



List of presenters and abstracts

20 Years of the Quality of Government Research: taking stock and moving forward

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All panels will take place in the lecture hall: **Hörsal Dragonen**, [Department of Political Science, Sprängkullsgatan 19](#), University of Gothenburg

Andersen, David, Aarhus University

Plights of Patrimonialism and the Causes of Incumbent-led Democratic Breakdowns

One of the greatest puzzles of political development since the French Revolution in 1789 is when and how democratically elected incumbents succeed in breaking down democracy from within (Bermeo, 2016). Incumbent-led democratic breakdowns (IDBs), i.e., actions of the political executive that decisively undermine competitive elections for government power, comprise no less than 58 cases or 40 % of all democratic breakdowns spread across the period from 1789 to 2020 (Skaaning, 2021).

IDBs are intimately connected with the workings of the state administration (Bauer et al. 2021), but political science has so far abstained from theorizing the state administration as a cause of IDB (see e.g., Waldner and Lust, 2018; Berman, 2021). This paper proposes a novel theoretical explanation of IDB focused on recruitment norms of top-level civil servants. I distinguish between two stages in IDB processes: the likelihood that would-be-authoritarians are elected to government office (stage 1) and the likelihood that a subsequent incumbent-led assault on democracy is successful (stage 2). Patrimonialism, denoting that the incumbent employs civil servants to top positions in ministerial departments and agencies on personal, political, or other non-merit criteria, is a constant source of dissatisfaction that would-be-authoritarians may exploit in election campaigns (stage 1) and a constant source of fragility in those structures that should otherwise protect against incumbent assaults (stage 2).

Two mechanisms, or plights of patrimonialism, lead to IDB. One is that top-level civil servants in patrimonial systems tend to favor the interests of the incumbent that hired them. Top-level civil servants thus use their status and access to state resources to discriminate the incumbent's political opponents, which radicalizes opposition voters (Cornell and Lapuente, 2014; Lindvall, 2019: 62-66). Would-be-authoritarians are attracted to and likely more successful in such polarized environments (Svolik, 2019; Graham and Svolik, 2020). After election, patrimonialism makes the incumbent able to hire political loyalists to key offices, facilitating the manipulation of election results and executive aggrandizement (van Ham and Garnett, 2019; Boese et al., 2021). The second mechanism differs from the first in its effect on vote shares of would-be-authoritarians. Because patrimonially recruited top-level civil servants are also less competent and public service-minded, they often discard expert advice, choose less prudent measures of implementation, and take bribes from economic and political elites (Dahlström and Lapuente, 2017). This results in delays or sabotage of government policies (Brehm and Gates, 1997), which particularly leaves pro-government voters disappointed with democracy (Linde and Dahlberg, 2021) and strengthens the platform of 'strongmen' and populists (Svolik, 2013).

I theorize observable implications for these mechanisms, including key actors' motives and actions, and examine them in the IDBs of Germany (1933), Philippines (1972), and Venezuela (2008). These cases represent different contexts that we would expect to work as scope conditions: region, colonial history, type of international system, ethnic and religious composition, level of economic development, and liberal-democratic experience. These examinations may challenge key assumptions that IDBs are either outcomes of political elite actions (e.g., Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan, 2012; Levitsky and Ziblatt, 2018; Bartels, 2023) or

the omnipresent authoritarianism of voters (e.g., Svulik, 2019; Petersen and Laustsen, 2020). Alternatively, they may challenge recent insights on the stabilizing role of bureaucratic quality for democratic stability (e.g., Andersen and Doucette, 2022).

Andriani, Luca and Dumbah, Conrad, Birkbeck University of London

Government Effectiveness in Sub-Saharan Africa

In the dynamic context of Sub-Saharan Africa, this study delves into the heart of the "Quality of Governance" debate, shedding light on the pivotal role that key elements of public finance management (PFM) play in shaping institutional trust. The term "institutional trust" encapsulates the profound confidence individuals have in their institutions, believing that these entities act in the best interests of their citizens (van der Meer and Hakhverdian, 2017; Hooghe et al., 2015). It reflects the very essence of governmental effectiveness (Rothstein and Teorell, 2008). This term encompasses the expectation that the state will adeptly collect taxes, the tax administration will uphold principles of fairness, and corruption will not taint the system. Furthermore, it underlines the competence and efficiency of the government across various institutional functions (Rothstein, 2021).

