

## UPCOMING UMCCD EVENTS 2014

DATE	EVENTS
9 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conflict Resolution Process and Prospects for Paradigm Shift by Dr. Hilal Ahmad Wani (Research Fellow at UMCCD from University of Ilorin, Nigeria)</li> <li>Contributions of Women to Peace and Dialogue: Sri Lankan Experience by Dr. Mohammad Ismath Ramzy (Research Fellow at UMCCD from International Islamic University Malaysia)</li> </ul>
27 November	The Production and Re-production of National and Other Cliches in the International Press by Prof. Dr. Gerhard Leitner (College of Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences, School of Humanities & Social Sciences, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore)
18 - 20 October	International Conference on Library Space and Content Management for Networked Society (IC.LISCOM-2014) in collaboration with Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram, Bangalore, India
5 November	Seminar on "Indigenous Cultural Heritage: Preserving the Past to Sustain the Future", in conjunction with the celebration of UNESCO International Day of the World's Indigenous People 2014 in collaboration with Center for Malaysian Indigenous Studies (CMIS), University of Malaya UNESCO Club (UMUC) & Faculty of Law, UM
20 November	UNESCO's World Philosophy Day, "Inter-cultural Dialogue in the Context of Social Transformation: Be the Change You Want to See in the Future" in collaboration with University of Malaya UNESCO Club (UMUC)
24 November & 8 December	UNESCO's World Day for Audiovisual Heritage 2014: "Archives at Risk: Much More to Do" in collaboration with Department of Media Studies, UM
12 December	UNESCO's International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2014 in collaboration with Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Affairs & Alumni), UM & Za'ba Residential College, UM
13 December	<i>Seminar Falsafah dan Hikmah Melayu</i> in collaboration with International Relation Unit, Higher Education Sector, Ministry of Education & Akademi Sains Islam Malaysia (ASASI)



## SEMINAR ON MALAY AND CHINESE PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCES

In Collaboration with Akademi Asasi Islam Malaysia (ASASI)  
and Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)

<b>Forum</b>	Education for Peace: A Need for Change in Malaysia 2014
<b>Public Lecture</b>	<p>"Who Gains the Advantage? International Student Market in Asia" - Prof Dr Sheng-ju Chan, Visiting Scholar at UMCCD</p> <p>"Perception of Educated Women towards Delayed Marriage in Malaysia and Bangladesh: Awareness of Liberal Feminism towards Empowerment" - Dr Zobaida Akhter, Senior Research Fellow at UMCCD</p>
<b>UNESCO Club</b>	UNESCO's International Youth Day - Gender Awareness: An Introductory Workshop from Gender Lens

# IN THIS ISSUE

## EDITORIAL

## BULLETIN 27

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### About Cover Photo

A collage of old Malay inscriptions (in Palava-Malay characters), classical Malay manuscripts (in Jawi Malay characters) and transliteration in Rumi.

This Bulletin reports on the activities and events conducted by the University of Malaya Centre for Civilizational Dialogue (UMCCD), UNESCO Club (UMUC) and our collaborators.

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Centre for Civilisational Dialogue/  
Pusat Dialog Peradaban

Greetings and *Salam Sejahtera* from UMCCD!  
In this issue we see the revival of the UNESCO Club including the celebration of the International Youth Day at a premier secondary school.

We wish to announce the latest UMCCD multidiscipline research programme on cultural heritage. We look forward to disseminating the initial findings by early 2016.

We also see a flow of old and new staff at the Centre. As we wish the best to our former members, we usher in the new UMCCD members, just as a Malay saying goes, '*patah tumbuh hilang berganti*'. We shall cherish the sweet memories forever.

Please have look at other UMCCD activities in this issue. I hope you enjoy it.

Faridah Noor Mohd Noor, Director

## EVENT HIGHLIGHT

**Seminar on Malay and Chinese Philosophy of Sciences** 3  
in collaboration with *Akademi Sains Islam Malaysia* (ASASI) & Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)

<b>Forum</b>		<b>Research</b>	
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# ACTIVITIES JUNE—SEPTEMBER 2014

