

Universitetspladsen

RUglobal

Information and debate from Roskilde University

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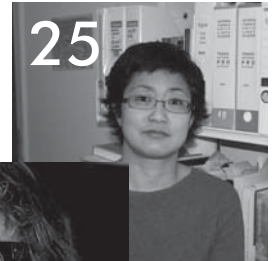
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SurveyXact for evaluations

Students and staff at RU have access to SurveyXact from the portalino. See how to get started here:

www.ruc.dk/en/surveyxact

A screenshot of the SurveyXact website. The top header includes the Roskilde University logo, navigation links like 'På dansk', and a search bar. The main content area features the title 'SurveyXact for evaluations' and introductory text. A sidebar on the right contains a menu with categories like 'Education', 'Research', and 'About the University'. At the bottom, there is a 'surveyXact' logo and a 'USERS' section with an overview of surveys and organizations.

Editor's Desk



According to new integration minister Søren Pind, *integration* is bad. Instead *assimilation* is the new word *du jour*.

Apparently, multiculturalism has no place in Denmark anymore. If you're here, you must conform, the minister says. I find this thought ludicrous, to say the least. I mean, is he serious? Or is he just spinning the wheels? But I digress...

All that aside, diversity at RU is alive and well. Students, staff and the school all add variety to the status quo – and isn't this what makes RU so special? Isn't this the very premise on which RU was built?

Despite what anyone might say, variety indeed is the spice of life. Diversity is the spice that makes the prominent Danish culture just a little more lively...tasty...exquisite. Isn't it? At least RU's International Club (IC) seems to think so.

IC tries to integrate (sorry, Mr. Pind) international students into life here at RU. This issue we take a look at IC's Mentor Programme and how it welcomes new RUC'ers to the Danish way of life.

Ranting aside, integration is far from lost in Denmark. Longtime RU professor Hartmut Haberland arrived here from Germany in the 70s. "I reckoned I was going to stay for three or five years," Hartmut told us in an interview. Almost 40 years and Hartmut's still here. Read his awesome story in this issue of RUGlobal.

We also bring stories on different happenings at RU, including two spectacular PhD-projects. How important is *real* coverage of *real* news? What are the life conditions of Thai prostitutes in Denmark? Find out inside.

Before wrapping things up, I'd like to encourage readers to write us if RUGlobal needs to investigate a topic closer or if you just want to be heard. After all, this is the official news and debate source of the RU community. So use it. We will continue to do the same in the following issues. So stay tuned.

Till next time...

- Philip Michael

PS – In last issue's story "Speak English, please", I accidentally misnamed an associate professor. His name is Mogens Buch-Hansen, not Jensen. My apologies, Mogens!

Publishing information

RUCnyt/RUGlobal is Roskilde University's official magazine for information and debate about the organization of the university. RUGlobal is open to all employees and students at Roskilde University to debate the educational and research organizations at the university, including questioning of common interest for research and education.

Editorial staff:

Hanne Preisler (Responsible)
Camilla Buchardt (Editor)
Jakob Bang Schmidt (Editor)
Philip Michael Shange (Editor)
Tyson William Lyall (Editor)
Andreas Wraae (Editor)

Cover photo:

Tuala Hjarnø

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Notifications: rucnyt-meddelelser@ruc.dk

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Articles: need to be handed in by e-mail. Please enclose suggestions for illustrations. Discs and other material are normally not returned. The editorial staff is allowed to shorten articles and to reject articles which are not of common interest. Articles of more than 8000 characters (about 2 pages) can normally not be expected to be published un-shortened. There is no minimum length for an article to be published. Anonymous articles are not accepted.

Upcoming deadlines:

Nr.	Articles	Notices	Publication date
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- at 12 noon on the assigned date

PhD: We have to reconsider our views on foreign prostitutes

The life of Thai sex workers living in Denmark is about much more than just selling sex. In a new PhD thesis, Marlene Spanger from RU concludes that these women's motives for making a living by prostitution are closely connected to an ordinary every day life with motherhood, marriage and love

Text and photo: Camilla Buchardt, the Information Office

Thai women making a living by prostitution in Denmark are not all victims whom society should seek to rescue from a life as sex workers.

This is one of the conclusions in Marlene Spangers' new PhD thesis which is based on interviews with female immigrant prostitutes, the police, social workers and a number of different experts.

