957), North Borneo British Dominion (1961) and Phase 03: Malaysia (1979).

Phase 01: 1890s – 1940s	Phase 02: 1950s – 1960s	Phase 03: 1965 – 1990s
		

Table 3. 3: The different stamps of primates record the different era of Malaysia. Phase 01 (from left): North Borneo (1897), North Borneo (1939); Phase 2: Sarawak (1950), Sarawak (1955) and Phase 03: Malaysia (1979).




Phase 01: 1890s – 1940s	Phase 02: 1950s – 1960s	Phase 03: 1965 – 1990s
		

Table 3. 4: The different stamps of cows record the different era of Malaysia. Phase 01 (from left): North Borneo (1909), Kedah (1912); Phase 2: Malaya (1959), North Borneo (1961) and Phase 03: Malaysia (1979).

First phase indicates the stamps issued in between 1890s to 1940s. This early colonial decorative art was more tended towards Victorian period style. Multilingual inscription was included in North Borneo and some Malay's State stamps. The first phase of decorative pattern is greatly influenced by Western aesthetic value. Associated with the mixture of botanical, architectural motifs and cartouches designs, the decorative art of postage stamps explicitly influenced by the eclectic decorative art of Victorian period style.

Second phase (1945 to 1963) is the key indicator as historical events has taken place, and the State governments underwent several restructures or overturns in this time phase. Firstly, the British Military Army (BMA) took over administration after WW II. Followed by the Malaya Federation celebrated its Independence Day in 1957 while the state of North Borneo and Sarawak was officially added to the Majesty's Dominions on 1946 as it transferred to British Government.⁷³ Lastly, the new State of Malaysia was formed on 1963. The decorative pattern in this phase is typified by the attachment of a smaller monarch portraits alongside with thematic stamp designs. This design eventually formed

⁷³ Cecilia Leong, *Sabah The First 100 Years* (Kuala Lumpur: Percetakan Nan Yang Muda Sdn. Bhd., 1982), 197.

the basic design structure of definitive stamps. It might be an intended design to re-assert the authorial representation of the British colonial State to explain the impact of WWII, which possibly shattered the Colonial State's previous narratives as represented in stamps. Moreover, decorative art in this phase starting to employ native or primitive art elements. Examples of designs are tiger stamps 1957, cow stamps 1959 and Sarawak western tarsier stamps 1950. In fact, cultural assimilation takes place gradually.

The decorative art is no longer adopted in third phase (1965 to 1990s). Reviewing to second phase, the researcher observes that 'Independent' Malaya State retained similar structure of decorative art with those belong to Colonial State, but the symbolic royal representatives was substituted by the local sultans. Even though the sovereign representation is replaced to Postcolonial State, there is no clear cut in between, in terms of the structure and decorative art influence. The influence of colonial "imperium perergon" was still omnipresent after the Independence. Hence, the postcolonialism in this research is not only tracing the historical changes of the decolonisation, but also reckons the continuity of certain visual representation of colonialism, lingered after the colonial era.

Moreover, the researcher discerns this remarkable decorative design "trend" is aligned with those other postage stamps of Commonwealth nations, however, their time frames of phases are slightly shifted (sooner or later than Malaysia's case) subject to their state narrative or respective year of Independence. Tables below are the examples of nations who used to issue animal stamps as well. Even though the decorative designs are not fixed or consistent, animal issues fluctuated and may be absent in certain time frames, the overall design "trend" corresponded to evolution in phase 1, 2 and 3. Hence, this research suggests this evolving design pattern as an effort of unified imperial identity among Commonwealth nations.




Example 1- Malawi (formerly known as Nyasaland during colonial era) Year of Independence: 1964		
Phase 01:	Phase 02:	Phase 03:
		
Stamp of 1897.	Stamps of 1947 and 1963.	Stamps of 1964 and 1966.

Table 3. 5: Example 1- stamps of Malawi (formerly known as Nyasaland during colonial era).




Example 2- Papua New Guinea (formerly known as Papua during colonial era) Year of Independence: 1952 Australian Trust Territory- Papua and New Guinea 1973 Self Government		
Phase 01:	Phase 02:	Phase 03:
		
Stamps of 1932.	Stamps of 1934 and 1937.	Stamps of 1952 and 1974.

Table 3. 6: Example 2- stamps of Papua New Guinea (formerly known as Papua during colonial era).




Example 3: Mauritius		
Year of Independence: 1967		
Phase 01:	Phase 02:	Phase 03:
		
Stamp of 1925.	Stamps of 1950 and 1965.	Stamps of 1969 and 1974.

Table 3. 7: Example 3- stamps of Mauritius.

Designed to be the one of the pivotal delivery tools invented by British Empire, postage stamp itself served as an identical colonial representation as well. In a broader view, based on the myriad use of similar decorative art in different colonies, dominions, territories and protectorates, the researcher defines a consistent shift in the peripheral format of postage stamps. The appearance of British Crown in second phase is clearly an imperial symbolic of the British sovereignty. Nevertheless, the existence of the monarchy in second phase (which usually the period phase before Independence) is seemingly paradoxical, but it is the unification Commonwealth identity, thus the nations will always remind themselves were used to “allegiance to the same sovereignty”.⁷⁴

3.5 Conclusion: State Narratives Across the Eras

In this chapter, the researcher showcases the general distribution of animal thematic postage stamps across the eras. Peninsula Malaysia and East Malaysia are heterogeneous culturally difference and they are parted by the South China Sea. However, these lands

⁷⁴ Various Writers, *The Empire and the Century* (London: John Murray, 1905).

also share many natural resources included animals. Among them the fauna proliferation or specific animal species is their common uniqueness that bind the interest of their States. As a result, there are similar species had been selected to showcased in stamps.

During pre-Independent era, postal institution affiliated to the Colonial State while postage stamp was one of its products that conceiving with specific communicative intent. This is because postage stamp itself is seemingly a “functional miniature poster” that reaching out to local and even oversea readers, passing from one hand to another during the postal delivery, and some of them probably were kept for philatelic purpose. Every design of postage stamp was precious piece as the State had to send every printing order to England and bear all the printing cost during colonial era.⁷⁵

The thematic stamp issues are pertinent to the State narratives. Taking the example of animal thematic stamps, animal species which frequently presented are becoming well-known by the public. Tiger, orangutan and hornbill are explicit endorsement to represent the State or these lands. In latter post-colonial era, these animals’ images are being reproduced anthropomorphically as the mascot of sport games (Commonwealth Games 1998), being iconic engraved in the national emblems and state’s coat of arms. Among the recurring animal thematic stamps, tiger is the most frequent issues that represented the “Malay(sia)”. Hence, tigers are represented differently throughout the eras.

Besides that, this chapter studies the changes of decorative designs across the era. After the WW II, the Colonial State used the Queen’s head in their commonwealth stamps, to symbolise the power of British Empire’s sovereignty. This possibly reflects the intention

⁷⁵ Printing expenditure of postage stamps was very high in 19th to early 20th century due to the exclusiveness of security printing technology that monopolised by Western States. Although Colonial State reserved the priority to issue any postage stamp, Sultans of the Malay States could issue their own (portrait’s) stamps too, in the condition they paid for all the printing cost and expenditure. For more information, read Richard E Hale, “Johore 1891-1922,” *The Malayan Philatelist* 51, no. 246 (2010): 3–9.

of re-assert of authority properties, or in a broader view, to mark the “holder” identity and shared the vision of commonwealth consciousness.

The similarities shared in the decorative art also implies the state narratives as well. The hoisting Union Jack Flag or Malaysia Flag, *Jalur Gemilang* for the first time ever might declare the historic governmental power shift, but the in-depth ideological changes of either political social practices are far more complicated and taking years to accomplish. As John McLeod stated in his book *Beginning Postcolonialism*, the colonial values and practices do not simply vanish on the first day of Independence.⁷⁶ In fact, the colonial mindset still having a dominant influence on art trend that persisted for decades.

Following in the next chapter, the researcher delves in the discourse of colonialism, explore the explicit and implicit manifestation of the imperial sovereignty, as well as the territorial identities shaped by the Colonial States.

⁷⁶ John McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism*, 2nd ed. (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2010),38.

CHAPTER 4: ANIMAL THEMATIC POSTAGE STAMPS AS A PART OF COLONIAL NARRATIVES

"The power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism, and constitutes one of the main connections between them."⁷⁷

4.1 Framework of Colonialism and Colonial Narratives

This chapter discusses the colonial narratives use of visual elements or visual cultures. Examples of visual elements included postage stamps, cartographical designs, and coat of arms and so on. Being an invention of the colonial State, postal system is considered as a direct part of the colonial institutions. The upper part of this chapter discusses the subject matters, animals in terms of selection reasons and ways of representations. The researcher studies their visual representations in stamps together with other visual elements to see how they related with each other in the colonial narratives. Whilst the lower part focusses on the decorative art of animals in postage stamps as well as other thematic stamps during colonial era, to understand the Empire concept as a system of exercising imperial power.

At the beginning of this chapter, let us revise the main ideas of colonialism. Colonialism concerns about the settlement of (the colonizer) people in another lands.⁷⁸ Besides that, colonial and orientalist discourses unveil how the certain form of practices and ways of specific representations eventually shaped the binary opposition between coloniser and the colonised, whereas the coloniser was always upholding superior position as compared to those 'inferior' colonised peoples. Furthermore, colonialization is considered a mode

⁷⁷ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994).

⁷⁸ John Mcleod, *Beginning Postcolonialism*, 2nd ed. (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2010), 9.

of practice or mechanism that is driven by the ideology of imperialism.⁷⁹ Imperial ideas of British Empire extended to its distant oversea territories via instillation of mindset and attitudes, as well as circulation of imperial visual concepts in official publications.⁸⁰

On the other hands, what is the significances of animal and how are they related to colonial narratives? Animal studies is an interesting topic that has attracted attention of the Western researchers since early colonial era. Animals, together with the miscellaneous topics such as native languages, plants or peoples, are considered a part of the British survey modalities,⁸¹ to build up the epistemological knowledge for a new colony or territory. Different branches of investigative modality such as historiography, museology, and survey modalities encompassed a vast range of information collection, eventually building up a systematic acquisition for British Empire that contributed to the understanding of distant colonies from various documentaries.

However, although network of investigative modalities has collected detailed scientific description for animal species as well as their specimens, nevertheless, earlier colonial postage stamps reflect another variation of animal depiction which reverted to exoticism or romanticism, like the previous communicative cartographic illustrations. In early cartographic designs, intriguing animal or beast figures featured as part of the cartographic elements in navigation map since the Western expansion.⁸² This is due to the depictions of fauna or fauna subjects contributed a lot to the map's attractiveness and

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Said, *Culture and Imperialism*.

⁸¹ Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996).

⁸² Dennis Reinhartz, *The Art of the Map : An Illustrated History of Map Elements and Embellishments* (New York and Canada: STERLING Publishing, 2012).

marketability.⁸³ Example of mapping cartouches for South Asia are shown in *Indiae Orientalis* (Figure 4.1), where natives in the front row are accompanied by animals: native man at the right carries a basket of fishes and giant bird, passing the other native who sit aside with monkeys, while women sit on left corner holding a parrot and jewellerys at the same time. The cartouche reflects Oriental land was rich with natural resources. It expands viewer horizons and enticed their curiosity to catch a glimpse of life in the distant other lands. Moreover, animals are not only romanticised as the decorative elements of Oriental depiction, but also being objectified as the hunting and trading items. In the following sections the researcher further observes and studies the animal that featuring on postage stamps.



Figure 4. 1: Visscher, Nicolaes, C. H. Coote, Isaac De Graaff, and Jan Jansson. *Indiae Orientalis Nec Non Insularum Adiacentium Nova Descriptio per Nicolaum Visscher Cum Privilegio Ordinum Hollandiae Et Westfrisiae [cartographic Material] / Nicolas Visscher. Amsterdam: Jan Jansson, 1657. Print.*⁸⁴

⁸³ Dennis Reinhartz, *The Art of the Map : An Illustrated History of Map Elements and Embellishments* (New York and Canada: STERLING Publishing, 2012), 106.

⁸⁴ State Library New South Wales, “Indiae Orientalis Nec Non Insularum Adiacentium Nova Descriptio per Nicolaum Visscher Cum Privilegio Ordinum Hollandiae et Westfrisiae, 1657,” accessed April 9, 2019, http://digital.sl.nsw.gov.au/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?embedded=true&toolbar=false&dps_pid=I E3680652.

