



THE SARAWAK PHILATELIST 2023

The Journal of Philatelic Society of
Kuching Sarawak

Volume 15, No. 1, October 2023

30th Anniversary

Special Commemorative Publication

1993 - 2023



¹Institute of Biodiversity and Environmental Conservation
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
94300 Kota Samarahan, Sarawak, Malaysia
E-mail: idas@unimas.my

²IES Village Grove Condominium
Lorong F, Jalan Stutong, BDC
93350 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia



Introduction

A ceramic transformed via heating materials, typically including kaolinite (a clay mineral), in a kiln to temperatures up to 1,400°C, porcelain is one of the most famous products to come out of China. The hardness and strength, low permeability, elasticity, whiteness, translucency, resonance, as well as resistance to corrosive chemicals and to thermal shock may explain the material's popularity and utility in the household as well as industry. Its contemporary and historic usage is vast- from utensils such as pottery to other tableware, figurines, dental applications, sanitaryware, electrical insulators, surgical scalpels and other laboratory wares. The use of porcelain is thus widespread in many industries. With a history going back some 2,000 years, porcelain production spread to east Asia, and then to Europe in the 17th century via trade. The English name itself originates from the old Italian, 'Porcellana' or cowrie shell, on account of its resemblance to the white, immaculate surface of the bleached versions of these molluscs. And in a nod to its origin, the material is also referred to as 'China' or 'Fine China'.

Porcelain artefacts have featured prominently in postage stamps from the People's Republic of China (Figs. 1–5).