

Review Paper

Significance of *Negaraku* as a National Symbol: A Review of National Identity Concept

Siti Nurkhalilah Liana, Azizan Zainuddin* & Anida Mahmood

Faculty of Administrative Sciences and Policy Studies, UiTM Shah Alam, 40450 Selangor, Malaysia

*Corresponding Author: azizan_zainuddin@uitm.edu.my

Received: 23 November 2023

Accepted: 24 January 2024

Abstract: The existence of national symbols plays a crucial role in reflecting the identity of a nation. The national anthem is one of the national symbol categories that are commonly used by every nation in this world. The combination of syntactic (musical) and semantic (lyrical) structure make it unique from any other national symbols. Despite of tangibility of other national symbols, the national anthem is intangible, and the lack of transient makes it stronger towards the emotional attachment. *Negaraku* also faces the same problem as there is a lack of understanding regarding the significance of the national anthem as a symbol of national identity. The continuous issues of contempt regarding *Negaraku* from 1957 until 2022 show the lack of understanding of the anthem itself as a symbol of national identity. Therefore, this paper aims to emphasize the significance of *Negaraku* as a symbol of national identity as a foundation of knowledge for fellow citizens about Malaysia. An integrative literature review is used to analyze the significance of *Negaraku* towards national identity discussion. The analysis will review various sources of relevant information from international and local references which cover books, journals, websites as well as newspaper cutting. Based on the analysis drawn it proves that *Negaraku* textual structures indicate a direct interpretation of national identity through historical and cultural elements in political and economic perspectives. In conclusion, the conceptual discussion through *Negaraku* contextual analysis can widen the social sciences area through anthemology studies in Malaysia.

Keywords: *Negaraku*; national anthem; national identity; national symbol; historical

Introduction

The existence of national symbols plays an important role in the formation of nation-states. The projection of national symbols has become a strategic tool in delivering the message of national identity and unity (Cerulo, 1993; Benjamin, 2019). The symbols can exist through the creation of verbal, visual, and iconic symbolism in terms of flag, anthem, flower, coat of arms as well and currency. The purpose of national symbol creation is to unite and promote patriotism to be celebrated by the people. Commonly, the national symbol highlights the culture and history of a nation as it shows the world that the symbols are essential in that nation. Due to their proximity to the culture and historical background of the nations, national symbols are significant to the formation of national identity (Benjamin, 2019; Shazlin, 2022).

Malaysia also created the national symbols in 1957 during the midst of preparation for independence. The first symbols that are marked as national symbols for Malaysia are national flags (*Jalur Gemilang*) and anthem (*Negaraku*). Both symbols hold pride as Malaysians despite of different ethnic groups (Shazlin, 2018, 2020, 2022). The unique structure of the national anthem is intangible compared to *Jalur Gemilang*. The usage of colour and symbols in the national flag makes it easy for people to understand the nationalism essence compared to the national anthem (Elgenius, 2005, 2011; Shazlin, 2022). The distribution and awareness regarding the role of *Jalur Gemilang* as the identity of Malaysia are widely broadcast through any platform

for fellow citizens. Unfortunately, the transient and lack of material presence of visible and tangible symbols makes it unique and expresses a strong emotional attachment towards the listener (Waterman, 2019; Nancy, 2002). To this day, only two prominent figures who manage to expose the function of the national anthem in Malaysia are Dr Shazlin Hamzah and Saidah Rastam.

