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RECTOR'S NOTE



Prof. Dr Roshima Said
Acting Rector

"Together we advance knowledge with integrity, creativity, and purpose—many voices united to shape a brighter, sustainable future."

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh,

Alhamdulillah, with gratitude to Allah SWT, I am pleased to welcome you to the fourth volume of RMU4U e-Bulletin. This publication continues to serve as a reflection of our vibrant intellectual community at UiTM Kedah, bringing together voices from diverse disciplines and perspectives. In this issue, with 42 insightful contributions, we witness not only the richness of research topics but also the strength of our shared purpose. While the papers range from sustainability in fashion and design, digital literacy, and artificial intelligence to law, economics, and cultural heritage, they are united by a common aspiration: to advance knowledge that is meaningful, ethical, and impactful for society.

Our academic journey is significant because of this harmony amid diversity. Whether addressing contemporary challenges in technology and governance or celebrating the timeless values of culture and tradition, our scholars demonstrate that knowledge is most powerful when it is connected, when different fields meet at the crossroads of innovation, integrity, and service to the community.

As Rector, I am profoundly inspired by the dedication, innovation, and scholarly excellence demonstrated by our academics and researchers. You are not only advancing knowledge within our university but are also fulfilling UiTM's noble mission, creating impactful ideas that serve the nation and uplift the ummah.

Your work reflects a deep commitment to relevance, integrity, and service. Let us continue to nurture a culture of collaboration, creativity, and excellence, ensuring that our contributions remain forward-looking, transformative, and rooted in the needs of society. Together, we are shaping a brighter, more sustainable future through education, research, and innovation.

Congratulations to all the dedicated contributors whose passion and perseverance have brought this volume to life. My heartfelt appreciation goes to the Research Management Unit for their steadfast leadership and solid commitment in making this achievement possible. May RMU4U continue to shine as a beacon of knowledge, uniting diverse voices in a shared mission of discovery and excellence. Together, may we be inspired to reach even greater heights in the pursuit of impactful research and innovation.

One purpose. One vision. Many voices, one future.

Sincerely,
Prof. Dr Roshima Said
Acting Rector,
Universiti Teknologi MARA Keda

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EDITOR



Dr Azyyati Anuar
Chief Editor,
RMU4U E-Bulletin

"RMU4U Volume 4 celebrates diverse scholarship, uniting research, innovation, and culture to inspire collaboration, sustainability, and inclusive growth."

We are pleased to present Volume 4 of RMU4U, a platform dedicated to showcasing research, innovation, and thought leadership across diverse academic disciplines. This issue reflects the dynamic intellectual ecosystem we strive to cultivate, highlighting contributions that bridge theory and practice while addressing pressing contemporary challenges. In the Business, Accounting, and Finance section, we feature 15 insightful papers that explore the evolving landscape of global markets, financial resilience, sustainable accounting practices, and digital transformation in business operations.

These works not only provide empirical findings but also propose actionable frameworks for industry adoption, underscoring the vital role of research in shaping competitive and ethical enterprises. The Designer Thoughts segment presents 6 stimulating papers that merge creativity with problem-solving. From design thinking methodologies to innovation in product aesthetics and usability, these contributions remind us that design is not merely about form but about crafting meaningful user experiences.

