

PRINCE CLAUS CHAIR
ANNUAL REPORT

2019



THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
SOCIAL STUDIES OF ERASMUS UNIVERSITY
ROTTERDAM AND UTRECHT UNIVERSITY WILL
ALTERNATELY APPOINT AN OUTSTANDING
YOUNG ACADEMIC FROM A DEVELOPING
COUNTRY TO THE PRINCE CLAUS CHAIR,
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF RESEARCH AND
TEACHING IN THE FIELD OF DEVELOPMENT
AND EQUITY.

Prince Claus Chair

development and equity

ANNUAL REPORT

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FOREWORD

“DIVIDING LINES ARE BLURRING,
WHILST CONNECTING LINES ARE
BECOMING INCREASINGLY SHARP”

Connection. In my opinion, that was the key word for the Prince Claus Chair in 2019. But it does not just apply to last year's milestones. It also refers to the phase of development that the chair is going through.



There is increasing connection between the worlds above and below the equator. Academic research focused on a country, as is the case within our chair, often achieves results with global impact. Our current chair holder's research demonstrates this very well. Veena Srinivasan focuses her attention on equal and fair access to natural resources and their shared ownership. During her well-attended inaugural lecture in May last year, the newly appointed professor told an interesting story about the Cauvery Delta in southern India, one of the regions she is researching. It's a local story with a universal message.

Since the mid-nineteenth century, this area has been the scene of a protracted conflict between two states that draw water from the river. The construction of dams by one state, high up in the hills, reduced the amount of water available for the other state, down in the delta. This caused serious irrigation problems for the small farmers there. An agreement reached at the beginning of last century was intended to put an end to these problems. In essence, it was agreed that construction activities upstream should not interfere with irrigation by farmers downstream. All's well that ends well, you might think. Not quite. In the 1980s and 1990s, driven by technological progress, farmers began to extract water from the soil through drilling. This led to a dramatic drop in the groundwater level and caused irrigation problems in the Delta as a result.

Technological developments have overtaken the agreement with which the two states thought they had contained the problems. It's a pattern that is not restricted to the Indian delta. The results of Srinivasan's local research are also relevant elsewhere in the world.

The same applies to the work of her successor, Gustavo García López, the holder of the Prince Claus Chair from 2019 to 2021. García López, who focuses his attention on social justice, does a great deal of research in Central America. There he examines, among other things, citizen initiatives that promote a fair distribution of natural resources and exert influence by joining forces. This phenomenon is very similar to the role of the water boards in the Netherlands, which regulate water management on behalf of the residents. His key question is: how do you get from campaigning to institutionalised forms of democratic governance?

The examples of these chair holders do not stand alone. In general, we are seeing a shift within the Prince Claus Chair towards themes with a more universal scope. It is a trend that is underlined in the independent evaluation of

the chair by the Rathenau Institute. I don't wish to pre-empt the conclusions (we will respond in detail later this year), but to give you a hint: the term 'global impact' certainly appears in the report.

Professor Louise J. Gunning-Schepers is a Distinguished University Professor emeritus of Health and Society at the University of Amsterdam. Her position as chair of the Curatorium is in a personal capacity.

As a chair, we have our roots in traditional development studies, with young scientists from the southern hemisphere. But the academic world is globalising as well. Young scientists, regardless of their country of origin, are increasingly becoming members of an international community and have often already worked in several countries. They are broadening their research beyond the

boundaries of their disciplines, for example by relating it to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations. And they are focusing on an ever-increasing variety of subjects. The chair holder who is now waiting in the wings also has this broad outlook, with a study in the field of global health and equity.

It is good to check at regular intervals whether the interpretation of the chair still meets the original objectives, in order to keep the chair vital and sustainable. In the spring of 2020, we will publish the results of the evaluation and our plans for the future. It is a new chapter in the story of the Prince Claus Chair, in which the dividing lines between south and north, local and global, unique and universal, will further blur and the connecting lines will become ever sharper.

Professor Louise J. Gunning-Schepers
Chair of the Curatorium

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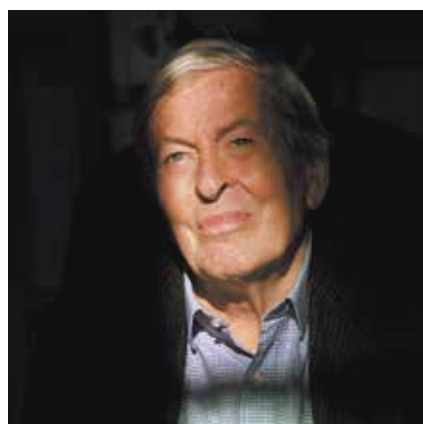
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OBJECTIVES OF THE PRINCE CLAUS CHAIR

The objective of the Prince Claus Chair is to continue the work of His Royal Highness Prince Claus of the Netherlands (1926-2002) in development and equity, by establishing a rotating Academic Chair.

