



CISCA Newsletter

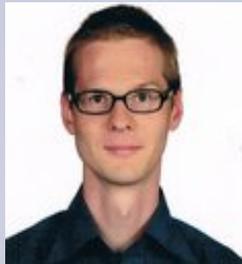
Dear reader, once again it is time for the CISCA Newsletter – the first and unfortunately belated in 2014. A lot of things have happened at CISCA:

On the 27th of February the Indian ambassador H.E. Sri **Niraj Srivastava** held discussions with **Bjarke Parup** (HoD, Dept. of Culture and Society), **Anemone Platz** (Head of Section, Asian, Arab and Islam Studies), as well as **Niels Brimnes**, **Anusuya Kumar** and **Uwe Skoda** (all teaching in the South Asian Studies programme). At the meeting, the Ambassador was informed about plans to start a new MA focusing on India and SA. At this occasion he also met **Rektor Brian Bech Nielsen**.

More on Indian Embassy in Denmark:

<http://www.indian-embassy.dk/>

On the 5th of March **Stephan Beutner** held two lectures. The first was titled **Introducing English Ideas: From Bewar to Plough Cultivation?** and was linked to the course **“Introduction to Society and Culture in South Asia”**. the second dealt with **Relocation Processes**



Reconsidered: Nature, Property and their link to “Development”. After the lecture **Jyotirmaya Tripathi** and **Sudarsan Padmanaban**, both IIT Madras, acted as discussants. More on Stephan:

http://iaaw.huberlin.de/southasia/research/grad_research/beutner

On the 6th of March, **Jyotirmaya Tripathy** held a lecture on the subject of **Indian Environmentalism and its**



Fragments. Jyotirmaya Tripathy is a faculty at Dept. of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Madras. His areas of interest are cultural criticism and critical development studies. He has published in these areas in various journals. He is also the co-editor of *The Democratic Predicament: Cultural Diversity in Europe and India* and *Becoming Minority: How Discourses and Policies Produce Minorities in Europe and India*.

The **2nd Steering Committee Meeting** of the Interdisciplinary Bridges in Indo-European Studies (IBIES) consortium was held between 26-27th of March, 2014, at Symbiosis International University, Pune, India. IBIES is coordinated by AU and supported by CISCA.

At this occasion, IBIES, the Interdisciplinary Bridges in Indo-European Studies, awarded new grants for scholars and students coming to AU in 2015 – the names of the the people coming to Aarhus University are: Dhivya Jothi Ganesh, Vanya Rachel Gnaniah, Jadubhanj Murmu, Fasma Vayalil, Darsana Vijay, Kiran Sharma, Sujata Banerjee, Chandi Prasad Nanda, Kumaresan Raja Natesan Krishnasamy, Sudarsan Padmanaban, Hamsavahini Singh and Jyotirmaya Tripathy.

More on IBIES: <http://erasmus.iescp.net/>





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On the 2nd of April, **Sirpa Tenhunen** presented a lecture on the subject of **Smart phones in rural India: gender, inter-sectionality and mediation**. The lecture was linked to the course "Introduction to Society and Culture in South Asia". Sirpa came to AU not only as a scholar and South Asianist, but also in her capacity as director of the Nordic Centre in India (NCI) and held discussions at AU to intensify the collaborations between NCI and AU. More on NCI - <http://www.nordiccentreindia.com/>

On the 9th of April, **Maia Ingvardson** presented a lecture on the subject of **Dalits and "Untouchability" in India and South Asia**, which was linked to the course "Introduction to Society and Culture in South Asia".



Furthermore the lecture introduced the International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN), the NGO that **Maia** represents. IDSN works on a global level for the elimination of caste discrimination and similar forms of discrimination based on work and descent. More on IDSN - <http://www.idsn.org/>

Rita Brara (Associate Professor, University of Delhi), who also teaches at her alma mater, at the Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi, India, came to Aarhus University as a guest professor under the IBIES programme in the spring of 2014. In this capacity she co-taught (with **Uwe Skoda**) a course on Visual Culture in South Asia" Furthermore, she also held a lecture on the subject of **Visualizing Climate Change: An Analysis of Cartoons** on 14th of May.



On the side of the Pune meeting of IBIES, the European Association of India Study Centres (EAISC) held a meeting to find new ways to collaborate their work on India and prepare the next upcoming regular meeting in Milan in Sept 2014.





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The members represented at the Pune meeting: Hochschule Bremen, University of Milan, Leiden University, Reutlingen University, Aarhus University, University of Warsaw.

On the 24-25th of April, the **South Asian Discussiongroup** held a seminar at Copenhagen University, which aimed at enhancing the collaboration between the South Asian branches of both AU and KU.