## June 2014

### Seminar on Malay and Chinese Philosophy of Sciences



## July 2014

### Forum on Education for Peace



## August 2014

### Public Lecture: Dr. Sheng-ju Chan



## September 2014

### Workshop on Gender Awareness



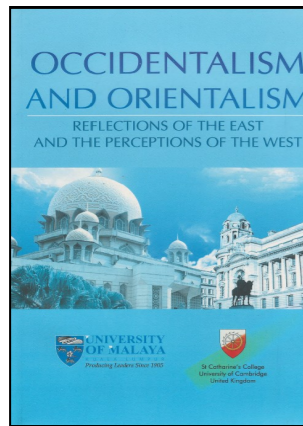
### Farewell Dr. Sheng-ju Chan



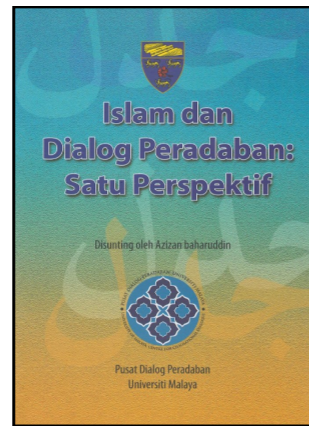
### Public Lecture: Dr. Zobaida Akhter



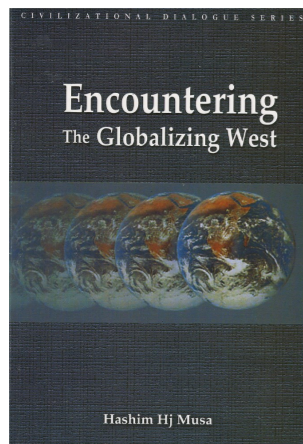
# UMCCD Selected Publications



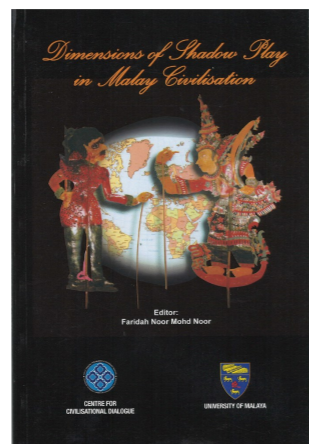
**Title:** Occidentalism and Orientalism: Reflections of the East and the Perceptions of the West  
**Editor(s):** Azizan Baharuddin and Faridah Noor Mohd Noor  
**Printed by:** University of Malaya Press  
**ISBN:** 978-983-3070-25-1  
**Year:** 2008



**Title:** Islam dan Dialog Peradaban: Satu Perspektif  
**Editor(s):** Azizan Baharuddin  
**Printed by:** University of Malaya Press  
**ISBN:** 978-983-3070-08-6  
**Year:** 2005, 2012 (2nd reprint)



**Title:** Encountering the Globalizing West  
**Author(s):** Hashim Hj Musa  
**Printed by:** University of Malaya Press  
**ISBN:** 978-83-1002-27-8  
**Year:** 2004



**Title:** Dimensions of Shadow Play in Malay Civilisation  
**Editor(s):** Faridah Noor Mohd Noor  
**Printed by:** University of Malaya Press  
**ISBN:** 978-983-3070-14-0  
**Year:** 2006, 2012 (2nd reprint)

## Seminar on Malay and Chinese Philosophy of Sciences

The following is the report of the seminar conducted in collaboration with *Akademi Sains Islam Malaysia (ASASI)* and University Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) on 17 June 2014 at Katha Room, UMCCD.

A seminar on Malay and Chinese Philosophy of Sciences was hosted by the University of Malaya Centre for Civilisational Dialogue (UMCCD) on 17 June and 18 June 2014 at the Katha Room, UMCCD. This event was jointly organized by UMCCD, the Academy of Islamic Sciences Malaysia (ASASI) and the Centre for Chinese Studies, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR).

The Taiwanese and Malaysian scholars spent two days reflecting and comparing the similarities and differences between the Chinese, Malay and Western philosophies of science.

The two-day seminar was attended by scholars from Taiwan and Malaysia, including the National Yang-Ming University, Taiwan, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) and University of Malaya, Malaysia. A total of nine presentations were held throughout the two days with a forum on the Malay and Chinese philosophy of sciences as the closing session. Its aim was to discuss and delve deeper into the current philosophical aspects of sciences in both countries.

