

# SEA-

## NEWSLETTER

## Southeast Asia Department welcomed UNITAG participants!

“Southeast Asia is something about Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, maybe about Bali, Hindu, and Buddha as well,” was the answer commonly given by the UNITAG participants in sharing their preliminary thoughts about Southeast Asia.

On 21 February 2023, the University of Hamburg hosted an event for visitors under the headline “UNITAG 2023: Vorlesungen und Studienfachberatung.” More than 100 participants attended this event. Senior high school students got information about our study programs and prospective career paths provided by our Department of Languages and Cultures of Southeast Asia. The event was held in Room 221 (Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1) and took place from 12:00–13:00. Professor Elsa Clavé and other lecturers, like Pannarai Büchmann (Thai) and Quang-Nghiep Cao (Vietnamese), delivered welcome addresses introducing our academic subjects with special emphasis on the language, history, culture and literature, as well as on contemporary political and economic developments and specialized issues in the understanding of local dynamics and rising influences of the Southeast Asian region in a globalized world. The session continued with a presentation of study programs, curriculum structures, and career opportunities for the international Bachelor and Master programs “Languages and Cultures of Southeast Asia”. This talk was given by our students. After the talk, the participants visited booths displaying traditional handicrafts from Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam. They had also the chance for a direct consultation with professor Clavé, the lecturers and our students to get deeper insights which will be important for their decisions and plans to, hopefully, study at our Department of Southeast Asian Languages and Culture, Asien-Afrika-Institut, University of Hamburg. We look forward to welcoming you guys as our new students!



## Dr. Tịch Vy Trần, Department of Vietnamese Language and Literature, University of Ho Chi Minh City,

our DAAD guest lecturer this summer semester 2023 (1 April 2023 to 31 July 2023)

- 2. MA Vietnamese Languages and Cultures A: From diaspora community to diaspora literature: The case of Vietnamese in Germany**  
 (Wednesday, 14:00 – 16:00, Room 233, Asia Africa Institute)
- 3. MA Vietnamese Languages and Cultures B: When East meets West: Vietnamese Culture and Literature in the Republic of Vietnam**  
 (Wednesday, 16:00 – 18:00, Room 233, Asia Africa Institute)

The lectures will be held online to reach a wider audience. The first course allows students to study wide issues encountered in modern Vietnamese society and literature in the 20th century – ranging from socio-cultural and political-economic aspects to

literary works. The second and third courses bring more into literary issues, particularly literature written by authors who lived during the Republic of Vietnam 1955 – 1975 or diaspora writers who lived in the post-1975. The courses will discuss their themes, trends, and writing styles to touch upon social and historical contexts. The lectures also give opportunities for students to work broadly on “texts” as written materials and discourses that require close reading and critical thinking. By the end of these classes, students are expected to recognize and respect cultural productions of communities, especially literature, with open-mindedness, which hopefully raise awareness of cultural identity.



Photo: Pixabay

With the topic on memories and identities in literary works of Vietnamese authors living in Germany, Dr. Tịch Vy Trần completed her PhD dissertation on Vietnamese literature at our department in 2019. Dr. Tịch Vy Trần will teach the *Introduction to Modern Vietnamese Literature* module this summer semester.

- 1. Modern Vietnamese Literature**  
 (Thursday, 12:00 – 14:00, online)

# SEA- NEWSLETTER

## From Bali to Papua: Austronesian Student Field Research

Our two students of the Austronesian Studies program at the University of Hamburg have travelled to the Indonesian islands of Bali and Papua to do their field research.



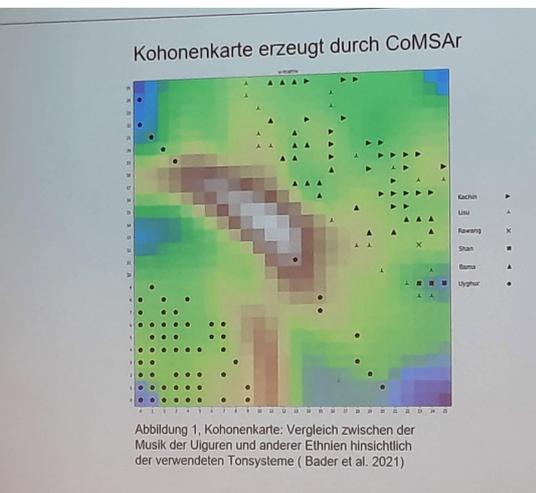
Figure: Zakariya (left) discusses with Balinese literary specialist, Putu Eka Guna Yasa. (Photo: Zakariya P. Aminullah)



Figure: Traditional market sells handicrafts that symbolize the West Papua flag in Sentani, Jayapura. (Photo: Fachri Aidulsyah)

Zakaria Pamuji Aminullah has been conducting his PhD research trips in Bali Island from February to May 2023. Affiliated with the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC), he is currently a PhD researcher whose dissertation topic focuses on Javanese Chandrakirana manuscripts that provide technical knowledge on metric structures and lexicon for authors who aimed to compose Old Javanese poetic works (kakawin). Driven by theoretical and methodological frameworks of manuscript culture studies, Zakariya traces how Candrakirana manuscripts and poetic knowledge of Kakawin were spread, used, and transmitted from Java to Bali Island. His preliminary finding reveals that the Old Javanese poetic guidelines recorded in the manuscripts have been dispersed across several public and private collections in Bali. His study aims to provide a new framework and reconstruct the history of Candrakirana manuscript transmission that scattered throughout the Islands of Java and Bali. His work gained a field research grant funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the French Institute of the Far East (EFEO).