While the concept of government capacity has been examined in the context of its impact on economic development (Dinecco and Prado 2013; Tabellini 2005), little attention has been devoted to its role in enhancing government effectiveness, especially in developing countries, such as those in Sub-Saharan Africa. Despite progress in legal, administrative, and bureaucratic capacity since the end of the Cold War, these countries continue to exhibit a considerable gap in government capacity when compared to advanced economies (Savoia and Sen, 2015).

Our research compiles data from multiple sources, covering 49 Sub-Saharan countries over the span of 2005-2019. We employ the World Bank's World Governance Indicators' (WGI) Government Effectiveness index as gauge for institutional trust. This index reflects public perceptions of public service quality, civil service competence, policy formulation, and implementation. In assessing public finance management (PFM), we focus on two key aspects: i) Audit and Scrutiny, and ii) Tax Revenue to GDP. Audit and Scrutiny, as an indicator of accountability, is extracted from Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) assessment scores. It gauges the quality of audits and external scrutiny using PEFA dimensions based on submissions of audit reports to the legislature. Actual Tax Revenue to GDP, as a measure of fiscal capacity, is sourced from various finance ministry websites in these countries and the World Bank's World Development Indicators dataset.

Employing a panel regression approach, our preliminary findings show that citizens' perception on the quality of government effectiveness of their country increases with higher accountability scores, and with higher level of fiscal capacity. These results are robust to a series of sensitivity analyses, and to the inclusion of country fixed effects.

Our study is not only a valuable contribution to the overarching discourse on governance quality in non-Western nations but also a significant exploration of the role that pivotal concepts, well-established in Western public administration, such as government capacity

and accountability, play in less institutionally and economically advanced settings. It underscores the vital importance of public finance management in nurturing trust and strengthening governance effectiveness within Sub-Saharan Africa and analogous regions. This research is an imperative addition to the ongoing global dialogue on governance quality and its far-reaching policy implications.

Avellaneda, Claudia N., Indiana University

Implementation of the Mexican Meritocratic System: Assessing Its Impartiality and Gender Effects

Worldwide, civil service reforms have been continuously promoted. Changes in remuneration, job classification systems, human resource recruitment and management, downsizing and operational efficiencies illustrate some of civil service reforms (Repucci 2014). Among the personnel recruitment reforms are those that seek merit and neutrality in the selection process to earn government jobs. Contrary to the spoils system in which patronage, favoritism, partisanship, family and religion ties were the determinants of winning a governmental job (Panizza et al. 2018, Auyero 2000, Chubb 1982, Gordin 2002, Grindle 2012, Stokes 2005), merit-based selection systems are expected to enhance fairness, impartiality, and professionalization in the selection process. '[T]he appointment of the best person for any given job' (McCourt 2007, 5) defines merit. Therefore, merit-based selection systems should, in turn, improve governmental performance (e.g., Park and Liang 2020, McCourt 2007, Ornaghi 2019).

With the reform of a merit system promoters seek to root out patronage and the effects that its spoils system has inflicted on government hiring and personnel promotion. Implicit in this reform is the notion that the selection and advancement of all new career employees hired through the system's standard testing and placing process should offer equal opportunity based on relative ability, knowledge, and skills in a fair and open competition (Ban and Ingraham 1988). In 2004, Mexico adopted a merit system for hiring across all federal agencies. However, to what extent (1) is the Mexican merit system promoting gender equity and neutrality in the bureaucratic selection process? To answer this question, we compiled data on all the merit-based entrance examinations carried out in Mexico from January 2004 until December 2020, covering 81,248 selection processes that included 2,859,795 job applicants. Findings reveal that female applicants overperform male candidates on all assessed dimensions (technical, managerial, merit, and interview) except for experience. This female overperformance tends to be homogeneous across time and across job levels. Moreover, conditional on qualifications, female applicants are more likely to be hired. This study has practical implications for understanding the effects of civil service reforms, human resource management, and policy implementation.