The seminar began with Dr. Szu-Ting Chen's talk on 'Capacity as a Structural Ideas: A Comparative Case Study.' He made several comparisons between the Western and Chinese Philosophy in terms of causal explanation of an event. He elaborated on Aristotle's idea of causation from the Western perspective and ex-

### The list of speakers

#### Taiwan

- Dr. Szu-Ting Chen (National Tsing Hua University)
- Dr. Kai-Yuan Cheng (National Yang-Ming University)
- Dr. Chien-Hsing Ho (Nan Tien Institute)

#### Malaysia

- Dr. Tee Boon Chuan (UTAR)
- Dr. Ahmad Murad Merican (UTP)
- Dr. Muhammad Hj. Salleh (National Laureate)
- Dr. Tengku Mohd Tengku Sembok (UPNM)
- Dr. Mohammad Alinor Abdul Kadir (ASASI)
- Dr. Shaharir Md. Zain (UMCCD)

plained the term "*shi*" from the Chinese perspective means "a disposition of things."



The forum session was joined by (from left) Dr. Shaharir Mohd Zain, Dr. Kai-Yuan Cheng, Dr. Alinor Abdul Kadir, Dr. Tee Boon Chuan and Mr. Fauzi Naiem (middle) as the moderator



Dr. Ahmad Murad and other participants paying attention during a talk

This was followed by Dr. Tee Boon Chuan's talk on 'Xunzi as a Biological Naturalist.' He deliberated on empathy and Al-Farabi in the Islamic World according to Xunzi. He made the comparison between the Chinese and Islamic philosophy of sciences. In this case, Xunzi's idea was compared with Mencius's innate moral conception on empathy.

Dr. Ahmad Murad Merican continued with 'Studying Media in the Malay World: The Science of *Budi* and *Kaba*.' His talk concerned the field of media studies as a vehicle in exploring the concrete, and in particularly the abstract of the Malay world. He addressed the problems of studying media in the Malay world in the matrix of thought and philosophy. He claimed that the citing of *pantun* and *kaba* is an attempt to integrate the genesis of the Malay media to science and philosophy. The *budi* is manifested through its various avatars, namely, the cosmological, epistemological and metaphysical.

The session continued with Dr. Kai-Yuan Cheng, who presented a talk on 'A Cross-Cultural Study of Neuro-Philosophy'. He suggested that there is a distinctive difference between the Western and Eastern ways of thinking, whereby the former relies on the notion of law while the latter's thinking revolves around the concept of "*shi*". In other words, the Western philosophers limit the cause of events to immediate causal elements whereas their Eastern counterparts attribute external factors that can influence certain occurrences.

Dr. Shaharir Mohd Zain discussed the nature of the Malay word *moga-moga* and the accurateness of the word when translated in English. In his talk, it showed that the "mogamic" reasoning is different from the English modal reasoning and further argued that "mogamic" reasoning is suitable to include the other two Malay form of reasoning, namely, the *budic* reasoning as proposed by Lim (2003) and Hassan (2003) and Islamic reasoning that he had proposed earlier.

'Is Consciousness Self-Aware?' by Dr. Chien-Hsing Ho raised the concept of self-awareness thesis by two Indian Buddhist epistemologists, namely, Dignaga and Dharmakirti. The Buddhist's thesis is that consciousness and self-awareness are two elements that work together in order for one to experience and be aware of things within and around them. He also discussed that body awareness is somewhat similar to self-awareness as it is tacit, pre-reflective and non-conceptual.

Dr. Muhammad Hj. Salleh presented on 'The Aesthetics of the Malay *Pantun*.' In his talk, he noted that Malay literature is distinctive compared to the literature of other cultures. This is due to the fact that both oral and written forms of Malay literature are abundant and simultaneously existent. He illustrated the versatility of the *pantun* and said that the advent of technology has helped propagate as well as reinvent the *pantun* in order to cope with and remain relevant in these changing times.

Dr. Tengku Mohd Tengku Sembok presented on 'Language, Thought and Information & Communication Technology.' He mentioned that language is an essential aspect in the formation of civilizations because of its contribution to progress. It is also fundamental in the area of information and communication technology (ICT). Not only does language shape the minds of the people, it similarly has the potential to generate wealth. He claimed that intelligence is related to language, thus a computer can only be considered to have intelligence if it is able to comprehend natural language.

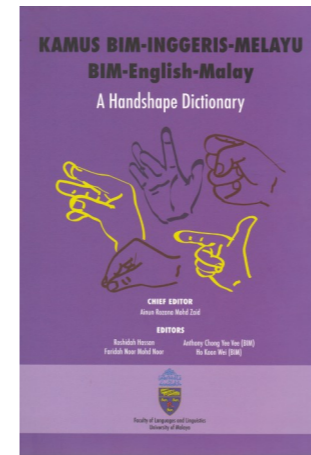
After the sessions ended, the participants were brimming with anticipation for the forum that followed. With great panellists from Taiwan and Malaysia, such as Dr. Shaharir Mohamad Zain from Malaysia and Dr. Kai Yuan Cheng, the sole representative from Taiwan, it centred on the current philosophical concerns in both countries and illustrated the grueling reality of philosophy fields in both scenes. It had sparked interesting debates on the issues pertinent to the philosophy of sciences in the world today.



