



# Emerging Patterns Of Bangsa Malaysia In Anthony Burgess' *Time For A Tiger*

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Received: 14-07-2015

Accepted: 27-10-2015

Advance Access Published: October 2015

Published: 01-01-2016

doi:10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.5n.1p.264

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.5n.1p.264>

The research is financed by Universiti Putra Malaysia Grant GP-IPS/2014/9430900.

## Abstract

*Time for a Tiger* (1956), a novel by Anthony Burgess, is believed to have been overlooked in the Malaysian literary context. Existing scholarship has maintained that the central themes of *Time for a Tiger* are colliding cultures, clashes of religion and racial conflicts but, in spite of these themes, this paper attempts to argue that there are in fact emerging patterns of *Bangsa Malaysia* in *Time for a Tiger*, which in turn reflect the elements of unity among the rich mixture of multi-ethnic characters. *Bangsa Malaysia* is not only the first of the nine challenges listed in Vision 2020 as conceptualised by Dr. Mahathir Mohamad (1991), but also marks the first time the Malaysian government is officially putting forward a clear vision in building a nation, launched to create a oneness atmosphere among the ethnic groups, in hopes it will reduce, if not erase, the tension among them. This study reveals that there are indeed emerging patterns of *Bangsa Malaysia* depicted through a mixture of characters from various ethnicities, namely the Malays, the Chinese and the Indians, through the implementation of government policies, education, a change of mindset and personal judgement, patriotism and the unifying role of the monarchy. Additionally, the patterns do support the earlier stage of the formation of *Bangsa Malaysia*, namely tolerance.

**Keywords:** *Bangsa Malaysia*, Anthony Burgess, *Time for a Tiger*, Malaysians, tolerance, unity

## 1. Introduction

John Anthony Burgess Wilson (1917-1993) was born in Harpurhey, Manchester and is a prominent contemporary British author more well-known for his dystopian themed novels. What is less known, however, is that Burgess first paved his way through the writing career by way of his first novel written based on his experiences in Malaya (Malaysia), *Time for a Tiger* (1956). Between the years of 1954 to 1959, Burgess dedicated his life to live and work in Malaya and also Brunei as an educator, namely in an elite boarding school for the Malays, the Malay College Kuala Kangsar (MCKK) in Kuala Kangsar Perak, situated on the western coast of then Peninsular Malaya, the Malayan Teacher's Training College at Kota Bharu, Kelantan, on the eastern coast, and the Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin College in Brunei, where his experiences and encounters inspired him to shape his views and works particularly on the Malays and their religious faith, Islam (Coale 438). From these teaching posts, Burgess is mostly remembered for his time at MCKK, an elite school which was originally built for the children of Malay aristocrats (Azmi and Shamsul A. B. 348). MCKK, which is also called the 'Eton of the East', inspired Burgess to write about the Mansor School in *Time for a Tiger*, the first volume of *The Malayan Trilogy*, followed by *The Enemy in the Blanket* (1958) and *Beds in the East* (1959), with themes of colliding cultures, clashes of religion and racial conflicts (Coale 438; Whittle 86; Zawiyah 177-179; Biswell 168). The novel is a fictional narrative on the lives of the Malaysians during the pre-independence period, who live together with the protagonist, Victor Crabbe, an eccentric English teacher at the Mansor School in a town called "Lanchap". Crabbe, who favours the Malaysians more than his own people, often acts as a referee in his various attempts to unite the conflicting ethnic groups, although the efforts usually end up in vain (Whittle 87).

Despite the fact that the trilogy is written in the Malayan setting, there have been limited number of studies conducted so far, especially in the Malaysian academic context and discourse, namely by Zawiyah (2003), Ida B. B. (2010), Whittle (2013) and Farahanna, Ida. B. B. and Rosli (2014). Various issues have been analysed in these studies, specifically Burgess's ideological projection through his portrayal of the characters (Zawiyah 2003), the hypothesised paradigm of Malayness as an everyday-social reality (Ida B.B. 2010), the connection of the post-war period of decolonisation with the national identity of the British (Whittle 2013), and the author's portrayal of the animistic beliefs of the Muslim Malay characters and how the animistic beliefs are linked to the practice of Malay *adat*/culture (Farahanna et al. 2014). Although Whittle's study is based on decolonisation and British identity, his analysis, however, focuses more on the idea of ethnical tension and the possible unity that might be achieved by the Malayan characters.