It is undeniably true that *Negaraku* acts as the binder of various ethnic in Malaysia as they accept it as the national anthem and a symbol of national identity. The lyrical and musical structure indicates a unique emotional attachment that can only be appreciated and embraced during the singing of the anthem. It portrays a deep sentimental attachment even though the anthem cannot be seen like the other forms of national symbols. Although *Negaraku* is already 60 years old, the value of identity, nationalism, and patriotism toward Malaysia will not fade. The behaviour portrayed by fellow citizens when listening to or singing *Negaraku* should be embraced by each ethnicity. We stand up straight when hear the melody of *Negaraku* despite all the differences in culture, tradition, and practice. All ethnicities show this mark of respect as they accept *Negaraku* as a national pride of the nation. The behaviour itself reflects the strength of the national identity of the fellow citizen (Shamsul, 2022; Shazlin, 2018, 2019, 2021). The melody and lyrics of *Negaraku* reflect the cultural unity and historical character of the nation. It proves that *Negaraku* can bind people despite their uniqueness and differences (Shazlin, 2018, 2022, 2023).

The application of *Negaraku's* essence continuously dimmed and faded day by day. Most people only treat *Negaraku* as one of their routines without understanding the purpose and true meaning of the anthem (Shamsul, 2022; Ahmad Murad, 2022). It somehow reflects the strength of the nation especially in a multi-ethnic society like Malaysia. The continuous case shown in the table below has become a concerning issue for the nation as it jeopardizes the image and identity of Malaysia in the eyes of the world.

Table 1. The timeline of controversy and initiatives done by the government regarding *Negaraku*

Year	Controversies	Initiatives
1957	Disrespectful behaviour during <i>Negaraku's</i> playing in cinema by the ethnic majority.	National Solidarity Week. Radio Malaya 'Teaching sessions' of <i>Negaraku</i> every day at 5 p.m radio slot.
2008- 2011	2008: Changing the lyrics of <i>Negaraku</i> to <i>Negarakuku</i> by one of the Malaysian students in Taiwan. 2011: Insulting and changing the lyrics of <i>Negaraku</i> by Malaysian student through an FB page	Second revision of the National Anthem Act 1968 in 2018. The addition for Section 8(1) on the types of action that constitutes disrespecting behavior.
2019- 2022	2019: 7 Sarawakians arrested due to not standing up during <i>Negaraku</i> on a special occasion in Sarawak 2021: The creation of several versions of <i>Negaraku</i> in Mandarin, Arabic, and Kadazan languages. 2022: A group of Malaysians disrespect the <i>Negaraku</i> by singing and waving Jalur Gemilang in Israel 2022: The international dispute between Indonesia and Malaysia regarding the insulting action of the Indonesian anthem by Malaysian citizens.	All the cases are still under investigation under Act 808 but no other initiatives have been done by the government in projecting the <i>Negaraku</i> as a symbol of national identity.

Although the national anthem is a pride to the nation, many Malaysians fail to understand its significance. The continuous issues of contempt regarding *Negaraku* are a major source of concern as they jeopardize the nation-state's image. There are initiatives done by the government to curb these issues, but the same problem is still happening to this day. Fellow citizens need to be aware that *Negaraku* does not only serve as a national anthem but also national pride and identity to the world. As a result, this paper aims to emphasize the significance of *Negaraku* as a foundation of knowledge for fellow citizens in the formation of national identity as a Malaysian. The objective of this paper is to discuss the link between *Negaraku* and the conception of national identity in Malaysia through literature evaluation on past research. An integrative literature review of anthemology and national identity will be conducted to achieve the purpose of this paper.

Methodology

1. Research Design

The qualitative research approach will become the main procedure of this study. Adopting the historical design approach in this research will provide the researcher with the exploration of the philosophical stances of *Negaraku*. By looking at the understanding of *Negaraku* it can widen the discourse of *Negaraku* towards the national identity. The creation of *Negaraku* as a national anthem and a symbol of national identity originated based on the historical background of a nation. Therefore, this research will focus more on the historical design which concerns the identification, location, evaluation, and synthesis of the past. The close correlation of *Negaraku* and history of Malaysia become the foundation for the formation of national identity.