4.2 Studies on Animals: Subject Matters in Colonial Postage Stamps

This section is the continuing study of animals as the main subject matters in postage stamps which extended from previous chapter. Other than tiger, orangutan, and hornbill that mentioned in chapter 3, majority numbers of animal stamps were issued by North Borneo Chartered Company. Since the lands of the Malaysia were separated colonial territories of Britain during the pre-independence era, thematic designs of stamps and the selection of subject matters also varied among different states. For instances, colonial post office of Sarawak issued only a few animal (hornbills, pangolin, western tarsier and orangutan) stamps around 1950s while colonial post office of North Borneo subjected a variety of animal thematic stamps. British Malaya's post offices on the other hands, were particularly fond of tigers or cow species. Nevertheless, these different designs of the animal thematic postage stamps shared certain similarities in terms of species selection's tendency and ways of representation. Since the most issued animal species (tiger, orangutan and hornbill) that featuring across eras has been scrutinized in previous chapter, this chapter focusses on species that only found in postage stamps of colonial era. Following that, examples of animal representation in corresponded visual cultures such as postcard, coat of arms and cartouches are discussed as well to understand the colonial concept from similar institutions or combination from different Ideological State Apparatuses.

4.2.1 Selection of the Subject Matters in Colonial Postage Stamps: Big, Wild and Dangerous Animal Species

In previous chapter, the researcher mentioned 221 species of mammals in Borneo compiled by *A Field Guide to the Mammals of Borneo*,⁸⁵ nevertheless, there are around

⁸⁵ Payne and Francis, *A Field Guide to the Mammals of Borneo*.

11 endemic mammals only issued in Sarawak or North Bornean postage stamps of colonial era. In this section, the researcher elucidates the selection preference of animal species on the colonial postage stamps, particularly for the issues of North Borneo's State.



Figure 4. 2: Stamps of North Borneo (elephant) 1909-1931.



Figure 4. 3: Stamp of North Borneo (crocodile) 1894-1902.



Figure 4. 4: Stamp of North Borneo (rhinoceros) 1909.



Figure 4. 5: Stamp of North Borneo (Orangutan / chimpanzee) 1897-1902.



Figure 4. 6: Stamp of North Borneo (cow) 1909-1922.



Figure 4. 7: Stamps of North Borneo (Palm Cockatoo) 1909-1922.

The archipelagos abound with different small and large endemic species, however, the selection of species on stamps was mostly the giant wildlife species in the case of North Borneo the British protectorate. In the mammal category, selected species are the larger mammal representatives such as elephants, Malayan tapir, rhinoceros, cow, orangutan, proboscis, wild boar and clouded leopard (biggest Felidae in Borneo). Besides that, other intriguing big mammals included the sambar deer and bears that issued twice in the North Bornean postage stamps. Besides that, the administrators of North Borneo Chartered

Company issued the dangerous giant reptile representative, the crocodile in postage stamps since 1894, while turtle only first appeared after many years in Sarawak's stamps of 1955. Apart from that, bigger bird species were featured on colonial stamps too. The examples of featuring birds are cassowary, great argus pheasant, rhinoceros hornbill and most likely a palm cockatoo (big cockatoo species that native and distributed in the island of New Guinea). These selected animals are not only larger in size compared to their respective family species, they were all wild species as well. In some sense, these dangerous, vicious or species that bigger in size in were selected and represented in postage stamps reflects the stereotype for North Borneo that visually constructed to the lands with wildness, where only those labelled gigantic and exotic species presented in the official disseminations.⁸⁶ Moreover, the background depiction in these animal stamps delineated an unexplored natural lands with mountain, jungle and river in the distant view. The animals' size further enlarged due their background setting was the broad wild land that coincidentally took place in different postage stamps.

⁸⁶ Said, *Orientalism*.



Figure 4. 8: Orang Utan Attacked by Dayak in the preface of *Malay Archipelago* by Alfred Wallace, illustrated by Joseph Wolf.



Figure 4. 9: *Waino and Plutanor (The Wild Men of Borneo)*, 1890s, photograph / promotional card, Collections of Syracuse University, image source from Disability History Museum (in footnote 86).

The “wild and unexplored” Borneo stereotypes might most probably match with the depictions in those fictional novels, illustrations and constructed advertisements. For instances, illustrations of the gigantic orangutan attacked native Dayak in the preface of *Malay Archipelago*, originally published in 1896 (Figure 4.8), giving the impression of how fierce and menace of this animal species against mankind. Besides that, the name of Borneo had been commonly known by the Westerners (especially Americans) due to the so-called “Wild Men of Borneo” (Figure 4.9) from the freak circus show by P.T

Barnum.⁸⁷ The actors with faked Borneo biography performed certain freak gimmicks such as great weight lifting as well as savage “half-man, half-beast” or chicken-eater (similar to the were-tiger description in chapter 3),⁸⁸ that misleadingly denounced Borneo natives as wild as savages. Dealing with such accusations on North Borneo, Agnes Keith, writer cum wife of the British Officer in Sandakan was the minority group of Westerner who refuted those fictional Borneo’s wildness. She commented, “it seems to me that the adventurers have passed over the most melodramatic scene of all: Here are the aborigines, as fierce or as mild as they seem. Here is the tangled green of the jungle creepers which have constantly to be beaten back, and the wild which awaits to engulf again the clearing we called Sandakan...”⁸⁹ She had spent four years in Sandakan, capital of North Borneo since 1936.⁹⁰ Since (Western) audiences learned of these distant lands through “experiences” from limited reinterpretation on fictional visual performances, written forms and illustrations, it might make sense for them that Borneo (the East) was the dark wild and dangerous land as this “meaning / concept” had previously constructed via reiterates or “re- present” in different institutions.⁹¹ The oriental stereotype was eventually consolidated upon the collection and creation of a series of repertoire images and from various institutions and observational / travel modalities, that were familiar in the ways of seeing in Westerners’ predetermined itineraries, whereas postal department

⁸⁷ Frank Braden, “P. T. Barnum’s Observation -- ‘The American Public Likes to Be Humbugged’ -- Still Hold Good?,” *Illustrated World*, 1922, <https://www.disabilitymuseum.org/dhm/lib/detail.html?id=1204&page=all>.

⁸⁸ “Hiram and Barney - Wild Men of Borneo,” *The Human Marvel*, accessed April 15, 2019, <https://www.thehumanmarvels.com/wild-men-of-borneo/>; Braden, “P. T. Barnum’s Observation -- ‘The American Public Likes to Be Humbugged’ -- Still Hold Good?”

⁸⁹ Agnes Newton Keith, *Land Below the Wind* (London: Michael Joseph Ltd., 1939), 21.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ Hall, “The Work of Representation.”

was one of the affiliated institutions / Ideological State Apparatus.⁹² Hence, the gigantic and distorted animal depictions (further elaborate in next section) in postage stamps were seemingly “real and logical” as they fitted into the stereotype of the dangerous far East and fulfilled the expectation for imagined Oriental lands.

4.2.2 Ways of Representation for the Subject Matters in Colonial Postage Stamps: Exaggerated, Wild and Hunting Animals

Apart of the selection of larger animal species, the animal representations in the early colonial postage stamps were exaggerated or deviated from the real scene. Nevertheless, depiction of dramatic shading has inlaid the life-like details in the subject matters and enhanced value of naturalism in the composition of three-dimensional forms despite these animal illustrations were distorted from original species or merely an imagined mix-breed existence.

This section further exemplifies animal depiction in these early Bornean stamps that are apparently exaggerated in term of body sizes and body features in the narrative images. As mentioned in last section, background setting of vast lands in these animal thematic stamps were seemingly contradicted with the dense rainforests in Borneo. In fact, due to the rugged and mountainous terrain geographical feature of Borneo, Bornean (and Malayan) terrestrial species are comparatively smaller in term of body size. For instance, Bornean sun bear is the smallest species in bear family, the pygmy elephant of Borneo is the smallest elephant species in the world while Bornean rhinoceros (also known as the

⁹² Bernard S. Cohn, “The Observational / Travel Modality,” in *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 6–7.

Sumatran rhinoceros) is the smallest rhino species in the world that existed for millions of years.⁹³



Figure 4. 10: Zoom in to Figure 4.4 (rhinoceros).



Figure 4. 11: Zoom in to Figure 4.2 (elephant).

Firstly, Bornean or Sumatran rhinoceros is smaller body size that having small horns and cute short legs in real scene. However, the illustrated rhino species in North Borneo stamp 1909 (Figure 4.10) had longer legs and protruding facial features especially its front horn, likewise the white or black rhinoceros in Africa instead. It was heightened as its two front legs stood in higher level and looked much gigantic in this perspective standpoint. Portrayal of subject matter from low angle can make it bigger than life-scene. Meanwhile, an adult native standing right beside the elephant in the postage stamp of Figure 4.11,

⁹³ Common fact of the animal species acquired from several animal webpage: “Rhino,” *WWF Malaysia*, accessed March 23, 2019, http://www.wwf.org.my/about_wwf/what_we_do/species_main/rhino/. “Elephant,” *WWF Malaysia*, accessed March 23, 2019, http://www.wwf.org.my/about_wwf/what_we_do/species_main/elephant/; National Geographic, “Sun Bear,” accessed March 23, 2019, <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/s/sun-bear/>.

juxtaposing their body sizes whilst the native’s height approaching to the elephant’s leg only, giving an impression of how huge this species was. Therefore, different angles of animal depictions may possibly evoke different perceptions for audiences to see or judge these animal species. Hence, these official publication’s depictions were not absolutely reflecting the mimesis truth of the other lands, but different ways of subject matter being represented might construct a new meaning or shaping selective facets regarding the other land and its species.⁹⁴



Figure 4. 12: Stamp of North Borneo (bear) 1897-1902.



Figure 4. 13: Stamp of North Borneo (bear) 1961.

Apart of exaggerated size of clouded leopard (stamp of 1931) and bizarre orangutan (stamp of 1897) in chapter 3, similar exaggerated featuring also applied to sun bear and “cassowary” that evoke the signals of wild and dangerous. In stamp of North Borneo 1897 (Figure 4.12), the bear species that showcased in the stamps was overbig size and too tough for the sun bear, the only arboreal bear in Borneo and Malaya. It’s pointy ears, sharp eyes and long snout on furry face resembles the wolf. Although it shares similar characteristics with sun bear: the bear is climbing and tearing the tree branch, long

⁹⁴ Hall, “The Work of Representation.”

tongued and having the same light colour shed on its upper chest, sun bear is, however, rounded ear and slimmer in size as it is a good climber. In fact, sun bear is the smallest bear species in the world. The body appearance of this depicted species is obviously oversized, and its pronounced shoulder hump make it looks like the aggressive grizzly rather than sun bear. Sun bear species was featured on North Borneo stamps once more in 1961 (two years before the formation of Malaysia 1963), whereas the bear depicted (Figure 4.13) with the same posture as previous one, but apparently becoming smaller in size indeed. These cases prove that British colonial officers were realised and admitted of exaggerated animal depictions in the early years.



Figure 4. 14: Stamps of North Borneo (Cassowary) 1909-1922.

Besides that, the cassowary species that presented in the stamps (Figure 4.14) does not exist in the record of Borneo nor Malaya neither, it is native to the tropical forests of New Guinea instead. Based on the *Stamp & Coin Mart magazine*, “The British North Borneo Company who administered the territory explained that a mix-up with artwork belonging to the natural history set they issued that year...”, and they handed the wrong species of cassowary to the Waterlow & Sons printing. It might be confused with the species of

megapode, a smaller species bird.⁹⁵ The illustrator or engraver had seen neither cassowary nor megapode before, the so-called Cassowary's head was erroneously matched with ostrich, it was more likely an imagined mix-breed of ostrich (the biggest bird species) and cassowary (the fiercest bird species) instead. Hence, the researcher suggests that the North Borneo Chartered Company or British officers in London preferred wild animals or wildly exaggerated species to be represented in the stamps of 19th to early 20th century. Ironically, contrary to those observational or mimesis animal drawings in natural study fields, the depiction of animals on these official representations are relatively loose in terms of the accuracy or precision. These animal illustrations might be naturalistic and narratively realism in term of depictions, but they are not real. Animal thematic postage stamps are the great examples illuminate that animals are always the observed and the represented subject in the accompanying ideology.⁹⁶ Hence, the researcher suggests that animals in the colonial stamps were considered as a part of orientalism domain, whereas animals were wild and roamed freely: crocodile with mouth open awaiting at the wet swamp, rhinoceros, elephant, wild boar and sambar deer at the lowland while giant bear, oversize clouded leopards, threatening orangutan at the jungle trees. The Other lands were dangerous and mystery, yet they were proliferated with natural resources that best representation of exotic romanticism.⁹⁷ These dangerous, exotic romanticism concepts attracted many Western researchers to collect specimens, explorers for travel purpose, hunters came after the hunting games and so on.

