

THE RECIPROCAL PERCEPTION OF EUROPE AND SOUTHEAST ASIA IN TRAVEL REPORTS: THE ROLE OF RELIGION (TOGETHER WITH JÜRGEN SARNOWSKY)

THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN FUNDED BY THE GERMAN RESEARCH FOUNDATION (DFG; FUNDING SCHEME: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION) FROM 2013-2016. AT THE PROJECT'S CORE WERE TWO WORKSHOPS IN THE SCHOOL OF CULTURAL STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GADJAH MADA IN YOGYAKARTA, CENTRAL JAVA IN AUGUST 2013 AND IN HAMBURG IN NOVEMBER 2015. IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO THE FIRST WORKSHOP, THERE WAS A SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GAJAH MADA OFFERED IN COOPERATION WITH INDONESIAN COLLEAGUES. THE PROGRAM FAMILIARIZED STUDENTS, INCLUDING DOCTORAL CANDIDATES, WITH HISTORICAL METHODS AND TECHNIQUES AND INTRODUCED WORKSHOP TOPICS.

THE INTERDISCIPLINARY WORKSHOP PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW POSSIBLE SCHOLARLY COOPERATION WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF EUROPEAN-SOUTHEAST ASIAN RELATIONS. THERE WAS PARTICULAR FOCUS ON THE QUESTION OF HOW TRAVELERS FROM EUROPE OR SOUTHEAST ASIA HAVE PERCEIVED ONE ANOTHER'S CULTURES AND RELIGION AND WHICH EXPLANATORY APPROACHES BEST SUIT EACH VIEWPOINT. THE WORKSHOP BEGAN WITH AN ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE PLAYED BY RELIGION IN EACH CULTURE'S VIEW OF THE OTHER: WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE VIEWS OF CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT TRAVELERS? WHAT DO THEY HAVE IN COMMON? HOW DOES THE (PRIMARILY) ISLAMIC RELIGION AFFECT THE VIEWS OF TRAVELERS FROM INSULAR SOUTHEAST ASIA? THE SECOND WORKSHOP IN HAMBURG „TRAVELERS' REPORTS AND THE RECIPROCAL PERCEPTION OF EUROPE AND INSULAR SOUTHEAST ASIA: REPORTS ON RELIGION, POLITICS AND SOCIETY SINCE THE 16TH CENTURY“ CONTINUED THE RESEARCH ON TRAVELOGUES AND THE PERCEPTION OF RELIGIONS. ON THIS OCCASION, POSSIBILITIES OF FUTURE COOPERATION AND COMMON PROJECTS WERE EXPLORED. SCHOLARS FROM UNIVERSITAS GAJAH MADA, UNIVERSITY OF COLOGNE AND HAMBURG, BOTH SENIOR AND YOUNG SCHOLARS, WERE INVITED. WE PLAN SEVERAL YEARS OF SCHOLARLY COOPERATION INVOLVING FURTHER CONFERENCES FOCUSING ON POTENTIAL FURTHER JOINT RESEARCH PROJECTS.

RESEARCH OUTCOMES ARE PUBLISHED IN THE BOOK ENTITLED „THE ROLE OF RELIGIONS IN THE EUROPEAN PERCEPTION OF INSULAR AND MAINLAND SOUTHEAST ASIA: TRAVEL ACCOUNTS OF THE 16TH TO THE 19TH CENTURIES“ (CAMBRIDGE SCHOLARS PUBLISHING, IN PRESS).