2. Data Collection

The author conducted a physical reading on a few references on anthemology studies across the world to get the gist of this topic. This article also refers to anthemology studies of *Negaraku* from 2014 until 2022. The studies were pioneered by Muhamad Hashim, Saidah Rastam, and Shazlin Amir Hamzah. Both figures are the only researchers that focus on the historical background study of *Negaraku* and its impact on social integration in Malaysia. The interaction between the national anthem and national identity has not yet been discovered in the social sciences field. Furthermore, the comprehensive electronic search also has been done thoroughly through newspaper clips that report on the issues of contempt regarding *Negaraku* from 1957 until 2022. The search was through Jstor, Scopus, and national academic journals which covered the themes of national anthem, national identity, and *Negaraku*. As a result, seven international and local references which cover books, dissertations, and thesis; 30 articles from international and local journals; and 20 online newspapers cutting have been reviewed for this paper. The wide spectrum of sources in the literature review is due to the limited sources on the topics of *Negaraku* and national identity in Malaysia. Hence, the author tries to use it as much as possible in analysing the data.

3. Data Analysis

This paper adopted an integrative literature review approach to discuss the significance of *Negaraku* in the conception of national identity in Malaysia. An integrative literature review can be defined as a non-contact method that apprehends the synthesis of data through reading and analyzing the existing literature about a specific topic or issue (Guijian, 2009; Snyder, 2019; Mavuso et.al, 2022). This method does not involve any kind of object or person and focuses only on the purposes of the study; thus, it is known as a non-contact method. In this case, the researcher will categorize the themes based on the latent content search from a comprehensive electronic search and physical reading of the relevant books. All sources found during the data collection process will be analysed through this method according to the themes of *Negaraku*, national identity and national symbols.

Literature Review

1. National Anthem as A National Symbol

The national anthem is one of the national symbols and it is commonly known as a patriotic musical composition that reminds the people in that nation about history, traditions, and the struggle of its people. It is intended to be sung to express commitment, patriotism, or love; hence, the content is meaningful, and it usually carries an important message for the nation. The national anthem also represents an 'official patriotic symbol' in the form of auditory and it is equivalent to the country's flag, currency, and crest. Furthermore, it also can be signified as the 'umbrella' of the country that can be proud of a nation (Perry, 2000; Voros and Fekete, 2012, Surjowati, 2021).

Two vital functions of an anthem can be seen through its emotional function and symbolic function. Firstly, the emotional function comprises of music structure itself that serves as an expression of emotion. Music acts as a medium for emotional responses which is so unique as this response cannot be attained through ordinary discourse alone. Interestingly, music also can be culturally defined as it serves as the reflection of one's culture that can lead to a strong emotional attachment. It is believed that the attachment can be formed through the experiences and objects that have been reinforced by repetition (Erikson, 2005; Shazlin Hamzah, 2022).

"Music directly imitates the passion or states of the soul... when one listens to music that imitates a certain passion, he becomes imbued with the same passion; and if over a long time, he habitually listens to music that arouses ignoble passions, his whole character will be shaped to an ignoble form..." (Grout, 1988, p.7-8).

Secondly, the national anthem has symbolic functions through the song's text. This text can communicate and interact with the listener; hence, it can produce concrete information for those capable of understanding the language at the implicit level (Surjowati, 2021; Abril 2007; Merriam, 1964). It has a certain solemnity, stirring quality, and dignity, symbolic of the birth of a new nation as well as appealing to all communities (The Straits Times, 1956). It is undeniable that the national anthem has been recognized as the performative symbol in igniting nationalism and patriotism essence among citizens. The ability of the national anthem can be seen through the connectivity as well as ignite the people's response through music (Allan, 2007).

Furthermore, it is ideally suited as a medium that is frequently used in promoting political socialization, construction, or maintaining mass identity, particularly in a multicultural society. This is because the national anthem holds a key part of national identity formation, especially in times of distress or war (Musvoto, 2009; Shazlin Hamzah, 2022). This section unveils the interesting history and transformation of *Negaraku* from a love song to an official national anthem in Malaysia. Apart from that, it also discover the practicality of *Negaraku* in policy studies as the unifying and identity symbol of Malaysia.