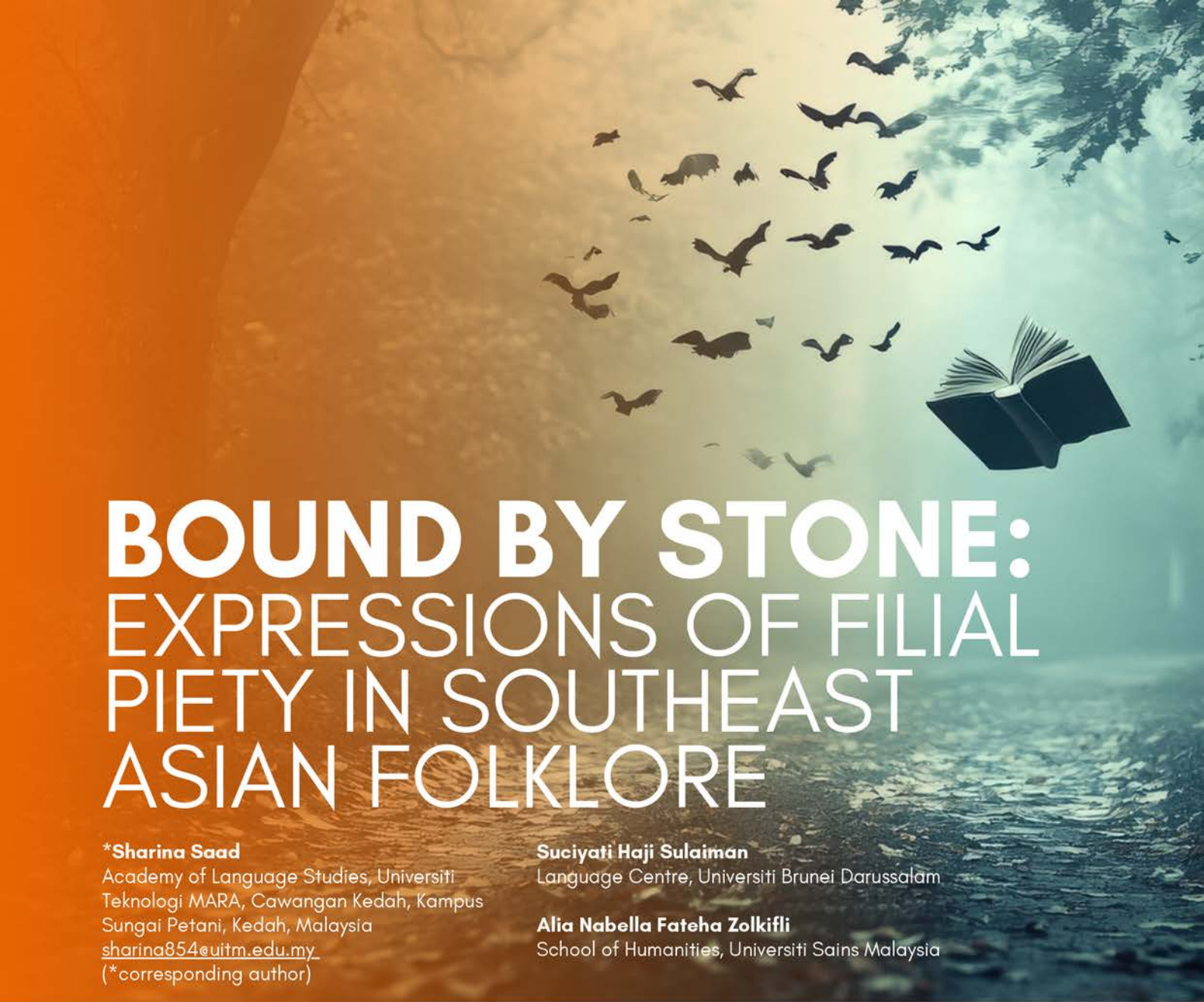
This section will be of particular interest to those who value the intersection of artistry, functionality, and human-centered solutions. Our IR 5.0 category brings together 6 pioneering papers examining the fusion of automation, artificial intelligence, and human capital development in the context of the Fifth Industrial Revolution. The authors challenge readers to consider how technology can be harmonized with ethical and inclusive practices, ensuring that digital progress translates into equitable societal benefits. In the Law and Policy section, 7 comprehensive papers analyze legal reforms, governance frameworks, and policy innovations that respond to shifting socio-economic realities.

The breadth of topics from regulatory compliance in emerging industries to community rights in a globalized economy reflects the critical role of law as both a safeguard and an enabler of change. The Literature and Culture segment enriches this volume with 8 thought-provoking papers that delve into narratives, identities, and cultural dialogues shaping societies today.

Whether revisiting classic literature through modern lenses or exploring contemporary cultural phenomena, these works invite readers to appreciate the role of the humanities in fostering empathy, critical thinking, and cultural continuity. Collectively, these 42 scholarly contributions affirm the breadth and depth of academic engagement within our community. They underscore our commitment to advancing knowledge that is relevant, impactful, and forward-looking. This volume is not only a testament to our contributors' dedication but also a resource for policymakers, practitioners, educators, and learners who seek informed perspectives and innovative solutions. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to all authors, reviewers, and editorial team members whose collective efforts have made this publication possible. We hope that RMU4U Vol. 4 will spark dialogue, inspire collaboration, and contribute to the enrichment of both academic scholarship and practical application.