⁹⁵ Stamp and Coin Mart Magazine, "Top Five Early Bird Stamps - Thematics," *Warners Group Publication* (Lincolnshire, May 2017), <https://www.collectors-club-of-great-britain.co.uk/stamps-coins/articles/stamps/thematics/top-five-early-bird-stamps-thematics>.

⁹⁶ Berger, "Why We Look at Animals."

⁹⁷ Said, *Orientalism*.

Even though the animal depictions were exaggerated from the real scene, illustrators and engravers employed chiaroscuro techniques which emphasizing on the shadow shading delineations, evoked a sense of naturalistic drawing and life-like details in animal depictions (Example in zoom-in illustrations Figure 4.15 – 4.17). The setting of light and shadow in animal illustrations reflects the “fidelity of details” and narrative realism,⁹⁸ paradoxically striving for an impression of authenticity even though they might be merely fictional existence.



Figure 4. 15:
Stamp of North
Borneo (orangutan)
1931.



Figure 4. 16: Stamp
of North Borneo
(proboscis) 1939.



Figure 4. 17: Stamp of North
Borneo (tapir) 1909-1922.

Meanwhile, the uncivilized, lands of wilderness, became the reason for colonial interference and domination as well. In the first paragraph of *White Man's Burden, 1899*, Kipling started his poem with “Take up the White Man's burden”, which implying the obligations as a Westerner was to civilize the oriental lands as they themselves is the “best breed”.

⁹⁸ Mary F.Holahan et al., “American Narratives: Periodical Illustration, 1840-1930,” in *History of Illustration*, ed. Susan Doyle (New York, London, Oxford, New Delhi and Syney: Bloomsbury, 2018), 285–306.

There are explicit imperial narratives in between the poem writing. This English poet who lived in India signified the Other as the land of dangerous by using phrases such as “heavy harness” for “fluttered folk and wild”, “half-devil and half child” as well as “sullen people” to discriminate against the Colonized, persuading the wild species captives as a noble “White Man’s Burden”. Meanwhile, the writing reflects that every White Men was endowed with the believe system or consciousness that they are responsible to enlighten and civilize the Other wild lands.⁹⁹ Calling up by the White Man’s consciousness, reciprocal mode of practices by the imperialists were highly admired and imitated (example in Figure 4.18, 4.19 and 4.24), it was best moment to show their pride and power against the wilderness.



Figure 4. 18: Illustration of the Prince of Wales and the Chillingham Bull, 1872.¹⁰⁰



Figure 4. 19: *Tiger Hunting*, 1900s, photograph / postcard card, Publisher A. Kaulfuss Penang.

⁹⁹ Althusser, “On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses.”

¹⁰⁰ *The Monthly Chronicle of North Country Lore and Legend, Volume 5* (Northumberland: Newcastle Upon Tyne Jubilee Exhibition, 1891), 115.

Following that, the shooting games inevitably became a popular pastime during the colonial era and the affection of “triumph over (wild) nature” influenced native peoples and the Malay ruling class too. Relook the animal thematic stamps in North Borneo, elephants, sambar deer, gaur, wild boar, clouded leopard and all birds were the famous targets for hunting games. Animals that were vividly depicted on the postage stamps enhance the aesthetic value as well as their attractiveness. The boar hopping out from bush in the postage stamps (Figure 4.22) seemingly delineated the lively and vitality of species in the jungles. The richness of fauna and flora species had attracted many trophy hunters, animal traders, and genuine scientific specimen collectors from the West and the East travelled to the Peninsular Malaya and Borneo.¹⁰¹



Figure 4. 20: Stamp of North Borneo (peacock/ pheasant) 1894-1902.



Figure 4. 21: Stamps of North Borneo (Sambar deer) 1909-1931.



Figure 4. 22: Stamp of North Borneo (wild boar) 1909-1922.

¹⁰¹ Hoi Sen Yong, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Malaysia Volume 3 Animals* (Leeds, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur: Archipelago Press, 1998),9.



Figure 4. 23: Postcard of Pig Hunting, produced in 1910.



Figure 4. 24: Postcard of His Highness the Sultan Ibrahim of Johore, produced in 1920.

Referring to the postcards or photos printed in the colonial period (Figure 4.23 – 4.25), the hunting games were eagerly sought after by the Westerners, locals as well as the Malayan royal members. In North Borneo, hunting wild animals was quite common among indigenous peoples too as the hunting skills brought them food sources. However, the increasing numbers of big hunting activities or trophies games were prevalent upon the colonial era.¹⁰² Equipped with gun weapons, hunter dog, and the aids of native people, hunting games became the favorite past times of higher class, to exemplify their superior powers and bravery on conquering the wilderness. Since sending their motherlands exotic animals was a symbol of conquest as well as an act of patriotism,¹⁰³ ambitious Western explorers would most probably travel to hunt and recorded their moment of bravery in writing as well as photos (in postcards). Massive numbers of hunting games eventually

¹⁰² Exhibition text of Sabah Museum, *Temnadau Horns*, Sabah Museum, Kota Kinabalu.

¹⁰³ Berger, "Why We Look at Animals."

divide the horizon between man and the Other animals, the concept of dualism between hunter and the hunted has changed our ways of seeing and representing the animals.¹⁰⁴



Figure 4. 25: A duck hunting party at Kota Belud, North Borneo during 1930s. Photo snapped in Sabah Museum (Picture courtesy of Richard Baxter, Tenom).



Figure 4. 26: A pair of hunted Tembadau Bos javanicus's horns is being showcased in Sabah Museum. Photo snapped in Sabah Museum.

4.2.3 Ways of Animals Representations of Postage Stamps in Relation to the Dichotomy of Power

In last subsection, the researcher discusses on different wild animal species that represented in colonial postage stamps. This subsection will further study on the representation of the Lion and its relations with the imperial status and towards the other animals, extended to the studies of power dichotomy between the colonizer and the colonized.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.



Figure 4. 27: Earliest stamp of North Borneo, issued in 1883.

Amongst the different animal species, Lion is the one who generally associated with representation of British colonization in postage stamps. Figure 4.27 showcases one of the earliest postage stamps issued by the British North Borneo Company in 1883. The stamp features an ornamented cartouche, which chested by a lion on the top and a sailing ship on its lower part respectively. Its shape resembles the medieval shield's design, denoting the protectiveness armor of chivalry spirit. The lion on the top was the symbolism of Britain Empire. It's presence metaphorically ascribed to fearless courage and power. Hence, it may signify the blessing for the sailing as well for new settlement in other lands by the British empire state.

Instead of being interpellated as a species of "wild", representation of lions in official disseminations are heraldic emblems that reflect British imperial status. Along with the Lion, shield, sailing ship and crown, were all considered the iconic symbols of imperial power too. They adorned the designs of royal emblems, crests, coat of arms, map and cartouches as well. In fact, this Lion and shield cartouche's design had been adopted to become the part of army coat of British North Borneo company too (as shown in figure 4.28 and 4.29).



Figure 4. 28: Stamp of North Borneo, introduced in 1931.

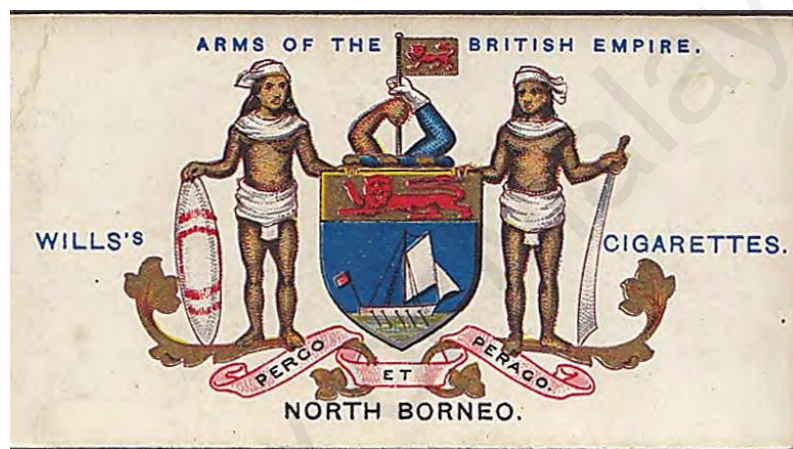


Figure 4. 29: Arms of the British Empire, North Borneo issued around 1910 (Picture courtesy to the private collector of My North Borneo Stamps blog).¹⁰⁵

Relooking the North Bornean stamps and its coat of arms, they underlined how the status dichotomy between coloniser and the colonised, whereas the coloniser was always upholding superior position as compared to those ‘inferior’ colonised peoples. Take an example of the arm of coat showcased in the stamp 1931 (Figure 4.28), two natives who stand and holding its both sides (act of supporters), safeguard the coat of arm by their traditional weapons -- shield and sword paddle, meanwhile keeping their eyes on the coat

¹⁰⁵ This picture is originally taken from the packaging of Will’s Cigarettes, picture courtesy to the private collector of My North Borneo Stamps blog: My North Borneo Stamps, “North Borneo Cigarette Cards Part 3,” 2015, <https://mynorthborneostamps.blogspot.com/2015/02/north-borneo-cigarette-cards-part-3.html>.

of arm. Upper part of the coat there are two hands erecting the English's lion's flag, where the Western hand on the right is outgun the native's hand on the left (refer to Figure 4.29 for a clearer colourful illustration, printed on a cigarette's packaging). The company's slogan or motto lied beneath and written: *PERGO ET PERAGO*, in Latin means "continue to execute and accomplish" or "I advance and accomplish".¹⁰⁶ The illustration potentially evokes two functions of interpellation.¹⁰⁷ First is the recognition of colonial status where the imperial symbols such as British flag, the Lion, shield cartouche, and sailing ship are predominantly placed at the higher or central position. Followed by the misrecognition or relegation of native peoples, where they are presented as the supportive force that servile to the imperial power by the sides. Hence, the cartouche of North Borneo as an example, became the choice of symbolic British Empire even though this Felidae species is not belong to the lands of England. Lion is on the imperial status only if it was associated with British Empire, typified as frightfully elegant and superior; whereas the Other (animals) on the contrary, are the depictions of vicious predators and preys, other than relegated to the secondary roles as the means of men's transportation or agriculture, or the trading items.

Furthermore, the researcher suggests that animal species in various form of colonial representations are involved in a hierarchical relationship as well.¹⁰⁸ Since many national coats of arms were firstly emblazoned in their postage stamps during early colonial era, therefore, these designs share some similarities in term of imperial visual representations. In the examples of colonial stamps, we can discern that the Lions (together with the

¹⁰⁶ The researcher refers to information provided by private collector of North Borneo Cigarettes Card in the blog page, Ibid..

¹⁰⁷ Althusser, "On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses."

¹⁰⁸ Said, *Orientalism*.

mythical creature unicorn) were in the protector's position if it was associated with Britain Empire or royal representatives, as shown in the example of Great Britain's stamp with King George VI (Figure 4.33), 1951 and stamp of British East Africa with Queen Victoria, 1896 (Figure 4.30). However, it had endowed with higher ranking of imperial representation while featuring with the other animals or natives from the Other (Figure 4.31, 4.32, 4.34 and 4.35). Hence, researcher reads there is certain ranking disparities in between where the colonial state had visually narrated and constructed themselves a pre-eminence or higher rank than the natives.¹⁰⁹



Figure 4. 30: Stamp of British East Africa, 1896.



Figure 4. 31: Stamps of British South Africa Company, 1891.

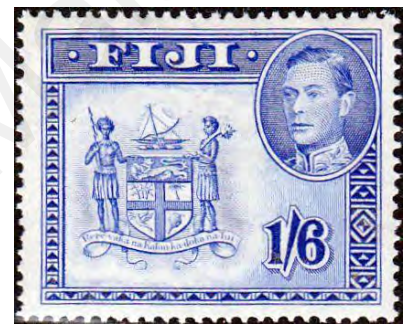


Figure 4. 32: Stamp of British Fiji, 1938.



Figure 4. 33: Stamp of Great Britain, 1951.



Figure 4. 34: Stamps of Australia, 1957.