Dr. Chien-Hsing Ho explaining the philosophy of self-awareness according to Dignaga and Dharmakirti



Dr. Muhammad Hj Salleh giving his opinions while being looked on by two participants



The cover page of BIM Dictionary



Prof. Dato' Dr. Amin Jalaludin, UM's Vice Chancellor delivering his speech while Mr Dino Hassan (left) interpreting in Bahasa Isyarat Malaysia (BIM)

## Launch of BIM Handshape Dictionary



Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye addressing the audience

The first BIM-Malay-English: A Handshape Dictionary was launched on 17 July 2014, at the University of Malaya Arts Gallery, UM. The event was organized by the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics (FLL), UM.

The dictionary is a product of research collaboration between linguists from FLL, members and allies of the Deaf Community and the main sponsor, SP Setia Foundation.

One of its objectives is to develop a rich resource for the members of the Deaf Community, students, academics, researchers in BIM linguistics and teachers

of BIM.

The ceremony was officiated by Ybhg. Professor Dato' Dr. Amin Jalaludin, UM's Vice Chancellor. Also in attendance was Ybhg. Tan Sri Datuk Seri Lee Lam Thye, Chairman of SP Setia Foundation and other VIPs.

UMCCD's Director, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Faridah Noor Mohd Noor, was one of the linguists involved in the research and the Centre has also lent a hand in the process of publishing the dictionary.

BIM was officially introduced in 1998 when the Malaysian Federation of the Deaf was established and recognized as an autonomous and independent language.



Meeting at Katha Room

## Pro-Chancellor's Visit to UMCCD

UMCCD was recently host to the first meeting for University Women's Association (UWA) Charity Gala to be held in collaboration with the Geriatric Unit of University of Malaya Medical Centre (PPUM).

It was attended by YAB Toh Puan Dato' Seri Hajjah Dr. Aishah Ong, the Patron of this special event and YBhg. Professor Datuk Dr. Rohana Yusof, UWA Patron,

as well as the EXCO and Charity Gala committee members. The meeting was chaired by Assoc. Professor Dr. Faridah Noor, UWA President.

Also present were Assoc. Professor Dr. Yong Zulina,ul Bahiyah, UWA's Vice-President and Dr. Shahrul Bahiyah, the representative of the Geriatric Unit.

The event is scheduled to be held at Pullman Kuala Lumpur Bangsar in November 2014.

## UMCCD says farewell to Dr Zuraidah and Mdm Noren



It was all now a memory. From left: Current UMCCD'S Director, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Faridah Noor, former Director, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Raihanah Abdullah, a friend and Dr. Zuraidah Abdullah

On 16 September 2014, we bid farewell to Dr Zuraidah Abdullah, who held the post as UMCCD's Deputy Director from September 2011 to September 2014.

At the time of her appointment, she was working with the Academy of Malay Studies and is now teaching at the Faculty of Education to pursue her interests in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and Leadership.

Among her research projects at the Centre include 'Transgenderism in Malaysia: The Different Perspec-

tives (completed), Knowledge Sustainability with References to the Malaysian Knowledge (completed) and Towards the betterment of Persons with Disabilities: A Comprehensive Study (ongoing).

Described as an advocate for the Malay language and passionate in any cause that she is involved in, Dr Zuraidah loves learning new knowledge and shares them among her students, making her a much beloved lecturer.

UMCCD wishes her all the best and much success in all her future undertakings!



Norennazuwa Rabun (in green) is pictured with the UMCCD's Director (left) and Deputy Director (right)

UMCCD's staff gathered to bid farewell to one of our own, Madam Norennazuwa Rabun on 29 May 2014.

A small gathering was held at Katha Room, UMCCD and attended by UMCCD's Director, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Faridah Noor Mohd Noor and Deputy Director, Dr. Zuraidah Abdullah as well as our research fellows and staff members.

As a mother of one, Norennazuwa, or fondly known as Noren, was the coordinator of many activities organized by UMCCD. Her hard work has ensured that all Centre's events ran smoothly. She plans to venture into the banking industry and pursue a career in it soon.

All of us at UMCCD wish her all the best and much success in all her future endeavours!