Bech Seeberg, Merete, Aarhus University

Women's road to parliament in Africa: Do voters respond differently to campaign strategies depending on candidate gender?

How do campaign strategies affect voters' assessments of candidates depending on candidate gender? Whereas the gendered effects of campaigning have been explored in Western contexts, we know very little about the interactions between voters and women candidates in Africa, where valence-competition and clientelism prevail. It is commonly argued that corruption, spiralling campaign costs and excessive resource inequalities between the genders explain the underrepresentation of women. In this paper, we analyze the gendered effect of a range of campaign strategies with varying costs. Combining research on campaigning in Africa and on stereotypes of women in politics in Western democracies, we argue that women candidates may benefit from choosing strategies that deliver information to voters that is both positive and surprising. Holding rallies or delivering services to the constituency may be most beneficial, as the strategies do not match stereotypes about women (they are surprising), and they signal competence and trustworthiness (they are positive). Being present in the community also signals trustworthiness, but given stereotypes about women in politics, the signal is not surprising and does not update voter beliefs to the same extent. Finally, monetary handouts are a double-edged sword, as they can both signal competence (positive and surprising information for female candidates) and corruptibility (negative and surprising information for females). We test the theory through a survey experiment in Malawi presenting voters (N=1600) with audio-visual treatments of fictive candidates to examine how different types of campaign strategies shape voters' evaluations of men and women candidates on key dimensions such as electoral viability, trustworthiness/corruptibility, and competence. The study is paramount to identifying obstacles to women's advancement in politics in the global south.

Keywords: Campaigning, Clientelism, Electoral Handouts, Women in Politics, African Elections.

Can Karahasan, Burhan, MEF University

Quality of government cohesion across the EU regions: Success or failure?

Government quality is perceived as the core of institutional development. Besides, there is an overall consensus that institutions whether directly or indirectly affect economic development. Among different outlays this study examines the evolution of local institutions for the European Union (EU) and questions the regional convergence in quality of government (QoG). Earlier evidence shows that some regions attain higher levels of government quality (Charron and Lapuente, 2013). This also relates to the economic and social differences across the EU regions. For instance, earlier studies highlight that better local institutions are crucial for understanding the rising innovation and investment performance (Rodríguez-Pose and Di Cataldo, 2015; Rodríguez-Pose and Garcilazo, 2015), falling populism (Agerberg, 2017), rising trade potential (Barbero et al., 2021) and finally resilience capacity across the EU regions (Rios and Gianmoena, 2020). Although prior literature clarifies the importance of local institutions our knowledge on the convergence pattern of government quality is mostly limited to the cross-country investigation of EU institutions (Beyaert et al., 2019; Pérez-Moreno et al., 2020). To fill this gap, we investigate the evolution of cross-regional variation in quality of government across the EU regions and question the path of convergence in institutional improvements.

We examine the regional convergence for the main and sub-pillars (impartiality, corruption and quality) of the government quality index by using 2010, 2013, 2017 and 2021 QoG data sets (Charron et al., 2014, 2015, 2019, 2022). Our departure is the neoclassical convergence model (β -convergence). The main hypothesis is that regions with lower institutional development will realize a faster institutional improvement and catch-up with the average standards of the EU institutions. Our preliminary findings from β -convergence models confirm this expectation and suggest that EU regions are able to harmonize their local institutions. These preliminary findings point-out the potential of cohesion in local institutions. However, these results disregard the possibility of spatial heterogeneity which can be hampering the local institutional harmonization. Recently, Ezcurra and Rios (2020) highlight the spatial clustering of institutions and the possibility of regional heterogeneity among the EU regions. Similarly, Bourdin (2019) show that the impact of EU policy on local development can be spatially variable. These discussions confirm our concerns about the potential that convergence is not uniform across the EU regions. We consider the spatial heterogeneity of institutional convergence by estimating a multi-scale geographically weighted (MGWR) regression. MGWR enables to spatially decompose the convergence coefficient. Results show that although there is β -convergence in a global sense, speed of convergence varies across the EU regions, suggesting the existence of success and failure stories in institutional development.