Figure 4. 35: Stamp of New Zealand (Coat of Arms) 1931.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

Apart from the postage stamps and its coats of arms, four allegorical sculptures of animals that pointing to different directions represents respective continental groups in the architectural monument of Albert Memorial.¹¹⁰ There are camels (for Africa), bison (for America), bull (for Europe) and elephant (for Asia). According to the record of British history online, 'lion' was primarily the designs representing the African relief, but it was replaced by a camel because of the lion's Britannic associations.¹¹¹ Garnering the various forms of animals' visual representation in colonial era, the researcher outlining the possible meaning that underpinned in selective animal species of colonial postage stamps for Malaya, Sarawak and North Borneo. Meanwhile, studying these animals in the big picture unveils the representation of the imperial Self and the Other, and further understand that Empire was a world system that synchronized with the imperial ideological state apparatuses.

4.3 Studies on Decorative Art: Sub-Element in Colonial Postage Stamps

In chapter 3, decorative art of postage stamps are studied and compared between several Commonwealth Nations to study the phases of design transformation taken place. Connecting in this section, the researcher scrutinises the relationship between representation of decorative art to its subject matters, as well as comparison of decorative art transformation with the Britain's stamps.

¹¹⁰ Albert Memorial is a commissioned work by the Queen Victoria in memory of her beloved husband, Royal Albert hall. It is situated in Kensington Gardens, London.

¹¹¹ "Albert Memorial: The memorial," in Survey of London: Volume 38, South Kensington Museums Area, ed. F H W Sheppard (London: London County Council, 1975), 159-176. British History Online, accessed January 3, 2019, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol38/pp159-176>.



Figure 4. 36: Stamps of North Borneo (Sambar deer) 1909-1931.



Figure 4. 37: Stamp of North Borneo (wild boar) 1909-1922.



Figure 4. 38: Stamp of North Borneo (tapir) 1909-1922.

The decorative art was the indispensable element for colonial animal stamps as they created the “picture frame” of scenography designs for Western spectators. Relooking at the colonial animal thematic stamps, majority of the eclectic decorative art encompassed by similar arch designs at their top. Examples of these designs are Figure 4.2 to 4.5, Figure 4.37 to 4.38, and clouded leopard and proboscis stamps (Figure 4.43 and 4.44).

These arch designs resemble the representation of proscenium arch in the ancient theatre space (see example in Figure 4.39), which meant to provide the visual experiences of spectacle for the West.¹¹² The proscenium metaphorically acts as the window that channeled Westerners to the distant lands of Oriental scene. Compared to the British royal portrait stamps in colonial era, oval or other symmetrical cartouches are used instead of proscenium designs. In fact, theatrical display is perhaps the ideal space for narrative of all kinds, in which the stage of European ritual performances or ceremonies of exercising power took place as well.¹¹³ In the mentioned examples of animal stamps, most of the central prosceniums are inscribed with English title “State of North Borneo”,

¹¹² The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, “Proscenium,” *Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.*, 2008, <https://www.britannica.com/art/proscenium>.

¹¹³ Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*.

correspondingly leading the audience to link the display subjects to the State of North Borneo.



Figure 4. 39: *Stage at the Coliseum London, early 1904, illustration on postcard.*¹¹⁴

Besides that, the decorative art and design underplay important roles in perpetuate the narrative images of colonial identities. In other words, the Victorian aesthetic was perpetuated in part of the colonial postage stamp's decorative art, until the 1940s. On the contrary, the decorative art represented in British postage stamps themselves were innovated ephemerally with the change of European art movement (Figure 4.40 to 4.42). Although some decorative elements were repeated waywardly, patterns of decorative art evolved from 1880 to 1937: From the starting of insipid, flat, replicated and symmetrical patterns, gradually innovate to 3-dimensions but less ornamented, and eventually to the minimal decorative art in 1937. Relooking at the changes of decorative art from 1880s to

¹¹⁴ This postcard of Stage of Coliseum London is produced in early 1904, since the copywrite holder is not specified. The researcher cited this image as public domain, "Stage at the Coliseum, London," *Theatres Database*, 2017, <https://database.theatrestrust.org.uk/resources/images/show/21-stage-at-the-coliseum-london>.

1930s, the decorative forms were evolved in phases which similar with the mentioned Commonwealth stamps in chapter 3. However, the phases of transformation in British stamps were apparently leading trend ahead of others.

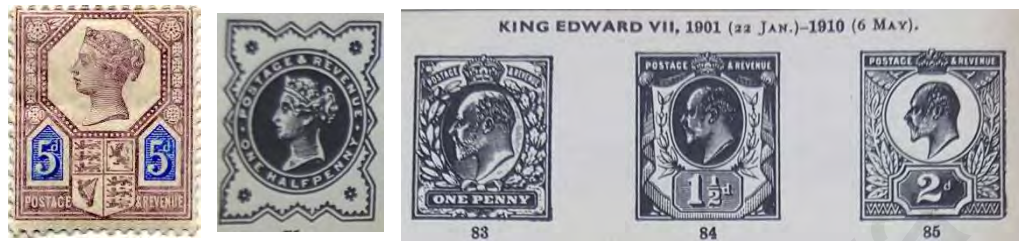


Figure 4. 40: Decorative art that mentioned in Phase 1, British Queen Victoria postage stamp 1880-1892 and British King Edward VII, 1901-1910.¹¹⁵



Figure 4. 41: Decorative art that mentioned in Phase 2, British “Seahorse” stamp 1913 (Left), British stamps of Postal Union Congress 1929 (Centre) and British stamps of Postal Union Congress 1929 (Right).

¹¹⁵ These photocopy versions extracted from Stanley Gibbons Catalogue.



Figure 4. 42: Decorative art that mentioned in Phase 3, Edward VIII British postage stamp 1936 (Left), and UK definitive stamps of King George VI, 1937-47 (Right).

In overall, the transformation of decoration art in Commonwealth nations were synchronised with the transition patterns on the Britain stamps. Nevertheless, the transformation (depiction technique and design trend) taken place in Britain's stamps were flying leap to the quasi-photographic representations in around 1930s, while the colonial stamps in Other lands remained vintage and eclectic Victorian designs (Figure 4.43 and 4.44) regardless they were most probably produced in the same companies in England as well. Hence, the intended differences in using of printing techniques and decorative art might possibly construct an obvious gap in term of visual representation, the imperial stamps were modern and advanced in design technologies, whereas the other colonies remain at the remote past.



Figure 4. 43: Stamp of North Borneo (clouded leopard) 1931.



Figure 4. 44: Stamp of North Borneo (proboscis) 1939.

4.4 Beyond the Animal Thematic Stamps: Themes Distribution in Colonial Era

This session discusses about the major themes of postage stamps in colonial era, other than animal themes. This extra information helps the reader understand the main

narratives conveyed by the State and identify whether animal thematic stamps are considered as part of its communication.



Figure 4. 45: Stamps of the Straits Settlements, Queen Victoria, 1867.



Figure 4. 46: Stamps of the first White Rajah, James Brooke, 1869.



Figure 4. 47: Stamps of Sultan Abu Bakar, 1891.



Figure 4. 48: Stamps of Royal Silver Wedding, Pahang 1948.

During the colonial era, the stamps designs were dominated by royal portraits or heads. Queen Victoria portrait was the first ever design for almost all stamps of states included North Borneo, Labuan and the Straits Settlements. Moreover, ceremonial occasion such as Coronation of Queen Elizabeth, Royal Silver Wedding (Figure 4.48) or inauguration also printed in colonial stamps, embodied a sense of sovereign power of the State to whom they belonged to. For the case of Sarawak, portraits of the White Rajah (Figure 4.46)¹¹⁶ and his predecessors were always the chief subject for the Sarawak stamps as well.

¹¹⁶ Rajah is the alternate spelling of *raja*, translated from Malay language. It means king or the monarch. The reign of White Rajah refers to the James Brooke and his successors who ruled Sarawak for more than a hundred years.

Precedence of British overlords on the key plates of states' postage stamps asserted territorial authority visually.

This was only until the early of 1891, The Malay king of Johore state, Sultan Abu Bakar decided to issue his own stamps (Figure 4.47) after his travel to Europe.¹¹⁷ Following that, His Highness sent the Postmaster General of Johore to visit the De La Rue in London and dealt the order of his own portraits on Johore stamps.¹¹⁸ This decision was greeted in dismay by the colonial officers in Singapore as it showed “further undesirable signs of His (Johore Sultan's) wish to assert and maintain His independence”.¹¹⁹ Hence, the presence of the overlords' portrait on stamp printing was a significant visual representation to narrate the highest sovereign (independence) power for a state ever since the colonial era. From the 1890s onwards, Sultans from different Malay States had hitherto becoming an indispensable design selection in the plate stamps for all Malay states.

Apart from the royal portraits and Universal Postal Union (UPU) designs, there were limited variations of thematic stamps among the Malays States. On the contrary, British North Borneo Company issued very few royal portraits but ingraining the imperial representation via their company's coat of army or emblem that featured again and again on North Bornean stamps. Their design themes of stamps ranged from native peoples, animals, local sceneries map and so on. Whereas in Sarawak, White Rajah and his successors dominant the design themes until 1950s, animals, economic activities, native ethnic groups and local art culture were gradually taken account by the State via visual

¹¹⁷ Richard E Hale, “Johore 1891-1922,” *The Malayan Philatelist* 51, no. 246 (2010): 3-9.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

representing them in postage stamps. In short, there were difference in the stamp's themes selection in between the British Malay States, British North Borneo company and White Rajah Sarawak State, nevertheless, animal thematic was the common interest among them. Despite of being the common interest among the colonial and postcolonial, animal stamp is considered a neutral theme in disseminating the state narratives across the eras.

4.5 Conclusion: State Narratives in Colonial Eras

In this chapter, the researcher suggests several representations of animals through the lens of the Colonizer. Following that, the researcher further interprets the meanings and appearance of animals (and this Land) via their visual representation on the colonial postage stamps, corresponding to the colonial discourse. Even though the wordings or illustration space is limited on the postage stamps, it does not restrain the narrative or certain communication intents which imply through the different ways of subject matter being represented. Postage stamps circulating from nation to nation, while its narrative image seemingly the descriptive content provided for peoples who could not read / have no idea about this animal / nation, meanwhile, enhanced meanings for those who could.¹²⁰

Since the 1881, British North Borneo Chartered Company was given the sovereign rights to control the state of North Borneo. However, the company was meant to be the British's stepping stone for expanding their imperial powers overseas. The British North Borneo company had to remain Britain in character and domicile, the appointment of the governor was done by the British government, and the territory of North Borneo was not allowed

¹²⁰ Susan Doyle, "Printmaking: A Democratizing Cultural Phenomenon," in *History of Illustration* (New York, London, Oxford, New Delhi and Syney: Bloomsbury, 2018), 18.

to be transferred without the consent from central British government.¹²¹ The company was acted as one of the dominion, it pledged allegiance to the Empire of Britain as its 'mother land'.¹²² Hence, the company was committed to the two missions: to administer and to exploit its territory.¹²³ Although it did not directly participated in the trade business neither on the port trading nor land market, the company controlled the trade license and land lease.¹²⁴ Thus, the company aimed to attract large numbers of outer investments or traders to generate revenues, by building an inviting image for North Borneo and made it a suitable place to trade. In other words, visual representation of the animal thematic stamps is typical of the romanticised and oriental topographical subjects which constructed the image of the far other proliferate and wild lands.

Besides that, animal discourse or the study of animal species that carried out by the British researchers during colonial era had tremendously build the understanding towards these colonies. For example, Alfred Wallace grouping the Malay peninsula, Singapore, Borneo, Java and Sumatra as Indo-Malay islands. According to his record, the number of Mammalia in the Indo-Malay region was exceeding 170 species.¹²⁵ What is the contributions of natural studies to Colonial States? Natural history studies are fundamental to all the biological surveys. Thus, every piece of natural science information was compiled and classified, to be provided to policy-making bodies. The political entities that established the surveys expect them to provide information to policy-making

¹²¹ Cecilia Leong, *Sabah The First 100 Years* (Kuala Lumpur: Percetakan Nan Yang Muda Sdn. Bhd., 1982), 45.

¹²² John Mcleod, *Beginning Postcolonialism*, 2nd ed. (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2010), 11.