Since the Chair was established in December 2002, Utrecht University and the International Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University Rotterdam have alternately appointed an outstanding young academic from a developing country to the Prince Claus Chair. The objective is to advance research and teaching in the field of development and equity. Candidates for the Chair are nominated by a Curatorium, under the chairmanship of Professor Louise J. Gunning-Schepers.



H.M. Queen Máxima of the Netherlands, Honorary Patron of the Prince Claus Chair

H.M. Queen Máxima of the Netherlands served as the first chair of the Curatorium of the Prince Claus Chair from when it was founded in 2003. In May 2014 she symbolically handed over an African chief's staff to the incoming chair, Professor Louise J. Gunning-Schepers, and graciously agreed to assume the role of Honorary Patron. As Honorary Patron, Queen Máxima remains associated with, and deeply committed to, the work of the Prince Claus Chair on issues of development and equity.

PRINCE CLAUS, THE INSPIRATION FOR THE CHAIR

His Royal Highness Prince Claus of the Netherlands was strongly committed to development and equity in North-South relations. Through his work, his travels and his personal contacts, he gained a deep understanding of the opportunities for, and the obstacles facing, equitable development. He was tireless in his work for development and equity throughout the world, bringing people together to solve problems and make the most of opportunities. His knowledge, his accessibility and his personality all made an important contribution to his work. As a result, he was – and remains – a source of inspiration to many.

In 1988, Prince Claus received an Honorary Doctorate from the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) 'in recognition of his continued insistence on the importance of reducing the differences between the rich and the poor in national and international fora, while emphasising the human dimension of this process and not only that of international policy and strategy.' At the official ceremony for the award of the Fellowship, Prince Claus gave an acceptance speech stating his views on development and equity in the form of 23 propositions.

The establishment of the Prince Claus Chair attests to the deep respect and appreciation of the academic community of Utrecht University and the ISS for Prince Claus as a person, for his work, and for his commitment to, and authority in, the field of development and equity throughout the world.

Prince Claus was born Claus von Amsberg in 1926, in Dötzingen (Hitzacker), Niedersachsen. He studied at the University of Hamburg in the Faculty of Law and Political Science (1948-1956), after which he worked at the German embassy in the Dominican Republic and as Chargé d'Affaires in the Republic of the Ivory Coast. From 1963 to 1965, he worked at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bonn, in the Department of African Economic Relations.

After his marriage to Her Royal Highness Princess Beatrix of the Netherlands in 1966, Prince Claus focused his efforts on development cooperation. He was appointed as a member of the National Advisory Council for Development Cooperation (Nationale Adviesraad voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking, NAR). In addition, he was Chair of the National Committee for Development Strategy (Nationale Commissie voor de Ontwikkelingsstrategie), a position he held from 1970 to 1980, and Special Advisor to the Minister of Development Cooperation. In 1984, he was appointed Inspector General of Development Cooperation. To commemorate the Prince's 70th birthday, the Dutch government established the Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development (Prins Claus Fonds voor Cultuur en Ontwikkeling), of which Prince Claus was Honorary Chair. The objective of the Fund is to increase cultural awareness and promote development.

CHAIR OF SEARCH COMMITTEE

The committee responsible for searching for candidates for the Prince Claus Chair 2018 – 2020 was headed by Esther Stouthamer. She explains why Dr Veena Srinivasan was chosen.

“The search committee was looking for someone with roots and a network in Asia. With a strong scientific CV. And a background in water management, or geographical or environmental sciences, and preferably also an affinity with plant biology. Finding all of that combined into one person is almost impossible; and yet Dr Veena Srinivasan comes very close.

She is not just experienced in research. She has also been a consultant and the programme leader of the Water, Land and Society Programme at non-profit organisation ATREE, that aims to generate knowledge to support policy-makers



Esther Stouthamer is associate professor of physical geography at Utrecht University.

in developing sustainable policies. Veena has the network and the knowledge to convert research results into actual changes.

Veena carries out research into phenomena in Asian deltas, such as droughts and floods, and into trends in land use and population. She identifies the developments, and more importantly, examines the best way to deal with them. The aim is to achieve sustainably managed deltas for the future, which are also liveable and inclusive in the here and now. For instance, what are the short-term consequences if you decide to flood an area? What happens to the farmer who loses his piece of land and his livelihood in the process?

By ensuring that policy-makers and other responsible parties can make well-informed decisions, Veena can make a valuable contribution to achieving a well-considered and fair distribution of the costs and benefits in Asian deltas. In addition, promoting equality is an important objective of the Prince Claus Chair.

With her expertise, incisiveness, sense of purpose and perseverance, we have in Veena a chair holder who can handle this difficult interdisciplinary subject.”

“VEENA IS ALL WE SEARCHED FOR
COMBINED INTO ONE”



CHAIR HOLDER 2018-2020

PROFESSOR VEENA SRINIVASAN

Professor Veena Srinivasan obtained her doctorate from Stanford University in 2008 with research into the influence of urbanisation on water shortages in developing countries. She studied in Boston and Mumbai, and conducted research at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Environment and Development in Bengaluru (India). As a post-doctoral researcher at Stanford she founded the Freshwater Initiative. She is a senior fellow and director Centre for Social and Environmental Innovation of the Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE), an academic think tank in Bengaluru.



