

## **“Thank You Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group”**

Report of my stay from 2 February to 26 February 2009

### **Anne-Marie Autissier**

The purpose of this mission was to evaluate possible collaborations between the Institute of European Studies (Paris 8 University), Kolkata Research Group and other professional networks and institutions in the following areas

- Intercultural dialogue (including interfaith dialogue and cooking)
- Interlinguistic dialogue
- Cross audiences outlook (cinema and audiovisual) between India and the European Union
- Perceptions of Indian films and series (mainstream and others) by European audiences

In the frame of her mission and notably under the supervision of Professor S.K. Das, Anne-Marie Autissier delivered a lecture on 18 February 2009 at Department of Political Science, Calcutta University, on the following theme: ‘The World as a regional cosmogony in the cultural field: which role for regional organizations?’

Thanks to Calcutta Research Group contacts and through other connections, Anne-Marie Autissier has been able to meet the following personalities:

Rustom Barhucha, Cultural expert

V. Ramaswamy, Social scientist and activist

Reba Som, Director of the Radindranath Tagore Centre

Ravindra Kumar, Editor and Managing Director of *The Statesman*

Navin Kishor, Director of Seagull books

S.V.Raman, Deputy Director at the Goethe-Institut, Kolkata

Mrinal Sen, Filmmaker

Ruchir Joshi, Writer and filmmaker

Those interviews revealed quite useful to have a better view of West Bengal and Kolkata’s cultural and social specificities, and the possible links and connections that could be launched in the field of joint research. While Kolkata and West Bengal face some economic and social problems, this region appears to be a strong landmark for cultural activities and researches on those. It will notably be interesting to establish in the future whether possible inquiries can be made on the relationship of Bengali audiences with their writers and filmmakers’ works, as well as between these Bengali works and European audiences. And it could as well be interesting to have an overview of the economic impact of cultural activities in Kolkata and West Bengal territory.

Linguistic issues have been tackled as well. In a multi linguistic country, the role of cross-cultural Indian artists in the plural linguistic issues could be a theme of interest for

Indian as for European researchers. The next stay of Professor Samaddar in France (winter 2009) will be used to develop such perspectives, like launching comparative studies in several Indian states and notably France, UK and Spain. The role of media should also be investigated in this prospect both in India and in Europe. The context of a French festival in India (“Bonjour India”, December. 2009 – January 2010) will also be used to try and give these prospects a public perspective.

Finally, Anne-Marie Autissier has written four articles (in English and French), dedicated to Indian artistic and cultural activities and debates, on *Culture Europe International* website; they can be consulted from March 1<sup>st</sup> 2009 on, at [www.culture-europe-international.org](http://www.culture-europe-international.org).

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