The thesis also shows that many of the Thai women are married to Danish men, have children and lead an ordinary everyday life with packed lunches and homework while also being sex workers.

Stereotypes

Marlene Spangers believes that there are many prejudices related to living as a Thai sex worker in Denmark. According to Marlene Spanger, for example, in the public debate, the group of female immigrants fall within two categories of opposing stereotypes:

- Either they are considered victims of human trafficking – or they are seen as free, strong women who should have labour market rights such as pension and sickness benefits.

Marlene Spanger finds that both views are problematic since they simplify the reality of these women's lives.

- My research shows that these women's everyday lives are much more nuanced and that, their social relations are much more complex, and many of the women have absolutely nothing to do with human trafficking, said Marlene Spanger.

Not just victims

Often, there are other problems than those related to life as prostitutes that these women

have to contend with in their everyday lives, explained Marlene Spanger.

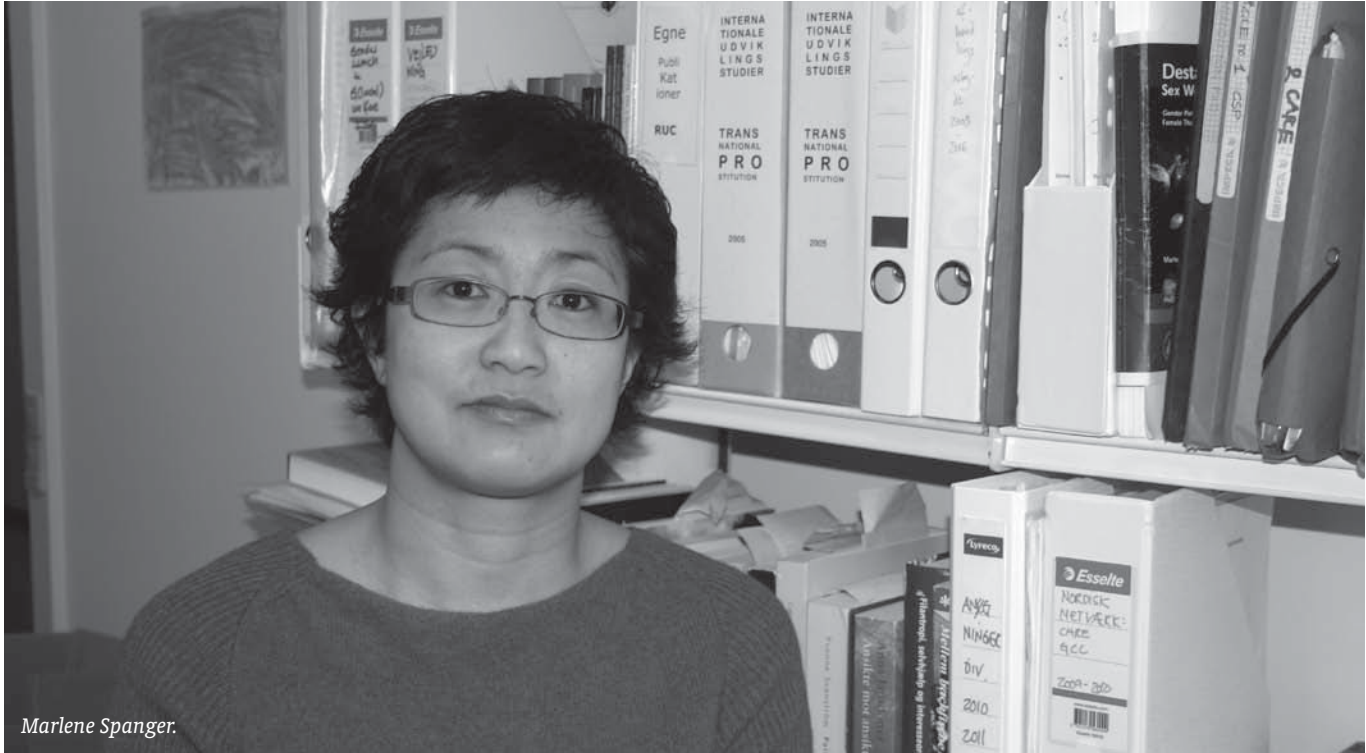
- The question is whether they should be seen as victims of human trafficking at all; often, these women face completely different social problems related to their every day lives, she said.

For example, it could be family related problems in connection with childcare, their spouses, married life or general problems related to being integrated in Danish society, she explained.