As the holder of the Prince Claus Chair in Development and Equity 2018-2020, professor Srinivasan wants to contribute to a transition in the Asian delta areas to sustainable land use. On the one hand, she researches how land use can better anticipate changing circumstances such as drought, flooding and urbanisation. On the other, she is keen to work towards changes in water management in delta regions, so that the transition is both sustainable and inclusive. Srinivasan aims to contribute to more involvement from the local population in both the decision-making process and in the creation of a more sustainable food production.

LOOKING INTO THE CRYSTAL BALL: ANTICIPATING AND INFLUENCING CHANGE IN ASIAN DELTAS

The chair focuses on the Cauvery Delta, in Southern India, as a case study of how human societies have shaped landscapes and in turn been shaped by them. Each actor in the system, acting within the confines of his/her knowledge and interests makes decisions that together could trigger unsustainable and inequitable outcomes. The goal then is to answer two questions. First, if we had been in 1970 today, would we have been able to imagine how the region would look half a century later? Second, knowing what we know today, could we do better in anticipating change? And if so, how could we take a more sustainable and equitable transition pathway?

Water scarcity is a livelihood problem in the Cauvery delta. The delta, located at the mouth of the 80,000 sq. km Cauvery river basin, lies at the epicentre of a 150 year long inter-state dispute. Riots over the Cauvery delta have claimed dozens of lives and inflicted billions of dollars of damage. Ultimately, the challenge that confronts us is how to ensure everyone who lives in the region, can earn a decent living on shrinking parcels of land, with the limited water that exists in the basin.

The Prince Claus Chair brings together work within two Research Hubs, the Water, Climate and Sustainability hub and the Future Food hub, in addition to International Development Studies, at Utrecht University. Additionally, we are working collaboratively with TU Delft and IHE, Delft as part of more extensive collaborative work between India and the Netherlands. The work under the chair will focus on the following research areas:

UNDERSTANDING, ANTICIPATING AND INFLUENCING CHANGE IN THE CAUVERY DELTA

We will seek to understand the patterns and drivers of change in the Cauvery delta over the last 30 years. We hope to typify different transition pathways that villages in the delta have taken. We want to know, why some villages are abandoning agriculture, while others are intensifying, where mechanization is occurring and where aquaculture is emerging.



ESTABLISHING BIOPHYSICAL LIMITS AND TIPPING POINTS

To ensure sustainable transitions, we will need to be able to anticipate irreversible tipping-points in terms of, for instance, land subsidence and soil salinization, before they manifest. There is anecdotal evidence that land subsidence and soil salinization are an emerging concern in the Cauvery delta, but quantitative evidence is lacking.

TRANSLATION OF RESEARCH TO INNOVATION

Anticipating change is only valuable if we can do something about it. Researchers are not mute spectators. We can and should be active participants in the process of ensuring that humankind is on a sustainable and equitable pathway. Therefore, knowledge cannot stay locked in journal publications. We also need to focus on translating knowledge through partnerships for capacity building, network creation and market transformation.

PERSONAL PROFILE

CURRENT POSITIONS

2019 – to date

Senior fellow and director Centre for Social and Environmental Innovation (CSEI), ATREE

2013 – 2019

Programme leader Water, Land and Society Programme, Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE)

2011 – 2013

Senior research associate, Pacific Institute

PREVIOUS POSITIONS

2018 – 2011

Post-doctoral scholar, Stanford University

2012

Consultant, Skoll Global Threats Fund

2004

Consultant, Packard Foundation

2001 – 2002

Research associate, Pacific Institute

2001

Research associate, Center for Interdisciplinary Studies in Environment and Development (CISED), Bangalore

1998 – 1999

Consultant, Utilities Group, Pricewaterhouse Coopers India

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

2008

PhD. Emmet Interdisciplinary Program in Environment and Resources, Stanford University

1997

Master of Arts, Energy and Environmental Analyses, Boston University

1995

Bachelor of Technology, Engineering Physics, Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai

HONOURS AND AWARDS

2019

IUGG Union Lecturer

2018 – 2020

Prince Claus Chair, Utrecht University, The Netherlands

2017

Citation for Excellence in Reviewing for the journal Water Resources Research, AGU

2017

Nature Travel Grant for Gordon Catchment Science Conference, USA

2016

Citation for Excellence in Reviewing for the journal Water Resources Research, AGU

2016

Royal Bank of Scotland Visiting Faculty to University of Waterloo, Canada

2015

Jim Dooge Award for best paper in Hydrology and Earth System Science

2013

Water Resources Research Editor's Choice Award, American Geophysical Union

2005 – 2007

Teresa Heinz Environmental Scholar, Heinz Foundation

1989 – 1991

National Talent Search Scholarship, Government of India





ACTIVITIES AS HOLDER OF THE CHAIR

TALKS AND SEMINARS

24 September 2019

'Bridging the science-policy-practice gap in India: Insights from Cauvery Basin Research', keynote lecture Water Future Conference, Bangalore, India.