Since the term *Bangsa Malaysia* was unveiled in 1991 by the fifth former Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, under Vision 2020, it has attracted different views and perspectives, mainly due to its unclear and ambiguous meaning, and the means of achieving it due to the nation's multiethnic languages, religions and cultures (Mustafa 2006, 2010; Khoo 2011). Researchers and scholars both agree that there is still much to be done in realising *Bangsa Malaysia* and, to do so, a number of approaches have been suggested; for example, to acknowledge their differences, to form mutual understanding of each other (Shamsul A.B. 1996), to instill religion into the system (Khoo 2011) as well as to achieve it through political culture (Shakila 2006; Shukri et. al. 2010; Husin 2015), through a change of mindsets and attitudes (Shakila 2006; Husin 2015), through a deep understanding and sense of respect for religion, culture and monarchy (Shakila 2006; Shukri et. al. 2010; Husin 2015), through the education system (Aminuddin 2000; Khader 2012; Husin 2015) and also through parenting (Aminuddin 2000). Indeed, *Bangsa Malaysia* is at the top of the nine challenges listed in Vision 2020, and this also marks the first time the Malaysian government is officially putting forward a clear vision in building a nation (Mustafa 2-4), where the specific term was launched to create a oneness atmosphere among the ethnic groups, in hopes it will reduce, if not erase, the tension among them. Besides that, the term *Bangsa Malaysia* was also originally proposed by Mahathir to replace the term *Bangsa Melayu* (Reid 296-297) and was instead later redefined into *Melayu Baru* (1991) (directly translated into 'New Malay') which was created to urge the Malays to continue thriving towards a better self, creating success without being spoon-fed or, in other words, to learn to stand on their own (Mustafa 163-164).

However, through a hermeneutic textual analysis as our methodology, we argue that there are, in fact, emerging patterns of *Bangsa Malaysia* in the narrative, *Time for a Tiger*, which in return reflect the elements of unity among the rich mixture of ethnic groups already depicted by a renowned British author, Anthony Burgess, long before it was conceptualised by Mahathir in Vision 2020. Our study, so far, has also discovered that scholarship on the Malayan characters in Burgess' *Time for a Tiger* is still undermined in terms of scholarly value and overlooked in terms of its ethnicity discourse. Another new knowledge, therefore, of this study is to respond to the problem of this absence by examining the literature by an English author who had, in reality, lived in the setting of his own fictional world. In our opinion, the literary continuation of this group of writers has been ignored for a long time and has not appeared in anthologies or class syllabi in the Malaysian context.

## 2. *Bangsa Malaysia*

Mahathir, in his paper presentation, "Malaysia: The Way Forward (Vision 2020)" (1991), states that:

There can be no fully developed Malaysia until we have finally overcome the nine central strategic challenges that have confronted us from the moment of our birth as an independent nation. The first of these is the challenge of establishing a united Malaysian nation with a sense of common and shared destiny. We must be a nation at peace with itself, territorially and ethnically integrated, living in harmony and full and fair partnership, made up of one '*Bangsa Malaysia*' with political loyalty and dedication to the nation (Mahathir 1991)

The eight other strategic challenges proposed in the Vision 2020 are to build a Malaysian society who are (1) psychologically liberated and respected, who are confident and proud of their achievements, (2) mature, democratic and can act as a model to other nations, (3) highly ethical, with strong religious and spiritual values, (4) full of tolerance for others, who practise diverse sets of customs, cultures and religions, (5) innovative and progressive, (6) loving and caring, (7) economically unbiased and (8) prosperous and economically competitive (Mahathir 1991).