## Welcoming UMCCD's New Members!

We are proud to welcome the new faces of UMCCD!



**Mr. Zulkifli Ismail** originally hails from Alor Gajah, Melaka and currently lives in Selangor, Kuala Lumpur. With more than 35 years experience working at the Faculty of Medicine, UM, he is no stranger to the campus community. As of May 2014, he has officially become a part of UMCCD family!

**Nik Maisarah Akmal Nik Mustafa** is a native Kelantanese from Pasir Mas and now resides in Putrajaya. She holds BA in Education (TESL) from Management and Science University (MSU) and is pursuing her master degree in Education Management at the Faculty of Education, UM. She is now in-charge of the UMCCD's events and also the UNESCO Club's Project Officer.



**Nur Shahidah Abu Hanifah** was born and raised in Kuala Lumpur. She is an alumni of Faculty of Languages and Linguistics (FLL), UM and now pursues a master degree at her alma mater in Linguistics. She is currently the officer-in-charge of UMCCD's publications.



## Education for Peace: A Need for Change in Malaysia



Prof. Dato' Hussein Haji Ahmad showing some of his books to the participants

The following is a report of the forum held on 18 July 2014, at Al-Tabari Conference Room, Human Sciences Building, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM).

The "Education for Peace: A Need for Change in Malaysia" Forum 2014 was the first collaboration between University of Malaya UNESCO Club (UMUC) and the Department of Political Science, International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM). Students from IIUM, Victoria Institution School and Sekolah Sri Bintang Utara, KL participated in this one-day event.

Professor Dr. Zulkifli A. Manaf, a Senior Research Fellow at the Excellence of Malay Research Centre, University of Malaya was the forum's moderator.

Dr. Tunku Mohar bin Tunku Mohd. Mokhtar, Head of the Department of Political Science, IIUM began by presenting a talk on 'Introduction to Conflict and Conflict Resolution.' Conflicts, according to Dr. Tunku Mohar, can

fall into two categories: conflict of ideas and conflict of interest. Conflict of ideas comprise of issues such as nationalism, ethnicity, religion and ideology whereas conflict of interest may involve territorial disputes, control of governments and economic concerns.

Furthermore, conflicts can be resolved through different means, namely by the use of diplomacy, which includes:

- Negotiation
- Mediation
- Conciliation
- Legal means (arbitration and adjudication)

He also outlined the techniques utilized to settle conflicts, such as peace-making, peacekeeping, peace-enforcement and peace-building. Some important points pertaining to the Islamic perspective on conflict resolution state that Islam advocates the use of the Qur'an and Sunnah when settling disputes, in addition to *shura* (consensus) and reconciliation.

### Do you know?

A project called "UNESCO Global Initiative for Building a Culture of Peace through Education and Youth Empowerment" aims at promoting a culture of peace and non violence through education at global and regional levels



UMCCD's Director welcoming the participants to the forum

## Interesting Facts About University of Malaya UNESCO CLUB (UMUC):



- The **first** UNESCO Club in Malaysia
- Established since the year 2007
- Launched by Professor Hubert Gizjen, Director of UNESCO Office, Jakarta during the Intercultural Discourse towards Peace and Unity within ASEAN
- Members consist of students, academic & non-academic, associated members and public from all around the world
- Aim to educate people based on principles of sharing, solidarity and sharing of ideas through:
  1. Charity/ Volunteer work
  2. Science & Environment
  3. Community awareness
  4. Cultural activities

For more information, please visit [www.dialogue.um.edu.my](http://www.dialogue.um.edu.my)



Participants preparing for the presentation after the talk

Professor Dr. Noraini M. Noor continued with 'Peace Psychology'. It seeks to develop theories and practices aimed at the prevention and mitigation of violence. She started by distinguishing the differences between conflict and violence. Conflict, she said, begins in the minds of human being, whereas violence is the action that is done to a particular person or group with the intention of harm.

She explained the two categories of violence; episodic and structural violence and their possible interventions. Negative intervention, also known as peacemaking, addresses the episodic violence and it functions to prevent and ease violent episodes. Positive intervention or peacebuilding is aimed to reduce structural violence which cannot be prevented due to its degree of ongoing structural and cultural elements.

The forum continued with Professor Dato' Dr. Hussein Hj. Ahmad who presented a talk on 'Peace Education: Why Malaysia Needs It?' Dato' Hussein explained that the forming of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was a result of the Second World War (WWII). UNESCO is an agency under the umbrella of the United Nations (UN) and its vital pillars on education include learning to know, learning to do,

learning to live together peacefully and learning to be something useful.