11 July 2019

'Bridging the science-policy-practice gap in India: Insights from Cauvery Basin Research', IUGG Union Lecture IUGG Conference, Montreal, Canada.

22 May 2019

'Bridging water science, policy and practice to address India's water crisis', Brown Bag Seminar, IHE Delft, The Netherlands.

7 May 2019

'Looking into the crystal ball: Anticipating and Influencing change in Asian deltas', Prince Claus Chair Inaugural Lecture, Utrecht University, The Netherlands.

24 April 2019

'Bangalore's Lakes: Blueprint for a Circular Water Economy', Civil Engineering Seminar Series, TU Delft, The Netherlands.

5 April 2019

'Bangalore's Lakes: Blueprint for a Circular Water Economy', closing Keynote Lecture Research Days, Dept. of Human Geography, Utrecht University, The Netherlands.

22 March 2019

'Achieving water security in a hot, flat and crowded world', public lecture World Water Day, Unilever, Unilever Global Research Centre.

20 February 2019

'Sustainability of land and water transitions in urbanising regions', Indo-German Conference on Rural-Urban Transitions, University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, India.

MEDIA AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

PUBLICATIONS

- 'Groundwater levels in over-exploited, hard rock aquifers: insights from borewell camera scans in South India', N. Ballukraya and V. Srinivasan in Current science, (2019)
- 'The Groundwater Recovery Paradox in South India.' Hora T., Srinivasan V. and Basu N.B., in Geophysical Research Letters (2019).
- 'Climate Adaptation in the Water Sector in India', Srinivasan V., edited by Navroz Dubash, in India in a Warming World, Oxford University Press (2019).
- 'Science and Technology Gaps: Policy Recommendations in Water Futures of India Status of Science and Technology', Srinivasan V. and P.P. Mujumdar, edited by P.P. Mujumdar and V. Tiwari, in INSA and IISc Press, ISBN: 978-81-939482-0-0 (2019).
- 'Transitioning to Sustainable Development Goals for Water', Srinivasan V. and Joy, K.J., in Economic & Political Weekly, 54(11), 17. (2019).

NWO-WOTRO

NWO-WOTRO has generously supported the work of Professor Srinivasan by funding the position of her postdoctoral fellows, Andres Verzijl and Crelis Rammelt. WOTRO supports scientific research on development issues, in particular poverty alleviation and sustainable development. Its scope includes all low and middle-income countries. WOTRO is a division within NWO (the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research). For its activities, WOTRO receives funding from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

FORMER POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER

Crelis Rammelt worked closely with chairholder Veena Srinivasan in 2018 and 2019. He found a new position and handed over the research with pain in his heart.

"I was involved in Veena's chair from the very beginning. The position suited me perfectly, because I had already done research in the Bangladesh delta. I find it very interesting to see that there are many similarities as well as great differences between these regions.

Veena and I drew up a number of research questions together. The most important question is: what have been the greatest socio-ecological changes in the Cauvery Delta, in southern India, in recent decades? How has the region



Crelis Rammelt was the PCC postdoc at Utrecht University from September 2018 to December 2019.

changed under the influence of factors such as climate, urbanisation and agriculture? How has this affected the inhabitants of the region?

After drawing up the research questions, we carried out preliminary field research in India, to see with our own eyes whether our points of reference were correct. Subsequently, a period of collecting a large amount of data began. Luckily, we were able to do that together with ATREE, Veena's organisation in India. We divided the research area into smaller units of similar villages or smaller river basins. That gave us the chance to see spatial patterns.

Based on these patterns, it is now possible to carry out investigations on location into the story behind the data. That means interviewing farmers and other people involved. A fine task for my successor. It's a pity that I can't complete the next phase myself, but I couldn't turn down a permanent job as a university lecturer. Fortunately, everyone understood immediately. Anyway, I know the new postdoc, so I'll be keeping up to date."



"IT'S A PITY THAT I CAN'T COMPLETE
THE NEXT PHASE MYSELF"

CURRENT POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER

Andres Verzijl has worked together with chairholder Veena Srinivasan since the end of 2019. His passions are water management and local initiatives concerning food production in Asia. He will regularly visit research locations in India, Vietnam and Peru.

“For the next two years, I’ll be the postdoc. I’m really looking forward to working with Veena. At our first meeting – via Skype – we hit it off immediately. We are both intrigued by delta regions and water management in Asia.

Veena and I are now going to investigate the Cauvery Delta together with her team. It is fascinating to see how the Indian population – for whom ‘water management’ has its own specific meaning – uses its area and brings it to life.



Andres Verzijl has been the PCC postdoc since 1 December. He also works at the University of Amsterdam.

