

## ***“Critics of development: How anthropologist views development projects “***

Lecturer:

Hiroe Ishihara (Assistant Professor, IPADS, the University of Tokyo)

Desiree Daniels (External Postdoctoral Researcher, Bern University)

This lecture is designed to nurture critical thinking of development policies by introducing two notions, ‘Anti-politics Machine’ *a la* American Anthropologist James Ferguson and the discursive power *a la* French Post-modern philosopher Michele Foucault. Ferguson analysed a failed development project in Lesotho, Thaba-Tseka integrated development project implemented by Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) during the 1980s and 1990s. This project aimed at poverty alleviation through livestock and agricultural development; however, it did not contribute to poverty alleviation as it failed to generate income of the poor. Ferguson argued that the root cause of this failure as ‘Anti-politics Machine’. This notion points out to the fact that the discourses of development policy depoliticised its very political nature by depicting development as ‘technical problem’ that requires “technical solutions”. Further, he argues that the project was continued despite its failures, due to its ‘unintended consequence’, extending the bureaucratic power of the central government in the rural area.

One of the backbones of Ferguson’s argument is the notion of power, especially the notion of discursive power developed by Foucault and other Post-modernist thinkers. The lecture introduces different types of power, i.e. visible power, such as the military power or the legal system with punishment and invisible power, such as discursive power to construct social order, “the way we do things around here”, and the way of thinking by disciplining our minds. In the case of Lesotho, the development policy (re-)constructed Lesotho as a ‘less-developed country’ situating the country in the North-South, Doner-recipient relationship and provided technical discourses to solve the issue of poverty for the development workers and government staffs.

The lecture will be consisting of three parts:

1. Lecture on Anti-politics machine (by Hiroe Ishihara)
2. Lecture on discursive power (by Desiree Daniels)
3. Group-work: Critically analyse the existing Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) from Anti-politics Machine lens