

## **Leeds – Copenhagen Collaboration Asian Studies**

Prof Christopher Dent (Department of East Asian Studies, Leeds) and Prof Jorgen Delman (Asian Dynamics Initiative, Copenhagen) - September 2010

Christopher Dent made the first exchange trip on 22-24 September 2010, where he gave a couple of presentations on core areas of his research (free trade agreements, energy diplomacy) and had a number of meetings with Asian Dynamics Initiative (ADI) staff where we:

- 1) Shared information on the profiles of our respective centres of Asian Studies and the research expertise and interests of our staff
- 2) Discussed what possible areas and projects we could collaborate on
- 3) Decided that Jorgen Delman would make his exchange trip to Leeds during 11-13 May, when our Department was hosting the 'Asia-Pacific: Shaping the World' WUN conference (12-13 May), and a small half-day event on China (11 May)

Christopher Dent's discussions with Copenhagen ADI staff on 1) revealed that Leeds and Copenhagen shared a number of areas of mutual research interest, especially relating to economic, social, political and cultural issues. His talks with Jorgen Delman established a strong common interest in matters of East Asia's energy security and energy diplomacy. Prof Delman has worked extensively on state-society relations in China – an area where a number of Leeds staff (Christiansen, Zhang, Liu, Davin, Weightman) also research interests. He and his ADI colleagues have also done work on security issues (connections to Dent, Dosch and Rose at Leeds). Prof Jakob Munch and Christopher Dent share strong related interests in Asia – Europe trade issues, and Prof Munch may also have common research interests with certain White Rose East Asia Centre (WREAC) international business scholars from CIBUL (Centre for International Business, Uni of Leeds), which we shall explore in due course.

It was agreed that a bottom-up approach to fostering closer Leeds – Copenhagen collaboration on Asian Studies was the way forward. Prof Delman's visit to Leeds in May 2011 will help cement links and further advance the processes of familiarisation and socialisation between our two centres. He already knows his fellow national, Prof Flemming Christiansen, here at Leeds very well. They are currently working as part of an Asia – Europe team of academics that have put in a bid to an EU scheme to develop an international training network for young scholars. Furthermore, both have been our respective university representatives for the EastAsiaNet (<http://www.eastasianet.eu>), the network of East Asia studies centres in Europe. Prof Delman knows Prof Delia Davin too.

We shall eventually explore how we might develop joint research projects together, and cultivate stronger networked links between Leeds and Copenhagen in our field over the longer-term. This is likely to build into existing initiatives and projects in progress within both centres, such as the 'Asia-Pacific: Shaping the World' WUN project being co-led by Christopher Dent and Joern Dosch at Leeds. The three areas where research collaboration and network-building may be most apparently at this stage achieved are probably state-society relations in China, energy security/policy in East Asia, and Asia – Europe trade. It is hoped that more prospective areas of research collaboration will be more clearly apparent as relations between both centres strengthen over time.