

The Reflection Report of NISK 2018 and COINS Ph.D. Seminar

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During September 2018 18th -20th , COINS supported me to attend NISK 2018 conference (Norwegian Informatics Conference), which was organized as a co-located event together with

- Norwegian Informatics Conference (NIK)
- Norwegian Conference for Organizations' Use of IT (NOKOBIT),
- Norwegian Information Security Conference (NISK), and
- Norwegian Conference for Education and Didactics in IT subjects (UDIT).

The venue was Radisson Blu Polar and Kulturhuset in Longyearbyen at Spitsbergen. The event collected around 200 participants from several institutions in Norway. This conference served as a meeting point for researchers and students of cryptography and security who work in both, theoretical and applied aspects of these disciplines

The first day of activities was dedicated to the COINS PhD seminar, which consisted in research presentations by six COINS students. I was impressed by two lessons learned sessions with the following topics:

- *“How to get (and not to get) a PhD + why you should / shouldn't travel”* by Chris Carr.
- *“There is always light at the end of the tunnel”* by Bo Sun.

They have shared their real life experiences with everyone who has attended the student seminar. They gave us valuable suggestions to pursue and to complete our PhD successfully. This seminar ended with election of two COINS student representatives. On the first day evening, there was a city tour in a bus with a guide who was entertaining. He told us about Svalbard's history, the visa/immigration policy and employment conditions for Svalbard. It was quite interesting.

Conference on the second day, September 19th, began by Ellen Munthe-Kass, Head of the department UiO followed by a keynote speech by Prof. Barbara Wasson regarding the role of education using learning analytics. Prof. Wasson started with an overview of SLATE (Centre for Science and

technology), then moved on to Learning Analytics. Learning Analytics is the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of data about learners and their contexts, for purposes of understanding and optimizing learning and the environments in which it occurs. There were two papers presented in Crypto Primitives, related to Fully Homomorphic Encryption and Stream Ciphers. Both of these presentations included various concepts related to attacks based lattice and correlation.

The third day of the conference was begun with a keynote about “*Developing for the long term - Lessons learned through 20 years of Qt*” that presented via Lars Knoll, CTO of The Qt Company. The last session of the conference was about malware, in which three regular papers were presented. The first paper was Fighting Ransomware with Guided Undo, presented by Matthias Held. The second paper was Source Code Patterns of Cross Site Scripting in PHP Open Source Projects, presented by Basel Katt. The third paper was Comparing Open Source Search Engine Functionality, Efficiency and Effectiveness with Respect to Digital Forensic Search, presented by Joachim Hansen

In the evening of the third day, we had dinner at CAMP BARENTZ at Advent valley to celebrate the 30th anniversary of NIK. Advent valley locates 10 kilometers away from Longyearbyen. It was built as a copy of the cabin that Barentz and his crew built on Novaya Zemlia. The tent was surrounded by armed guards in case of a polar bear attack. The valley is also the home of polar bears so the conference organizers provided participants, a once in a life time experience in which dinner was served under the protection of armed guards.

The experience of staying in Svalbard, joining the conference and attending COINS seminar have been important for my growth as a researcher, both for the breadth of the selected topics and for the opportunity to strengthen my network with fellow researchers who work in Norway. Co-locating with the NIKT conferences gave the participants the opportunity of attending a diverse range of talks. I really admired the enthusiasm and energy of the funders, organizers of the conference. It was an inspiring experience from which I have benefited greatly. I am very pleasant to be a participant for this specific event