About the PhD thesis by Marlene Spanger

Marlene Spanger completed the defence of her PhD thesis "Destabilising Sex Work & Intimacy: Gender Performances of Female Thai Migrants Selling Sex in Denmark" at the Department of Society and Globalisation at RU on 1 April 2011. The thesis is about Thai sex workers in Denmark and breaks down the myth that they are victims. One of her conclusions is that many of them have come to Denmark in pursuit of a better life, and not as a result of human trafficking.

The thesis enters a research field that has become increasingly prevailing around the world during the past 10-15 years. Marlene Spanger investigates the different factors that contribute to forming partly the political views and partly the everyday life among Thai sex workers in Denmark. The subject is controversial both within research and in the public debate because it collides with one of the hottest issues of our time, namely public control and regulation of migration, and sexuality.



Social efforts

With her thesis, Marlene Spanger hopes that as an RU researcher she can make the population, social workers and politicians realise that there is a need for a more nuanced view on migrants in prostitution and life as a prostitute in Denmark.

- At one and the same time these women are often both victims and players with a voice, said Marlene Spanger.

- Instead of taking for granted that these women want to be rescued from prostitution, you should look at their actual problems and needs and compare them with the help that the Danish State offers to them, said Marlene Spanger.

One of the things that might come as a surprise in Marlene Spangers' research is that many of the women are married to Danish men, but still fell compelled to work as prostitutes. However, there is an explanation for this, she said:

- One thing is that their husbands can provide for them, but many of the women often feel obliged to support their family in Thailand to whom they send money.

In some cases, husbands are fully aware that their wives work as prostitutes; some of the couples have even meet at the massage parlour. In other cases, sex work takes place secretly.

Extra job at a factory

It also appears from the PhD thesis that in order to provide for themselves and their family, Thai prostitutes often have jobs as unskilled workers in addition to their job at the massage parlours, for example in kitchens, at factories or in cleaning.

- The situation is not that they are either prostitutes or cleaners. The boundary is much more vague. They often switch between prostitution and different jobs as unskilled workers, said Marlene Spanger. It is her impression that some of the women who choose prostitution believe that it is less hard compared to many unskilled jobs.

- If there is no pimp telling them how many customers they should have, and if they only need to sell sex a couple of times a week, to some that could seem more attractive than unskilled work, said Marlene Spanger.

One of the Thai women she spoke to worked at a shrimp factory in Jutland for some time.

- She told me that the work at the factory was too hard, which was why she was introduced to prostitution, said Marlene Spanger. Another woman told Marlene Spanger that she would rather work at a massage parlour than clean an office. In her opinion, the working hours as a cleaner were bad, and she also thought that it was hard being on her own, said Marlene Spanger.

She believes we should intensify focus on this area:

- Maybe we should make it more attractive to be an unskilled worker than a prostitute.

- If we don't want prostitution to be considered an ordinary job, we must ensure that working conditions for unskilled workers are good or offer training enabling these women to get skilled jobs, said Marlene Spanger. However, she points out that her thesis does not offer any golden solutions to the women's problems.

- First and foremost, we have to acknowledge that foreign sex workers constitute a very complex group and that the help and the social efforts should be adjusted to this picture, said Marlene Spanger.

Easing into the UNiverse...

Adjusting to a new country, culture and customs is often overwhelming. But International Club's Mentor Programme saves students a lot of trouble

By: Philip Michael Shange, *RUglobal*

If you're new to RU, they're at your service.

They offer pickup service at the airport, serve private dinners and welcome you to the social scene – all the while wanting little in return.

Sounds fishy? It really isn't. It's the International Club's (IC) Mentor Programme.

"The whole goal is to make the mentee feel that having a mentor made their experience in Denmark better," Programme Manager Anne Amalie Rosenberg Holm says, adding that they're all potential RU ambassadors.

"Each and every exchange student comes back to his or her university with a story about RU. We want to make that story sound better."

Flexible program

The program is IC's initiative towards a more international RU. The Mentor Programme consists of the Programme Manager (MPM) and two Mentor Programme Coordinators (MPC). While a mentor program has always existed, this year is the first time it's been promoted actively.

"We want to provide as much as we can with guidance around on campus or whatever they may need. We're basically here for them – there's nothing written in stone," Rosenberg Holm says. She adds that it is up to the mentee how much they wish to get involved.