¹²³ Leong, *Sabah The First 100 Years*.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid, page 150.

bodies that allowing for "better decision-making" with regards to those living resources.¹²⁶

Furthermore, orientalism is one of the ideological projects culminated in the colonial study too. Based on Edward Said's words, orientalism is a "system of the European or Western knowledge and itself is a product of political force and activity".¹²⁷ The discourse of orientalism reveals how Westerner perceptions had predominated the substratum of knowledge system. The enormous European systematic disciplines and discourses were installed, enabled British to study, explore and further manage the other oriental land politically, sociologically, ideologically, scientifically, militarily and imaginatively.¹²⁸ Moreover, the Western hegemony was reiterated to the mainstream media via different channels, such as political propagandas, literature and other printing outputs. Undoubtedly, political motives were the initial force that driven the 'investigative modalities' for the colonial state. Correspondingly, there was once a 'survey department' in the British Malaya's administration, taking charge for the decision-making of thematic postage stamp series based on their essays and documentaries. In other words, the survey modality not only enriched database of zoology, botany and geology for colonies likewise in British Malaya, it was also part of the colonial bureaucracy that accessible for administrative needs and generated economic values.

¹²⁶ Meredith A. Lane, "Roles of Natural History Collections," *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden* 83, no. 4 (1996): 536–45.

¹²⁷ Edward Said, *Orientalism*, First (London and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1978), introduction.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 5: ANIMAL THEMATIC POSTAGE STAMPS AS A PART OF POSTCOLONIAL NARRATIVES

In previous chapter, the researcher learns how the animals and lands being represented under the lens of colonial view. Following in this chapter, the researcher studies the visual changes in animal thematic stamps as one of the chosen symbolic products by the Malayan Federation or Malaysia States, to further examine the highlighted national visions, national cultures and identities constructed by the early postcolonial state of Malay(sia) until the end of 1992. The researcher thus focuses on the animals which represents national identities as well as the new species introduced by the Postcolonial State.

5.1 Framework of Postcolonialism and National Narrative

As mentioned in chapter 1, postcolonial era in this research implies the period that “existing after the end of colonial rule”. Nevertheless, ideological constructs of national consciousness are not ‘manufactured’ instantly after the Independence Day. It is a long process to realise the imagining nation by forging the tradition, history, as well as the national narratives.¹²⁹ Meanwhile, the affection of colonialism does not vanish without single trace after the remarkable Independence Day as well. The constructed ideologies are instead permeated in our ways of recognition and judgement, included in the system of knowledge and government. Since British colonisation is the shared experience (or common historical background) of the lands of Malaysia and, colonial culture has

¹²⁹ John Mcleod, “Nationalist Representations,” in *Beginning Postcolonialism* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2000), 80–120.

inevitably becoming the legacy or administrative framework for the newly established nation-state.

Following to Benedict Anderson's *Imagining Communities*, a state is in the position of "ultimate locus of sovereignty".¹³⁰ He proposed that a nation is an 'imagined' constituent and it is constructed through a conceptual sense of belonging to communities.¹³¹ Every single member of the communities believes that he or she is a part of the nation even though they may never know each other.

The newly formed postcolonial governments are led by majority well-educated elite group. Frantz Fanon has once explained in the *Wretched of The Earth*, the national culture led by the intellectual or elite group is formulated via three reciprocal phases.¹³² The first phase is constructing national identities under the framework of former coloniser cultural fashions while, second phase is the attempts of erecting native cultures from the past to fervently sever from the Occidental representations.¹³³ Following that, third phase would be the reconstruct or redefining the impartial national identities based on the considerations of collective cultural resources from the past and present.¹³⁴

¹³⁰ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised ed. (London, New York and Philippine: Verso and Anvil Publishing, 2003), 6,7 and 82.

¹³¹ *Ibid*, 5-7.

¹³² Frantz Fanon, "On National Culture," in *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963), 206-48.

¹³³ *Ibid*.

¹³⁴ *Ibid*.

5.2 Studies on Animals: Subject Matters in Postcolonial Postage Stamps

This section focusses on the animal species selected in postcolonial era and how they were being represented differently as compared to the previous colonial era. After the formation of Malaysia, the selection animal species in thematic stamps are more diversified. Contrary to the colonial era, the postcolonial State preferred to issue animal thematic stamps in a series. For instances, special issues entitled with “Protected (Wildlife) Series” and “National Series” thematic stamps which intended to group a number of different or similar species in one issue. Besides that, newly animal thematic stamps included special issues in freshwater fishes, species of marine life, insects, and more subspecies series of birds. More animals were being featured in postage stamps regardless in special issues, definitive issues or commemorative issues. The following subsections study on the animal selection and their visual representations accordingly to their special issues.

5.2.1 National Series: Selection & Representation of Subject Matters in Postcolonial Postage Stamps

There are three special issues provided with “National (Animal) Series” until 1991. First issue is the *National Birds Series* in 1965 and followed by the *National Butterflies Series* in 1970 and *National Animals Series* in 1979. They are the top lists in the agenda of chapter 4 as their titles explicitly reveals the intended communications of certain national narratives from the State.

5.2.1.1 National Birds Series: Symbolism of Freedom and Peace

Being the first ever animal thematic stamps that issued after the Malaysia formation in September 1963, *National Birds Series*, which being introduced in 1965 has heralded some changes in term of animal selection’s preference. Despite of Rhinoceros Hornbills that featured in both North Bornean and Sarawak stamps, other bird species ever featured

in North Bornean stamps are Palm Cockatoo (non-native species of Malaysia), terrestrial bird species such as cassowary (non-native species of Malaysia) and Great Argus Pheasant that are bigger in size only. Meanwhile, peninsular or British Malaya had no other bird issued in stamps during colonial era. On the other hands, various bird species emerged in the stamp issues after the *National Bird Series* such as *Protected Wildlife of Malaysia* (series II and IV) and *Hornbills of Malaysia* during postcolonial era.

Other than reflecting the diversity of avifaunal species in Malaysia, the emergence of different bird species in postcolonial stamps might be attributed to their symbolic meanings which attached to new postcolonial aspirations: the harmony and inclusiveness regardless geographical or racial differences. In the *National Birds Series*, 8 bird species shortlisted included Crested Wood Partridge, Blue-Backed Fairy Bluebird, Black-eyed Oriole, Zebra Dove, Great Argus Pheasant, Asiatic Paradise Flycatcher, Blue-tailed Pitta and the most frequent bird species across era: Rhinoceros Hornbill (all shown in Figure 5.1). Each of them was presented in a differently background colour. Moreover, although these 8 bird species are categorized in different families, none of them are raptors (birds of prey). Most of them are tamed species that feeding on fruits or small insects.



Figure 5. 1: *National Birds Series* in 1965.

These 8 bird species that can be spotted in different regions of Malaysia and most of them are shared species for East and West Malaysia (except Bornean Banded Pitta that can only be found in Borneo island),¹³⁵ therefore, they may probably signify the subject of connection between different lands of Malaysia. Since East Malaysia (Sabah and Sarawak) and West Malaysia (Peninsula Malaysia) are separated by the South China Sea, birds that endowed with wings and flying strength are seemingly an apt subject of symbolism, that bridging peoples from one side to the other side of the country. At the same year, brand new Kuala Lumpur International Airport was officially launched by Yang Dipertuan Agong, Tuanku Syed Putra on 30th August 1965, or 10 days prior to the introduction of *National Birds Series*. Following that, a special stamp issue for *Opening of International Airport, Kuala Lumpur* was introduced at the same day, 30th August 1965 to commemorate the official opening of Kuala Lumpur International Airport. The launching date of *Opening of International Airport, Kuala Lumpur* was closely followed by *National Birds Series*, suggesting a reciprocal connection between the representational meanings of “national birds” to flying and travelling. Hence, the narrative of imagining Malaysia was gradually propagated via different events and products from the State, where the role of postal institution was to publish and sell these exact same issues in every single post office in the nation.¹³⁶ For instances, both stamp issues of *Opening of International Airport, Kuala Lumpur* and *National Birds Series* were circulated in between peoples and they might evoke different meanings in different individual, nevertheless, for those members in this new nation, they would likely be linked to the same clue, kindled by an imaginary relationship of a bigger nationhood, where it could

¹³⁵ Based on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species official website. Full citations are included in the reference section.

¹³⁶ Althusser, “On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses.”

possibly be realized by “flying ability” although the lands are severed apart and peoples or the members were not knowing each other.¹³⁷ Prior to the Malaysia formation, Malayan Tiger was undoubtedly the choice to represent the Federation of Malaya in definitive stamps of Independent year at 1957. Since Malaysia was established based on its multiracial populations, *National Birds Series* became the first representational national species after Malaysia formation as they might reflect certain narratives of togetherness for new nationhood and they were less provocative expression of any regional or ethnical sentiment.

Moreover, *National Birds Series* might unveil the postcolonial State’s diplomatic vision in a broader viewpoint. Even though there are 2 terrestrial birds (Crested Partridge and Great Argus Pheasant) are included in the list of *National Birds Series*, none of them are endemic to Malaysia’s regions only.¹³⁸ Instead of that, these so-called national birds are distributed in other South-East Asian nations too such as Indonesia, Thailand and Philippine. Hence, the researcher suggests that species selection in *National Birds Series* concocts ambiguous national narratives, it encompasses the ideas of “inter-nationalism” instead. Other than constructing national consciousness for Malaysia formation, these various birds in *National Birds Series* that distributed around neighborhood’s countries might metaphorically refer to international relation or interaction between nations. Tracing back to the history of Malaysia formation, congregation of Malaya, Sabah and Sarawak was dismayed by its neighboring nation-state such as Indonesia and Philippine,¹³⁹ while this *National Birds Series* was introduced in between the period of

¹³⁷ Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*; Althusser, “On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses.”

¹³⁸ Distribution of bird species acquired from IUCN Red List of Threatened Species official website. The detailed citations of each bird species in IUCN website are listed in Bibliography.

¹³⁹ The government of Indonesia and Philippine were initially opposed the proposal of Malaysia federation as they regarded the congregation as a form of neo-colonialism. In 1963, Indonesia government

Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation. Instead of featuring the representational roaring Malayan tiger, 8 bird species were brought in the official dissemination as they might embody the State's prior consideration on harmonious diplomatic representation. In relation to this, a subspecies of dove: Zebra Dove was included in the list of national bird. The selection of dove was most likely associated with its universal symbol of peacefulness. Besides that, bird species in *National Birds Series* are commonly shared by other nations of Southeast Asia, this issue was seemingly recalled or corresponded to the regional collaborative efforts such as in Association of Southeast Asia (ASA) and MAPHILINDO,¹⁴⁰ which established in 1961 and 1963 respectively. Both confederations aspired to foster a harmonious relation between nations. Combining several counts on this national narrative, the researcher learns that the stamps issues are closely coherent with the politic agendas and the subjects issued in the product of ISA are not merely happenstances. Instead of that, they may be selected and represented upon multi-layered inclusions, exclusions and several intended communications of national narratives.¹⁴¹ Despite of concocting positive connotation on the new nation forging within its peoples, the State dedicated in presenting global composure of diversity in the international platform via several channels of official disseminations.

announced the confrontation policy (*Konfrontasi*) against Malaya. The conflict culminated when Indonesian troops attacked in raids, sabotage and attempted subversion in the boundaries of Sarawak and Sabah. This confrontation policy last until 1966. More information please refer to Alastair M. Taylor, "Malaysia, Indonesia - and Maphilindo," *International Journal* 19, no. 2 (1964): 155–71, doi:10.2307/40198963.

¹⁴⁰ ASEAN is formerly known as ASA, it established at July 1961 and its earliest members during that year were Philippines, Thailand and the Federation of Malaya. On the other hand, MAPHILINDO established on July 1963 with the vision to unite Malay communities, however, this union was dismantled at the same year due to the *Konfrontasi*.

¹⁴¹ Ieva Zake, "The Construction of National (Ist) Subject : Applying the Ideas of Louis Althusser and Michel Foucault to Nationalism," *Social Thought & Research* 25, no. 1/2 (2002): 217–46, www.jstor.org/stable/23250012%0D.

While studying the way of subject's representations, *National Birds Series* produced by naturalistic depiction that specifically delineate the aesthetic appeals of each bird species. This special issue designed by A. Franser-Brunner and photogravure-printed by Harrison and Sons Ltd. (London). 5 species included Crested Partridge, Asian Fairy-bluebird, Zebra Dove, Great Argus Pheasant and Blyth's Paradise Flycatcher are illustrated in a pair of male and female species, most likely to demonstrate different plumage features in between male and female of the same species. In some sense, the ways of seeing or representing these birds were sharing direct connection with the ornithological knowledge that accumulated since colonial era. Bird watching was a popular hobby for British and the history of ornithology in Malaya can trace back to as early as 18th century. William Farquhar, Alfred Russel Wallace Robert Ramsay, John Whitehead, and Dennis Batchelor are among the earliest naturalists and ornithologists who collected, recorded bird species of Malaya and Borneo.¹⁴² However, bird species were not commonly featured in the colonial postage stamps back then especially for British Malaya. This might be attributed to the flying bird species (with smaller body size) were having comparatively minimal representational value on colonial or imperial narrative, therefore these subjects were blocked from forming and emerging during colonial era.¹⁴³ Due to the widely distribution of bird (in the sky) and fishes (in the sea), these species were unlikely to be subjected in the belongings of other Lands. Thus, emergence of bird species that featured in *National Birds Series*, *Hornbills of Malaysia* in 1983, *Protected Wildlife of Malaysia – series II* and *series IV* had commenced another chapter of postcolonial narrative.