2. *Negaraku* as a National Symbol

Negaraku carries out the pride as well as the identity of Malaysia. It is Malaysia's only national anthem that the people have held for over sixty years. *Negaraku* is the most sonic symbol constructed by the Malaysian state and it reflects the continuous effort of nation-building for this country. The use of *Negaraku* as a national symbol in important ceremonies somehow provides the national movement with a definite shape and force towards progression and globalization. It serves as a national identity that each of the ethnic needs to accept as Malaysian. The anthem acts as the universal binder that each race should compromise and accept diversity as a part of national identity. It is also capable of projecting certain images by enabling people to appreciate and express their true feelings by singing this national anthem (Ahmad Murad, 2019; Shazlin, 2018).

The history of *Negaraku* originated back in 1800 during the event of *Perjanjian Pangkor* in Perak. It was first been sung on the Seychelles island by the native people there and it was discovered by Raja Abdullah. It is an isolated island where Raja Abdullah (Sultan of Perak) and his accomplice were exiled after being charged with the murder of the first British resident, J.W.W Birch. The hymn of melody was coming from the poem, La Rosalie which tells the story of a female disappointment and disdain towards his lover. The original melody was melancholic as the first scenario of this song portrays a woman sitting by a window on a rainy

day while humming the melody of the song. It was then played again and again and became a habitual tune on everyone's lips. It is then spread throughout the Malay Archipelago due to the bustling trade activities in the region (Shazlin, 2018, 2021, 2022; Saidah, 2017).

The root of the melody for La Rosalie can be traced through the original composer which was Pierre Jean De Beranger. He was born in France in 1780 and died in 1857. The song itself is often performed by French bands on the main Island of Mahe located in Seychelles (Zara, 2021). The tune was adopted into various languages in many countries around the world. It was first covered in Dutch, then in Indonesian, Japanese, English, Cantonese, and Chinese (Kay Kim, 2016). Around 1900, the song was a popular hit across the Malaya and Dutch East Indies among Malay's *Bangsawan*. The song has always been performed during performances, recorded, and played using gramophones during that time (Ahmad Murad, 2019). According to Shazlin (2021) in her commentary blog '*Negaraku: A Celebrated Tune in the Archipelago, Unifying Force for Malaysia*' stated that La Rosalie itself has been known in this part of the region as *Terang Bulan* with varying lyrics. Before the establishment of this melody to *Negaraku*, it was used by Indonesian films commonly in opera performances that marked the extra-turn period of *Bangsawan*. One of the famous performances was *Stambol Satoe* which highlighted the nobility troupes by Indonesian performers. Other performances were held in Penang in 1900, as the song was sung by Wayang Kassim and Indra Zanzibar during the opera performances of Nyai Dasimah. It is then sung by the most legendary Indonesian singer and actress who was known as Miss Roekiah in the film *Terang Boelan* (Saidah Rastam, 2017; Shazlin Hamzah, 2022).

Table 2. Transition of lyrics from La Rosalie, *Terang Bulan*, *Allah Lanjutkan Usia Sultan* to *Negaraku*

La Rosalie	Terang Bulan	Allah Lanjutkan Usia Sultan	Negaraku
French Version: La Rosalie asise par sa fenetre, J'ebtend la pluie qui verse sur son dos, Son petit couer qui repose a son aise , Et le mien qui na point de repos.	Para. 1: Terang bulan, terang dipinggir kali, Buaya timbul disangkalah mati, Jangan percaya mulutnyaa lelaki, Berani sumpah, tapi takut mati. Para. 2 Waktu potong padi di tengah sawah, Sambil bernyanyi riuh rendah Memotong padi semya orang, Sedari pagi sampai petang. Para 3: Waktu potong padi di tengah sawah, Sambil bernyanyi riuh rendah, Bersenang hati sambal bersuka, Tolonglah kami bersama- sama.	Dilanjutkan Allah usia Sultan, Adil dan murah memerintah watan, Diataati rakyat kiri dan kanan, Iman yang soleh Allah kurniakan, Allah berkati Perak Ridzuan, Allah selamatkan Negeri dan Sultan.	Para.1: Negaraku Tanah tumpahnya darahku Rakyat hidup Bersatu dan maju Para. 2: Rahmat bahagia Tuhan kurniakan Raja kita Selamat bertakhta Para. 3: Rahmat bahagia Tuhan kurniakan Raja kita Selamat bertakhta
English translation: La Rosalie seated by her window, I hear the rain pouring down her back, Her little heart rests at ease, And mine which has no rest.			