In order to create an environment in which peace is a pervasive element, he added, individuals should get to know, interact and trust one another. When these criteria are met, only then can peace be attained. He also described several characteristics of a good leader, which entails being a good role model in terms of character, capable of motivating and mentoring others and able to influence people via good behavior. Hence, to be an effective leader, one must be able to sustain and personify all these elements. He concluded that education is an important instrument at fostering understanding and bringing together people of different backgrounds. This will be a relevant component in the Malaysian education system in the future.

The forum was made interactive with question and answer (Q&A) session after each talk. The participants were also divided into several groups earlier and were given the opportunity to discuss the topics by the speakers and to apply their own insights.

The day ended on a high note and most participants expressed their wish for the event to be organized annually.



Students posed with their certificates with Dr. Zuraidah Abdullah (in purple scarf)

## Immortalising Cultural Heritage

Reported by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Faridah Noor Mohd Noor, Programme Leader

A new research programme commenced in July 2014 with Associate Professor Dr Faridah Noor Mohd Noor, Director of CCD, as the project leader. The project is being funded under the UMRG Programme awarded by the Humanities Research Cluster, University of Malaya.

Briefly, the three sub-programmes are headed by:

- Dr. Shaharir Md. Zain on the Study of Malay Jawi Manuscripts and Inscriptions
- Assoc. Professor Dr. Hamed Mohd Adnan on Pre-Independence Periodicals and Publications
- Assoc. Professor Dr Faridah Noor Mohd Noor on Digital Cultural Atlas

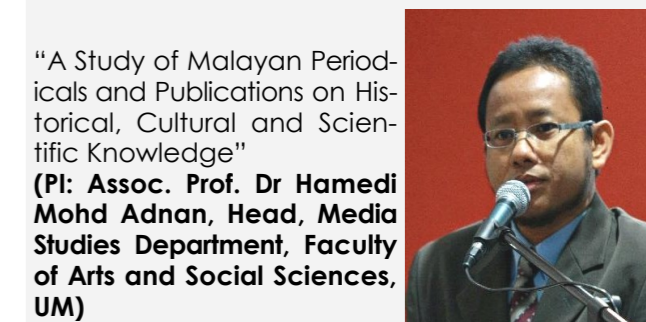
The Malay Peninsula is endowed with a rich history and multi-cultural tradition as a result of the comings and goings of traders, pilgrims and travellers from the Orient and the Occidental passing through the Straits of Malacca even before the 3rd Century. It is believed that old records are available in the Malay manuscripts, mostly written in Jawi. This project aims to mine the knowledge from these Malay manuscripts, and related documents that include maps, documents, drawings and photos that are still to be categorized in terms of content.

Archives available at various libraries, including the National Library and National Archive would be sought out. Contributors of related documents are welcome as the aim would be also to digitize documents in private holdings with the consent of the owners for future retrieval of our future generation.

## SUB-PROGRAMMES



"A Study of Malay Jawi Manuscripts and Inscriptions on Malay Historical, Cultural and Scientific Knowledge"  
(PI: Dr Shaharir Md. Zain, Senior Research Fellow, UMCCD)



"A Study of Malayan Periodicals and Publications on Historical, Cultural and Scientific Knowledge"  
(PI: Assoc. Prof. Dr Hamed Mohd Adnan, Head, Media Studies Department, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, UM)



"Digital Cultural Atlas of Malay Peninsula Based on Malay Jawi Manuscripts and Malayan Periodical and Publications"  
(PI: Assoc. Prof. Dr Faridah Noor Mohd Noor, Director, UMCCD)

Therefore, the findings are to be digitally mapped to illustrate timeline of events illustrating the historical and cultural information of the Malay Peninsula. It is hoped that the findings from this study will be shared and returned to the participating communities as this knowledge is rightly their heritage.