The Cauvery is a sacred river in India where historic temples, water distribution and irrigation are connected. I find that incredibly fascinating research material. Veena is investigating the river basin, which runs through several states. In the upstream state, more and more water is being used, causing a chronic water shortage in the delta. Crelis’s area analysis of the Cauvery brought subareas to the fore, each with their own characteristics and problems. I am going to examine some subareas in ethnographic terms and examine the consequences of water scarcity for food production. How do local groups deal with this situation in an effective and innovative way? What effect does it have on social relationships? How do they grow food? It’s very interesting to study this issue and compare the results with my research in other delta regions.

I’m very happy with this appointment. I wanted to spend more time on research and now I am getting the opportunity to do so. I’m looking forward to working with Veena, and achieving some great research results.”



“INCREDIBLY FASCINATING RESEARCH MATERIAL”

SCIENCE SHOULD NEVER BE ABOUT THE PAPER

Veena Srinivasan is not your average scientist. She is not attached to a university because she wants to be independent. She is not working on one detailed problem because she wants to keep a broad field of interest. And instead of being an observer she wants to be an influencer. “I want to make people’s lives better through my research.” An interview with the holder of the Prince Claus Chair for the years 2018-2020.

With three jobs in two different countries and a fifteen year old son at home, Veena Srinivasan is a very busy person. We are meeting her for an interview while she is in Utrecht for a week, for her work for the Prince Claus Chair. Another week in a hotel, living out of her suitcase. “It’s hard sometimes”, she admits with an apologetic smile. “But it has to be done.”

FROM ENERGY TO WATER

Srinivasan studied to be a physics engineer and out of interest in environmental issues found her way into the world of energy. “In the energy field, multinationals play the lead roles. You can’t make changes if you don’t belong to one of the major influencers. Soon it became clear to me that if I really wanted to achieve something, I had to pick a different area of expertise. That’s why I switched to water, almost twenty years ago now. In this area my work can make a difference. And that’s very important to me.”

To Srinivasan, not being specialised in deltas is not an issue. “In my opinion, scientific research too often takes place in a narrow field of vision. Researchers work on a problem from the perspective of one single discipline of science. I believe in an interdisciplinary approach, in looking at a problem from different points of views. Everything is related! Geographical factors, human activity. When you are specialised in just one area of expertise, there’s always the danger of missing things that are outside your scope.” But interdisciplinary studies are not very common. Not in the Netherlands, and even less so in India. “That is one of the things that make this project unique.”

BOTTOM-UP

It’s not only the interdisciplinary approach that makes Srinivasan’s project stand out. “We work from a bottom-up point of view. Instead of just telling the locals what to do, we ask them what they think. Scientific research and its results are almost always used top-down. You observe, measure, collect data and with the results tell people what and how they need to change. The Dutch, for example,



“IN THIS AREA MY WORK CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. AND THAT’S VERY IMPORTANT TO ME”

have great knowledge of, and experience in, water management. So they travel around the world to tell other people what they should do to keep their countries safe from flooding. Top-down. But in the Netherlands, at least it’s common to look at local circumstances and involve local inhabitants and companies in research. In India, asking local inhabitants to get involved is unheard of. A lot of scientists, researchers and engineers work from an ivory tower.” Srinivasan is convinced that getting the locals involved in a research project makes much more sense than leaving them out. The local inhabitants are the ones who see, feel and smell the water. They see the changes in the delta. The farmers find a way to get to water in the drying delta, change the way they process their land. “They are already adapting. They know what they need. And their needs should be leading for this project. So we talk to them first.”



“WE STUDY WATER MANAGEMENT NOT ONLY AS PHYSICISTS BUT ALSO AS SOCIAL SCIENTISTS”

CENTURIES AHEAD

Another remarkable feature of Srinivasan's investigation is the aim for flexibility. “Especially in water management we are used to coming up with solutions for a lifetime. We have built dams and other flood defences to last for at least a hundred years. But the environmental changes that have an impact on the regions where those structures are, take place much faster than that. The sea level rise, the subsidence of land – it is not going as we had foreseen fifty or sixty years ago. So we have to adjust, which is complicated because those structures were meant for eternity.”

Srinivasan thinks it's better to look at a shorter term. “Of course you have to look at the sustainability of projects. But being able to easily adjust to changing circumstances can be more sustainable than planning ahead for another century.”

ATREE

Sustainability and the environment are key factors in Srinivasan's work. She has published, for example, on groundwater, lakes, water security and the effects of urbanisation on the environment. Since 2013, she has been attached to the Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE), where she is a Senior Fellow and Director of the newly established Centre for Social and Environmental Innovation. Like Veena, ATREE believes in an interdisciplinary approach. “We study water management not only as physicists, but also as social scientists. I think that is very important. Especially looking at the Cauvery Delta.”

THE USUAL SUSPECTS

It is way too soon to draw any conclusions, but the first results of the research in the Cauvery Delta seem to show the importance of involving social sciences. The researchers of course looked at climate change as one of the usual suspects for environmental changes. “Rising sea levels and salinization are a common problem in lots of deltas, and the Cauvery Delta is no exception. But those are not the only contributors. Not even the most important. Urbanisation plays an important part as well. With urbanisation the use of river water increases. As a result, the water level in the river lowers and people in the deltas, especially the farmers, have started using groundwater to work the land. But using groundwater has substantial consequences,” Salinization is a perfect subject for physics research. But to look at why and, more importantly, how farmers change the way they work or live, social sciences are what is needed.