¹⁴² Kim Seng Lee et al., "Birding the Tip of the Malay Peninsula: Bird Diversity and Birding Sites in Johor," *BirdingASIA* 17 (2012): 81–93.

¹⁴³ Said, *Culture and Imperialism*.

5.2.1.2 National Butterflies Series: Representation of Variety and Diversity

Following the *National Birds Series*, another species with flying wings – *National Butterflies Series* was introduced in August and November of 1970. The 8 species included Blue-banded King Crow Butterfly (25 cents), Saturn (30s), Common Nawab (50 cent), Great Mormon (75 cents), Orange Albatross (\$1), Raja Brooke’s Birdwing (\$2), Centaur Oak Bird (\$5) and Royal Assyrian (\$10). This series is designed by V.Whiteley while lithographic printing done by Bardbury and Harrison & Sons Ltd.



Figure 5. 2: *National Butterflies Series* in 1970.

Even though the postage stamps are tiny in sizes and having limited spaces for its illustration, the designer of *National Butterflies Series* greatly utilized provided spaces to delineate the detail of different species as well as related knowledge of lepidopterology. Some of the subspecies were depicted in pairs or even in caterpillar forms to present the overview of that subspecies. Meanwhile, the caterpillars crawl on their own host plant in the background depiction. For instances, a caterpillar of the Great Mormons in the stamps of 75 cents (Figure 5.3) rests on the Pomelo’s tree while the caterpillar of Common

Nawab crawls on the tree of Red Saga (*Adenanthera pavonina*).¹⁴⁴ Thus, despite of enhancing the attractiveness of overall presentation, *National Butterflies Series* shed a light on the different type of butterflies in real scene that engaging the public education and interest on the butterflies species.



Figure 5. 3: Zoom-in the stamps of Great Mormons in *National Butterflies Series*.

Moreover, the *National Butterflies Series* also unveils the abundant biodiversity and diverse natural ecosystems of Malaysia. The background of each butterfly was decorated with different flowers or tree leaves reflects the mutual dependence between fauna and fauna in the processes of pollination or seedling dispersal. In between 1971 to 1978, butterflies become the selected species of definitive stamps between different states of Malaysia (Figure 5.4). The butterflies were matching with different flowers at their background and the national flower, hibiscus decorated in the definitive of 6 cents. Before these butterflies definitive, only tiger and the ploughing buffalo had ever featured in definitive that commonly shared among different states. Similar with the *National Birds Series*, the researcher suggests that stamp series of butterflies embodied with positive connotation, which evoked the sensation of harmony and variety in the multicultural

¹⁴⁴ The information of butterflies and their host plants provided by ButterflyCircle. For more information please read the official ButterflyCircle website and blog page, "Butterfly of the Month," *Butterflycircle*, accessed May 5, 2019, <http://butterflycircle.blogspot.com/2019/05/butterfly-of-month-may-2019.html>.

depiction. Butterflies in the stamp series reflect the richness of biodiversity and the spirit of interdependences between different living species (flora and fauna).



Figure 5. 4: Examples of butterflies in definitive series 1971 – 1978.

On the other hand, stamp series of *Insects I - Wasps* that being introduced in 1991 demonstrates another way of seeing on insects compared to the butterfly thematic stamps. Four species of Wasps: Social Wasp (*Eustenogaster calyptodoma*), Wasp (*Vespa affinis*), Digger Wasp (*Sceliphorn javanum*) and Cockroach Wasp (*Ampulex compressa*) were painted in intense colours and most of them were standing above an unusual bright part of trees' branch and leaves, The unnatural lighting beneath the wasps was seemingly to highlight those depicted subjects. Their background depictions were clean and less informative. There was no gradual gradation of blue sky on the background but contrastic light blue overlapped with ragged edges instead. The overall presentation provokes a sense of uneasy sensation for these wasps, which seemingly superimposed symbolic representation of danger species for wasps. Again, it reflects that most animals which issued in stamp series were likely be given or represented certain symbolic meanings. Hence, contrary to the *Insects I – Wasps*, butterflies selected as one of the national animal series in early Malaysia formation period may most probably delineate symbolic meanings of variety and harmonious scenarios.



Figure 5. 5: stamp series of *Insects I – Wasps* in 1991.

5.2.1.3 National Animal Series: Unity of Differences and Resonance of Cultures

National Animals Series was introduced on January 1979. The selected 8 animals in *National Animals Series* (Figure 5.6) are Malayan Tiger (*Panthera Tigris*), cobego (*Cynocephalus variegatus*), mousedeer (*Tragulus javanicus*), pangolin (*Manis javanicus*), Leatherback Turtle (*Dermochelys Coriaca*), tapir (*Tapirus mdicus*), gaur (*Bos gaurus*), and orangutan (*Pongo Pygmaeus*). Malayan tiger and orangutan are amongst the popular selection since colonial stamps, while cobego, mousedeer, and gaur are the new introduced sub-species in postage stamps' issues. The rest of them (pangolin, turtle and tapir) have been issued once during colonial era. This series is designed by a wildlife artist, Ong Soo Keat (a self-taught artist from Penang) who was commissioned by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) since 1970s,¹⁴⁵ meanwhile photogravure-print done by Asher & Co. in Australia.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ Winnie Yeoh, "Painting on Despite Stroke," *The Star Online*, 2011, <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/community/2011/09/09/painting-on-despite-stroke/>.

¹⁴⁶ Steve Tan, ed., *Standard Stamp Catalogue Book Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei 30th Edition*, 30 ed. (Kuala Lumpur: International Stamp & Coin Sdn. Bhd, 2016), 107.



Figure 5. 6: National Animal Series in 1979

National Animals Series featured 5 terrestrial mammals, 2 arboreal mammals and 1 marine reptile to create a picture of biodiversity, the great variety of animal species in Malaysia. The list included predator and preys, big and small terrestrial mammals, as well as big and small arboreal species. While studying these animal selections from the aspect of species distribution, some of them are endemic species to certain part of Malaysia only but majority of them are distributed in other Southeast Asian regions as well. Malayan Tiger and Malayan Gaur are the endemic species of Peninsular Malaysia.¹⁴⁷ On the other hands, Orangutan is the endemic species of Borneo Island and northern Sumatra. While cobego, mousedeer, Leathery Pangolin, Leatherback Turtle and Malayan Tapir¹⁴⁸ are traceable on both West peninsula and East Malaysia, as well as in the areas of Sumatra, Myanmar, southern Thailand. Hence, summarizing the national birds and animals'

¹⁴⁷ S.M.N. Romaino et al., "Species Identification of Malayan Gaur, Kedah-Kelantan and Bali Cattle Using Polymerase Chain Reaction-Restricted Fragment Length Polymorphism," *Genetics and Molecular Research* 13, no. 1 (2014): 406–14, doi:10.4238/2014.January.21.8.

¹⁴⁸ Malayan Tapir does not exist in Bornean island nowadays, but it has once featured in the North Borneo stamp of 1900-02. Archaeological result shows that the Malayan Tapir once occurred in northern Borneo as early as 45000 years ago, thus it might extinct in this island after 19th century. Hence, studying the animal stamps has provided the researcher some clues about species distribution that were not well-documented. For more information, please refer to P. J. Piper, "Borneo Records of Malay Tapir, *Tapirus Indicus* Desmarest: A Zooarchaeological and Historical Review," *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology* 19, no. 4 (2009): 447–571, doi:10.1002/oa.1015, abstract.

distribution in both stamp issues, the species exclusiveness was not the main consideration of selection.

Following that, most of the postcolonial animal thematic stamps introduced different animals from different species and different regions under one title or issue (for example, *National Birds Series*, *Protected Wildlife Series* and *Marine Life etc.*). In some sense, the representation evoked the nationalism of the imagined community which embraces the togetherness of different members in one platform,¹⁴⁹ rather than creates the binary opposition of Otherness as in previous colonial narratives. Hence, species endemism are not the main concern for national animal series selection in *National Birds Series*. Instead of that, these animals were most probably selected due to their associations to certain cultural narratives that linked to the representation of national identities.

Besides that, the animal selection in *National Animal Series* may involve several tentative narrations, firstly is the evoking of local cultures from Malay's folklores and other native's myths. Apart from the Malayan tiger that greatly discussed in chapter 3, Lesser Mousedeer is another example that commonly featuring in Malay folklores. Mousedeer belongs to the *Tragulidae* family and it is comparatively the weak prey species in the *National Animal Series*. Although similar deer species, Bornean Sambar (*C. unicolor brookei* Hose) or *payau* which is considered the Bornean endemic species and that have been issued in the postage stamps more than once during colonial era, it is however no longer adopted in postcolonial stamp series. Instead of that, Lesser Mousedeer or more commonly called as *Kancil* in Malay, is selected possibly due to its famous feature in the Malay folklores and legend. Despite of its smaller body size and short legs, *Sang Kancil* will always outwit its stronger antagonists at the end of the folklore stories. Examples of

¹⁴⁹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*.

the folklores are “*Sang Kancil* and Crocodiles”, “*Sang Kancil* and the Elephant” and “The Tiger cheated by *Sang Kancil*”. Moreover, Lesser Mousedeer is the well-known legendary icon for the establishment of Malacca empire in 1400s,¹⁵⁰ in relation to this the Lesser Mousedeer was symbolized in the coat of arm of Malacca (Figure 5.8). Thus, Lesser Mousedeer is the metaphoric epitome of smart and encouraging character in the Malay folklores, its presence seemingly rekindled the pre-colonial collective memory and Malay’s culture. These folklores and myths resonating across eras and gradually rooted beneath the notions of continuous tradition. They were later becoming a source of meaning-giving context, a concrete subject of imaginary realities for nationalist to construct postcolonial or national identities.¹⁵¹ While relooking the Lesser Mousedeer depicted in the stamp series (Figure 5.6), its side view is presented with short leg and chubby body yet muscular at the upper part of hind legs. Besides that, compared to other animal species in the same series, the mousedeer depiction is more “active” as it freezes at the moment when both front legs bringing together in an action ready-to-move or bounce up. In real scene, mousedeer is not an agile species due to their imbalance proportion of chubby body versus short and thin legs, nevertheless, Malay folklore often described it as a brave species and good in agility in the contrary. Bear in mind that postage stamp’s communication function is set for public viewing, this mousedeer

¹⁵⁰ The Founder of Malacca, Parameswara established a kingdom where he named it Melaka. The story began when he witnessed a white Lesser Mousedeer kick one of his hunting dogs into the river. So impressed was he by the deer's defiant gesture that he decided immediately to build a city on the spot. He asked one of his servants the name of the tree under which he was standing and, being informed that the tree was called a Malaka, gave that name to the city Malacca. This legend is well-taught in the history class of Malaysia.

¹⁵¹ Althusser, “On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses”; Zake, “The Construction of National (Ist) Subject : Applying the Ideas of Louis Althusser and Michel Foucault to Nationalism.”

depiction seemingly expands upon a usual mimetic image, as it captures a slice of agile motion which closer to the verbal descriptions of mousedeer in the folklores.



Figure 5. 7: The mousedeer and Melaka Tree in the oval cartouches in the definitive stamp of 1957.



Figure 5. 8: Mousedeer and Melaka tree featured its coat of arm.

Besides that, there is the legend and belief of the pangolin and turtle as well. Orang Asli, the Orang Ulu of Sarawak believe pangolin's scales can drive away evil spirit.¹⁵² Hence, the pangolin scales also sewn onto the sheet of the Iban's shoulder cape (*gagong*) alongside with the leopard skin.¹⁵³ Meanwhile, Malay folklore *Puding Emas Puding Perak* recorded that the mother of main character had transformed herself to a turtle and then a pudding plant that continuing supported her daughter in upcoming obstacles.¹⁵⁴ Therefore, national animal series in postage stamps are probably inaugurated the selection

¹⁵² Yong, *The Encyclopedia of Malaysia Volume 3 Animals*, 33.