## Research in UMCCD

### Ongoing

- New Index for Knowledge Sustainability, BKP- BK020-2014, 2014-2015 (PI: Dr. Shaharir Mohd Zain)
- Policy and Social Assessment for Disabled Community in a Multi-cultural Society Malaysia, UMRG—RP003(A-D)13HNE, 2013-2015 (PI: Assoc. Prof. Dr Raihanah Hj. Abdullah)
- Towards the betterment of Persons with Disabilities: A Comprehensive Study, UMRG-RP002(A-E)-13HNE, 2013-2015 (PI: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Siti Hajar Abu Bakar)

- Inter-cultural Dialogue towards Peace Building, UMRG- RP004-2012(A-D), 2012-2014 (PI: Assoc. Prof. Dr Raihanah Hj. Abdullah)

### Completed

- Knowledge Sustainability with References to the Malayonesian Knowledge, UMRG-RG185-12SUS, 2012-2013 (PI: Dr. Shaharir Mohd Zain)
- Transgenderism in Malaysia: The Different Perspectives, UMRG- RG383-12HNE, 2012-2013 (PI: Dr Zuraidah Abdullah)

## Celebrating UNESCO International Youth Day

International Youth Day will be taking place on 12 August 2014. It will bring youth issues to the attention of the international community and celebrate the potential of youth as partners in today's global society. This year, the theme will be "Youth and Mental Health" under the slogan 'Mental Health Matters'.

12 August was designated as International Youth Day by the UN General Assembly in 1999. It is an annual celebration of the role of young women and men as essential partners in change, as well as an opportunity to raise awareness of the challenges and hardships facing the world's youth.

Thematic discussions and information campaigns will take place on 12 August 2014 across the world, to encourage both Member States and the general public to understand the needs of young people, to implement policies to help them overcome the challenges they face, and to help young people into the decision-making process.

For more information, please visit <http://en.unesco.org/events/international-youth-day-2014#sthash.l0IWfGEf.dpuf>



Some students having a discussion on the exercises given



Students presenting their work in front of their peers



Dr. Zobaida Akhter (in red) and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Faridah Noor Mohd Noor (in yellow scarf) strike a pose with the teacher and the students of Sekolah Sri Aman (P), Petaling Jaya



Professor Sheng-ju Chan (left) answering questions while being moderated by Dr. Mohammad Ismath Ramzy (right)

## Who Gains the Advantage? International Student Market in Asia

This public lecture was presented on 20 August 2014 at Cemerlang Room, Management Building, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya.



**Sheng-ju Chan** is a Professor at Graduate School of Education, Taiwan. He holds a PhD in Education from the Institute of Education, University of London and has vast experiences in teaching and research. He is also the editorial board member for several publications and member in professional associations. He is currently a Visiting Research Fellow at UMCCD.

This lecture addressed the current scenario of international student market in Asia. Along with the rise of cross-border education and globalization, attracting international student has been an essential element for greater international competitiveness and even economic growth. It is against this wider context that a wide range of Asian countries have been launching diverse policies, measures or initiative in order to cater for the needs of inflow students. These countries even set up certain student number as target for accountability management at the national level. For example, Japan aims to receive 300,000 foreign students by 2020.

However, in this grand race, there is no comparative investigation into relative strengths/ weakness of each country in terms of international student market in Asia. This article using analytic hierarchy process (AHP) technique intends to examine how well selective Asian countries perform in this emerging market. The preliminary results show that Japan still dominates most of the indicators including teaching quality and institutional reputation. However, South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan are catching up. Although introducing some well-known universities into domestic market, Malaysian ranking seems to be not so good compared to traditional Northeast Asian countries.

During the question and answer (Q&A) session, several questions were asked:

**Q1:** Why economic factor is regarded more important than others?

**A1:** Asian students tend to be 'instrumental' and 'goal-oriented'. Their concern for 'value for money' clearly reflects upon the weights they rate different factors while deciding study abroad. This tendency might have implications to intercultural competences, moral education and religious attachment.

**Q2:** Students' choice of international destination could be influenced by gender or social status. Has this study considered these background variables?

**A2:** Parent as 'purchaser' of overseas study might have different opinions from surveyed students (as consumer). Are you going to distinguish these differences or gauge the parent attitude?

**Q3:** In addition to gender and social status, I have included some major variables which may influence student's choice such as grade, origin of country, field of study and level of education etc. However, I have not examined the impact of these variables. Therefore, I can't provide definite answer to these questions so far.

**A3:** Parent's attitude is critical in relation to children's studying abroad. Their opinions are also important in determining the mobility of international students in Asia. Unfortunately, we don't administer questionnaire to them. It would be better to implement another questionnaire if we want to know their considerations.

In conclusion, Prof. Sheng-Ju Chan's lecture has provided a clearer view on the current trends in the global education market, especially to the participants as well as those who are interested in pursuing the field.



Dr. Zobaida Akhter delivering her talk

## Perception of Educated Women Towards Delayed Marriage in Malaysia and Bangladesh: Awareness of Liberal Feminism towards Empowerment

This public lecture was held on 23 September 2014, at Dean's Meeting Room, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, in collaboration with the Gender Studies Programme (PPG), UM.