WINNING TEAM

With the Prince Claus Chair comes a post-doctoral researcher. The University of Utrecht assigned a Dutch social scientist to work with Srinivasan. “Of course I'm very happy that we have this postdoc on board. But we risk working from a single discipline too much. So I'm really excited that I found the funds for a second postdoc, a hydrologist based in India. I hope to get him started soon.”

Another valuable addition to the project is an expert in Geographic Information Systems (GIS). “It’s very important to process all of our data as well as the data that have already been made public by others in databases and maps. Thanks to this expert we are able to use the latest technologies, like Google Earth Engine and ODK”, Srinivasan explains.

With the two postdocs from different disciplines, a PhD-student at ATREE, and three grad students Srinivasan’s team is almost complete. Almost. “We’re planning to get local college students involved to do the field work in the Cauvery. For us, it’s an efficient way to carry out the research. Those students are on location already. They speak the language and know their way around. For them it’s an opportunity to gain research experience and contribute to their own society.”

GOOD TO GO

In the first year of her chair, Srinivasan and her team worked on formulating the research questions. Those are clear now. The scientists are good to go. But at the time of the interview in January the field work had not started yet. Srinivasan: “During our first year my postdoc got a beautiful job offering. He accepted it and had to leave us. Completely understandable, but it took a while to find a replacement. So we’re looking at a delay of about six to eight months. But that is okay. If I only had the funds of the Prince Claus Chair I would be worried because that ends in another year. But with the additional funds we have found and the involvement of other partners, I’m pretty sure we will be able to continue.”

LONG TERM PROJECT

The answers to the research questions are not the end of the project. On the contrary. “One of the results of this project should be a thorough knowledge of what has happened in the deltas and what is happening still, from a biophysical and asocio-economic point of view. But we also want to come to a vision of the future for these deltas in 2050”, Srinivasan explains. “And it’s not enough to publish this vision. We should see it through and start the implementation of our plans. I don’t believe in research solely for the paper. Science should never be about the paper. It’s what you do with the paper that matters.”

FINGERS CROSSED

“I am not the right person to get this plan embraced. We need a strong representative for that, someone in politics and with a large network, to convince members of our Parliament that it’s time to take action. That will be a long haul process.” Once the project has been handed over, Srinivasan is not planning to take a long and well-deserved rest. The end of the investigation will be the start of a new one. “It is only when the plan is implemented that we can see if it works, see if we’ve really been able to make a difference.”



“INSTEAD OF JUST TELLING THE LOCALS WHAT TO DO, WE ASK THEM WHAT THEY THINK”

CHAIR HOLDER 2017-2019

PROFESSOR ALI BILGIÇ

Last year, professor Ali Bilgiç wrapped up his tenure at the Prince Claus Chair. A term in which, as he says below, he was transformed from an academic comfortable in his office into a researcher confidently sharing his findings around the globe.

"I felt extremely honoured to be appointed as holder of the Prince Claus Chair for 2017 to 2019. It is a highly prestigious position and it has opened many doors for me, both on a personal and on a professional level. My research focuses on the relationship between migration and the 'human security approach' in order to understand migration more comprehensively as a social, political, and economic process. Not only did I enjoy the privilege of working together on that



subject with other academics at ISS/Erasmus University and other universities in the Netherlands but I was lucky enough to work internationally too. The Prince Claus Chair also enabled me to attend lectures and conferences throughout Europe, in countries such as Great Britain, France, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, and of course the Netherlands. As an immigrant myself, formerly doing research in Turkey, it felt like a dream come true.

Most academics, including myself, feel comfortable in their offices, reading, writing and doing research. In my role as chair holder I had to step out of that comfort zone. I was offered the opportunity to share my findings about migration, mobility, and human security within a wide network. I received invitations from global researchers to express my views, which has given me the confidence to engage with European policy. I was fortunate enough to talk to policy makers, such as those at the Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs. In addition, I was offered an opportunity to discuss the importance of building trust between migrants and European citizens in my interviews with the media in a number of European countries.

The underlying goal of my research, which is about how to manage migration in a constructive way, is in line with the ethical approach of the Prince Claus Chair. The chair focuses on development and equity. When it comes to a highly politicised and polarising subject such as migration, I call for a radical change in language to show the issue in a different light. The main purpose is to change the way we think about human mobility. In my view, we ought to look at migration from a human security perspective, which will then reveal how the security of European citizens and that of migrants are inherently linked.

In April 2018, I gave my inaugural lecture and formally accepted my appointment to the Prince Claus Chair. That day in The Hague will remain as a turning point in my life. I am immensely grateful for the opportunities the Prince Claus Chair has given me in the past two years. At the Noordeinde Palace, on the same day, we celebrated the 15th anniversary of the Chair in the presence of Her Majesty Queen Máxima and Her Royal Highness Princess Beatrix. Being invited to the event was a big honour, but it also left me with an overwhelming feeling of responsibility.