Despite the *bona fide* effort, the idea of *Bangsa Malaysia* itself, according to Ariffin and Badriyah, is deemed problematic; the term *bangsa* denotes people, race, ethnic, community, nationality, state, or nation, thus making it a perplexing term to start with (as cited in Mustafa 151). Hishamuddin Rais (2014) suggests that *bangsa* signifies a group of people who shares the same sets of languages, cultures and ways of life and lives together in a territory, and that it is also important for these groups of people to not only share the same historical background but must also share the same dreams, hopes and ambitions (Hishamuddin 2014). The term *Bangsa Malaysia*, however, according to Hooker, gives the original meaning of *bangsa*, which refers to race, a touch of nation (161). The ethnics, in Vision 2020, she explains, are actually being renamed no longer as Malays, Indians and Chinese but as one, a nation, and that this move is taken to overcome the gaps between the ethnics in Malaya, which was originally cultivated by the British colonial practice (Ibid). Here, the image of oneness as a nation is highlighted, through their utmost devotion to the country and through the use of the national language, *Bahasa Malaysia*. Accepting the Constitution, which covers rights and responsibilities

not only of the government but also the citizens, namely religion, citizenship, elections, the monarchy and the Parliament, signifies unity as it demonstrates a common understanding and also tolerance as a multi-cultural nation.

Malaysia's current Prime Minister, Mohd. Najib Abdul Razak, also reiterates the same view as Mahathir; that *Bangsa Malaysia* does not mean the need to evaluate someone by their skin colours, races or religions and it also does not question the special positions of the Malays as promulgated in the Constitution of Malaysia as Article 153 (Tan et al. 2006). However, Najib also states that *Bangsa Malaysia* is not a policy written in the Constitution but a 'state of mind to eradicate social prejudices and differences among the races', and that everyone should accept this in order to avoid polemics on the definition so as to avoid arousing controversies (Ravi and Nurbaiyah 6). Najib also highlights the confusion behind the term *Bangsa Malaysia* that has been openly interpreted and debated as this misunderstanding has, in fact, triggered the idea that *Bangsa Malaysia* poses a threat to the Malays as it is believed that it challenges the Constitution and the special positions of the Malays (Ibid). The unclear meaning of *Bangsa Malaysia* has also been discussed by Khoo Gaik Cheng, where she suggests that the whole idea of *Bangsa Malaysia* often leads to the understanding that, instead of basing themselves by ethnicity, the Malaysians will merge into one: "Because the word *bangsa* conflates meanings like "race" and "nationality," the most optimistic reading of "*Bangsa Malaysia*" suggests a Malaysian, a nation able to imagine itself as a hybrid whole rather than one permeated by ethnic divisions" (Khoo 2).

Khoo's view of *Bangsa Malaysia*, for instance, differs from Mahathir's as the eminent statesman defines the term as the citizens being able to identify themselves with the country, adhering to the Malaysian Constitution, which also means accepting the polychromatic cultures and beliefs practised by other ethnics, while Khoo sees it more as a hybrid, merging the diverse ethnicities of Malaysia into one. Mahathir has, in the recent past, admitted that the creation of *Bangsa Malaysia* has to be one of the most challenging political tasks yet in realising Vision 2020 as the different ethnic groups have to acknowledge each other's differences in order to share a common national identity (Shamsul A.B. 15-16). *Bangsa Malaysia* is indeed prone to economic and social pressures and, in order to avoid succumbing to them, the Malaysian government has been continuously thriving to instill religion into the system as, in times of stress and disturbance, religion is believed to act as a strong force of guidance that shapes identity (Hooker 162-164). Indeed, the success of *Bangsa Malaysia* lies in the success of the leaders in applying Islam to function as a moral code as well as a civil religion and one of the commonalities of *Bangsa Malaysia* (Hooker 162-164). In recent times, Mahathir has stated that *Bangsa Malaysia* would not be realised if the citizens in Malaysia still held tightly and rigidly to their own identity, culture and language ("*Pegangan Kuat Identiti Asal Halang Wujud Identiti Bangsa Malaysia, Dr Mahathir*" 2014). According to Mahathir, if this practice continues, it will not only split the nation apart but also hinder the government's attempt to nurture a new generation of *Bangsa Malaysia* (Ibid). He further adds that it has been agreed under the Social Contract of 1957 that citizens of Malaysia are allowed to retain the identities of their homelands but the problem arises when they do not allow any changes in their lives, thus complicating the process even further (Ibid).