Sources: Shazlin (2022), Khalilah (2020) & Mohamad Hashim (2018)

Table 2 above shows the transition lyrics from La Rosalie, *Terang Boelan*, and *Allah Lanjutkan Usia Sultan* until *Negaraku*. The song itself adheres to a long journey to become the official national anthem of Malaysia. Despite many versions of the creation of Malaysia's national anthem, the recorded history indicates *Negaraku* has undergone an extensive selection. It was when Malaya decided on the date for Independence

Day, but the country still did not have a national anthem. Therefore, Tunku Abdul Rahman who was the first Prime Minister decided to make a worldwide competition in creating Malaya's national anthem. He invited anyone from professional to amateur people from all over the world to enter this competition. In addition to that, a special committee has also been established, and led by Tuanku himself. This committee aimed to sort through candidates and submissions during this competition. The competition process continued over several months and over 500 entries were submitted (Perpustakaan Negara, 2003; Saidah Rastam, 2017; Shazlin Hamzah, 2022). The table below shows the transition of the anthem from *La Rosalie*, *Terang Bulan*, *Allah Lanjutkan Usia Sultan* to *Negaraku*.

3. National Anthem towards National Identity

The impact of music in the previous century contributed to the creation of the national anthem as a prominent symbol that portrayed the national identity of a nation. The oldest national anthem was Great Britain's "God Save The Queen" which officially became a national anthem in 1825. According to Nettl (1952), he stated that the melody of this anthem was closely related to the oldest French music. The tune was from Lully who was the great French composer. During the French reign, the music was used to symbolize the royalties and aristocracy of the ruler. The lyric of the anthem indicates the prayer for the King, and it reflects the identity of Great Britain that upholds the reign of monarch for the sustainability of their nation. The impact of the anthem has spread across Europe as most European countries followed and referred the God Save the King to create their national anthem. As a result, the beautiful melody of the anthem also has been adapted by Germany (Nettl, 1952; Heather, 2023).

The impact of Italian and French music already reached Southeast Asia. Most national anthems in this region did have an influence from Italian and French music with the infusion of their cultural element. For example, the national anthem of China indicates the fusion of traditional temple anthems with Western melodies. The first full pledge of China's national anthem was originally from the party song of *Kuomintang*, a communist ruler of China. The tune was created by Che'ng Mao-Yun during the public competition held by *Kuomintang*. The tune was simple and keeps the balance between Western melodies and the native pentomic system which reflects the culture and tradition of the nation. Meanwhile, the lyrics were taken from the speeches of prominent figures in the *Kuomintang* party, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen (1867-1925). The lyrics reflect the national identity of China through the opening words "Sun-Min Chu I" which signify three principles of basic ideals of nationalism, democracy, and socialism as national identity (Nettl, 1952). They uphold the image of the national anthem as their pride and national identity due to the implementation of national anthem laws in China and Hong Kong in 2017. The law specifies on punishes the people who disrespect the national anthem. It is due to the Umbrella Movement of 2014 portrayed disrespectful behaviour towards the Chinese national anthem during football matches in 2015 (Ting-Fai Yu, 2019).

