

# SEA-NEWSLETTER

The Department for Languages and Cultures of Southeast Asia

APRIL 2024

This month we present a short impression written by Alan Darmawan who obtained a doctoral degree from our department in 2021

## Dr Alan Darmawan

### ALUMNI COLUMN

Would you like to share your story as ex-student in our Department?

Contact us and join our Alumni Group on LinkedIn

LinkedIn: Students and Alumni of the Southeast Asian Studies Department- Hamburg University.

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/9016077/>

Alan Darmawan is originally from Sumatra, Indonesia. He came to Hamburg in 2016 to carry out a PhD project on the revival of a theatre practice in the islands of Riau and other performing traditions in the Indonesian archipelago, supervised by Prof Jan van der Putten.

With support from a DAAD scholarship, Alan and his family lived in Hamburg and accomplished his doctorate in 2021. "The city and the university gave me very insightful lessons, such as getting the chance to immerse myself with my family into Hamburg's academic culture", said Alan to our editor, Syukri Rizki. Recalling his time in Hamburg, Alan recounted, "attending classes, co-teaching with my doctoral supervisor, joining conferences, and working at the library, trained me how to conduct good research." To him personally, as he admitted, the most delightful training he obtained was presenting in the PhD colloquium and attending a Jawi course, with a small group of students reading classical Malay texts. The latter equipped him with the necessary skills to examine Malay manuscripts more rigorously

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than before. In early 2022, Alan continued his academic career, starting a new journey at the University of London as a postdoctoral fellow, working for the *Mapping Sumatra's Manuscript Cultures* project, led by Dr Mulaika Hijjas. This project focuses on manuscripts from Aceh, Minangkabau and Palembang. As a postdoctoral researcher, Alan is dealing with one of the three project's case studies: Palembang Palace Library, tracing the dispersed royal manuscripts and reconstructing its collection. "Here in London," Alan explained, "I collate manuscripts, conduct archival research and conduct fieldwork, organise workshops, write research articles, edit a selected text, make some texts into artworks and have them performed on stage." It sounds like an exciting and challenging work. As an extra feature, London offers him loads of things to enjoy, like food, museums, art galleries and libraries. To our editor, Alan expressed, "I am so grateful for getting this opportunity to continue being part of the scholarly communities in Hamburg and London." •



Dr Alan Darmawan, a postdoctoral researcher at SOAS University of London.

Alumni of Hamburg University's Department of Languages and Cultures of Southeast Asia.

On 15 February 1898, a US naval vessel sank in Havana Harbor, Cuba. This event marked the beginning of a conflict between Spain and the United States. In less than a year, the Spanish Empire collapsed, while a United States empire was born, expanding across the Pacific towards the Philippines. The exhibition *Traces of Empires* invites visitors to reflect upon the long-term impact of these colonial events and the legacy of the Spanish and American empires in the Philippines. It thus opens a window into the concerns of contemporary Filipino society and Filipino diaspora in Germany.

The exhibition was created by master's students in Austronesian studies for a project seminar. It is the result of a collaborative project between the Department of Languages and Cultures of Southeast Asia and the University Museum.

#### Opening speeches

Prof. Dr. Silke Segler-Meßner  
Dean of the Faculty of Humanities  
Dr. Antje Nagel  
Head of the University Museum

#### Introduction

Prof. Dr. Elsa Clavé

Temporary-exhibition section, Universität Hamburg's Main Building, Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1, 20146 Hamburg  
Dr. Antje Nagel, head | Prof. Dr. Elsa Clavé, project head | Lara Hemken, exhibition design | Olga Sukhina, graphics  
Student curators: Happy Yulfarida Arini, D Wira Atmaja, Dea Mentari Dini, Laura Hirsch, Emmanuela Hellen Kustanti, Carina Lang, Astrid Martz, Anna Mazur

Invitation to the grand opening of our special exhibition

## Traces of Empires in the Philippines

On Friday,  
19 April 2024  
at 5 pm

**Location:**  
Agathe Lasche Lecture Hall  
in the Main Building of Universität Hamburg

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## Munthe is awarded with the Karl H. Ditze scholarship

Apriyanti Madah M The (Munthe) has been enrolled in the Department of Language and Cultures of Southeast Asian Studies since the Spring semester of 2022.

During her studies, and in an attempt to conclude her MA program, she designed a proposal to research the Indonesian LGBTQ community in the framework of Indonesian Catholicism discourse. The latter is becoming increasingly urgent in an evolving society that is now more open to diversity.