Main take-away of these preliminary findings is about the success of institutional harmonization across the EU regions. While some regions catch-up with the institutionally developed ones there are eventually losers which fail to reach the average institutional standards of the EU. In other words, institutional development and regional cohesion has a spatial varying pattern. These findings are central as policies targeting improvements in local institutions will be less-effective if the importance of region specific placed-based policy implementations is disregarded.

Keywords: convergence, institutions, spatial heterogeneity

Casas, Julieta, Johns Hopkins University

You're Fired! Patronage, Civil Service Reform, and the Political Activation of Disgruntled

Weak state capacity is an endemic problem in Latin America. 1 The region's patrimonial bureaucracies negatively affect economic development and inequality, significantly decreasing the quality of life of millions of Latin Americans. 2 Poor governance is also a key reason why democracies in the region are "stuck" or underperforming. 3 Research shows that countries can remedy this problem by reforming their civil services and establishing professional bureaucracies. 4 Yet, despite debating bureaucratic reform in Congress for centuries, few governments in the Americas have been able to do so. Why did some countries successfully professionalize their bureaucracies while others did not? This paper accounts for the success and failure of civil service reforms across the Americas.

The study proposes that a crucial factor explaining the success of civil service reforms is the type of predecessor patronage regime. All countries had some form of patronage, but not all patronage systems were the same: they varied in terms of their firing practices. This variation

was highly consequential for the posterior success of civil service reforms. Where the patronage system featured rotation in office after party turnover, political entrepreneurs emerged, mobilized for reform, and reform succeeded. But not all patronage systems removed employees after party turnover; some featured virtually no layoffs. Public employees organized for sectorial benefits there, and civil service reform failed.

The paper tests the theory in two closely matched case studies: Argentina and the U.S. The case studies show how the two countries diverged from similar beginnings after the rise of mass politics and trace the ensuing self-reinforcing and self-eroding processes that took place. In the U.S., the emergence of mass politics shaped a patronage system where jobs were allocated under a partisan logic and where there were mass layoffs when the executive changed hands—patronage with rotation in office. This patronage system locked groups of citizens out of public office and set in motion a self-eroding process in the 19th-century U.S. The groups excluded from the system led a national civil service reform movement and a petitioning campaign that proved crucial to the passage of the Pendleton Act in 1883.

In Argentina, mass politics brought about a patronage system of partisan recruitment and virtually no firings—patronage without rotation in office. This system did not lock any segment of the population out of public office in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, setting in motion a self-reinforcing process. After party turnover, virtually no government employees were locked out of office. Because the patronage system featured secure employment, groups of professionals found government jobs attractive. Although civil service bills were on the congressional agenda like in the U.S., and employees were fighting for employment benefits, Argentina's civil service advocates found that their projects persistently failed in Congress without the support of political entrepreneurs organizing the mobilization of a broad base of constituents.

The article elucidates the longstanding puzzle of bureaucracy professionalization in the absence of war, generating new insights for contemporary debates on bureaucratic politics. It identifies the conditions under which countries can outlaw patronage, providing generalizable theoretical expectations for similar contexts. Similarly, the findings make crucial contributions to long-standing debates in comparative and American politics. A significant contribution to American political development (APD) is providing a new framework to situate American exceptionalism in comparative perspective. While the first generation of APD scholars compared the U.S. to Western Europe, the second one resolved that the U.S. was a particular type of state that did not lend itself to comparisons. My approach proposes a third way: inter-regional comparisons between the U.S. and Latin American countries can put the American sociopolitical trajectory into sharper focus and identify variations along dimensions that would be invisible otherwise. In comparative politics, the project reshapes the current comparative agenda on the historical origins of state capacity in Latin America. Scholars have followed one of two routes to account for weak state capacity: leverage comparisons with European countries or exploit variations within Latin American countries. My findings suggest that paired comparisons that exploit variations between Latin American cases and the U.S. and Canada might prove a more fruitful avenue for future research.

