



# Doing Anthropology on Democracy and Public Engagement

A PhD-course (7,5hp) of the Research School for Swedish Anthropology (RESA)<sup>1</sup>

in collaboration with

Uppsala University's Forum for Africa Studies and Swedish Society for Anthropology and Geography

Course dates: 13/4; 20/4; 2-4/5; and 31/5 2016

Course leader:

Professor Sten Hagberg

Dept. of Cultural Anthropology & Ethnology; Forum for Africa Studies

Uppsala University

Even though anthropologists have, for long time, been conducting research on the politics of almost any societal phenomena, more limited scholarly interest has been concerned with the actual workings of democracy in elections, political parties, democratic assemblies, and formal decision-making. It is as if the legitimate focus on the subaltern and the marginalized has led to anthropologists to pay little attention to formal political processes. Another reason that may explain the limited anthropological work on democratic processes is that it involves public engagement in new and to some extent challenging ways to the discipline's basic principles: the non-normative cornerstone of the anthropological project.

The purpose of this RESA PhD-course is to explore the various ways by which anthropology may do research on democracy and public engagement. It addresses the intersection between the scholarly focus on contemporary democratic practice as articulated in elections, party politics and civil society, on the one hand, and the researcher's public participation and civic engagement to the betterment of society, on the other. The anthropologists' epistemological, methodological and practical positioning will be problematized through the exploration of, inter alia, practical norms, democratic elections, municipal politics, public presence, and popular struggle and resistance.

The PhD-course builds on a combination of the reading of contemporary anthropological works on democracy and public engagement, and the presentation of case studies

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<sup>1</sup> The Research School for Swedish Anthropology is a consortium of the PhD-graduate programmes in Social and Cultural Anthropology of the universities of Gothenburg, Lund, Stockholm and Uppsala. The RESA contact person is Lina Lorentz: [lina.lorentz@socant.su.se](mailto:lina.lorentz@socant.su.se). For more information, click [here](#).

developed by lecturers. Case studies will draw upon research carried out in Burkina Faso, Mali, Bolivia, Uganda, and Sweden.

The course combines three different learning modules: seminar, symposium, and workshop. It requires the active participation of all PhD-students enrolled. The course is open to PhD-students in anthropology and neighboring disciplines.

Candidates should submit a declaration of interest including a short CV (two pages) and a PhD-project summary no later than 15 March 2016 to: [sten.hagberg@antro.uu.se](mailto:sten.hagberg@antro.uu.se)

## **Course Schedule**

### Wednesday 13/4, 9.30-12.00

Seminar at Uppsala University with video conference:

*Introduction: Doing Anthropology on Democratic Practice and Public Engagement*

Sten Hagberg

### Wednesday 20/4 9.00-12.30

The Vega Day at Royal Academy of Science, Stockholm, with web-TV available afterwards:

*The Public Presence of Anthropology*

Didier Fassin, Saba Mahmood, Margareth Lock and Thomas Hylland Eriksen

Chair: Sten Hagberg

### Monday 2 May-Wednesday 4 May

Workshop with two nights in Uppsala:

*Case studies on Democracy and Public Engagement*

Sten Hagberg and other Uppsala colleagues

### Tuesday 31 May 13-17

Final seminar at Uppsala University with video conference:

*Presentation and Discussion of Student Papers*

Sten Hagberg