

SEA-NEWSLETTER

The Department for Languages and Cultures of Southeast Asia

JUNE 2024

Photo by: Framchaser Photography

We congratulate **Anwar Kholid**, from Yogyakarta, Indonesia, who successfully defended his dissertation in a disputation on 28 February 2024.

Anwar Balancing Academic Freedom and Responsibility

ALUMNI COLUMN

Under the supervision of Prof. Monika Arnez, Prof. Elsa Clavé and Prof. Jan van der Putten, Anwar conducted his research on the role and position of the Islamic mass organization Muhammadiyah and Aisyiyah, its affiliated women's organization.

Established in the first decades of the 20th century the Muhammadiyah and the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) have grown into the two leading moderate Islamic mass organizations of Indonesia that have branched out in various socio-political organizations, particularly active in the healthcare and educational sectors. Their schools and offices are distributed all the different levels of the Indonesian nation and beyond (there are branches in Germany of both Muhammadiyah and NU for instance). For his PhD. Research project Anwar probed into the rising controversy surrounding the LGBT community in

Indonesia. As is well known, this vulnerable community have come under stark rising pressure in Indonesia and other Muslim nations with LGBT communities. This rising tension came to its most recent sad climax in 2016, when an increasing number of people and organizations within the LGBT community were attacked and other incidents took place. With this in mind, Anwar wrote a proposal to problematise and analyse what the official discourse of the Muhammadiyah was surrounding the issue of this LGBT community. Anwar went through all the sources that were publicly available to find out what >>>

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>>> had been published about this topic and he conducted many (semi-structured) interviews with members of the Muhammadiyah on all levels of the organization and in different parts of the country, such as Yogyakarta (which may be considered the traditional centre where the organization was founded in the 1920s), Kalimantan, Makassar and quite a few other locations. We must realize that Anwar did his research during the Covid pandemic, which of course posed all kinds of extra difficulties of carrying out his research besides the mere fact that the topic is of course highly sensitive in a Muslim environment. Interestingly, the Muhammadiyah did not issue a clear-cut condemnation against the community, as NU did, for instance. The discourse that was produced by the Muhammadiyah on the different levels within its organization was much more nuanced and tolerant than

the general Indonesian political discourse. It became also clear in his research that the leaders of the women's branch organization Aisyiyah held and voiced much more progressive opinions about the LGBT community compared to the male members of the different levels in the organization who firmly held on to their patriarchal power and were much more conservative in the opinions they published in the media such as the official Muhammadiyah magazine *Suara Muhammadiyah* and its YouTube channel.

Anwar has returned to Yogyakarta where he continues his position as lecturer at the Muhammadiyah University there and develops more interesting research projects. We wish you all the best of luck and hope to see you again soon in Hamburg or perhaps in Yogya! •

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Would you like to share your story as ex-student in our Department?
Contact us and join our **Alumni Group on LinkedIn**

 Students and Alumni of the Southeast Asian
Studies Department- Hamburg University.
<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/9016077/>

No. 9 Forum of Vietnamese Culture/ Diễn Đàn Văn hóa Việt Nam

A Maritime Vietnam: From Earliest Time to the 19th Century

Speaker:

Prof. Li Tana
Canberra

Friday, 07. 06. 2024
14:00 - 16:00 CEST
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Vietnam time

The Department of Vietnamese Studies, Hamburg University cordially invites everyone to a talk by Professor Li Tana, a Senior Fellow at the Research School of Pacific Studies National University of Australia (ANU), Canberra. Her research originally was focused on South of Vietnam, but was extended to the history of Vietnam's waterways in general.

In a way Vietnamese history can be essentialized in four words: *Bắc cự, nam tiến* (resist to the north, expand to the south). In this narrative, however, all other elements – ideologies, economy and society – will be weaved around this central drive, and elaborated upon as the key to understand Vietnamese history as a whole and in a more nuanced way.