For this research, Munthe successfully approached the Jakarta episcopate to obtain the data she needs for her project. After approving the thoughtfully chosen research topic, Prof. Elsa Clavé, as her academic supervisor, encouraged her to apply for financial assistance from the Karl H. Ditze Foundation, which could finance her fieldwork. She applied and was selected as one of the stipend awardees.

This Hamburg-based Ditze foundation offers scholarships to students of the four universities in Hamburg, namely, the University of Hamburg, HAW Hamburg, HFBK Hamburg, and TU Hamburg. The Foundation focuses on research projects in the fields of humanities and social sciences.

Munthe plans to travel to Jakarta this coming June 2024 to start her research by interviewing members of the LGBTQ communities based in the city. She expects to complete her fieldwork and all the interviews before the start of the winter semester of 2024 to process the data and carry on with thesis writing.

Munthe thinks that the scholarship offered by Karl H. Ditze may be a good opportunity to obtain additional funding for fieldwork and highly encourages her fellow students to apply as well.

For the selection criteria, deadlines and other relevant information, please click the following link: <https://www.gw.uni-hamburg.de/studium/ditze-preis.html>. After accomplishing the master's study the awardees are requested to write a statement acknowledging the Karl H. Ditze Foundation's merit.

Hopefully, Munthe's field trip to collect the data for such a challenging research topic will work as planned. We wish her a safe trip and a successful master's study. ●

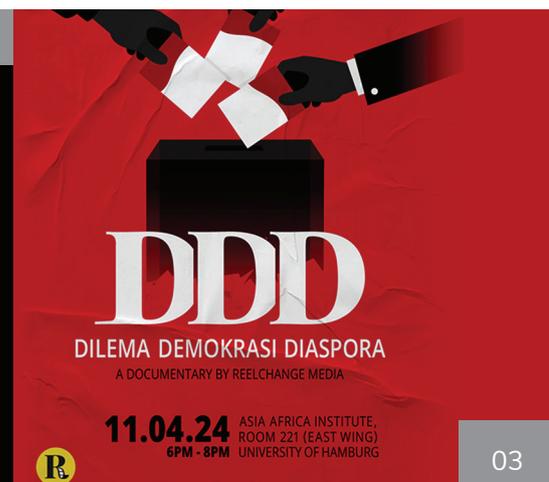
SoSe 2024 - West Papua/Indonesia Film Screening



## Paitua Juur

Asien-Afrika-Institut  
Universität Hamburg  
Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1, Flügel Ost  
20146 Hamburg

Thursday, 18.04.2024  
Room O-221  
from 6 to 8 pm



# SEA-NEWSLETTER

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APRIL 2024

Forum of  
Vietnamese  
Culture/ Diễn Đàn  
Văn hóa Việt Nam

## South Vietnamese Literature (1954 – 1975) from the perspective of the literary researcher Nguyễn Vy Khanh

The Department of Vietnamese Studies, Hamburg University cordially invites everybody to a talk with the literary researcher Nguyễn Vy Khanh (Toronto, Canada), author of the famous “History of Southern Literature 1954 – 1975” (two volumes, 1606 pages). The topic of his talk is “Southern Vietnamese Literature (1954 - 1975) from the perspective of the literary researcher Nguyễn Vy Khanh”.

In the presentation, Nguyễn Vy Khanh will present the results of his nearly thirty years of research. He will review the stages of development along with the unique characteristics of each stage and mention the main literary groups and trends, as well as the main themes and specific features of Southern Literature during this period of time. In addition, he will emphasize the continuation and survival of Southern Literature after the fall of Saigon in 1975.

After the presentation, the audience will have the opportunity to ask questions to the speaker or to give comments and share thoughts about the topic. The event will be held Online (via ZOOM) in Vietnamese.

The talk will be introduced by Professor Thomas Engelbert. Cao Quang Nghiep, MA, will serve as chair. ●

**Webinar-ID:** 66789708939

**Webinar-Password:** 61129760

For the ZOOM access, please use the following link: <https://uni-hamburg.zoom.us/j/66789708939?pwd=bkRKSHZRN2YrckxSR2poQIQwdkN4Zz09>

**Date:** Friday, April 26, 2024,

**Time:** 14:00 - 16:00 h, (CET)

which is 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Vietnam time.