Fazekas, Mihály, Central European University

Mayors' salaries and public procurement corruption risks: Evidence from 10 European countries

It has long been argued that paying public officials and bureaucrats higher salaries should help decrease corruption—particularistic allocation of public resources. Higher salaries impose greater opportunity costs of job loss upon detection of misuse and decrease the consumption-related needs for rent-seeking (Becker and Stigler 1974; Shapiro & Stiglitz, 1984). Better pay should also help attract higher-quality candidates who, presumably, are also less rapacious (Besley 2004; Bond 2008). Yet, counter-arguments abound. Higher pay may attract less publicly-spirited individuals who are possibly more, not less, prone to rent-seeking (Fisman et al. 2015; Hollyer and Wantchekon 2005). To produce the intended beneficial effects, salaries may need to be prohibitively high (Besley and McLaren 1993). Much corruption is not for personal gain but rather to tilt the political playing field, a goal less sensitive to salary-related inducements (Brierley 2021; Nyblade and Reed 2008). And salaries are but one of a menu of job characteristics influencing performance and selection (Dal Bó et al. 2013). Perhaps unsurprisingly, the empirical evidence is mixed. While some evidence points to both the disincentive effects (Di Tella and Schargrodsky 2003; Klačnjak 2015; Lindkvist 2014; Van Rijckeghem and Weder 2001) and the positive selection effects (Ferraz and Finan 2009; Gagliarducci and Nannicini 2013; Kotakorpi and Poutvaara 2011), others find no links between higher salaries and lower corruption (Alt and Lassen 2014; Dahlström et al. 2012; Foltz and Opoku-Agyemang 2015; Treisman 2007). While the mixed evidence may in part stem from complex or conditional effects (Gans-Morse et al. 2018), we argue that it also derives from the large variation in the contexts, concepts, and methodological approaches in the existing literature. Many previous studies focus on single cases, making it difficult to generalize. Studies with broader scope conditions are typically correlational, making it difficult to ascribe causality. And the existing works vary widely in the types of concepts examined, some of which are only tenuously related to corruption (e.g. tax revenue or public officials' educational attainment). Our contribution in this paper is to provide new, plausibly causal evidence from a large, original dataset spanning multiple countries over several decades and comprising uniformly defined and empirically validated corruption risk indicators. Utilizing a large database of public procurement contracts across European countries (see: opentender.eu), we study the patterns in proven red flags in government contracting such as single-bidding and non-open procedures (Fazekas and Kocsis, 2020). We match these indicators with variation in salary for municipal mayors—elected officials with control over considerable discretionary funds, i.e. local contracts. To aid the causal identification of salary effects, we assembled data on all instances of salary increases tied to municipal population—a plausibly exogenous source of salary variation. On the resultant dataset of 350 salary-population thresholds and almost 1.5 million government contracts covering 10 countries over more than 20 years, we estimate a series of regression discontinuity and difference-in-discontinuity models to produce some of the most comprehensive evidence on the link between public officials' salaries and corruption.

Fleischer, Julia, University of Potsdam / University of Bergen

The Structural Backbones of The Leviathan: A New Perspective on Bureaucratic Capacity in Europe

Several bodies of literature highlight the crucial role of a permanent bureaucracy for state formation, sharing the idea that 'state capacity' is a necessary condition for statehood, with 'bureaucratic capacity' as one of its three dimensions (Hintze 1975[1906]; Moore 1966; Wood 1999). Those scholars interested in the rise of the modern state in Europe in the early 19th century mostly follow a Weberian definition of statehood. Many authors study bureaucratic capacity as the professionalization of state bureaucracies that allow for political control while enabling bureaucratic expertise, accomplished by establishing new recruitment rules and hence the establishment of different civil service systems. Others have examined bureaucratic capacity as the means by which bureaucratic action penetrated society via expanding public services and thus contributed to state capacity and formation.