In the academe, however, we have identified views in contemporary studies and scholarly articles on *Bangsa Malaysia* (Aminuddin Mohd. Yusof 2000; Shakila Parween Yacob Fakhri 2006; Diana L. Eck 2007; Abd al-Hakeem Carney 2008; Md Shukri Shuib et al. 2010; R. Khader 2012; Azhar Ibrahim 2014; Syed Husin Ali 2015) which seem to indicate an understanding of a nation (the Malaysians) consisting of various ethnicities who acknowledge each other's differences while still maintaining their own values and, at the earlier stage of formation, must first tolerate these differences before slowly transitioning to accept them as a part of a polychromatic nation. Moving on from the issues concerning *Bangsa Malaysia*, we aim to address the following queries for this study with regards to the literary portrayals of Malayan characters: are there any emerging patterns of *Bangsa Malaysia* based on Burgess' portrayal of the Malayan characters? If so, how do these patterns fit into the understanding of *Bangsa Malaysia*? To clarify our own stand, we will also be applying the term 'ethnicity' to refer to the characters' ethnic groups throughout the analysis. It must be stated, however, that, since the unveiling of *Bangsa Malaysia*, the concept has attracted scholars from various fields, including literary studies; thus, it is important for us to discuss these studies first in the next section before moving on to our analysis.

### 5. *Bangsa Malaysia* in Literary Studies

Since it was first introduced in Malaysia, a number of literary scholars have applied *Bangsa Malaysia* as a framework in their studies (Quayum 1999, 2007; Noritah and Washima 2007). From these studies, the concept of *Bangsa Malaysia* has been used in exploring the authors' suggested approaches through the portrayal of their characters in constructing *Bangsa Malaysia* (Quayum 1999, 2007), in examining how women and sexuality are framed in Malaysian literature within the dominant national view of a national Islamic identity and an imagined *Bangsa Malaysia*, and also the potential of these works to be examined in understanding and interpreting the national policies and ideology, particularly towards race, religion and gender (Noritah and Washima 2007).

Mohammad. A. Quayum, in "Imagining "*Bangsa Malaysia*": Race, Religion and Gender in Lloyd Fernando's *Green is the Colour*" (1999), argues that Fernando suggests ways of creating a united identity, *Bangsa Malaysia*, in this nation's plural society scene, through his visions in the novel, *Green is the Colour* (1993) (31). In doing so, Quayum analyses the main characters of the novel that represent the suggested 'rainbow society', namely Panglima, who is portrayed as ironically neither a Malay nor a Muslim by birth, dismisses the idea of having a multi-cultural and multi-religion society and echoes the British divide and rule policy, while the liberal spirited Siti Sara represents the binding agent of the nation (Quayum 33). Another character, Dahlan, on the other hand, is portrayed as the binary opposition of Panglima as he actively imposes his idea of *Bangsa Malaysia*, namely through his marriage to Gita, a Hindu woman, without asserting any force onto her to convert into Islam and standing up for the rights of other characters consisting of

different ethnicities and religions (Quayum 36). Despite Dahlan's ideas on a united nation, his character is deemed problematic due to his hasty approaches and failure to understand that the process of nation-building cannot be achieved in such a swift manner but through a slow weaving process (Quayum 37). Quayum's study leads to his discovery that Fernando, in *Green is the Colour*, proposes the view that, rather than rigidly striving to form a mono-cultural society, everyone must strive to assert colourful cultures in order to co-exist in Malaysia (40). Fernando, as Quayum puts it, rejoices in the ingenious ideology through his work, which serves as the foundation of the construction of the identity of *Bangsa Malaysia* (Ibid).