Another example can be seen in Singapore, as one of the nearest continents to Malaysia. *Majulah Singapura* is the national anthem of Singapore and has the same characteristics as Malaysia's national anthem. The song was composed by Zubir Said who was one of the composers that Tunku Abdul Rahman invited during the creation of *Negaraku* (Shazlin, 2022). At first, the song was known as a city council song, but after they achieved their independence in 1959, the song was upgraded to become the national anthem. The usage of *Bahasa Melayu* as the language of the anthem reflects the identity of the nation that has a major population of Malay people. The understanding and appreciation behind the anthem are the crucial elements hence, *Bahasa Melayu* is chosen as it is easily perceived by fellow citizens. Besides, Singapore is the most prominent country that imposed a hard sanction towards the offender of their national symbols, especially on their national flags and national anthem. It has been documented in their National Symbol Bill 2021 which states the fine can reach up to \$30,000 or jail terms of up to six months for the offender. The imposition emphasized the importance of *Majulah Singapura* as one of the national symbols and the pride of the nation (Fiona, 2016, Vernon, 2022).

Discussion

1. *Negaraku* as a Symbol of National Identity

National symbols are so strong that they can clarify and create society. However, the different types of symbols can fluctuate according to the country's history and culture plus the needs of national leaders. It also affects the national identity according to the circumstances of the national symbols that the country uses to represent its identity (Cerulo, 1993; Billig, 2002). *Negaraku* carries out the pride as well as the identity of Malaysia. It is Malaysia's only national anthem that the people held for over sixty years. *Negaraku* is the most sonic symbol constructed by the Malaysian state and it reflects the continuous effort of nation-building for this country. The use of *Negaraku* as a national symbol in important ceremonies somehow provides the national movement with a definite shape and force towards progression and globalization. It is also capable of projecting certain images by enabling people to appreciate and express their true feelings by singing this national anthem (Ahmad Murad, 2019; Shazlin Hamzah, 2018).

Looking back at history, the first official recording of *Negaraku*'s song was done by the Merdeka Choir. The choir group itself has been overseen by Ahmad Merican who was working with Radio Malaya at that time. Tony Fonseka was then appointed as a conductor and responsible for training as well as arranging a group of multi-racial singers which comprised Malay, Chinese, and Indian. This group carries a strong symbolism of Malaysia's identity as a multi-ethnic nation. It has been stated by Saidah in his interview with BFM radio station in 2015. She stated, "When Tuanku decided to create the repertoire of a new song for this new nation, the choir which was formed to sing it comes from all faiths, all creeds and all colours." (Saidah, 2015, para. 17). The figure below showed the simplified timeline that explained the journey in *Negaraku*'s creation.

