

Summer Semester 2025

# SDAC Guest Lecture

Jointly hosted with the Chair of Cultural and Social Anthropology and the Chair of Religious Studies and Intercultural Theology

## Southeast Asian Women in anti-colonial struggles – Oral History Perspectives

Dr. Agnes KHOO  
Shenzhen Technology UniversityMonday  
5. May 2025  
16:15 – 17:45 pm

\*The lecture will be held in: **Hörsaal C, Kochstr. 4, 91054 Erlangen**

Dr. Agnes KHOO hails from Singapore, Dutch citizen and a global nomad who teaches International Relations/Inter-Cultural Communication/Asia Studies around the world: Asia (China, Bangladesh), Europe (The Netherlands), the UK, USA, West Africa (Ghana). Author of "Life as the River Flows" - an oral history of women guerrillas of the Communist Party of Malaya, she has also translated several books. Before entering full-time academe, Agnes worked as a Board Member, Researcher, Policy Consultant, Trainer and Organizer in international NGOs based in Amsterdam, Hong Kong, Taipei and Chiangmai. Agnes considers herself a scholar-activist/activist scholar, consciously placing herself at the intersections of both.



Women in Asia were active participants of the region's struggles for independence during the colonial era, against imperialism and fascism and for peace during WWII. However, their contribution to the movements and countries was seldom told and even less documented in words and images. Consequently, they were being written about, rather than being heard first-hand. Henceforth, oral histories as a research tool, a method of remembering and re-telling one's life, an approach enabling women to find our voices, and to be understood in our own terms, remain crucial in understanding Asian histories - from women's perspectives and experiences.

My lecture focuses on the former women guerrillas of the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM, Malaysia/Singapore) who laid down arms after the Peace Agreement was signed between the Thai and Malaysian governments and the CPM in December 1989. Most of these women are living out their retirement, with their families and comrades, as naturalized Thai citizens since 2004, in four Peace Villages spread across Southern Thailand. The Singaporeans however, remain persona non-grata to the Singapore government and must content to die in exile.

This lecture is accompanied by video snippets extracted from hours-long of footage by Jason Soo, Singapore's Independent film-maker, accompanied by the author in the Peace Villages in 2019.

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ELITE MASTER'S PROGRAM  
Standards of Decision-Making Across Cultures