Another recent study by Quayum is on "Self-Refashioning a Plural Society: Dialogism and Syncretism in Malaysian Post-Colonial Literature" (2007), in which he explores the spirit of dialogism and syncretism, where the Malaysian post-colonial literature authors negotiate the past, present and future in order to shape a new united nation (Quayum 27). For instance, in Lloyd Fernando's *Scorpion Orchid* (1976), which is set in Singapore during the 1950s when the country was still part of colonial Malaya, Quayum focuses on a group of undergraduate students who have known each other since their senior school years (31). Of particular interest is his portrayal of two characters, Tok Said and Sally-Salmah, as possessing indistinct racial identities, where both characters are not actually defined by their looks nor name, making them the symbols of not only the racialised image that the locals are so used to hold on to, but also to depict how the image of racial differences are merely illusions than realities (Quayum 32). The vague racial identities depicted by the author also signify his dismissal of the racial borders and how these boundaries can be transformed into a united front through the amalgamation of cultures or hybrid zones (Quayum 33). As Quayum views it, Fernando further asserts his rejection of the ethnical boundaries by quoting works of Malay classics, namely Tun Seri Lanang's *Sejarah Melayu* (1612) and Munshi Abdullah's *Hikayat Abdullah* (1849), that highlight the socialisation of the three main ethnic groups, the Malays, the Indians and the Chinese, before the arrival of the colonisers (33-34). The works of the Malay classics demonstrate that, for hundreds of years, these different groups of ethnicities have been living harmoniously together and this peaceful situation has been manipulated by the colonisers, turning them against each other with mistrust and doubts (Quayum 34).

While both of Quayum's studies are focused on the society as a whole, a study by Noritah and Washima, "Race, Gender and Religion within the Construct of 'Bangsa Malaysia' and 'National Islamic Identity' in Malaysian Literature" (2007), focuses on the debate on "national identity" which they argue has grown more powerful with the construction of the notional construct of *Bangsa Malaysia*. Examining how women and sexuality are framed in Malaysian literature within the dominant state view of a national "Islamic identity" and an imagined *Bangsa Malaysia*, they consider Islam as positioned in the national ambition by highlighting two main issues, namely the assumption of Islamic knowledge and the ethnic-religious contexts of *Bangsa Malaysia*, both located in selected texts of Malaysian literature. According to Noritah and Washima, there exists arguments on the concepts of *Bangsa Malaysia* and "Islamic nation" which in turn bring about repercussions on how the Malays view themselves as both concepts lead to various identifications of how the Malays relate themselves to the nation and their religious faith (48). They further posit the view that there remains one group of people who believe that Islam safeguards their identity as Malays and that the Malay identity is presumed within their Islamic identity; therefore this presumption protects both their rights as Muslims and as Malays. Quoting views from a study by David C. L. Lim in his critical analysis of *Bangsa Malaysia*, Noritah and Washima highlight the ever-present contention that an impartial concept such as *Bangsa Malaysia* transcends race and religion which is in actuality a means of ethnic reconstruction that may turn into a problem (Ibid). This is because of the existence of contradictory views on what constitutes impartiality, where the construction of a "national race" is concerned, or when there is disagreement on how power ought to be combined between competing groups (Lim 26 as cited in Noritah and Washima 48). In his study of K.S. Maniam's works, for example, Lim discovers that *Bangsa Malaysia* is depicted in the "togetherness, trust and innocence ...[and] exchanges of small tokens of friendship between members of different ethnic communities..." (Lim 183 as cited in Noritah and Washima 48).