"We ask them, 'do you want this?' And then it's really up to them."

Mentor of choice

Once an international applicant has been accepted to RU, the students receive a letter asking whether they want a mentor. Once that step has been completed, a comprehensive form is filled out, detailing your preferences.



Mentor Programme Manager Anne Amalie Rosenberg Holm welcomes international students with a smile.

The MPCs then look for the best fit and assign mentors to incoming mentees.

According to Rosenberg Holm, only little more than half uses a mentor. Which is a shame, the MPM says.

"The biggest challenge of moving here – regardless where you're from – is that you have to be integrated into the Danish culture," says Rosenberg Holm, who arrived at RU from Norway.

Despite having Danish roots, the initial stage was still tough.

"I came here with no relations at all," she explains.

"But I was lucky since I had the basics like language and culture covered."

How a mentor can help

Others may not be as lucky as another Norwegian experienced.

"I felt awful when I came here," Aurora Eck Nilsen, 22, admits. A full-degree student from Oslo, Eck Nielsen arrived here alone. Her first issue was housing. "I lived in a really crappy place and paid way too much rent."

Lack of housing knowledge is a common problem for international students. This is also where a mentor comes in handy, MPM Rosenberg Holm says.

"The possibility of having someone who has already lived here one year, 10 years, 15 years, who can tell them about the Danish culture and help them understand how things work," she adds.

Rosenberg Holm says more people need to join sign up for the program to reach its full potential.

"Our goal is to make the program more vital," the MPM says.

"We want to show how fun it can be. And if we don't push, I don't think it will happen."

Hartmut Haberland: How a three year adventure turned into 35 years

Part of a group with only few left, German veteran Hartmut Haberland is one of the original pioneers of RU. Ironically, the then 26-year-old Hartmut was just supposed to stay a few years. Yet, 35 years later and nothing has changed. Except for a lot

By: Philip Michael Shange, RUGlobal

As is almost a professor's wont, his office is satiated with books and journals compiled in an order that it best described as organized cluster.

Boxes with papers, shelves of books and a desk of work spring to sight as RUGlobal enters the office of Roskilde University's international veteran, Senior Associate Professor Hartmut Haberland.

During the days at RU, Hartmut resides in the Department of Culture and Identity. However the fact that he's actually here, is somewhat of a surprise.

As an aspiring scholar in Germany, Hartmut wanted to see the world.

"I wanted to go to Japan," he says. "I had already started preparing that."

But then he received an international phone call – a big deal in the pre-internet days.

"Wow, am I that important that I get a phone call?" he says, thinking back. Hartmut had been persuaded to apply for a position at a new university in Denmark.

"To my great surprise, I got the job."

As a 26-year-old Hartmut accepted the offer. "I didn't reckon I'd be staying here more than three to five years," he says, laughing.

The positive tone shines through the entire interview. The mood is light and the atmosphere jovial. For a man who was supposed to leave in the 70s, the Senior Associate Professor seems more than content – in fact, he comes across upbeat and remarkably delightful.

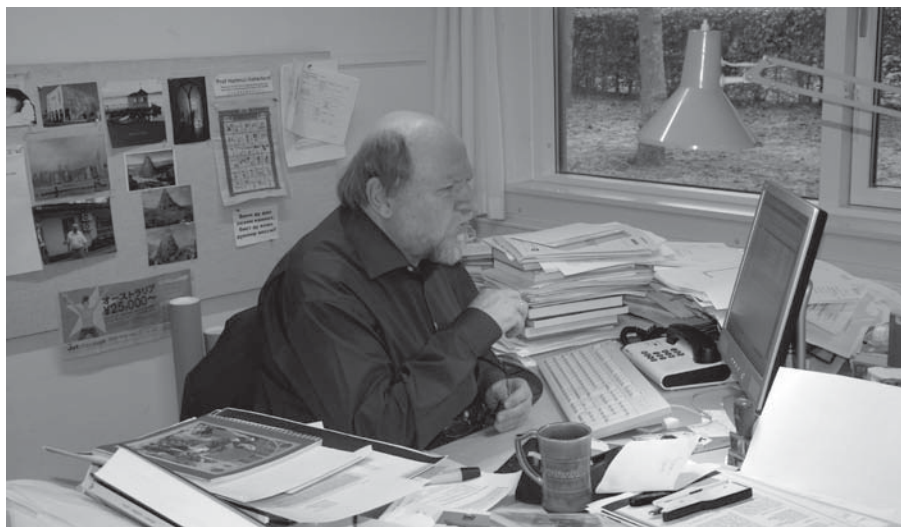
"After a number of years, I realized that I liked being here," says the German native, who's since become a Danish citizen. "I'm 63 now so I'm not going to go anywhere."

