

Article; (4) Constructing Quality Academic Papers: The Oxford Style of Writing; (5) The Art of Referring to Islamic Sources & Its Common Pitfalls; and lastly (6) The Theory and Practice for Quantitative Research by Using STATA.

The presenters and instructors were all IAIS Malaysia's in-house experts and researchers: Prof. Mohammad Hashim Kamali (Founding CEO), Assoc. Prof. Dr Mohamed Azam (Deputy CEO), Dr Alexander Wain (Associate Fellow), Dr Ahmad Badri (Research Fellow), Mohd Fariz (Head of Human Resource), Dr Mohammad Mahbubi Ali (Associate Fellow), and Dr M. Rizky (Research Consultant). From the success of this pilot training, IAIS Malaysia seeks to produce more extensive academic training modules in line with future demands.

### **Forum on “Unlocking the Enigma of The Lord of the Rings (LOTR)” (International Islamic University Malaysia, 25 March 2019)**

*Abdul Muhaimin Misran*

IAIS Malaysia in collaboration with the Department of English Language and Literature (DELL), International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), successfully organised a forum, “Unlocking the Enigma of The Lord of the Rings (LOTR)” on 25 March 2019. The event, which was held at HS Seminar Room, IIUM, attracted more than 150 arts and literature enthusiasts.

The first session talked about ‘Myth, Fantasy and Fairy-Story in Tolkien’s Middle-Earth’ and was presented by Ms. Buveneswary Vathemurthy, an MA holder in English Literature, University of Malaya. The session, however, was not limited to the LOTR but also to Tolkien’s other works in *The Legendarium* (*The Silmarillion* and *The Hobbit*).

The second session on “Tolkien’s Orcs” was presented by Dr David C.E Tneh, Dean of the Faculty of Creative Industries, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR). In J. R. R. Tolkien’s fantasy writings, Orcs are a race of creatures who are used as soldiers and henchmen by both the greater and lesser villains of *The Silmarillion*, *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*.

The third session was uniquely different as Dr Alexander Wain, a historian who obtained his DPhil in history from the University of Oxford, presented on “Symbolism in The Lord of the Rings”, not from a literary point of view but from that of history. According Dr Wain, the symbolism represented in Tolkien’s works were inspired by his personal life.

The event was meant for the development of literature, art, culture and education. It delved in-depth into universal values of good, evil and morality

from various perspectives, including semiotics and symbolism in literary works. Since its publication 65 years ago, J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* has emerged as an international phenomenon, transcending its humble origins as the pastime of an Oxford University professor and traversing cultural boundaries to sell more than 150 million copies worldwide in over 38 languages.

**Forum on the Uyghurs' Plight: Countering Extremism or Religious  
Discrimination?  
(IAIS Malaysia, 2 April 2019)**

*Wan Naim Wan Mansor*

The unfolding crisis in Xinjiang has witnessed the large-scale forced Sinicization of the Uyghur community at the hands of the Chinese government. Global uproar and condemnation have focused on the flagrant violation of human rights in Xinjiang, where Uyghurs have experienced mass incarcerations, discrimination, surveillance, and intrusion. Against this backdrop, IAIS Malaysia, in collaboration with JUST, MAPIM, and Global Peace Malaysia, organised the above-mentioned forum. The event was moderated by Dr Mohammed Azam (Deputy CEO of IAIS Malaysia) and featured four panellists: Mohd Azmi Abd Hamid (President of MAPIM), Dr Alexander Wain (IAIS Malaysia), Ahmad Fahmi Mohd Shamsudin (CEO of Global Peace Malaysia), and Hassanal Noor Rashid (Project Coordinator from JUST). Several issues pursuant to the crisis were explored by the speakers, including geopolitical context, international relations, Han Chinese nationalism, the Uyghur's history of separatism, and the internal politics of Xinjiang. Also discussed were the responses of Muslim countries to this crisis and possible actionable steps that might be taken to help mitigate it.

Dr Alexander, focusing on the historical relationship between the Uyghurs and the Chinese government, concluding that the current situation in Xinjiang is largely the product of regional history and must be understood within that context. When finding a solution, decision-making must be pragmatic and moderate: 1) while the Uyghurs originated far beyond China's borders and possess a unique cultural identity, they are currently citizens of China and must accept that reality; and 2) the Chinese government must recognise the right of the Uyghurs to cultural self-determination and that oppression, far from reducing extremism, only encourages it.

The other speakers, Mohd Azmi, Ahmad Fahmi, and Hassanal Noor, shared similar thoughts with regards to the Uyghur crisis, condemning the documented