## 6. Patterns of *Bangsa Malaysia* in Time for a Tiger

### 6.1 Unity through Policies

In order to develop a strong united nation thus leading to the materialisation of *Bangsa Malaysia*, external factors, namely government policies, must not be the sole drive in achieving it (Shakila 42). One must realise that the country is made up of a complex mixture of ethnicities, thus requiring the changes from within the citizens themselves first before it could be carried out on the society as a whole (Ibid). In the following extract from the novel, a Malay character, Sultan Aladdin, projects his vision for his own people, the Malayans, to work harmoniously together side by side in building the country:

He found it easy to see that the future of Malaya in general, and of Lanchap in particular, rested not with the Malays alone but with the harmonious working together of all the component races [...] He saw in the mingling of many cultures the possibility of a unique and aesthetically valuable pattern, and before his early death he had laid out his plan for a Malayan public school in a letter which he sent to all the Sultans. (Burgess 28)

Although the scene is set during the pre-independence period where government policies or concepts, such as *Bangsa Malaysia*, have not been introduced, the essence of the spirit of the concept can be found depicted through the portrayal of Sultan Aladdin. As a leader, Sultan Aladdin realises that unity among the various ethnic groups in Malaya is the drive behind a thriving and prosperous nation. The Malayan public school mentioned in the extract above refers to the Mansor School, named after a Malay character, Sultan Mansor, which will be further discussed later in this section.

### 6.2 Education as a Medium

As we discussed earlier, another medium to foster a healthy environment for various ethnics in Malaysia is through education (Aminuddin 2000; Khader 272). Schools, especially those that have inclusive ethnic mixtures, are considered vital to shape the young minds, encouraging interactions between them (Ibid). This mixture of ethnic groups in the schooling system emerges in a scene in the novel, which involves the portrayal of students and teachers at the multiethnic boarding school, the Mansor School:

And so the Mansor School came into being in Mansor's own royal town. To it came Chinese, Malays, Indians and Eurasians – all of 'good family' [...] Teachers came from England and India and the Straits Settlements. The school grew steadily, established traditions slowly. (Burgess 29)

As we can see from the extract above, the students and teachers at the Mansor School, consisting of a mixture of ethnicities, are portrayed as learning and teaching under one roof. This scene exemplifies tolerance for each other despite their ethnic differences, which we have identified as the first step in realising *Bangsa Malaysia*. Undeniably, we can argue that the Mansor School is a place not only to formally educate the students, but also to provide them the opportunity to socialise with other students and also teachers from various ethnicities and backgrounds.

### 6.3 A Change of Mindset and Personal Judgement Leading to Tolerance

As recalled, in order to live in harmony, it is essential for Malaysians to change their mindsets and personal judgments, to be more open in accepting and also appreciating other people's cultures and beliefs (Husin 60). This is especially true in the extract below from the novel where the students of the Mansor School are portrayed as living their daily lives in dormitories based on arrangements made to accommodate their different sets of religious beliefs and cultures:

The Chinese cried out for pork which, to the Muslims was haram and disgusting; the Hindus would not eat meat at all, despite the persuasions of the British matron; other Indians demanded burning curries and could not stomach the insipid *lauk* of the Malays [...] Allocation to houses was arbitrary – the dormitories buzzed with different prayers in different tongues – and everybody had to eat cold rice with a warmish *lauk* of buffalo meat or vegetables. Nobody was satisfied but nobody could think of anything better. (Burgess 31)

Taking into consideration each other's food taboos and other religious sensitivities are huge measures in not only promoting unity but also maintaining harmony among the students. Although the characters that come from various ethnic backgrounds are portrayed as not being fully satisfied with the arrangements that have to be made and sacrificed due to their various beliefs and cultures, they also demonstrate a certain level of tolerance for each other. It is also important to note that their portrayal as living together without restrictions to practise their religious beliefs also signifies a certain level of respect that they have for their fellow classmates. Here, we suggest that the scene above also reflects the fifth challenge outlined in the Vision 2020, namely to create a united Malaysian nationals, who are filled with tolerance for one another albeit practising diverse sets of religious beliefs and cultures.