When speaking to Hartmut, it becomes clear rather quickly that he loves to explore new cultures. True to his international orientation, he's established a family of diversity.

"My wife's Irish," he says. "And then we've adopted two children from Korea." The urge to explore the world still intact, "but when you're here with a family, going to a different country, at least when the children are between two and 20, is not a good idea."

Despite the obligations at home, Hartmut Haberland has still managed to build an impres-

Continues



Hartmut Haberland has been at RU since 1974.

Continued

sive international resume with a proven track record in the international academic universe:

He has taught across continents in more than 10 countries as a guest lecturer.

Recently, much of the international focus has been on the well-documented collaboration with China. Before the recent official agreements with Chinese universities took off last year, Hartmut Haberland had already explored the super power of the East – as chronicled in *RUGlobal* 10, 2009.

“I see a huge potential in that,” he says.

“But I’m not quite sure how it’s going to work out.” He says it’s difficult to adjust to the Chinese culture as an exchange student but

CV Hartmut Haberland

- Studied German language and literature and Philosophy at the Universities of (West) Berlin (Free University and Technical University) and Stuttgart.
- M.A. degree with a thesis in Computational and Mathematical Linguistics in 1971.
- Obtained a PhD a year later at 24 and published his first work the same year.
- 1972-1974 Assistant Professor in German Linguistics, Free University (Berlin).
- Arrived at Roskilde University in 1974. Senior Associate Professor since 1988.
- Has taught and researched in countries such as Hong Kong, Japan and Italy
- Member of the Editorial Boards of *Journal of Pragmatics* (as Founding Editor) and of *Linguistik Online* (as Wissenschaftlicher Beirat)

quickly adds: “I wouldn’t call myself an expert so I’d rather speak about Roskilde University.”

Life after RU

As his path inches closer to retirement, Hartmut Haberland still has plenty to accomplish. He’s a part of different research projects – including CALPIU that was just granted 7 million kroner. But that’s hardly the norm anymore, says Hartmut.

“Government talks a lot about research but they don’t really do anything for it. Maybe they

hope it doesn’t cost any money or that people do it in their spare time,” he says.

But before the RU adventure is said and done, Hartmut Haberland still has plenty of living to do.

“Our children are out so we can travel more. I’d like to spend six months in Japan.” Still, being a parent is a lifelong commitment.

“We have to stop now,” Hartmut Haberland says after his phone rings. “My son is waiting.”

And we will now switch over to – a lunch break story at RU

The media switch over to global hot spots at random. However, how close to the course of events is close enough? And what impact does it have on the reporting? Jørgen Skrubbeltrang focuses on these questions in his PhD thesis. He elaborated on that during a lunch break at RU

Text and photo: Andreas Wraae, RUGlobal

When the uprising against the Tunisian government broke out in Tunisia, the world’s correspondents flocked to the country to report on the news. On Monday 17 January 2011, Jørgen Skrubbeltrang, Steen Nørskov, foreign correspondent for the Danish Broadcasting Corporation (DR) and his photographer finally succeeded in entering the country after having waited in frustration for several days in different airports.

Their job was to cover the uprising. Jørgen was there to observe what was going on. He was granted permission to do that because he is doing a PhD on news journalism. In this context, he said:

“What impact does it actually have on the reporting and the news coverage that we constantly switch over to our special correspondents? Some times, they don’t even take us to the centre of events.”

In this context, he referred to situations such as the news coverage of the “no-fly zone” in Libya where the media often switch over to correspondents about – and not amidst – the centre of events.

“I will investigate that in my PhD”, he said.

Unofficial knowledge sharing

The lunch break story at RU was about what will later become science. So far, it is just a good story; in other words, Jørgen Skrubbel-



During a lunch break, Jørgen Skrubbeltrang described his experiences of the national uprising in Tunisia when it broke out.



About Jørgen Skrubbeltrang

Jørgen Skrubbeltrang holds an MA in anthropology from Aarhus University.

Since May 2010 he has been working on his PhD on news journalism.

He is attached to the newly established Centre for News Research at CBIT, RU.