**Zobaida Akhter** is a Senior Research Fellow at UMCCD for two years. She was a faculty member of Bangladesh Open University and will return to her home country at the end of September 2014.

This lecture addressed the topic of gender, particularly the perception of first delayed marriage among women in Malaysia and Bangladesh.

In her introduction, Dr Zobaida proposed that the attitude of delayed marriage is essentially related to higher education and empowerment of women. Women, who are in favour of rational choices for marriage, become economically independent as they believe that this will lead to a happy married life. This notion of thinking, Dr Zobaida added, is in line with the theory of Liberal Feminism which considers women as first and foremost, a human being.

Furthermore, the cultural images, she argued, reflect and promote the values of the powerful. Thus, it is necessary to change the attitudes of both male and female members in society through education in the real sense, that is, the education that would liberate the body and mind of women from their subjugated position. She then introduced the audience to Mary Wollstonecraft, a great feminist of the eighteenth century.

In Wollstonecraft's famous book, 'The Vindication of Women', the feminist identified several main causes responsible for discrimination against women. She also suggested a few ways to overcome gender discrimination, including the empowerment of women.

Dr Zobaida then brought the audience back to the crux of the matter; the perception of educated women towards delayed marriage in Malaysia and Bangladesh. Based on her research, she found that women from both countries are becoming less dependent to their families and many of them have higher and better quality education. She also compared the situations in both countries whereby the cultures and traditions are vastly different, but the awareness of gender equality is increasing.

The question and answer (Q&A) session afterward saw several questions posed by the students and academics whom attended the event. Today, Dr. Zobaida's lecture has become a platform of dialogue for various parties on the subject of gender from the perspectives of philosophy, sociology, religion and feminism.

# Gender Awareness: An Introductory Workshop from Gender Lens



This workshop was conducted by Dr. Zobaida Akhter on 2 September 2014 at SMK Sri Aman (P), Petaling Jaya, Selangor, in conjunction with the celebration of UNESCO's International Youth Day 2014.

Across the world on August 12, UNESCO Member States and the general public are called upon to understand the needs of young people by implementing policies that will help them to overcome challenges and be involved in the decision-making process.

The theme for 2014 was "Youth and Mental Health". UN's Secretary-General, Mr Ban Ki Moon, was quoted saying:

"As we mark International Youth Day 2014, let us enable youth with mental health conditions to realize their full potential, and let us show that mental health matters to us all."

(Source: <http://www.un.org/en/events/youthday/>)

In conjunction with the International Youth Day 2014, UMCCD in collaboration with SMK (P) Sri Aman, Petaling Jaya organized a gender awareness workshop. It was facilitated by Dr. Zobaida Akhter, UMCCD's Senior Research Fellow and staff. Associate Professor Dr Faridah Noor Mohd Noor, Director of UMCCD, also took the opportunity to address the young participants on a topic relevant to this year's theme.

Dr Zobaida began the workshop by introducing some gender related terms in 'Meaning of the Gender Related Terms'. The participants learned more about words that are considered as degrading for women. In 'Gender and Textbooks', the participants were able to see examples of



Students were divided into groups of seven and given some exercises to complete



Dr Zobaida and Dr Faridah instructing the participants on the activities to be conducted

those terms in the textbooks from Bangladesh and Malaysia. Afterwards, they were shown four TV commercials from Bangladesh; each of which women were portrayed negatively. In the last session, they were given some exercises to identify some gender related sentences and participated in brainstorming activities. Based on these activities, the participants were able to understand the nature of gender and recognize the importance of gender-balanced language for human development.

Following the workshop, Dr. Faridah delivered a brief talk on the relationship between stress, smoking and mental health. Participants were made aware of the fallacies such as "smoking is cool and can help them diet" and that smoking can help adults relax and cope with stress. Research shows that smoking affects mental health as well as cause physical symptoms like headaches or breathlessness. Feelings like feeling irritable, anxious or low can alter our behavior. A sad fact, based on a 2013 study in *Pediatrics* of the American Academy of Pediatrics, is that 68 percent of five and six-year-olds in developing countries are able to correctly identify a cigarette brand. In fact, tobacco is a major cause for 6 million deaths every year. (Source: <http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/help-information/mental-health-a-z/S/smoking>).

The workshop was participated by Form 4 students and teachers from the school and ended at 2pm.