In addition, a change of mindset also signifies the willingness and readiness to help one another regardless of their ethnicities (Husin 60). In one scene at the Mansor School, a Chinese student, Toong Cheong, is portrayed as defending what he sees as an injustice towards his fellow classmate, a Malay character, Hamidin, who has been expelled by the headmaster without any strong evidence:

"But, sir." Toong Cheong spoke more rapidly now [...] "We think he was framed, sir. Prefect no friend of his. He did nothing with woman in house-boy's room. Prefect deliberate lie to Headmaster" [...] "We wish you to tell Headmaster, sir, Hamidin wrongly expelled. Injustice, sir. He is a member of our form. We must stick by him." Crabbe was touched. The form had welded itself into a single unity on this issue. Tamils, Bengalis, the one Sikh, the Malays, the one Eurasian, the Chinese had found a loyalty that transcended race. Then, hopelessly, Crabbe saw that this unity was only a common banding against British injustice. (Burgess 44)

The scene above exemplifies a bond between the classmates despite their different ethnic backgrounds where Toong Cheong's willingness to stand up for Hamidin further displays how educational institutions implicitly encourage unity among youths. This depiction of unity among the students of various ethnicities mirrors a view by Lim where the depictions of *Bangsa Malaysia* can be found through "togetherness, trust and innocence ...[and] exchanges of small tokens of friendship between members of different ethnic communities..." (183 as cited in Noritah and Washima 48). Besides that, Toong Cheong's decision on uniting with other students also echoes the seventh challenge proposed in Vision 2020, which is to be citizens who are loving and compassionate towards each other. The depiction of Crabbe's skepticism, however, is a reflection of the setting of the novel, during the pre-independence period, where the spirit of nationality of the Malaysians rises against the colonisers. Besides Toong Cheong, the portrayal of unity among the students in the Mansor School is further exemplified in another extract, where another student, an unnamed Indian character, pleads for Crabbe to justify Hamidin's innocence to the headmaster, Mr. Boothby:

A thin bright-eyed Tamil stood up to say, "Mr. Crichton said he would do anything because Headmaster's decision is a right one and it is right that Hamidin should be expelled. That is why we ask you as form-master to tell the Headmaster that it is not right and that grave injustice have been done to the innocent." He sat down with grace and dignity. (Burgess 46)

The extract above further demonstrates how exposure to other ethnic groups at an early age in a controlled environment, namely schools, will help to produce healthier relationships across ethnicities. Although he is well informed that

Hamidin's dismissal is triggered by the words of another Indian student, a prefect named Pushpanathan, he however displays his full support for his Malay friend.

#### 6.4 Patriotism as an Identity

Apart from being able to converse in *Bahasa Malaysia* and also accepting the Malaysian Constitution, another important characteristic of *Bangsa Malaysia* is to be able to identify themselves with the country, Malaysia (Mahathir 1995). This sense of patriotism is exemplified through a letter signed as "Fair Play" sent to the headmaster, Mr. Boothby, to appeal against Crabbe's dismissal from the school. "Fair Play" represents an anonymous group of Crabbe's students who are known to include a wide mixture of ethnicities which also, again, signals unity among them:

We have heard that Mr. Crabbe is to be expelled from the School where he has done much good and valuable work, not easily forgotten by the boys he has taught. We will say that what happened at Sports yesterday was not fault of Mr. Crabbe's [...] Well, sir, to bring inordinately long missive to a timely end, what happened yesterday was the work of some boys who said it would be a good idea to do what was done, although some of us said no, it should not be. One of these boys has already been punished, to wit he has been punched on the nose and one eye has been blacked. This is termed summary justice. We beg, in conclusion, that Mr. Crabbe be not expelled but allowed to continue to teach the boys who would otherwise be sorry of his departure. (Burgess 148)

As mentioned previously, this novel is set during the pre-independence period; thus, communism is still one of the country's main problem, especially for security reasons, which leads to Crabbe's concern regarding a group of Chinese students, headed by a student name Shiu Hung, who organises secret meetings to discuss issues on communism. Although his accusation is later dismissed by Shiu Hung himself, who upheld himself as a devoted Malayan and will do anything that he could for his country, Crabbe's concern is later proven to be true, when Shiu Hung and his group orchestrated many events, including the fiasco of the sports day and, ironically, accusing Crabbe himself as a communist sympathiser. Crabbe's other students, however, are united to put a stop to Shiu Hung's effort to further divide the school and to appeal for their beloved teacher who has been wrongly accused. Contrary to Whittle's (90) view that communism is the main element that aggravates ethnical divide in the text, we have however discovered from this scene that communism paradoxically has brought the opposite effect where, rather than separating the Malaysians, it has actually proven to awaken the students' sense of patriotism towards their own country. This act echoes a view by Husin where he suggests that, in order for a nation to prosper, the citizens must have a deep sense of belonging towards their country (60).