¹⁵³ Heather Dorothy Zeppel, "Authenticity and the Iban: Cultural Tourism at Iban Longhouses in Sarawak, East Malaysia" (James Cook University, 1994), 165.

¹⁵⁴ MD. Salleh Yaspas, "The World View of Peninsular Malaysian Folk-Tales and Folk Dramas," in *Malaysian World-View*, ed. Mohd.Taib Osman (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1985), 253–84.

of local beliefs into the national representation. As mentioned in previous chapter, the way of how we see the animals may reflect an existential dualism, where animals surrounded us are the subjects from a parallel horizon, their existence and relationship with human are ambiguity: “They differ from men. They (animals and human) are both like and unlike.”¹⁵⁵ Even though their physical appearances are various and distinctly different from men, nevertheless, certain level of animal cognition and emotional expression share proximities with human being. Thus, they are often ascribed to different metaphoric meanings in many cultural roots as they extend the variation of human’s world. In some sense, the animal thematic stamps became greater in numbers and more variety of species during postcolonial era as they pertained the worldview towards mother nature and pre-colonial past.

Since Malay Archipelagos or Nusantara sharing intricated world view of cultures, beliefs as well as animal species, national identities’ formation of Malaysia were probably influenced by the neighboring nations. For instances, the researcher discovers the selection of species in *National Animals Series* shares some proximity with the animal thematic stamps of Indonesia Republic issued in 1956 (Figure 5.9) as well. Five animal species that selected on the *perangko seri hawan* or animal stamp series are *Kantjil* (Lesser Malay Mousedeer), *Linsang* (Otter), *Trenggiling* (Malayan Pangolin), *Banteng* (*Bos javanicus*) and *Badak* (Rhinoceros). Among them three similar species are selected and featuring in the national animal series of Malaysia 1979. While another subspecies of *Linsang*, *Banded Linsang* is featuring on the 1985 thematic stamps entitled *Protected Animals of Malaysia – series I*. In other words, four out of five similar animal species in this single Indonesia Republic stamp series are re-selected and re-presented in the next

¹⁵⁵ Berger, “Why We Look at Animals.”

Malaysia's animal series issued stamps until 1991. Hence, we can catch a glimpse of national consciousness in postcolonial State's identities formation: seeking for Self's recognition by referring to animal nomination by neighboring Archipelago nations instead as well as establishing Self's identities by tracing back to the precolonial history (such as myths and folklore).¹⁵⁶ The State strives to narrate national identities that demarcated from the colonial past by eliminating previous selection preference from the Colonial State. Following that, the State sought for another learning sources and inevitably, the neighboring countries like Indonesia might be the closer reference to build up a postcolonial national identity and national narratives.



Figure 5. 9: Animal thematic stamp Republic of Indonesia, 1956.

Apart from the mentioned possible narratives, these selected animals in *National Animals Series* are similar in one circumstance: they are endangered species due to the hunting games or trade and losing living habitats. Malayan tiger and gaur (*Bos Gaurus*) were among the popular hunting target during colonial era.¹⁵⁷ In between 1972 and 1976, the federal State of Malaysia streamlined the administrative system of Game Departments in Peninsular Malaysia under the enactment of the Protection of Wildlife

¹⁵⁶ Fanon, "On National Culture."

¹⁵⁷ Yong, *The Encyclopedia of Malaysia Volume 3 Animals*.

Act in 1972.¹⁵⁸ The Game Department was later known as the Department of Wildlife and National Parks Peninsular Malaysia (PERHILITAN).¹⁵⁹ Hence, the postage stamps of *National Animals Series* issued in 1979, alongside with postage stamps of *Protected Animal Series – Series I*, or *Protected Wildlife - Series II to Series IV* are considered a part of the official narrative for wildlife conservation. Relooking at the background depiction in *National Animal Series* (Figure 5.6), most of the animals featured near to tree branches or trunks, seemingly indicating these wild animals are indispensable with their natural habitats. Moreover, the background settings were altered and contrasted with the previous far distant lands in backgrounds of colonial animal stamps.

Summarizing the animal thematic stamps that entitled with the “National Series”, the researcher suggests two possible national narratives. Firstly, *National Birds Series* and *National Butterflies Series* that commonly sharing positive public connotations might imply certain communicative intents, which were to reconcile both intra-national and inter-national harmonies by avoiding any representation of confrontational or provocative subjects during the 1960s to early 1970s. Secondly, selection of different animal species or subspecies in one issue (especially the *National Animals Series*) reflects the variety or biological diversity in Malaysia.

¹⁵⁸ “Background,” *The Department of Wildlife and National Parks Peninsular Malaysia (DWNP/PERHILITAN)*, accessed May 20, 2017, <http://wildlife.gov.my/index.php/en/2016-04-11-03-50-17/2016-04-11-03-57-37/latar-belakang>.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

5.2.2 Protected Animal / Wildlife Series: Raising Awareness on Wildlife Protection and National Heritage

After the *National Animals Series*, Postal Department Malaysia started to introduce the series of *Protected Animals / Wildlife of Malaysia* since 1985. There were 4 collections in this series issued from 1985 to 1991.



Figure 5. 10: Protected Animals of Malaysia– Series I issued in 1985.

Based on the overview on animal selection, this series shortlists less menace or mostly smaller species to represent the wildlife of Malaysia. The series of “Protected Wildlife” may reflect the vulnerable facet of wildlife in order to highlights the Nation-State’s obligation to protect them. In the Series I, it introduced 3 small mammals in total, namely banded linsang (*Prionodon linsang*) and flying squirrel (*Petaurista elegans*), as well as a smaller primate, slow loris (*Nycticebus coucang*) in 1985. 3 of them are wild arboreal species. In Series I, the designer, Peter Khang depicted these 3 nocturnal species in the setting of natural daylight. Even though background setting might not reflect the species’ adaptation in real scene, the natural lighting depiction did unveil these mysterious nocturnal species to the eyes of public. On the following years, four subspecies of pheasant (birds) featured on the Series II while Series III issued four smaller Felidae as discussed in chapter 3. Subsequently, Series IV featuring four protected passerine birds. In series III – *The Felidae in Malaysian Forests* featured

Clouded Leopard, Leopard Cat, the Flat-Headed Cat, the Marbled Cat and the Golden Cat instead of the Malayan Tiger. It showcased the different adaptations within the Felidae Family and introduced them as fragile and endangered species to the point of extinction. Apparently, in the context of new postcolonial identities, postage stamps of *National Animal Series* and *Protected Animal / Wildlife Series* emphasize the act of animal species protection, further rebranding the Nation-State's images by repudiating the association of hunting games which greatly promoted in previous colonial era.



Figure 5. 11: *Protected Wildlife of Malaysia – Series II* issued in 1986.



Figure 5. 12: *Protected Wildlife of Malaysia – Series IV* issued in 1988.

Following that, *Protected Animal / Wildlife Series* may be a narrative approach to raise awareness on the conservation of biodiversity. Apart from Series I and III, another 2 issues in *Protected Wildlife of Malaysia Series* are provided for bird species. According to the Encyclopedia of Malaysia, Malaysia has 624 species of birds belongs to 78

families.¹⁶⁰ Malaysia has several species of pheasants that are in vulnerable state due to the hunting and loss of habitat.¹⁶¹ There are more than 5 hundreds bird species are protected by law of Malaysia, while Passerine or perching birds (Example in Series IV, Figure 5.12) constituted about half of the numbers.¹⁶² Even though the term of “biodiversity” was coined from the concept of biological diversity around late 1980s, however, Malaysia’s government started to gazette national park to reserve diversity of species and its habitats since 1965.¹⁶³ Apart from the Protection of Wildlife Act in 1972 and National Land Code 1965, the government also address problems of the loss of natural habitats and environmental degradation as a result of massive economic development in the Third Malaysia Plan (1976-1980).¹⁶⁴ Besides communicating with the public to raise awareness for endangered animal species, the series of *Protected Animal / Wildlife of Malaysia* and *National Animal Series* might confect an informal declaration of the State’s authorial power towards its belongings of it lands. Moreover, issuing the animal species conservation efforts on the stamps has revealed the State’s overarching vision to construct itself a new independent identity, who steadfastly opposed the previous colonial hunting games. Hence, the State laced the image of biodiversity to its national narratives.

¹⁶⁰ Hoi Sen Yong, “Birds,” in *The Encyclopedia of Malaysia Volume 3 Animals*, ed. Hoi Sen Yong (Singapore and Kuala Lumpur: Archipelago Press, 1998), 40–58.

¹⁶¹ Information cited to the Encyclopedia of Malaysia and First Day Cover, *Protected Animal Series I* (Kuala Lumpur: Jabatan Perkhidmatan Pos Malaysia, 1986).

¹⁶² Information credited to First Day Cover, *Protected Animal Series IV* (Kuala Lumpur: Jabatan Perkhidmatan Pos Malaysia, 1988).

¹⁶³ Preservation of national lands is the main effort under National Land Code 1965. “National Land Code 1965” (1965), http://www.federalgazette.agc.gov.my/outputaktap/20160909_A1516_BI_Akta A1516 BI.pdf.

¹⁶⁴ Conservation and Environmental Management Division, *Biodiversity in Malaysia* (Putrajaya: Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006), <http://www.kats.gov.my/ms-my/PustakaMedia/Penerbitan/Biodiversity in Malaysia.pdf>.

In previous cases, photogravure-printed and lithography works were commissioned or processed by different company such as Harrison and Sons Ltd. (London), J. Waddington (Leeds, England), Asher & Co. (Australia). To some extent the postcolonial State still relied on the outsource printing companies. However, the lithographed works were fully under the name of Security Printer, Malaysia at 1987 onwards. In contrast to engraving process in colonial postage stamps, the techniques of photogravure-printed and lithography enable the depiction of finer subtle textures, such as the colorful plumages and banded fur.

This series of stamps reflects the narrative to perpetuate natural resources of Malaysia and animals are part of the greatest natural heritage and national patrimony. Even though the several main law enforcements included the Protection of Wildlife Act (for Peninsula Malaysia), the Fauna Conservation Ordinance (Sabah), and the Wildlife Protection Ordinance (Sarawak) aim to protect the wildlife,¹⁶⁵ law alone will not guarantee the survival of endangered species. In fact, law enforcement should be engaging with education of natural knowledge. In this case, animal thematic postage stamps play a crucial role in attracting the public attentions. These stamps images that circulated among general public help to propagate the narratives regarding the values of nature as well as messages of endangered species, so that the peoples realize efforts of natural conservation implemented by the State.

5.2.3 Marine Life Series: Exploring Marine Species and Ecotourism Sector

For postcolonial era, the newly formed State has extended its horizon for animal species selections. The State issued a series of “Marine Life” animal thematic stamps started on 1988. The introduction of *Marine Life Series I to III* stamp series are mostly pertinent to

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

the accentuation of the “Law of the Sea Convention 1982”, in the conjunction with inaugural of “The Exclusive Economic Act 1984 (EEZ)”. The implementation of EEZ sets out exclusive economic zone as the area beyond and adjacent to the territorial sea extending to two hundred nautical miles measured from the baselines where Malaysia has sole exploitation rights over all its natural resources within the coverage.¹⁶⁶ In this EEZ area Malaysia exercises sovereign rights for exploring as well as conserving and managing natural resources of the sea bed and the subsoil and the superjacent waters.¹⁶⁷



Figure 5. 13: Marine Life Series I in 1988.

In Series I, the featuring species are a group of 4 nudibranchs or more commonly known as sea-slugs. Nudibranchs are fascinating invertebrate species that brilliantly colored, with have unfixed sizes and shapes. The species are selected and depicted in vibrant or complementary colours (Figure 5.9 and 5.10), which enhances the visual attractiveness of these species.

¹⁶⁶ Sativale Mathew Arun Advocates & Solicitors, “Malaysian Maritime Zones,” accessed April 18, 2018, http://sativale.com.my/demo/Practice_Areas/Malaysian_Maritime_Zones.php.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.



Figure 5. 14: *Marine Life Series II* issued in 1989.

Marine life Series II features the species of crustaceans: 2 species of shrimps (*Periclemenes holthuisi* and *Synalpheus neomeris*) and 2 species of crabs (*Tretalia nigrolineata* and *Neopetrolisthes maculatus*). Crustaceans are generally referred to aquatic invertebrate species that having exoskeleton or segmented body with jointed appendages.



Figure 5. 15: *Marine Life Series III* issued in 1989.

Marine life Series III introduces 4 turtle species that are in the vicinity of Malaysia's beaches. They are Leatherback turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), Olive Ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), and Hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*).



