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Center of Middle Eastern Studies (CMES) is a scholarly journal published by the Arabic Literature Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Sebelas Maret (UNS), Indonesia. CMES Journal is published biannually, in June and December.

CMES Journal features research articles and literature reviews on various topics related to Middle Eastern studies, including language, literature, culture, society, and politics. Articles are written in English, Arabic, or Indonesian.

Starting from Volume 16, Number 1, June 2023, CMES Journal has introduced a fresh new journal layout and design. This update aims to refresh the appearance of the CMES Journal, align it with modern international journal standards, and provide readers with an enhanced reading experience.

The objectives of the CMES Journal are as follows:

1. To publish research findings and literature reviews related to the Middle Eastern region across various fields as a platform for disseminating scholarly ideas.
2. To foster knowledge and insights among academics and researchers in Middle Eastern studies from diverse perspectives worldwide.
3. To serve as a platform for researchers of the Middle East worldwide to engage in academic discussions and seek scholarly solutions to regional challenges.

Historically, CMES Journal was initially published as part of the academic activities of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Faculty of Literature and Fine Arts, UNS, established under the Decree of the Dean of FSSR Number 2545/H27.1.1/KP/2009 on April 16, 2009. The establishment of the journal was a driving force behind the creation of the Arabic Literature Department. With establishing the Arabic Literature Department under the Decree of DIKTI Number 1762/02.2/2010 on July 2, 2010, the publication of CMES Journal became a regular academic activity organized by the department.

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PREFACE

Dear Esteemed Researchers,

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Allah SWT, as we have successfully published the December 2023, Volume XVI, Number 2 issue of the Center of Middle Eastern Studies (CMES) Journal. In this edition, we are delighted to share that we have received nine insightful research articles from authors across six countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, Egypt, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom. Each piece has been meticulously vetted through our dedicated reviewers' strict double-blind review process.

This issue encompasses a diverse range of research within Middle Eastern Studies, covering language (linguistics), literature, culture, and political science. Opening our edition, Saila Fadhila Ulfa and colleagues offer a critical discourse analysis of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's political speeches, examining the embedded feminist ideology. In a linguistic vein, Silmi Malina Binta and her team explore semantic shifts in translating an Arabic novel.

In literature, Kenny Andika and colleagues compare issues of prostitution in Egyptian and Indonesian novels, employing a comparative literary framework. Turning to Syria, Sabilla Setia Wida and her team critically analyze the lyrics of Maher Zain's songs, which symbolize the Syrian people's resistance against oppression.

Continuing with literature, Mamat Rachmat and colleagues discuss the portrayal of gender equality in Egyptian children's books, critically examining the power representations and underlying political ideologies in seemingly innocuous readings.

From a different angle, Anna Zakiah Derajat and colleagues explore political movements by using the Thobe dress by the Palestinian community as a symbol of resistance against Zionist forces. Similarly, Ainin Najib and colleagues discuss the resistance strategies of groups considered radical in the Middle East, specifically the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and Al-Qaeda, examining how their movements have influenced similar activities in the region.

Finally, Nahdhiyatus Sholihah and colleagues scrutinize the transformation of Saudi Arabian women after implementing the Saudi Vision 2030 policy, analyzing this change from a modernist perspective.

We also invite researchers and academics who are passionate about Middle Eastern studies from various fields (linguistics, literature, culture, political science, and social sciences) and enjoy challenges to join our CMES reviewer team. Interested individuals can find more information at uns.id/callforreviewers.

All articles in this issue have been presented with the highest standards of scholarship. We hope our readers will find valuable insights and enlightenment in these works. The CMES editorial team extends our gratitude to the Department of Arabic Literature, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Sebelas Maret (UNS) for their financial support in the publication process of CMES. We also thank the Research and Community Service Institute (LPPM) of Universitas Sebelas Maret (UNS) for their valuable input towards the future enhancement of CMES, particularly in preparing for indexing in reputable international indexes.

Embark on an enlightening journey through the Middle Eastern world!

Warm regards,

Editor in Chief,
Dr. Reza Sukma Nugraha

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