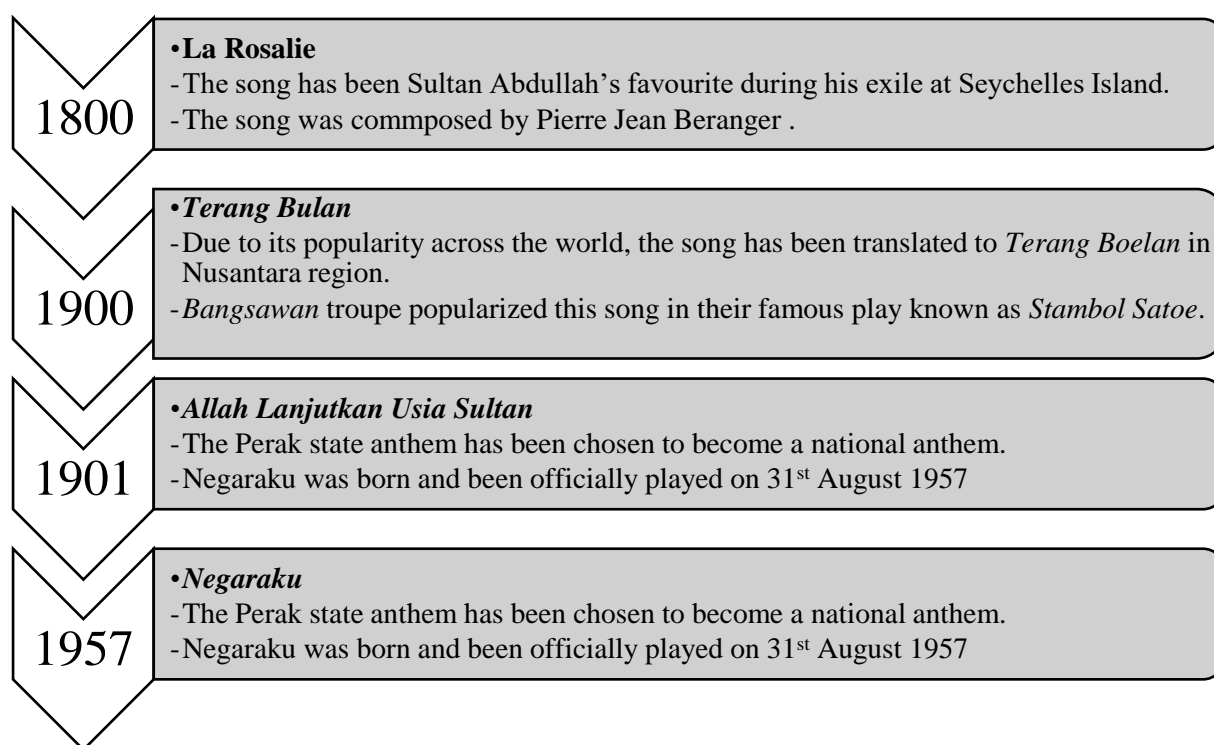


Figure 1. Timeline transition from La Rosalie, Terang Bulan, Allah Lanjutkan Usia Sultan to *Negaraku*

2. National Identity Representation in *Negaraku*

The significance of the national anthem in promoting national identity, cultural presentation, nationalism, and patriotism can be seen through international studies, especially in Singapore, India, Indonesia, and China. Although the area of anthemology, known as the scholarly study of the national anthem rapidly developing in the international arena, Malaysia does not have enough scholarly expertise in this area (Macedonian Heraldic

Society, 2023). It is still in the early stages of development in the academic area, thus, only two prominent figures that focus on the study of *Negaraku* are Dr. Shazlin A. Hamzah (2018, 2020, 2021, 2022) and Datin Saadah Rastam (2015, 2017). However, the existing studies from these figures mainly focused on the historical background specifically on the transition melody of *Negaraku*.

As mentioned in the previous section, it is undeniably true that music is a universal phenomenon as a part of human life. It is the face of the community that can determine the identity of a certain group. The expressive nature of music reflects the society that produces it. This involves the emotions, feelings, and thoughts of both the music producer and the listener. The same role and criteria can be seen through *Negaraku's* creation in the melodic and lyrical structure of the song. It is the most important spoken and audible national symbol in the country. Symbolism in the national anthem is an important element in the nation-building process because it acts as a marker that celebrates and commemorates nationhood (Elgenius, 2011; Shazlin, 2022).

*Negaraku,
Tanah tumpahnya darahku,*

The lyrical structure of *Negaraku* represents the cultural and identity aspects of Malaysia and it is portrayed in the first and second lines of the first paragraph in *Negaraku*. During the process of the anthem, Tunku always wanted the word “*Negaraku*” to be the first sentence. When the anthem is sung during Independence Day, the community realizes that Malaya has become a sovereign country and has its place and identity on the world map (Mohamad Hashim, 2014; Shazlin, 2022).

The next line in the same paragraph which is “*Tanah tumpahnya darahku*” illustrates the continuation of the ‘*Negaraku*’ in the previous line. It portrays the identity of a nation as Malaysia is the birth country for fellow citizens in Malay land. Although the nation consists of a diverse ethnic community, those who confess to becoming Malaysians are willing to die to maintain the pride and peace of the nation. Therefore, the first paragraph indicates “*Negaraku, Tanah tumpahnya darahku*” represents the citizen blood sacrificed in maintaining and defending the culture and tradition and somehow developing an understanding of the essence of nationalism and the national identity of the nation (Khalilah, 2020; Shazlin, 2022; Mohamad Hashim, 2014).

