**PhD Course Program**

**'Bureaucratic Encounters – Front Line and District Civil Service and Development'**

16-18 June, 2015 in Copenhagen, Denmark

Convened by the Department of Food and Resource Economics, University of Copenhagen and the Danish Institute for International Studies.

The state and its bureaucrats in developing societies have a bad name. They are often, quite perfunctorily, dismissed as dysfunctional, weak, or failed. Often labels such as 'corruption' essentialize and homogenize an immense variation of practices. Public service is often inadequate, often it departs from formal rules, often it harbours rent- seekers, and there are countless examples of in-just, in-equitable and inefficient operations. Yet, bureaucracies also deliver some service, improvise around impossible rules, demonstrate dedication and operate despite poor resources. It takes very little to see that states and bureaucracies in developing societies do not look like the imagined ideals of developed states. In fact, no states look like the ideal when closely inspected, and rather than measuring the distance from a normative ideal, it is important to investigate how states and bureaucracies actually work. Recent research that focuses on actual bureaucratic practices reveal that variations between and within countries are considerable, and generally many competing interests and logics are at play.

The population generally 'meets the state' in the form of front line officers and local and district bureaucracies. Policies, reforms, and the everyday delivery of education, health, extension, and policing and taxing manifest themselves at the local level. It is therefore important to develop analytical concepts and research methods that will allow a systematic inquiry into bureaucratic encounters at the local and district levels.

This PhD course responds to a growing demand for guidance and feedback from PhD students who are developing their thesis within this field of research. We want to bring together PhD students from a number of disciplines in social sciences with some of the protagonists of the current debate on how 'states work' in the encounter between public servants and the citizens. Through lectures by leading researchers in this field and the in-depth discussion of PhD student's research papers, the PhD course provides a key opportunity for PhD students to present and discuss their work with senior researchers in the field.

Specifically, the **learning objectives** of the course are:

1. That participants are knowledgeable about major contributions to the study of bureaucracies, i.e. understand differences and similarities in their scope, methodological approach, and findings
2. That participants are able to critically assess their own and others' work on bureaucracies and deliver constructive criticism to their peers

In **advance** of the course:
1. Participants must read the course curriculum
2. Participants are required to prepare an individual course essay **to be submitted by May 1.**

3. Participants must prepare written comments to the essays of their 2-3 fellow group members **to be sent to the author by June 6.**

**During** the course:
1. Paper seminar: the 15-20 participants are divided into five groups – each of which is assigned a senior lecturer. The groups meet to discuss and give constructive feedback on the papers that participants have submitted in advance of the course.
2. The 8 lectures will blend theoretical, conceptual and methodological perspectives through case based studies. In the course of the lectures, you will learn about predominant theorization of developing country bureaucracies as well as new ways of conceptualizing bureaucratic functions and actions. The lectures will consider the questions: How do bureaucracies gain authority and legitimacy? How do they address the many and sometimes contradictory demands of other actors? How this can be studied in practice? In addition, a supplementary lecture on developing case studies will help support your work with your own topic.
3. Breaks: We have long coffee and lunch breaks that are meant to be used for more than eating and drinking. Do take advantage of them to interact with fellow participants and the lecturers.

**Practicalities**

The course will be held at the Frederiksberg Campus of the University of Copenhagen and will be open to 15-20 participants. We invite applications from PhD candidates from (but not limited to) social sciences whose research project is in line with the thematic scope of the course. Their work should be based on extensive fieldwork.

The participant's fee is 200 €. Lunch on all three days and one dinner will be provided. Participants will have to cover own transport and accommodation.

Working language: English

ECTS points for participation: 5

**Program**

| Day 1 | |
|---|---|
| 8:30-9:00 | Arrival and coffee |
| 9:00-9:30 | Course introduction |
| 9:30-10:30 | Introductory activity |
| 10:30-11:00 | Coffee Break |
| 11:00-12:00 | Lecture 1: Giorgio Blundo<br>**Local level bureaucratic encounters, multiple accountabilities and practical norms in West African forestry** |
| 12:00-13:30 | Lunch |
| 13:30-14:30 | Lecture 2: Melis Ece<br>**The Greening of Bureaucracy** |
| 14:30-15:30 | Lecture 3: Christian Lund<br>**Of what is this a case? Thinking through the concrete, the abstract, the specific and the general** |
| 15:30-16:00 | Coffee |
| 16:00-17:30 | Paper group meeting I (2 papers) |
| 17:30-18:30 | Networking and snacks |
| 19:00 | Dinner at restaurant |