In her talk, Li Tana will discuss this theme which is also the topic of her new book *A Maritime Vietnam: From earliest time to the 19th century* (Cambridge University Press, 2024). She will explore and thoroughly discuss Vietnam's place in the world in its early history, and by discussing four metaphors.

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 English.

The talk will be introduced and chaired by Professor Thomas Engelbert. •



Webinar-ID: 66789708939
Webinar-Password: 61129760



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"Traces of Empires in the Philippines" - New Exhibition is now open!



Congratulations are in order!
 The newly opened temporary exhibition is
 now officially welcoming visitors, and
 I thoroughly enjoyed my time exploring it.

By Tiara Ulfa

'Traces of Empires in the Philippines' is a collaborative work between the Department of Languages and Cultures of Southeast Asia and the University Museum. Led by Prof. Dr. Elsa Clavé, the project was carried out by master's students in Austronesian Studies and co-funded by The Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines in Germany.

Occupying approximately a 60-square-meter room, the exhibition delves into the aftermath of the Spanish-American War and illuminates its profound impact on the Philippines. Emphasizing the nation's evolution under American colonial administration, it focuses on the post-war period to underscore how this pivotal

era reshaped Philippine history and identity, leaving a lasting legacy still palpable today.

The exhibition is divided into the following three sections; Filipinos beauty standards, journalism, and education & healthcare. The exhibition's opening section captures the era of the American administration in the Philippines (1898-1935), showcasing a captivating dress and headpiece from Filipino beauty contests. These artefacts highlight the influence of American cultural hegemony on beauty standards, evolving to reflect a distinct Filipino identity.

Another notable feature of the exhibition is the section about healthcare. A compact yet thoughtfully

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arranged display shows a hospital scene, complete with an anaesthesia cart, complemented by video testimonies from Filipino nurses in Germany. This display offers a compelling glimpse into the vital role of Filipino healthcare professionals, from their integration into American hospitals since 1965 to their subsequent recruitment by European countries like Germany.

In addition to these highlights, the exhibition is brimming with even more fascinating displays that are sure to impress and inspire visitors. Taking place at the Hamburg University Museum, this captivating showcase will remain available for exploration over the next six months. Don't let this opportunity pass you by—make sure to plan your visit soon! •



Museum opening hours:

Tue, 10 am–2 pm | Thu, 3–7 pm | Sat, 2–6 pm
www.uni-hamburg.de/unimuseum

Mabuhay! Cinema!

A Celebration of Filipino Short Films

Saturday, 22 June 2024,
13:00 - 17:00

ESA Ostflügel, Raum 221,
Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1,
20146 Hamburg.

Program Schedule:

13:00 – 13:15 Opening Remarks
 13:15 – 14:30 First Batch of Short Films
 14:30 – 14:45 Discussion and Feedback Session
 14:45 – 15:15 Meryenda (Snacks)
 15:15 – 16:30 Second Batch of Short Films
 16:30 – 17:00 Discussion, Feedback, and Closing Remarks

To register for the event, and advise us how many will be attending, please send an email to:

mabuhay.aai@uni-hamburg.de

The films will be shown in Filipino languages with English subtitles.

Bahay, Baboy, Bagyo, Directed by Miko Biong Kulas, a 10-year-old boy, resides in an informal settlement where he yearns to cherish his childhood with his closest friend, Gabo. However, the impending demolition of their community threatens to disrupt their idyllic world.

Beauty Queen, Directed by Myra Aquino
 Set in the Philippines during World War II, a young woman struggles to find herself after losing her father.

Gusto Kong Maging Fishball
 Directed by Macky Esquibel
 Potpot's house is at risk. He and his two friends Bonbon and Cheche come up with a plan of becoming millionaires by selling a million fishballs to save his house.

