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Ladies and Gentlemen, dear members of the HGV, dear students,

I have the pleasure to invite you to a presentation (webinar) of Prof. Dr. Christina Schwenkel, University of California at Riverside.

Title: The Building of Socialism: International Aid and Material Solidarity

Time: July 2, 2021, 16-18 h Central European Summer Time.

Link to attend the webinar:

<https://uni-hamburg.zoom.us/j/67315386675?pwd=MkIxM2ZpM2pBMFcycTByY2NKRjZhdz09>

Passcode: 79271664

Following a decade of United States bombing campaigns that obliterated northern Vietnam, East Germany helped Vietnam rebuild in an act of socialist solidarity. In this talk, Prof. Dr. Christina Schwenkel discusses the utopian visions of an expert group of Vietnamese and East German urban planners who sought to transform the devastated industrial town of Vinh into a model socialist city, and how and why those visions fell short. Drawing on archival and ethnographic research in Germany and Vietnam, including in Vinh's mass housing complex (khu tập thể), she explores the material dimensions of humanitarian aid, and the quick fall of the city's build environment into "unplanned obsolescence."

Christina Schwenkel is Professor of Anthropology and Director of the Program in Southeast Asian Studies at the University of California at Riverside, and co-editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Vietnamese Studies*. She is the author of [*The American War in Contemporary Vietnam: Transnational Remembrance and Representation*](#) (Indiana University Press, 2009) and [*Building Socialism: The Afterlife of East German Architecture in Urban Vietnam*](#) (Duke University Press, 2020). A recipient of a Berlin Prize from the American Academy in Berlin, her work has been supported by the *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst* (DAAD), National Endowment for the Humanities, Fulbright, and the Graham Foundation.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas Engelbert