In this paper, we take a novel view on bureaucratic capacity that somewhat bridges these two analytical perspectives. By studying the stability and change in the formal structures of (ministerial) government on a granular level, we reassess bureaucratic capacity and analyze the emerging organizational boundaries in which the new civil service workforce operated, which also inform about those state functions vis-à-vis society that were given priority and hence, bureaucratic resources. We compare structural change (and inertia) in Prussia and (Sweden-) Norway between 1805 and 1918 and trace the differentiation and specialization of the growing state bureaucracies in both regions on the level of individual ministerial units inside ministries and delegated authorities. Our empirical analyses show variation across these two regions and over time with regards to the areas of state activity that the novel bureaucratic capacity was invested in. However, the continuous functional differentiation and specialization also differs for these two state bureaucracies and this period, reflecting both external demands and internal dynamics of bureaucratic (re-)organization.

Goel, Rajeev, Illinois State University

Election campaign finance bans in parliamentary and presidential democracies and corruption

With the many causes of corruption and the numerous efforts to combat corruption largely ineffective in curbing corrupt activities worldwide, policymakers in some nations have been employing multipronged corruption abatement approaches. These include controlling or banning indirect channels of influence on corruption. In this regard, limitations on election campaign contributions are a set of policies many nations employ as an anti-corruption strategy. The relative effectiveness of campaign contribution reforms to achieve such objectives is the focus of the current work.

There are numerous reports in the media across different jurisdictions on improprieties in campaign finance and their impacts on ethics and governance¹, yet formal investigations of the impact of campaign finance reforms on corruption seem to be lacking (Dimant and Tosato (2018), Serra (2016)). However, there is formal research on the broader aspect of elections and corruption (Krause and Méndez (2009), Potrafke (2019), Vuković (2020)).

Presidential and parliamentary democracies have a number of qualitative differences that impact their functioning, legislative efficiency, and stability (see Horowitz (1990), Kaminsky (1997), Klüser and Breunig (2022), Mitchell (2000), Moe and Caldwell (1994), Siaroff (2003), Strøm (2000)).

The intent of donors to election campaigns is to get favors after successful candidates they backed either through direct personal gains (petty corruption – getting a government contract out of turn for example) or changing laws in their favor (grand corruption). Not all campaign contributions might be related to corruption – some may be legitimate, while others may be avenues for money laundering.

The effectiveness of different campaign contribution bans is unclear a priori, especially whether a similar ban would work across different types of democracies (e.g., presidential and parliamentary democracies). Furthermore, it could be the case that existing institutions with broad checks and balances on the use and abuse of government powers, and the detection/prosecution of illegal acts by the public might suffice to stem corruption, rendering campaign reforms ineffective or unnecessary. Finally, the different types of bans might be qualitatively different with dissimilar effects on corruption.

Key questions addressed in this research are:

- Are campaign finance reforms effective in curbing corruption?
- Are campaign finance reforms equally effective across parliamentary democracies and presidential democracies?

Using data from a large sample of nations, this research will study the effects of different campaign finance reforms on the prevalence of corruption, especially focusing on the differences between presidential and parliamentary democracies. The impact of campaign finance reforms on corruption has been largely ignored by the vast literature on the causes of corruption.

Goyal, Tanushree, Princeton University

Can local political leaders be impartial state agents? Evidence from experiments with India's rural politicians (With Sam van Noort and Mats Ahrenshop)

Local devolution of political and judicial powers has reshaped rural governance in developing countries. However, we know little whether local political leaders improve the quality of government impartially for all citizens. We investigate this question by conducting four vignette experiments with the first ever representative sample of rural politicians in Bihar. Each vignette randomly varies the gender and caste of a citizen in a law enforcement situation - enforcement of lockdown rules, inheritance law, land encroachment, and the open-defecation-free policy. We find that local representatives intervene to ensure citizens compliance with policy and, regardless of their gender or caste, strongly discriminate against (minority) women but mainly in inheritance enforcement. Conversely, we find little evidence for overt caste or gender discrimination in non-gender-progressive vignettes. We find similar results on conducting the inheritance experiment with local politicians who have formal judicial powers, suggesting local devolution of judicial power does not lower impartiality. Data indicate entrenched gender norms as a key explanation for bias. The findings show that local leaders are unlikely to enforce progressive reforms that clash with entrenched gender

norms, with implications for the study of decentralization and quality of government in patriarchal rural settings.

