“EMERGING ISSUES IN THE HUMANITIES AND ARTS”

Shuri Mariasih Gietty Tambunan
Guest Editor, Universitas Indonesia

Manneke Budiman
Editor, Universitas Indonesia

Yudi Bachri
Guest Editor, Bern University

The articles in this special issue are the outputs of the fourth International University Symposium on Humanities and Arts which was held in Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Indonesia, on 23 – 25 July 2019. Written by scholars in the field of Humanities from a variety of disciplines, the innovative and critical research findings problematize emerging issues that reflect the dynamic of multidisciplinary studies in the Humanities.

The outbursts and heated debates on how the Humanities are considered to be in crisis in recent years exemplify how the market demand has affected students’ choices on what they should be studying due to the misguided notion that studying in the Humanities might cloud their chances on the job market. The decline of research support in the field of Humanities has also been an issue which comes from a similar premise of how Humanities is not providing any real life or practical outputs. However, the articles in this special issue contest that idea and will show the significance and urgency on how problematizing issues and topics in the Humanities contribute to the understanding of everyday realities. Humanities is not in crisis because as a field of study, it has become a platform to make sense of the crisis we encounter in our everyday lives and even provide conceptual and also practical solutions. Research in the Humanities is able to evoke cultural and social changes with its ability to provoke new ideas or even agency within the field.

In several of the articles, case studies which are closely related to emerging issues in the Humanities are analyzed to uncover new ways in making sense of the issues. Rivaldy, Budiman & Tambunan (2019), Maulida & Basid (2019), Widyaastuti (2019), Dewi & Djaworo (2019), Ashari & Wuryandari (2019), Nariswari & Yoesoef (2019) Nugraha & Triwinarti (2019), and Christomy & Suharjo (2019) present textual analysis from different fields of studies, for example linguistics or literary studies, philology that problematize religion, gender, poverty, kinship, ecology and also violence in contemporary social, cultural and political contexts. Other issues that are discussed in the articles are how narratives of the past could be analyzed to understand the present, for example, the Islamic movement of Hamka and Muhammadiyah in Indonesia from a Historical perspective (Akmal & Abudarakman (2019)), colonial dynamics in 19th Century Ternate from a Codicology approach or industrial development in Banda Island from an Archaeological approach (Marwoto & Sarjiyanto (2019)). Another important topic of discussion is on how language phenomena reflect the dynamic transformation of the society (Munawarah & Datang (2019); Wulandari & Kiasati (2019); Wulandari & Datang (2019); Kurniawati & Widhyasmaramurti (2019)). Furthermore, the special issue also present research works that are resulted from a process of critical reflection on contemporary issues, such as Islam and Environmental Ethics (Nugraha & Naupal (2019)) and
also critical reflection on government’s regulation on a transnational initiative (Mutia, Archelli & Darmojuwono (2019)).

The multiple issues analyzed from a variety of approaches illustrate potentially elevating discussions of the everyday lives. Whether it is a problematization of gender and poverty in a novel, a reflection on how minority groups are dealing with discrimination, an analysis of the past to understand the present or an investigation on the language system in a society, the research findings in Humanities that are reflected evocatively in this special issue does not only answer questions and but also present clarification and even solutions. Some even provoke more questions as we critically examine our everyday realities through these research projects. All in all, the articles offer critical responses on emerging issues in the Humanities from an Indonesian perspective that could potentially open up new scientific discussions and even induce further research on the similar topics.