| Day 2 | |
|---|---|
| 9:00-9:30 | Arrival and Coffee |
| 9:30-10:30 | Lecture 4: Ole Therkildsen<br>**Working in neo-patrimonial settings: public sector staff perceptions in Tanzania and Uganda** |
| 10:30-11:00 | Coffee Break |
| 11:00-12:00 | Lecture 5: Giorgio Blundo<br>**Corruption: What is it and how can it be studied?** |
| 12:00-13:30 | Lunch |
| 13:30-14:30 | Lecture 6: Laurens Bakker<br>**Local level bureaucratic encounters: Negotiating financial assistance in Indonesia** |
| 14:30-15:00 | Coffee |
| 15:00-16:30 | Paper group meeting II |

| Day 3 | |
|---|---|
| 9:00-9:30 | Arrival and Coffee |
| 9:30-10:30 | Lecture 7: Mikkel Funder<br>**Local bureaucrats as bricoleurs: Implementing Kenya's environmental law on the ground** |
| 10:30-11:00 | Coffee Break |
| 11:00-12:00 | Lecture 8: Jens Friis Lund<br>**The techno-bureaucrat: science as a source of authority** |
| 12:00-13:00 | Lunch |

| 13:00-14:30 | Panel discussion/exercise/methods workshop |
|---|---|
| 14:30-15:00 | Coffee, evaluation and good bye |

## Confirmed lecturers

- Professor Giorgio Blundo, EHESS, Marseille
- Dr Laurens Bakker, Department of Anthropology, University of Amsterdam
- Dr Melis Ece, Centre for African Studies, Copenhagen University (UoC)
- Senior Researcher Emeritus Ole Therkildsen, Danish Institute for International Studies
- Senior Researcher Mikkel Funder, Danish Institute for International Studies
- Professor Christian Lund, Department of Food and Resource Economics, UoC
- Associate Professor Jens Friis Lund, Department of Food and Resource Economics, UoC

## Groups

| Group No. | Leaders | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Melis Ece<br>Ole Therkildsen | Charles Aben<br>Eliezeri Regnald Sungusia<br>Jevgeniy Bluwstein |
| 2 | Mikkel Funder | Julia Wernersson<br>Lisbet Christoffersen<br>Stina Wolff |
| 3 | Christian Lund<br>Giorgio Blundo | Caroline Schaer<br>Cyril Own Brandt<br>Brendan S. Whitty |
| 4 | Laurens Bakker | Ari Nurman<br>Lily Salloum Lindegaard<br>Marta Alice Lang |
| 5 | Jens Friis Lund | Bishnu Prasad Devkota<br>Dil B. Khatri<br>Marijana Vukotic |

**Lecture topics and literature**

**Day 1**

**Lecture 1: Giorgio Blundo**

**Local level bureaucratic encounters, multiple accountabilities and practical norms in West African forestry**

The case of forest services in West Africa represents a fruitful entry point for ethnographic exploration of the day-to-day functioning of the 'state machine'. As one of the first colonial administrative services, they have been deeply involved in the process of state building. Forest services are paramilitary corps, exercising the functions of granting, controlling and sanctioning through the use – and abuse – of legitimate violence and the monopoly of technical-bureaucratic knowledge.

Based on a recent ethnographic research on West African forest services, my analysis brings a critical shift as regards the doxa of both "good governance" experts and the culturalist analysts of African states. Contesting the widespread representation of unaccountable African state administrations, I suggest that state bureaucracies rather suffer from an "excess" of accountabilities: in the concrete exercise of their discretionary powers, state agents are strongly influenced by interventions from a variety of institutions and individuals, both formal and informal. I shall analyze the consequences of these diverse modes of accountability on civil servants' behavior and uses of administrative procedures.

Literature:

Blundo, Giorgio, « Seeing Like a State Agent: The Ethnography of Reform in Senegal's Forestry Services », in Bierschenk, T. & J.-P. Olivier de Sardan (eds), States at Work in West Africa. Dynamics of African Bureaucracies, Leiden, Brill, 2013, pp. 87 - 113.

Blundo, Giorgio, « The King is not a kinsman. Multiple accountabilities and practical norms in West African bureaucracies », in de Herdt, T. and Olivier de Sardan, J.-P. (eds.), Real Governance and Practical Norms in Sub-Saharan Africa. The game of the rules, Routledge, 2015, pp. 43-64 (forthcoming, final proofs available in March).