Knights, Mark, University of Warwick and **Ronald Kroeze**, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

A Prospectus for a History of Corruption

Quality of government has always been a historical concern. Across time and space, subjects and citizens have been concerned with the quality of government and sought to bring misgovernment to the attention of authorities or even to take more direct action to redress grievances. History thus offers a superb dataset for analysing aspects of the quality of government. The political and social science literature has, with some noble exceptions (including researchers at the QoG!), tended to neglect this in favour of more modern/presentist concerns; and historians have spent too little time testing the models suggested by their colleagues in these cognate disciplines. Methodologically, it can thus be productive to foster more of a conversation between historians and other scholars. One way of doing this is through the study of the history of corruption, which often offers a way of viewing larger quality of government problems. I will, together with Ronald Kroeze, be editing the Oxford Handbook on the History of Corruption and would like to use this opportunity to share some of its rationale and scope, and receive feedback from the group of scholars at the conference, since there may well be issues to which we may not have paid sufficient attention.

The volume will bring together 40-50 scholars, mostly historians but also some from other disciplines, to a) set out why a history of corruption might be useful to historians and other disciplines b) examine themes that cut across time and space such as public-private distinctions; conflicts of interest; gift-giving; social networks; ideas about wealth generation; the politicisation of anti-corruption; the influence of war, of legal frameworks, of gender etc c) explore national histories of corruption in order to highlight the importance of context and also examine how far local/petty corruption differed to central government/grand corruption d) highlight imperial and supra-national contexts which shaped global corruption and responses to it, and assess how far different imperial contexts produced different forms of colonial government and corruption. Throughout the volume attempts will be made to compare and contrast national contexts, since, in the discipline of history, this type of comparison has not been sufficiently well made, and to learn from social and political scientists who are more used to this type of comparative work. We think the results may help to inform current thinking about how change happens or why things stay the same, something which is central to the concern of the historian but also to policy makers.

Kolvani, Paulina, University of Oslo

On Mechanisms of Meritocratic Bureaucracy: Competence and Autonomy

Extant research has shown that meritocratic recruitment to bureaucracy is positively related to human development outcomes. Yet the mechanisms through which such outcomes are achieved are theoretically underdeveloped and empirically untested. We'll fill this gap by explicating the key properties of meritocratic bureaucracies: competence and autonomy. We

argue that the effects of competence and autonomy are embedded into two distinct theories of human development: one that emphasizes the need for a capable state, and another that underscores the need to constrain power-holders from abusing the power of the state. Meritocratic recruitment increases state capacity by improving the epistemic qualities of bureaucratic personnel, while autonomy creates a degree of misalignment of incentives between bureaucrats and politicians, enabling bureaucratic agents to thwart the undue influence of their political principals. We test the postulated effects using data on entrepreneurship, as one of the aspects of development, across the period 2006-2018 for 103 countries.

Keywords: meritocratic bureaucracy; competence; autonomy; entrepreneurship; mediation analysis

Nagawa, Maria, Sanford School of Public Policy / Duke University

Foreign Aid and the Performance of Bureaucrats

Although aid effectiveness has been extensively debated in the literature, we understand relatively little about aid's impact on the bureaucrats who implement development projects. In this paper, I evaluate how aid alters bureaucrats' incentives and sources of intrinsic motivation, and how this in turn affects their performance.

I argue that aid forces bureaucrats to make important tradeoffs between financial incentives and sources of intrinsic motivation. As a result, as financial incentives increase, bureaucrats are willing to apply more effort on aid projects, but reduce effort on their regular government work. To test my argument, I use survey experimental data collected from 559 bureaucrats across six of Uganda's main ministries.