I would like to thank and congratulate the Royal Family and members of the Curatorium past and present for establishing the Prince Claus Chair, advancing research and teaching in the field of development and equity. Furthermore, I would like to express my gratitude to the distinguished members of the Curatorium, and in particular, Ms. Linda Johnson, Secretary to the Curatorium, and Professor Des Gasper, my mentor at the International Institute of Social Studies, who has recently retired. I look forward to the years to come, in which I plan to cement the relationships I have already developed and extend my research on migration, together with the gifted postdoctoral researcher Cathy Wilcock."

CHAIR HOLDER 2019-2021

PROFESSOR GUSTAVO GARCÍA LÓPEZ

Since September 2019 Dr Gustavo García López has held the Prince Claus Chair at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) of Erasmus University Rotterdam.

As holder of the chair, Professor García López will look into the relationship between global social justice and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). His main focus will be the global justice component of the SDGs in order to feed into the emerging research agenda on global inequalities and inclusive societies. He will work closely with ISS researchers and with colleagues from other universities in the Netherlands.

Gustavo García López is a political scientist from Puerto Rico. He is currently an assistant professor in the Graduate School for Planning of the University of Puerto Rico Rio Piedras and a researcher at the Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra in Portugal.

García López gained his PhD from Indiana University in 2012, where he was a member of Elinor Ostrom's research group. Ostrom was awarded the Nobel Prize for economics in 2009 and she is an ISS honorary fellow.

Professor García López' research focuses on understanding the emergence and scaling-up of grassroots commons initiatives, their potential to transform governance towards more equitable and ecological alternatives, and the political-economic barriers they face. He has worked mostly in Mexico and Puerto Rico. At the University of Coimbra, he will be studying how community forestry and climate justice organizations come together at transnational levels to influence international environmental and development policies.

Gustavo García López is a founding member of JunteGente, a meeting space for organizations seeking alternatives to neoliberal disaster policies in the wake of hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico. Last but not least, in 2015 García López co-founded the ENTITLE blog. He has been a co-editor of, and a contributor to, ENTITLE ever since.



PREVIOUS HOLDERS OF THE CHAIR

2016-2018



Professor Fatima Suleman was appointed to the Prince Claus Chair by Utrecht University. Her main areas of interest are equity and access to medicines, and pricing and reimbursement policies. In her capacity of chair holder she has conducted research into affordable (bio) therapeutics.

2015-2017



Professor Saradindu Bhaduri was appointed to the Prince Claus Chair by the International Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University. His research concentrated on frugal innovation 'by and for the poor' with a focus on the informal sector.

2014-2016



Chilean Professor Javier Couso was appointed to the Prince Claus Chair by Utrecht University. A specialist in the field of sociology of law and comparative constitutional law, Professor Couso conducted a study on the institutional and socio-political determinants of judicial independence in new democracies, with a focus on Latin American countries.

2013-2015



Professor Olajumoke Oduwole, from Nigeria, was appointed to the Prince Claus Chair by the International Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University. During her tenure she focused on the nexus between international law and the implementation of the Right to Development (RTD). She looked at the practical effectiveness of the RTD in relation to development in Africa.

2012-2014



Professor Aylin Küntay, from Turkey, was appointed to the Prince Claus Chair by Utrecht University because of her work in the field of language and the socio-cognitive development of young children. Professor Küntay's research enables children with less-well-off parents to improve their social status by helping them to improve their language proficiency.

2011-2013



Professor Stella Quimbo, from the Philippines, was appointed by the International Institute of Social Studies. During her tenure as holder of the Prince Claus Chair, her research focused mainly on health insurance. She conducted research on access to health insurance and carried out an evaluation of the impact of health insurance on financial risk protection and quality of care.

2010-2012



Professor Atul Kumar was appointed to the Prince Claus Chair by Utrecht University. Indian-born Professor Kumar has extensive experience in researching climate change, energy policy, energy-system technology and how a sustainable lifestyle can combat climate change.

2009-2011



Professor Patricia Almeida Ashley was appointed to the Prince Claus Chair by the International Institute of Social Studies. The Brazilian professor is known for her interdisciplinary approach to Socially Responsible Entrepreneurship (SRE) and her research on the relationship between SRE and important social issues.

2008-2010



Professor Irene Agyepong, from Ghana, was appointed to the Prince Claus Chair by Utrecht University. As a public health expert, Professor Agyepong is a strong advocate of investing simultaneously in research into public health and the development of health policy. In her research she has been concentrating on how to manage and transform health systems in Sub-Saharan Africa.

2007-2008



Professor Alcinda Honwana was appointed to the Prince Claus Chair by the International Institute of Social Studies. Born in Mozambique, Professor Honwana is an authority on child soldiers in Africa and on the predicament of young Africans in the context of ongoing globalisation processes in postcolonial Africa.