**Speaker:**  
**Nguyễn Vy Khanh,**  
**Toronto**

## The Writing Center comes to PIASTA!

Are you working on  
a term paper, essay or  
your final thesis?

Perhaps you are looking for support with narrowing your research question, finding the right academic words, or getting through writer's block. Or maybe you just seek a quiet but dynamic space where you can write comfortably but without distractions. The Writing Center offers all of these things in a bilingual space at PIASTA!

Find all the offers and details on UHH-Join, and come along for supportive community, structured writing times, interactive workshops or individual consultations, whether online or in person.

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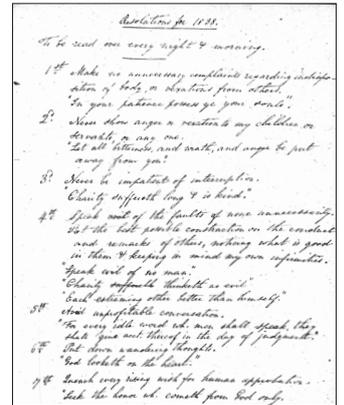
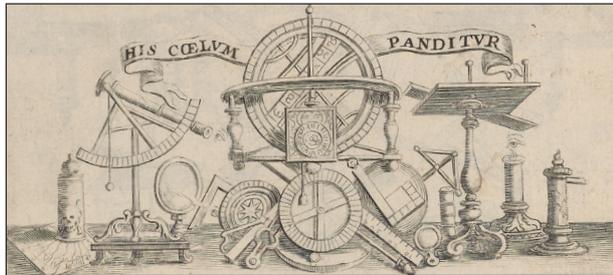
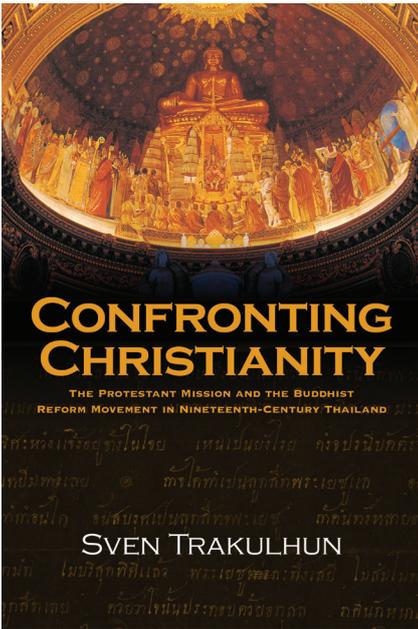
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APRIL 2024

## New Book Release

# Confronting Christianity: The Protestant Mission and the Buddhist Reform Movement in Nineteenth-Century Thailand.

By Sven Trakulhun. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2024.



This book examines the interplay between knowledge transfer and the Christian mission

in nineteenth-century Thailand. From c. 1830 onwards, discussions on religion became a central arena of conflict between rival regimes of knowledge in Siam, confronting 'traditional' Thai Buddhist views on nature and man's existence with the ideals and practices of science and rationalist thought coming from the West. Protestant missionaries were important brokers of knowledge, as one of their strengths was the ability to offer religion in tandem with modern science and technology. This book is the most thorough study of the encounter between Christianity and Theravāda Buddhism in Siam yet written. It explains how Buddhism became a major instrument in the struggle for spiritual and political authority in Siam, and grasps how the intrusion of colonial modernity and the enduring power of Thai culture and identity were negotiated in the nineteenth century.

Dr. Sven Trakulhun teaches and researches Thai and Southeast Asian history at the Department for Languages and Cultures of Southeast Asia, Universität Hamburg, and is an adjunct professor for history at Universität Potsdam. •

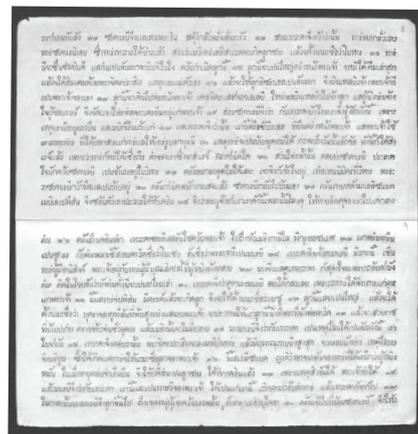


Photo credits:

Trakulhun, Sven. 2024. *Confronting Christianity: The Protestant Mission and the Buddhist Reform Movement in Nineteenth-Century Thailand*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.