Heist School, Directed by Julius Renomeron Jr.
 On the brink of failing high school, wayward best friends Omar and Joedel devise a risky plan to keep their graduation plans alive. With everything at stake, the odd duo take their final test of resiliency, street smarts, and most of all, friendship.

huhumcrediTT, Directed by Fea Fortuna
 Struggling to pay for his 16-year-old daughter's laptop, a conscientious father applies for a product loan purchase after getting convinced by a saleslady in a very unusual IT retail shop.

Subasko, Directed by Alleison Dimatulac
 When her husband did not return after a night of venturing out to sea, even though Agnes knew what might have happened, the longing was still greater, so she continued to hope to find him.

Tarang, Directed by Arvin Belarmino
 Roel a pedicab driver works alongside his wife, Aya, a prostitute; in a place where they can wishfully earn just enough to survive. An expected incident in what was supposed to be a normal day will test their faith and forever change their lives.

When the Sunflowers Bloom, Directed by Kla Imperial
 In a world where the end is fast approaching, Mika and Noah are two UP students at the cusp of graduation who attempt to make sense of what little time they have left.

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Bahasa Indonesia for Gesche and Lili – a short impression by two students majoring in Korean language studies at Hamburg University

We had an opportunity to interview Gesche Prestin and Lili Mauer, two students of the Korean Studies department, University of Hamburg – who take Indonesian language classes as their subsidiary subject – about the impression they have from the class.

Being interested in East Asia, in Korea in particular, Gesche and Lili want to know more about other Asian languages and cultures, they chose Indonesia, the largest country in Southeast Asia, hence they decided to take part in the Bahasa Indonesia classes at our Department. For Gesche, Indonesian grammar is relatively uncomplicated to understand, with exception of the prefix and suffix in verb conjugations – an aspect of Indonesian that for quite a few students may cause some headaches in trying to grasp the use and meaning because it is different from what they are used to in their mother tongue. They are in their fourth semester and are eager to follow the strategies undertaken by the lecturer, Ms. Yanti Mirdayanti. Her experience of teaching Indonesian at the university since 2010 has it possible for Ms. Mirdayanti to design invigorating and motivating language classes.

In a rather similar vein, Lili describes Ms. Yanti as a great teacher, who always attempts to assure that Indonesian learning can be enjoyable, and that problems encountered by each student can be addressed and solved. The class size is relatively small, comfortable. For Lili, after grasping sufficient grammatical understanding,

securing a broad range of vocabulary becomes the most essential step as it guarantees that one can

be more expressive in using the language, both orally and in written form. To do this, Lili is thinking of finding a tandem partner, who can help her attain fluency. Additionally, what she learned about Indonesian history and about the people's cultures of being under Dutch colonization for so long and having developed a broad variety of traditional clothes makes her more fascinated by the country and its huge array of different cultures and traditions.

Unsurprisingly they love the very open and friendly attitude they experienced from interacting with fellow students originating from Indonesia and studying here. This interaction makes it a lot easier when it comes to learning the language. •



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Researcher from Hamburg visiting University of Pennsylvania for a Research Fellowship



During February and March 2024, Dr. Peera Panarut (Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures, Universität Hamburg) conducted a visiting research fellowship at the Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies under the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia (PA, United States of America).



Photo credits: Peera Panarut

His fellowship project, entitled “Thai Royal Court Manuscripts in Philadelphia”, concerns the manuscripts from the nineteenth-century royal court of Thailand preserved at the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts within the Penn Libraries and at the Penn Museum (formerly known as the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology). Apart from his fellowship project, during his visit in Philadelphia, Peera Panarut also helped the library and the museum revise their Thai manuscript catalogues, as well as catalogue the newly acquired

manuscripts and other written artefacts (such as talismans) from Thailand. After the completion of his fellowship project in mid-March he also paid a visit to the New York Public Library and at the Princeton University Library to investigate Thai manuscripts for his research project at the Universität Hamburg. During his visits, he also helped the librarians revise their Thai manuscript catalogues at the New York Public Library (i.e. the Spencer Collection, as well as the Manuscripts and Archives Division) and at the Special Collections within the Princeton University Library. •