2006-2007



Professor Nasira Jabeen was appointed to the Prince Claus Chair by Utrecht University. Coming from a Pakistani background, Professor Jabeen focuses her teaching and research on the possibilities and constraints of good governance as a concept in the developing world.

2005-2006



Professor Rema Hammami was appointed to the Prince Claus Chair by the International Institute of Social Studies because of her impressive academic contribution, as an intellectual champion, to peace and co-existence in the Palestinian Territories. Her gendered approach provides a valuable point of entry into issues of governance, civil society, citizenship, rights and peace.

2004-2005



Professor Gaspar Rivera-Salgado was appointed to the Prince Claus Chair by Utrecht University. The Mexican professor was appointed on the basis of his academic work in the field of indigenous rights, particularly in Latin America and the United States.

2003-2004



Professor Amina Mama was appointed to the Prince Claus Chair by the International Institute of Social Studies. The Nigerian professor Mama was appointed for her contribution to the academic field of African culture and its relationship to development.

2002-2003



Professor S. Mansoob Murshed was appointed as the first holder of the Prince Claus Chair by Utrecht University. Professor Murshed is an economist from Bangladesh and was appointed for his academic work in the fields of trade and freedom of trade and in the field of peace and conflict management in relation to economic development.

CURATORIUM

The Curatorium is responsible for proposing new Prince Claus chair holders for appointment. Her Majesty Queen Máxima of the Netherlands is the Honorary Patron of the Prince Claus Chair. In 2019, the Curatorium comprised the following members:

Professor Louise J. Gunning-Schepers
Chair

Professor Joyeeta Gupta
Vice Chair
Professor of Environment and Development in the global south,
University of Amsterdam

Professor Henk Kummeling
Member
Vice Chancellor of Utrecht University

Professor Inge Hutter
Member
Rector of the International Institute of Social Studies/
Erasmus University Rotterdam

Linda Johnson, BA (Hons), MBA, is **Secretary** to the Curatorium



Linda Johnson, Joyeeta Gupta, Louise J. Gunning-Schepers, Henk Kummeling, Inge Hutter

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTES

ISS is a highly diverse international community of scholars and students from the global south and the global north, which brings together people, ideas and insights in a multidisciplinary setting. This environment nurtures, fosters and promotes critical thinking, and ISS researchers conduct innovative work on fundamental social problems. ISS offers a PhD programme, a Master's programme and various short courses. Between 300 and 400 students from more than 50 different countries study at ISS each year. The PhD community numbers over 150 researchers.

Key to the ISS philosophy and practice is the wish to make a contribution to achieving social justice and equity at a global level. ISS has strong partnerships with organisations and individuals all over the world, including its 13,000+ alumni. These partnerships make up a network in which the co-creation of knowledge and an integrated approach to research and teaching can flourish and generate social impact.

ISS research focuses on global development and social justice based on current global issues. The main research themes are: civic innovation, development economics, governance, law and social justice, political ecology.

ISS shares expertise with a wider public by providing high-level policy advice and serving as a platform for debate and the exchange of ideas.

Further information can be found at www.iss.nl



Utrecht University is one of Europe's leading research universities, recognised internationally for its high quality, innovative approach to both research and teaching.

Founded in 1636, the university has always focused strongly on research. Owing to its solid grounding in discipline-based scholarship, Utrecht University is at the forefront of developments in interdisciplinary knowledge. The university has chosen four strategic research themes: Pathways to Sustainability, Institutions for Open Societies, Life Sciences and Dynamics of Youth.

Utrecht University participates in several national and international networks, including the League of European Research Universities (LERU) and the network Charm-EU. This network that consists of universities in Europe aims to provide interdisciplinary, challenge-based education. Charm-EU is a concrete development of the European Universities' Initiative. A focus on energy, nutrition, health and the circular economy has been laid by the Utrecht-Eindhoven-Wageningen Alliance.

Utrecht University is home to 31,000 students and 6,800 staff members. Each year, more than 2,000 students and researchers come to the university from abroad. Commitment, inspiration, ambition and independence are Utrecht University's core values. The university works collaboratively with the business sector to undertake societally relevant and innovative research.

Further information can be found at www.uu.nl



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His Royal Highness Prince Claus of The Netherlands, in his acceptance speech upon receiving an honorary fellowship at the International Institute of Social Studies, 1988:

PROPOSITION #22

DEVELOPMENT IN THE TRUE SENSE OF THE WORD IS IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT SOME FORM OF DEMOCRACY WHICH GIVES THE PEOPLE SOME SAY IN THE PROCESS. IT IS A QUESTION OF ENABLING PEOPLE TO DIRECT THEIR ENERGIES WITHIN THEIR OWN CULTURAL CONTEXT TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE, IN THE BELIEF THAT THIS IS IN THEIR OWN INTERESTS. I AM NOT USING DEMOCRACY HERE IN THE FORMAL WESTERN SENSE BUT IN ITS MORE BASIC MEANING OF 'BY THE PEOPLE FOR THE PEOPLE'.