Total pages: 49

**Lecture 2: Melis Ece**

**Title: The Greening of Bureaucracy**

With the rise to prominence of environmental governance and greening of development, there is an increasing need to evaluate the production of environmental knowledge and, the ways in which  'public' and 'private' become imbricated and redefined in state and international bureaucracies. Given that knowledge is "deeply reflective of the conditions within which it is produced", what kind of scientific knowledge on environment is produced and how does it become routinized through "projects"? What role does bureaucratic writing play in the current era of "state retrenchment" where conventional public-private distinctions are being challenged? This lecture aims to engage students with nuanced accounts of state and international bureaucracies and their everyday processes and practices.

Literature:

Goldman, M. (2005) Imperial Nature: The World Bank and struggles for social justice in the age of globalization. Chapter 3 (Producing Green Science inside Headquarters) (p.100-150).

Sivaramakrishnan, K. Crafting the Public Sphere in the Forests of West Bengal: Democracy, Development, and Political Action. American Ethnologist. Vol. 27. No. 2 (pp.431-461).

Gupta, A. (2012). 'Let the Train Run on Paper' Bureaucratic Writing as State practice. In Red Tape: Bureaucracy, Structural violence and Poverty in India (Duke University Press). (pp. 141-190).

Total pages: 132

**Lecture 3: Christian Lund**

**Of what is this a case? Thinking through the concrete, the abstract, the specific and the general**

Case studies are often presented as self-evident. However, of what the material is a case is actually less evident. It is argued in this article that the analytical movements of generalization, specification, abstraction and concretization can make us more conscious of what our work might be a case, and that the same data have the potential to make different cases depending on these analytical movements. An analytical matrix is developed and the four movements and various pitfalls are discussed.

Suggested readings:

Lund, C. (2014) Of what is this a case? Human Organization 73(3).

Total pages: 26

**Lecture 4: Ole Therkildsen**

**Working in neopatrimonial settings: public sector staff perceptions in Tanzania and Uganda**.

We know little about staff management practices in African bureaucracies and what actually motivate staff to work – or not. However, that does not prevent many academics to theorise a lot about this. The purposes of the presentation are: (1) To make a critical assessment of the concept of neo-patrimonialism, which dominates the studies of bureaucracies in sub-Saharan Africa, and draw some methodological implications of this assessment; (2) To analyse practices of hiring, firing, transfer, promotion and demotion in ministries, local governments, and executive agencies in Tanzania and Uganda; and (3) To assess the effects of these practices on the performance of such organisations.

Therkildsen, Ole. 2014. "Working in Neopatrimonial Settings:  Public Sector Staff Perceptions in Tanzania and Uganda" in Bierschenk, Thomas & Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan, eds. States at Work: Dynamics of African Bureaucracies. Brill Academic Pub. Pp. 113-144 (31 pages).

Erdmann, Gero and Ulf Engel. 2007. Neopatrimonialism Reconsidered: Critical Review and Elaboration of an Elusive Concept. Commonwealth & Comparative Politics Vol. 45, No. 1, 95–119, February 2007 (25 pages).

Medárd, Jean-Francois. 2002. "Corruption in the Neo-Patrimonial States of Sub-Saharan Africa" in Heidenheimer, Arnold J. & Michael Johnston, eds. Political Corruption: Concepts and Contexts. New Brunswick, Transaction Publishers. Pp. 379-403 (24 pages).

Total pages: 80

**Lecture 5: Giorgio Blundo**

**Corruption: What is it and how can it be studied?**

If anthropologists only recently devoted attention to the subject of corruption, they have studied corrupt practices as a particularly useful way of penetrating further into the daily routine of the public services right to the core of the relations between public services and their users. Of course, corruption does not lend itself easily to analysis in the social sciences: of awkward definition, it presents some problems to the researcher, as much of an ethical as of a methodological nature. We suggest that the anthropology of corruption presents features that bring it close to the anthropology of deviant phenomena, to the anthropology of witchcraft, and to the anthropology of transactions.

Literature:

Blundo, G., « Hidden Acts, Open Talks. How Anthropology Can 'Observe' and Describe Corruption », in Nuijten, M. & G. Anders (eds.) Corruption and the Secret of Law. A Legal Anthropological Perspective, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2007, pp. 27-52.