Centre for News Research conducts practice-oriented journalism research to bridge the gap between journalistic and academic activities.

In addition, the centre regularly organises lectures on media, news and news research.

rang's good story. Because it is biased, which he emphasised several times.

"This is how I experienced it," he said and scanned the room packed with audience. Seats were primarily occupied by RU journalism students who consumed their packed lunches while listening to the lecture.

The story was about the atmosphere when the journalists "make a move", about the practicalities of preparing reports for Denmark, and about the effect of switching over to the site when the correspondent goes live on the air. Further, it was also about the myth of the foreign correspondent.

Several times and for several reasons it was not possible for Jørgen Skrubbeltrang to follow Steen Nørskov on the job, and he therefore took the opportunity to take in impressions at the correspondent hotels.

"And amazingly enough, they were there – the correspondents, in their khaki shirts, blue vests and bicycle helmets. And like on film, some of them were on their second round of drinks at the correspondent bar around noon," he said laughing.

"Well, isn't that beautiful!"

A story from foreign countries

At one end of the long main street, rebels were busy taking part in the, well yes, rebellion. We have seen that on TV. Yelling crowds in one huge state of chaos. At the other end of the street, people were sipping café lattes; Jørgen Skrubbeltrang was there too. The journalists were naturally reporting from the rebellion-end-of-the-street which gave better photos.

Behind Jørgen Skrubbeltrang's accounts is a man with a great sense of humour. He is committed and fascinating. We should include the end of the story:

"At some point, the rebels poured down the street where we sat drinking coffee discussing the situation. We could see them coming. In

seconds, tables and chairs were moved inside the café. And a moment later, after the crowd had roared past the café, tables and chairs were moved back out again", said Jørgen Skrubbeltrang laughing.

The selection of which part of the real world the foreign correspondents choose to report on to their home countries is exactly what he wants to investigate further in his PhD thesis.

A 20/80 split

Jørgen Skrubbeltrang got to know Steen Nørskov, DR foreign correspondent, very well.

"To him, it is just another day at the office," Jørgen Skrubbeltrang said.

It is somewhat different compared to a 9 to 5 research job, he stated and willingly admitted that he is fascinated by the "bang, bang – now, we are making a move" approach that sometimes characterises the job as a foreign correspondent.

That being said, much of the work as a foreign correspondent, is also, according to Jørgen Skrubbeltrang, a question of being a Mr. Organiser. According to him, about 80% of the work consists of practicalities and only 20% of journalism.

"Examples of practicalities are basic questions such as where do we live, what about food – during the uprising many of the shops were shut – will there be internet connections? Besides, does it suffice to use the street of the hotel (balcony) as background when the foreign correspondent reports home to the Danish viewers?"

Foreign correspondents face many practical challenges, and making good contacts to harvest your story is necessary, Jørgen Skrubbeltrang added.

We need a Mr. Organiser

The first thing you do when you enter a country where you do not already have a network of sources and collaborative partners to draw

on, is to get a Mr. Organiser. That was what happened when Jørgen Skrubbeltrang came to Tunisia accompanied by the DR reporters.

A Mr. Organiser is a local citizen acquainted with the area who helps interpreting the local languages in addition to sorting out practicalities such as finding a suitable hotel, renting a car and doing other useful things.

"The less you need to think of the Mr. Organiser, the better", Jørgen Skrubbeltrang said.

On the other hand, it could be relevant to consider what role Mr. Organiser plays in the journalistic product, he emphasized. Mr. Organiser in fact plays a central role in the stories produced, and according to Jørgen Skrubbeltrang the influence of Mr. Organiser on the stories can be difficult to comprehend, and therefore this is also an interesting subject to investigate further.

Lunch packs consumed

The academic version of reading aloud during the primary school lunch break – the lunch break story at RU – is about to be concluded. Most of the audience have already finished their lunch packs.

The idea of squeezing in a story from foreign countries in your lunch break seems to have worked quite well. At least there is no doubt that we have all become slightly wiser as to what a foreign correspondent actually is, including what challenges modern news journalism is facing today.

Jørgen Skrubbeltrang kept his promise. He told a story the way he experienced it without taking any academic reservations.

Maybe this is exactly why such a lunch break story is successful compared to lengthy academic lectures traditionally based on material that has been scrutinized to the extent that nothing can be concluded but its complexity.

What a relief.