*Rakyat hidup,
Bersatu dan maju*

The third and fourth line in the first paragraph; “*Rakyat hidup, Bersatu dan maju*” illustrates the spirits of the people who are willing to join hands with each other in developing the country even though there are differences in a multi-ethnic environment. In this case, it represents the process of civilization in the building of the state. Every state needs to achieve civilization because somehow it apprehends that the state moves along with the development era. Therefore, to achieve civilization, the essence of unification and great progression toward modernization and globalization. Both elements of civilization set standards for the level of civilization, thus, every nation tries to achieve the same goal and purpose towards these concepts despite any challenges and differences (Mohamad Hashim, 2014; Khalilah, 2020; Shazlin, 2022).

*Rahmat bahagia,
Tuhan kurniakan,
Raja kita,
Selamat bertakhta*

Although the second and third paragraph indicate the repetition of the same lyrics, they serve a specific meaning of religion and cultural aspects of a nation. The first and second line of the third and fourth paragraph, “*Rahmat bahagia, Tuhan kurniakan*” illustrates the importance of religious and divine elements in society. There is no specification of religion based on these lyrics as Tunku was aware that Malaysia consists of a multi-ethnic population that practices a different spectrum of religions. However, each religion recognizes the sole of God and only God can bestow grace on mankind for all their effort towards the country (Mohamad

Hashim, 2014; Shazlin, 2022). The third and fourth line in both paragraphs “*Raja kita, Selamat bertakhta*” somehow shows the continuation of the previous line. The committee paid attention to the congruity of the lyrics verses by relating them to the elements of the constitutional king. Furthermore, the paragraph formation can be seen as a form of prayer towards our monarchy as it represents a strong and important position in determining the strength of that nation and country (Khalilah, 2020; Shazlin, 2022; Mohamad Hisham, 2014).

The representation in the lyrical structure of the anthem reflects the socio-historical, cultural, and traditional aspects in every spectrum. It serves as the symbol of a national identity as Malaysian. It can be seen through the few discussions above that the bait of the lyrics in *Negaraku* reflects the identity and cultural discussion with the infusion of economic and political aspects.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the *Negaraku* not only serves as the national anthem of Malaysia but has been accepted by each ethnicity as a symbol of national identity. The importance of the national anthem in reflecting and portraying the identity of the nation has been started since the 18th century. A few examples from the world's national anthem prove that it signifies the identity of a nation. It holds a strong sentimental value which impacts the emotional attachment of the listener. Apart from that, the national anthem structure is unique compared to the other national symbols making it valuable to investigate. The combination of the musical and textual structure of the national anthem affects a strong emotional attachment towards the listener.

The same goes for *Negaraku* as national anthem of Malaysia. Despite the differences of ethnicities, all citizens will stand up straight when listening to and singing the *Negaraku*. Each ethnicity accepted that *Negaraku* reflects the national identity as Malaysian. The textual discussion in *Negaraku* portrays the national identity of a multi-diverse society. Each paragraph indicates not only the reflection of national identity but also the harmonious cultural differences in political and economic perspectives. The first choir performance of *Negaraku* involved singers from across ethnic groups to reflect the identity of Malaysia as a multi-diverse society.

Therefore, this paper can serve as the basis for anthemology studies of *Negaraku*. Until now, the studies for anthemology only cover the historical background of musical development in Malaysia by prominent experts in *Negaraku* which are Saidah Rastam and Dr Shazlin Amir Hamzah. This paper can widen the anthemology studies in Malaysia, particularly in national identity discussions.

Acknowledgment: This paper acknowledged Universiti Teknologi Mara Shah Alam in contributing this paper as a part of requirement in PhD journey.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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