Figure 5. 16: *Marine Life Series I: Miniature sheet.*

Malaysia is mainly surrounded by the sea and thus is a blessed nation with diverse underwater species within its costal EEZ. The readers can catch a glimpse of the dynamic underwater world in the miniature sheet issued with the *Marine Life Series I – 1988* (Figure 5.9). The whole miniature sheet depicted the great platform reefs, pools of fishes, seaweeds and corals which is portraying the ideal spot for snorkeling or scuba diving. While the \$1.00 postage stamp captured a Ringed angelfish (*Pomacanthus annularis*). Despite of proclaiming the State’s sovereignty over the coastline, “Marine Life Series” also highlighting the variety of marine species, building up the image of a tourism-friendly nation. In fact, the State was devoted a lot of preparation efforts to its first ever Visit Malaysia Year (VMY) campaign of 1990, with the theme "Fascinating Malaysia. Year of Festivals".¹⁶⁸ Being one of the official communication tools for State administration, postage stamps became the ‘advertising space’ for VMY campaign, whereas national park, white gibbon and a pair of pheasant is featured in the issue along with VMY logo on the bottom (Figure 5.17).

¹⁶⁸ “Visit Malaysia Year,” *Tourism Malaysia*, accessed December 4, 2018, <https://www.tourism.gov.my/campaigns/view/visit-malaysia-year>.



Figure 5. 17: Animal stamps with Visit Malaysia Year (VMY) 1990, Postage stamps issued in 1989.

5.2.4 Fresh Water Fishes Series: Promoting the Aquaculture Sector

This special issue of se-tenant stamps introduced freshwater fishes that closely related to aquaculture sector. Unlike the narratives concocted in National and Protected Animal Series, these freshwater fishes are purposely bred to fulfil the food protein market, and they represent the potential aquaculture sector promoted by the State.



Figure 5. 18: Fresh Water Fishes Series 1983.

The selected freshwater fish species that featured in the stamp series are Tilapia Nile (*Tilapia nilotica*), Common Carp (*Cyprinus carpio*), Indonesian Carp (*Puntius gonionotus*), and Grass Carp (*Ctenopharyngodon idells*) (Figure 5.18). The background setting is constructed with colourful stones and aquatic plants. All selected species in this stamp issue are introduced species. Non-native species of carps have been introduced to

breed in Malaysia as they are highly priced food fish whereas some others for the aquarium trade.¹⁶⁹

In 1980, freshwater fish culture was greatly encouraged by the State under its units, Federal Agricultural and Marketing Authority (FAMA) and Fisheries Department.¹⁷⁰ This sector grew rapidly in 1980s, acreage ponds in Peninsular Malaysia surpassed 5000 hectares as compared to 146 hectares in 1957.¹⁷¹ As a result, the annual output of fresh water fishes amounted to 8298 tones which constituted 6% of the total aquaculture production in 1980.¹⁷² Fresh water fishes become the major source of food protein to supply market needs for locals and overseas. Following that, fish catch activities in coastal areas has reduced. Hence, these freshwater fish species are issued in postage stamps as they represent the popular sector that promoted by the Federal State.

5.3 Studies on Languages Display: Sub-Element in Postcolonial Postage Stamps

In previous chapter 3 and 4, subsection of “Sub-Element in Postage Stamps” are much focus on the decorative art. In this chapter, the researcher studies on the language display on postcolonial stamps.

On the declaration of Malaya Independence 1957, the Malaya Federation began with introducing Malayan Tiger definitive stamps. In the example of Malayan tiger definitive (Figure 5.7) and *National Birds Series* (Figure 5.1), the State’s name was written in both

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ *Fresh Water Fishes* (Kuala Lumpur: Jabatan Perkhidmatan Pos Malaysia, 1983).

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

alphabets and Jawi. This bilingual “Malaysia” written form was eventually streamlined into alphabets only around the end of 1960s (Example as shown in Figure 5.4, *National Butterflies Series*). Furthermore, the standardised bilingual of Malay and English scientific terms were used to describe the animal species (Figure 5.10). There are some exceptions where only the scientific name is used to refer the animal species. This might probably be due to the fact that certain species may not be familiar when referred to in Malay or local names (Example in Marine Life Series I and II). Contrary to the image construct of multiracial nationhood, multilingual representation was not alluded by the State of postcolonial Malaya or Malaysia, as taken from the examples presented on postage stamps. Instead of that, Malay, the national language was erected along with the scientific taxonomy to introduce the animal species to the local as well as oversea audiences. Moreover, scientific taxonomy that presented in italic form provides specific detail for the species.

5.4 Beyond Animal Thematic Stamps: Themes Distribution in Postcolonial Era

As mentioned in previous chapter, (Malay) royal portraits and animal thematic stamps are among the themes distributed from the colonial to the postcolonial. In fact, the State published variety of new stamp issues during postcolonial era. This session briefly recaps various themes that distributed from the starting year of Independence / Malaysia formation until the year when Postal Department was corporatised, to aid the researcher a better understanding on the State’s narrative for its fledgling nation from all domains.

Apparently, Postcolonial State keen to express itself in the official dissemination of postage stamps. There are different conference or associational thematic stamp issue such as *Economic Commission Asia & Far East Conference 1958, Commonwealth Conference 1963 & 1989, United Nation series 1970, Southeast Asian Association 1971, 1977, 1982 & 1987, World Health Association 1973, “Bank Meeting 1974, Tin*

Conference 1974, Free Palestine 1978 & 1982 and so on. Besides that, the State issued a series of ASEAN Games thematic stamps in 1965, 1971, 1977 and 1989 respectively. These thematic stamps represent Malaysia as an independent Nation-State who is actively participating in regional conferences and events, meanwhile maintains friendly and diplomatic foreign policies.



Figure 5. 19: one of the stamps for ASEAN Games, 1977.



Figure 5. 20: one of the series of First Malaysian Plan 1966 depicts the hydroelectric station.

The State also issued various thematic stamps to celebrate its national developments in various fields and industries. Examples are *Hydroelectric station 1963*, the series of *First Malaysian Plan 1966*, *Submarine cables 1967 & 1980*, *FELDA 1977*, *Rubber production 1968 & 1975* and *Agro-Based Products Series* which were the definitives printed along with the Malay-sultanate portraits.

Apart from promoting governmental policies and new implementations, the State is attentive and concerning for social healthcare issues within or beyond the nation. Examples of the thematic stamps are *10th Anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights (1958)*, *World Malaria Eradication Campaign (1962)*, *Free Primary Education (1962)*, *National Language Month (1962)*, *Freedom from Hunger (1963)*, *50th Anniversary of International Labour Organization (1970)*, *International Year of the Child (1979)* and *International Year of Disabled Persons (1981)*. Besides that, there are

miscellaneous themes of postage stamps such as Scout Jamboree, National Fruits, Hibiscus Flowers series and so on.

5.5 Conclusion: State Narratives in Postcolonial Eras

In conclusion, animal stamps of postcolonial era are presented as a series of public education on diverse biodiversity of Malaysia. Hence, the researcher suggests that State envisage to construct an identity of a diverse and modern nation, and keen to connected with the other nations. Meanwhile, the State was attempted to return to the sense of Self identity. Different animals or subspecies were selected under a same issue resembles the concept of imagining communities: in a new nation, different members forged as a collective whole regardless their different backgrounds. Furthermore, different special issues on thematic stamps also unveil the efforts to improve the visibilities of underrepresented small species such as crustaceans and wasps.

The animal thematic stamps of “national series” might construe the aspiration of a harmonious nations. Based on the animal thematic stamps issued in between 1960s to early 1970s, the selection of animal species reflecting the preference of less overtly confrontational species such as national birds or national butterflies to avoid any dispute within or beyond the nation. During this time period, the new nation of Malaysia was formed although it is challenged by neighbouring countries. Meanwhile, the political coalition was unstable as racial riots were triggered in Mei 13, 1969.

Furthermore, the State emphasize on the endangered animal species and promoting different industries (tourism and agriculture) via animal thematic stamps. The depiction of beautiful underwater world in postage stamps promotes recreational diving in ecotourism industry. At first sign, the employment of lithography or photogravure-printing has depicted details of texture, lighting or value, gives the reproduced animals a higher level of naturalistic and realistic aesthetic. However, upon examining overall

presentation of animals in postcolonial stamps, many of them are superimposed in the dramatically verisimilitude background as shown in the *Fresh Water Fish Series* and *Insects I – Wasps*. Hence, the researcher suggests that these uncanny presentations might be attributed to some possibilities: to enhance the attractiveness of animal stamps as well as to connote new meaning (or functions) on the selected species.

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CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

This research writing has exemplified animal species representations in postage stamps are parts of direct or indirect State narratives. The research structure is recorded in chapter 1. In order to study the state narratives that were concocted in the visual imageries from the colonial to the postcolonial, animal thematic stamps are being examined throughout this research as they favoured both States.

In chapter 2, the researcher recaptures how the postage stamps started from general philately interests and gradually developed into several interest of studies such as visual meaning and national narratives. This chapter reveals that how historical evidences of postage stamps are being examined in academic researches for the close connection between postage stamps and state narratives. Following that, the researcher identifies the problem statements and research gaps that intended to be fulfilled via this research.

In chapter 3, the researcher begins the analysis by the framework of state narrative as well as providing the big picture of the different animal species that featured in postage stamps across eras. These animal thematic stamps are rearranged according to timeline and animal species are categorized under different groups such as mammals, reptiles, birds and fishes. In table 3.1, animal species distributions in postage stamps shows that certain animal species is the “all-time-favourite” selection, some animal species are only represented in the colonial postage stamps while some others are overrepresented in postcolonial stamps. These differences of species selections indicate that these thematic stamps are being produced based on selection preferences and certain intent communications. By using the Tiger stamps as the main references, the following section unveils different visual representations of Tiger in official disseminations the colonial to the postcolonial. It demonstrates the different perceptions from the State has eventually shaped different state narratives. It also reveals the narratives and visual meanings

towards a certain subject will relentlessly changes along the eras. Meanwhile, this chapter summarises the overall decorative art's development that has taken place in animal thematic postage stamps across the era. Besides that, the researcher also compares the postage stamps' decorative art changes among different nations. These comparisons show that decorative art changes are sharing similarities with other Commonwealth nation's postage stamps. However, these changes of decorative art are not solely depending on the universal ephemeral design trend, they are taken place phase by phase and might varied based on the different years of Independence. Hence, the decorative art is mostly a part of the intended design that implying representational value for the State.

In chapter 4, the researcher further delves on the selection preferences during colonial era. Majority numbers of animal species featured in colonial stamps consist of wild and larger species in their own family group. The illustrated animals in stamps are examined carefully and several unusual visual representations are identified: Most of them are exaggeratedly depicted or deviated from the real scene. The researcher thus compares these depictions with other colonial visual elements and written literatures or novels, and found they match the stereotype of the wild and oriental lands. This study reveals that visual elements play a crucial role in propagating colonial narratives. Colonial narratives generate a dichotomous view of the world where oriental lands (East) are inferior and wild that ought to be civilized by the West. Furthermore, the presentation of proscenium arch as the decorative element suggested the visual experiences of spectacle from the West.

In chapter 5, the researcher studied on several animal groups and special issues that were newly introduced during postcolonial era. The different preference of presenting animals in a series has revealed the concept of inclusiveness and harmony in the postcolonial or national narratives that contrasted with previous colonial narratives. Visual representation

of postcolonial animal stamps greatly demonstrates biodiversity of Malaysia, reflects the pride of richness in natural resources and animal species ought to be a part of the national patrimony in term of cultural lineage. In relation to this, National Animals Series and Protected Wildlife species overtly raising the awareness of wildlife protection or conservation. For the languages displayed in the postage stamps, the using of Malay local name to describe the animal species reflects the intention of erecting *bahasa* or Malay language as national language. Meanwhile the State also attempts to exemplify the identity of modern Malaysia by introducing various species with their scientific taxonomies together with the local names.

By studying on selective animals that present along the eras, the researcher learns the specific changes of state narratives dealing with same subject. By focusing on the animal species that only represented in either colonial or postcolonial era, the absence or replacement of those selected species might indicate the species extinction or less favorable by the latter State government. Hence, the researcher can have a better understanding on the identity constructions that the State was once envisioned for. In short, this research unlocks several possibilities of state narratives that are established within the historical context. Apart of the objectives (importance) stated in chapter 1, this research kindles a special appreciative feeling toward the richness of biological diversity in Malaysia. Malaysia is gifted with more than ten-thousands species of flora and fauna, it is the uniqueness and veritable treasures of the State as well to represent them in the postage stamps across the eras.

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