Blundo, G., 2006 - « Corruption in Africa and the social sciences : a review of the literature », in G. Blundo and J.-P. Olivier de Sardan (with N. B. Arifari and M. Tidjani Alou), Everyday Corruption and the State. Citizens and Public Officials in Africa, London, Zed Books, p. 15-68.

Blundo, G. and J. P. Olivier de Sardan,  2006, « Why should we study everyday corruption and how should we go about it ? », in G. Blundo and J.-P. Olivier de Sardan (with N. B. Arifari and M. Tidjani Alou), Everyday Corruption and the State. Citizens and Public Officials in Africa, London, Zed Books, p. 3-14.

Total pages: 92


**Lecture 6: Laurens Bakker**

**Local level bureaucratic encounters: Negotiating financial assistance in Indonesia**

In East Kalimantan, Indonesia, regional governments run programs in which 'the poor' receive governmental financial assistance to ease their daily lives. These programs have two immediate effects for the position of bureaucrats: first, by ascertaining who is eligible for assistance and who is not, the 'field bureaucrats' control access to the funds. Second, senior bureaucrats remain responsible and can overrule or add to decisions by the field workers. Regional bureaucrats in Indonesia have a strong reputation for corruption and nepotism, yet for the past ten years bureaucratic and transparent governance has gained strong footage at this level. In this lecture, I explore the positions and interests of these two levels of bureaucrats in terms of (in)dependence, power, and their idea of duty.

McC Heyman, J. (2004) 'The Anthropology of Power-Wielding Bureaucracies' Human Organization 63 (4), pp. 487-500.

Buehler, M. (2007) 'Local elite reconfiguration in post-New Order Indonesia: the 2005 election of district government heads in South Sulawesi' Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs 41 (1), pp. 119-147.

Total pages: 43

**Day 3**

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**Lecture 7: Mikkel Funder**

**Local bureaucrats as bricoleurs: Implementing Kenya's environmental law on the ground**

This presentation discusses the role of front-line bureaucrats as bricoleurs, i.e. as active participants in the ongoing adaptation and blending of rules, norms and organizations on the ground. The presentation draws mainly on research in Kenya, which has examined how local "Environment Officers" go about implementing the national environmental law in practice, and how they interact with communities in this process. As representatives of "the local state", the Environment Officers occupy an ambiguous position in which they are expected to implement lofty laws and policies with limited means and in a complex local reality. Their response is to employ various everyday implementation strategies which are geared to accommodate both the expectations of their home ministry and the demands of local CBOs and other technical line agencies.

Cleaver, F. 2012. Development through bricolage: rethinking institutions for natural resource management. London: Earthscan. (Chapter 1 from page 8, and chapter 2)

Sardan, J.-P.O de. 2014. The Delivery State in Africa. Interface Bureaucrats, Professional Cultures and the Bureaucratic Mode of Governance. In States at work : dynamics of African bureaucracies, edited by T. a. J.-P. O. d. S. Bierschenk: Brill.

Lund, C. 2006. Twilight institutions: Public authority and local politics in Africa. Development and Change 37 (4):685-705.

Total pages: 95

**Lecture 8: Jens Friis Lund**

**The techno-bureaucrat: science as a source of authority**

Many bureaucrats perceive of themselves as and are, in turn, perceived as wielders of scientific and technical expertise. Decisions and actions taken by bureaucrats are often seen as derived from – and thereby legitimized by – technical and/or scientific principles. Science is thus a source of bureaucrats' authority, which is exemplified in Fleischmann's (2014) 'logic of appropriateness' and, in particular, in Ojha et al.'s (2009) 'techno-bureaucratic doxa'. Yet, scientific and technical expertise is characterized by being unstable, resisted, and performed upon by all actors, which implies limits to the authority engendered by it, as shown by Mathews (2011). This lecture will seek to demonstrate how an attention to scientific and technical expertise provides one avenue to understand bureaucracies.

Literature:

Mathews, A. S. (2011). Instituting nature: authority, expertise, and power in Mexican forests. The MIT Press. Chapters 1 and 9.

Ojha, H., J. Cameroon and C. Kumar (2009). Deliberation or symbolic violence? The governance of community forestry in Nepal. Forest Policy and Economics 11: 365-374.

Fleischmann, F. D. (2014). Why do Foresters Plant Trees? Testing Theories of Bureaucratic Decision-Making in Central India. World Development 62: 62-74.

Total pages: 60