Another student, Fachri Aidulsyah, just finished his field research in Jayapura, Papua Province, the eastern part of Indonesia's archipelago in November last year. Fachri conducted the field research for his MA thesis that picks a topic on youth identity and Papuan nationalism. Supported by the Katholischer Akademischer Ausländer-Dienst (KAAD), Fachri was able to interview several key actors in Papuan secessionist organizations to understand better Papua nationalism discourses among young people. His finding discovers that Indonesia's development programs and long-standing military operations produce "imagined" Papuan nationalism. Due to the Special Autonomy Policy of Papua (OTSUS), the state has provided scholarships to Papuan youth. By then, student dormitories are places for young Papuan people to breed and circulate discourses on Papuan nationalism. Currently, Fachri is analyzing his collected data and writing his MA thesis in the final stage.



## Data Science Slam #2

Following a highly successful presentation at Data Science Slam #2 on 9 February 2023, Gerrit Wendt and Leon Woltermann's research project has been chosen! We congratulate them wholeheartedly. The project "Computer-assisted Analysis of the Cultural Influences of Malay Music in the Twentieth Century (Computergestützte Analyse der kulturellen Einflüsse malaiischer Musik im 20. Jahrhundert)" will be carried out as a data literacy student project (from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024) financially supported by Stiftung Innovation in der Hochschullehre as part of the Digital and Data Literacy in Teaching Lab (DDLitLab) project funded by the University of Hamburg.

# SEA- NEWSLETTER



Postdoctoral  
research projects

## **Traditional Knowledge in Cultural and Material Transformation: Inscriptions of Wat Pho Monastery (1831–1832) and Thai Manuscript Culture (Dr Peera Panarut), November 2019 to April 2023**

The project which is part of the Research Field B of the Cluster of Excellence “Understanding Written Artefacts” (UWA) examines the relationship between inscriptions and manuscripts based on the corpus of the Wat Pho Inscriptions in Bangkok. In 1832 King Rama III commissioned the editing of more than forty different texts, which were later inscribed on stone slabs throughout the temple’s ambulatories. This literary body of knowledge mainly covers works of didactic poetry and different kinds of treatises, in particular, works on medicine and astrology. Thus made accessible to a wider public, it had a significant impact on manuscript production during the second half of the nineteenth century. In addition, the inscribed texts of Wat Pho are closely related to manuscript production. Therefore, the project aims at providing new insights into the cultural change of inscriptions and the relationship between the usage of both manuscripts and inscriptions as writing tools and carriers of texts in traditional Siam, as well as the history of textual transmission through these two media.

Photo credit: Khlong Konlabot Inscription of Wat Pho and its “master copy” manuscript (National Library of Thailand: Khlong Subsection: Ms no. 229)



## **Anisong (Ānisamsa) Manuscripts from Luang Prabang (Laos) in a Comparative Perspective: Transformation in the Age of Printing (Dr Silpsupa Jaengawang), July 2020 to September 2023**

Dr. Silpsupa Jaengawang, a postdoctoral fellow at the Centre for the Study of the Manuscript Cultures (CSMC), received financial support by Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) for her research project: *Relationship between Anisong Manuscripts and Rituals: A Comparative Study of the Lan Na Traditions* and studies a corpus of *anisong* (Pali: ānisamsa) manuscripts from Luang Prabang. *Anisong* manuscripts from northern Thailand and Laos are mostly made of palm-leaf. Since the late nineteenth century mulberry paper and modern industrial paper figure more prominently in manuscripts from Laos and Tai Lü minority areas in the Upper Mekong region (the border region of Laos, Thailand, Myanmar and Yunnan). Modern printing technology furthered the industrial production of *anisong* texts printed on specially prepared palm leaves or concertina-like folded books resembling the *pothi* format of palm-leaf manuscripts. These changes pertain to the writing support, the writing substance, the layout, and the use of script with the secular Thai and Lao scripts replacing the once wide-spread religious Dhamma script. The project is part of the research group “Facing New Technologies” (FNT) of the Cluster UWA.

Photo credit: Block-printed palm-leaf manuscripts and a block-printing machine at a printing house in Bangkok (Photo by Silpsupa Jaengawang)