Let us continue to explore, innovate, and contribute, together shaping a future where knowledge serves as the foundation for sustainable and inclusive growth.

Warm regards,
Dr Azyyati Anuar
Chief Editor,
RMU4U E-Bulletin

The background of the book cover features a gradient from orange on the left to teal on the right. Numerous black silhouettes of birds are scattered across the sky. In the upper right corner, an open book is shown floating in the air.

BOUND BY STONE: EXPRESSIONS OF FILIAL PIETY IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN FOLKLORE

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Introduction

Filial piety, defined as profound respect, obedience, and devotion to one's parents, is a cornerstone of many Southeast Asian cultural traditions. Influenced by Islamic teachings, Confucian values, Buddhist principles, and indigenous beliefs, this moral imperative is sustained not only through family and community norms, but also through oral heritage and folklore (Endicott, 2016; Winzeler, 2008). One recurring folkloric motif across the southeast Asian region is that of the ungrateful child turned to stone, a tale deeply embedded in the cultural psyche of Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, and the Philippines.

This cross-cultural narrative usually follows a similar trajectory: a son, having achieved wealth or status, denies his humble mother in public which is an act that symbolizes not only personal shame but also a deep sense of ingratitude, as it represents the erasure of the very person whose sacrifices and unconditional love enabled his rise. In response, divine punishment is swiftly delivered, where he is transformed into stone, forever memorializing his betrayal. The stone becomes a symbol of eternal shame, serving as a public, moral reminder of the consequences of filial betrayal (Watson Andaya, 2001; Abdullah, 1990). These tales do more than entertain; they serve as moral instruments warning against disobedience and shameful pride, and reflect a shared cultural identity across Southeast Asian nations.



Shared Narrative Structure

Though told with regional variations, these tales follow a nearly identical structure: A young man leaves his impoverished home, attains great fortune, and returns, only to reject his aged, poorly dressed mother. The heavens respond by the strike of storms, lightning, or earthquakes, turning him and often his ship into stone. These geological remnants are believed to be real and are treated with reverence or caution by local communities.

Comparative Examples: Bound by Stone

Country	Story Title	Summary
Malaysia	<i>Si Tanggang</i>	A poor boy becomes a successful sailor. When his aging mother approaches him, he denies her. She curses him, and he and his ship turn to stone.
Indonesia	<i>Malin Kundang</i>	Similar to <i>Si Tanggang</i> ; a son denies his mother after gaining wealth. Her curse turns him into a stone on the coast.
Brunei	<i>Nakhoda Manis</i>	A poor widow raises her son, who later becomes a wealthy sailor. He denies her, and as she weeps, his ship is struck by lightning and turned into stone.
Philippines	<i>Ang Alamat ng Batumbakal</i>	A disrespectful child is swallowed by the earth and becomes part of a rock formation, now considered cursed ground.

Themes and Moral Lessons

Filial Piety as Divine Law

Disrespect towards parents is shown not merely as a personal failing, but as a cosmic violation that invites divine-like intervention and irrevocable punishment. These narratives make visible the social and spiritual consequences of moral collapse.

Transformation into Stone as a Moral Monument

Stone represents hardened hearts and hardened consequences. Transformation into stone functions as both metaphor and material symbol, etched into both memory and landscape. These rock formations often become cultural sites or landmarks grounding mythology in physical reality, for example, the Jong Batu in the Brunei bay, and the famous Batu Caves in Malaysia.



Comparative Table: Key Elements in Filial Piety and Bound by Stone Stories

Country	Story Title	Offense	Punishment	Landmark
Malaysia	Si Tanggang	Denies mother	Turned to stone	Batu Caves [legend]
Indonesia	Malin Kundang	Ashamed of mother	Turned to stone	Batu Malin, Padang
Brunei	Nakhoda Manis	Rejects his mother	Turned to stone	Jong Batu, Brunei Bay
Philippines	Ang Alamat ng Batumbakal	Disrespects elders	Swallowed by earth	Luzon rock formations

Conclusion

In essence, these enduring folktales are not merely echoes of the past, they are living testaments etched into the earth itself. The stones left behind are more than relics of myth; they are monuments of memory, cautioning each new generation that pride and neglect can harden not just hearts, but destinies. In a world that often chases status over substance, these stories whisper an enduring truth: the greatest legacy we carry is how we honour those who gave us life. And as long as those stones stand, so too will the unshakable values they represent.

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