

GUEST EDITORIAL

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David Martin Jones
King's College, London
(davidmartinjones@gmail.com)

JATI has, over the years, provided an important space for the views of local scholars on aspects of economic and political development, indigenous culture, literature and history which would not otherwise find an outlet. The current edition continues and develops this important role of the journal in promoting regional understanding. The articles in this edition deal with both contemporary and historical practices that offer insight into a range of cultural practices not otherwise understood or available to a wider public. A number of the essays adopt a comparative framework to discuss shared concerns about migration and economic development.

In the first essay in this edition Sumanto Al Qurtuby examines the contemporary problem of religious radicalism in Indonesia and discusses the peacebuilding approaches that government might adopt to curb Islamist militancy. Staying with Indonesia, Singgih Tri Sulistiyono and his colleagues evaluate the pre and post-independence evolution of the understanding and implementation of the cabotage principle, whereby Indonesia asserts authority over its maritime archipelagic waterways. This is followed by Habid's Buhigiba bin Mohamad Bustamam and his colleagues interesting attempt to shed light on the rise and fall of the People's Party of Brunei between 1973-1979. Subsequently, Tuan Pham Anh, Ha Thi Tran, and Nguyen Manh Hung discuss the role of exchange rate policy in facilitating or deterring bilateral trade between China and Vietnam.

Staying with the issue of regional socio- economic development Jiraporn Phornprapha and Weerayuth Podsatiangool revisit the notion of innovation in Thailand's economic policy through an evaluation of the impact of Japanese manga in Thai popular publications. Meanwhile Sophana Srichampa and her colleagues explore the vexed issue of unskilled migrant labour and the role of the state in catering for the problem of language

diversity amongst migrant communities in Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia.

In a similar vein, Vu Le Toan Khoa looks at the problems faced by Vietnamese migrant workers in Taiwan and how a mixture of debt and government policy forces workers to enter the black economy as illegal labour. Somewhat differently, Solomon Faller, evaluates the transformative socio-economic consequences of higher education for married workers in the hospitality industry in the Philippines. Amy Lou Lundell, Thirunaukarasu Subramaniam & Chong Wu Ling also discuss the impact of higher education on Chinese Malaysian identity and evaluate the manner in which the social context of the university affects self-understanding and self-perception

Finally, this issue is completed by two articles that discuss the impact of art on civilisational understandings. Irsyad Leihitu and R. Cecep Eka Permana's archaeological investigation of rock art in West Papua that discloses evidence of ancient Austronesian civilization. Finally Junaidi & Budianto Hamuddin discuss the construction of Malay civilisation and identity through an evaluation of the themes explored in twenty one paintings,

This interestingly heterogeneous collection will help facilitate and add to our knowledge of cultural and economic understanding and cooperation across the South East Asia region.