#### 6.5 The Unifying Role of the Monarchy

As discussed earlier, besides the implementation of western political institution models, the major definer of the Malay political culture, namely the institution of monarchy, is also regarded as a means to create a sense of unity among Malaysians (Shakila 24-25; Md Shukri Shuib et al. 2). The monarchy, which is highly revered by Malaysians, acts not only as a symbol of oneness of the nation but is also a part of the Constitution of Malaysia, which also includes other fundamentals, namely religion, citizenship, elections and also the Parliament. In the novel, the monarchy is depicted as acting as a symbol of unity exemplified in a scene at the birthday celebration of Sultan Mansor, where all his subjects are invited to participate in, regardless of their ethnicities and ranks:

The grounds were gay with tree-slung fairy-lights, with fire and smoke of food-sellers, noise of show-booths, of *ronggeng* music, Chinese opera, Indian drums, brown and yellow faces above best clothes, glistening eyes wide in the shine of the Sultan's treat. (Burgess 94)

The rich mixture of characters from various ethnic backgrounds are portrayed as celebrating Sultan Mansor's birthday together freely, without the constraints of their different ethnical backgrounds. The celebration, comprising of a long list of entertainments, also reflects the mixture of various cultural traditions of the land, namely the *ronggeng* music from the Malays, opera from the Chinese culture and also the Indian drums; thus, illustrating a sense of appreciation for each other's unique cultural practices. The mingling of the unique cultures again signifies the fifth challenge of Vision 2020; to become a nation made up of citizens who respect customs, cultures and religions practised by the diverse ethnic groups. Interestingly, although Zawiyah has suggested that the depictions of diverse cultures in the scene at the Sultan's birthday celebration could be seen as a way for Burgess to justify the need for the intervention of the British and that the mixture of cultures, as she sees it, signals the chaotic life lead by the Malaysians, which can only be solved by the colonisers (186), this example demonstrates another understanding, namely the unifying role of the monarchy. This example also fits into a view by Quayum that all ethnics groups must strive to assert their colourful cultures in order to co-exist in Malaysia (40).

### 7. Conclusion

From our analysis, we have identified that there are indeed emerging patterns of *Bangsa Malaysia* in Burgess' *Time for a Tiger* despite being written by Burgess with the central themes of colliding cultures, clashes of religion and racial conflicts. These patterns emerge through Burgess' portrayals of a mixture of characters from various ethnicities, namely the Malays (Sultan Aladdin and Sultan Mansor), the Chinese (Toong Cheong), the Indian (an unnamed student from the Mansor School) and also an anonymous group (Fair Play), which represents the students taught by Crabbe before his departure to another school. The images of unity by the Malayan characters are depicted through the implementation of government policies, education as a medium to lay the foundation of *Bangsa Malaysia*, a change of mindset and personal judgement leading to tolerance of each other's diverse religious beliefs as well as cultural values and practices,

patriotism as an identity of *Bangsa Malaysia* and the unifying role of the monarchy in order to help materialise *Bangsa Malaysia*.

From these patterns, however, we have found that the image of unity is portrayed primarily under education, by the ethnically diverse students at the Mansor School. Although the emerging patterns of *Bangsa Malaysia* portrayed by the Malayan characters in the novel do not entirely support our hypothesised definition of *Bangsa Malaysia*, however, given that it is set in the pre-independence period where ethnical segregation was still a thorny issue, the patterns do support the earlier stage of the formation, namely tolerance.

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