Life as an Indian exchange student at AU - This semester, Ajit Larka and Siddharth Srikanth, have both been exchange student under the Erasmus Mundus mobility programme. This is their experience of Aarhus University.

Ajit Larka: Overall, I really think student exchange in Denmark is what you put into it. It can be hard at times, but it's also easy to keep in contact with your friends and family members on Skype, Facebook, phone, email etc. Also being one year away, you are able to build up strong relationships with your host family and friends. I've personally gained invaluable experiences from this exchange so far and it has assisted me gain a kind of confidence in myself and my own personality. I would like to tell to all the exchange students: "Don't be afraid of making mistakes; the exchange is all about learning. Don't dwell too much on missing family members and friends because they will definitely be



there when you get back. You only have limited time to learn and enjoy the new culture".

Siddharth Srikanth: When I first reached Aarhus, I was apprehensive of how I would respond to life in a foreign country, as I had never left India before and was unsure of the different customs, routines and rhythms of life in what I knew would be a place very different from the cities I had known in India.

Aarhus and Chennai (where I come from) are very different on the surface, from the urban geography to university culture. After my initial nervousness passed, I found that I liked the slow pace and ease of life in Aarhus, and the warm and sociable people, especially students I met at the university and at classes. The standard of teaching was consistently excellent, and I benefited from classes that were diverse in the subjects taught and the plurality of academic points of view used to teach as well as the backgrounds of students of these classes. I found the informal relationship encouraged between instructors and students enabling: I learned as much in my chats with faculty outside of class as I did in it. I am also glad for those at AU who went out of their way to help me; the friends I made helped me understand Denmark better while also providing enough humour and laughter to withstand the winter cold. I can only hope Aarhus University as well as institutions in other parts of Denmark continue to facilitate the mobility of individuals from around the world, and they too experience the hospitality and generosity, intellectual and personal, that I did.





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We would also like to inform our readers about news from the CISCA network, i.e. we proudly present a new project: **MAGAART to support PhD course development in Nepal**, which is a capacity development project lead by AU that has initiated the development and testing of (partly) online PhD courses for Nepali PhD students and their supervisors at Tribhuvan University – and at two universities in Kenya and Uganda. The project is named MAGAART, i.e. an acronym for the project's six partner institutions: Maseno University, Aarhus University, Gulu University, Aalborg University, Roskilde University, and Tribhuvan University. You can find more information at the project website (www.magaart.org), including a [report](#) from the launching workshop in Kathmandu, March 2014.

And finally another news CISCA is very proud to announce: a new **Master degree in Asian Studies (India and South Asia)** officially starting this September! This new master programme is the only of its kind in Denmark and we would like to use this opportunity to introduce the central elements of this programme.

India and beyond in the “Asian century”

The Master in Asian Studies (India and South Asia) is tailor-made for students with an interest in and plans to work on one of the most dynamic regions in Asia covering roughly 25% of the world's population (triple the size of the EU). It includes India as the world's largest democracy, but also other recent “development stars” such as Bangladesh. The population growth coincides with the rising economies, but also with an increasing political assertiveness of nuclear powers on the global

stage. The programme offers an in-depth and interdisciplinary understanding of the rapidly transforming society and culture in India and South Asia, its increasing interactions with Asia and its entangled history with the “West”.



Multidisciplinary study environment with an “Asian” edge

The programme offers three elements: a) a distinctive focus on India and South Asia, b) a broader Asian perspective and c) two further specialisations. Firstly, the MA draws on a variety of disciplines such as anthropology, history, political science etc. whose approaches are applied to Indian and South Asian contexts. These insights are deepened during a study semester abroad. Secondly, within the larger MA Asian Studies students of the “India and South Asia” track closely interact with students specialising primarily on China and Japan to situate India in a larger Asian framework.





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Thirdly, in order to understand the complex and often contradictory social and cultural realities the MA gives students two more options: 1) to learn Hindi as the most common language in India, on an advanced level (language track) and 2) to acquire skills to deal with the Indian subcontinent in an increasingly globalised and interconnected world (international/non-language track). English as basic classroom language generally adds to the international environment.

Career Profile

The Master equips students with in-depth knowledge, first-hand experiences of the region and crucial cross-cultural competences required to work in larger teams in international organisations, international or Danish companies increasingly expanding their work in Asia and vice versa e.g. consultancy firms, government agencies, but also in the tourism industry or media houses. Graduates planning to pursue research and a career in academia can apply to the Graduate School in Arts after the first year or after completing the MA.

More on: <http://kandidat.au.dk/en/asian-studies-india-and-south-asia-studies/>

We wish all our readers a wonderful autumn (semester) and look forward to more interactions in the coming weeks and months. weeks!

