

EDITORIAL

The current issue of *KEMANUSIAAN the Asian Journal of Humanities*, the second one published this year, houses 10 articles and a book review. The first four papers examine issues in Islamic studies, linguistics, history and culture, respectively, while the last six articles are themed papers from the ICLLIC 2019, a conference on linguistics, literature, and culture. Discussing issues pertaining to change and preservation in language and culture in Asia, the six articles are featured under a themed supplement within this issue.

The first article discusses the issue of *isnād* (chain of transmitters) connecting back to Prophet Muhammad, an important tradition in the study of hadiths. Based on an analysis of modern and pre-modern biographical dictionaries, the authors examined whether the *isnād* tradition is still given importance by Salafis in modern times.

The second article, which is a study on an Arabic consonant, revisits the controversy surrounding the pronunciation of the consonant *daad* (/d^h/) in Modern Standard Arabic. Using data from different sources, the authors claim that errors by professionals when pronouncing the sound intensified the controversy and highlight the pedagogical implications of this finding for teaching Modern Standard Arabic in the Arab world.

The following article is a discussion on the participation of indigenous people in Java in the colonial era. The discussion centres around “local farmers in West Java in tea cultivation for export” and how their participation contributed to the emergence and continuous increase of tea plantations throughout the early 20th century until the end of the Dutch colonial era. The authors argue that, unlike the common portrayal of indigenous people as communal, they in fact were “willing and able to actively participate in the market economy”.

The fourth article is an interesting comparison of two indigenous communities in Indonesia and Japan, i.e. the Bali Aga community in northern Bali and the Ainu in northern Japan. The focus of the study is on the use of folktales by the communities to pass on local wisdom relating to nature conservation. Based on an analysis of folktales, through literary and comparative literature lens, the authors draw similarities between the folktales of both communities with regard to the communities’ life skills and cultural values which they argue, “offer local wisdom useful for fostering awareness in society of the importance of conserving nature”.

The following six articles, as mentioned earlier, are themed papers from a conference on change and preservation in language and culture in Asia. The first paper under this themed collection, by the guest editors, establishes the importance of the change and preservation in language and culture theme within “the changing social, cultural, economic and political contexts of Asia”. The discussion considers changes and preservation in the study of language and culture in recent decades in Asia, making particular reference to major

trends and directions in Southeast Asia. The article also introduces the following five articles that are featured in the supplement. All five articles discuss problems or concerns that foreground change and preservation in language and culture in Asia through the lenses of translation, literature, linguistics and culture.

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