I uncover a nuanced relationship: while bureaucrats are drawn to the financial benefits of aid projects and to departments with donor funding, their desire for peer coordination, equity and autonomy – all of which may be compromised by donor funding – remain largely stable. I further find that bureaucrats are more willing to apply effort to aid projects as financial incentives increase at the cost of working on their government duties. Notably, bureaucrats are also willing to apply more effort when departments are equitable.

This paper is novel in linking aid effectiveness to bureaucratic performance and builds on a small but growing literature on the performance of central government bureaucrats in the developing world. My findings are a key step towards understanding how donor activity impacts bureaucrats' motivation and behavior, which is essential not only to the success or failure of international development work around the world, but also relevant for long-term state capacity in aid recipient countries. My research can help to better structure donor engagements within governments as well as illuminate how bureaucrats respond to divergent incentives, enabling resource-constrained governments to design incentives in a way that enhances rather than undermines motivation.

Petrova, Bilyana, Texas Tech University / University of Zurich

Perceptions about Institutional Quality and Preferences for Economic Redistribution

This project examines the impact of perceptions about the quality of government on support for state sponsored redistribution. While existing scholarship has identified a number of factors that shape welfare state attitudes, individual evaluations of institutional quality have received relatively little attention. This omission is problematic because many countries around the world suffer from severe governance problems. I seek to address this gap by studying the way in which exposure to information about institutional inefficiency affects views on the role of the state in alleviating socio-economic inequality. To do this, I run a survey experiment embedded in a conjoint experiment in the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Poland. This empirical strategy allows me to explore how respondents' support for state-sponsored redistribution changes in response to their being primed to think about the quality of the institutional apparatus in their country. I begin by presenting participants with information about the misuse of state funds allocated to social benefits. I proceed to assess whether perceptions about the quality of government affect citizens' preferred policy interventions and policy designs. I first examine their support for state-sponsored redistribution, their belief that the government should bear the greatest responsibility for reducing economic inequality, and their willingness to turn to other actors. Crucially, I also explore the interaction between perceptions about institutional quality and respondents' income, education, economic insecurity, and political ideology. I then check if exposure to information about institutional inefficiency induces people to embrace specific policy designs. In a last step, I focus on other forms of inequality- alleviating policies citizens embrace.

Rotberg, Robert I., Harvard Kennedy School

Governance and National Outcomes

The concept of governance -- the performance of a government (local, provincial, national) or the delivery of essential services to constituents -- provides an ideal metric by which to explore and extend investigations of the quality of government in world regions beyond the West. Examining "governance" across its many dimensions allows researchers to examine "government capacity," "bureaucratic impartiality," and a host of related issues. Using "governance" as the lens through which to scrutinize government service delivery across as many as fifty-seven dimensions of performance can provide a fine-tuned diagnosis of whether and how a government meets the needs of its citizens. It also reveals in what areas a government is falling short, inadequately satisfying the expectations of its consumers (the citizenry).

Governmental jurisdictions and the personnel that run them exist to provide for the residents of a collective -- the state or municipality -- security and safety, a rule of law and mechanisms to regulate disputes, some method of expressing or channeling interests and concerns (perhaps political participation), a money and banking system with a (stable) currency, an economic framework whereby citizens can prosper, schools and schooling, medical and health services, a basic infrastructure (water supplies, roads, electric power, access to broadband and the like), and a host of other fundamental deliverables. (The list of items should be considered the subject of much further examination.)

For your 20th Anniversary meeting I will deliver a paper explaining what governance measures best and most accurately and how such measurements may be employed to

inform governments of all sizes and shapes how they can strengthen the ways in which they meet the most important needs of their citizens. (The paper will also discuss how those key “needs” can best be ascertained from citizens and other subjects of a government.)

My focus will be the application of the governance formula to national outcomes in the developing world, especially Africa and Asia. The formula is useful in much the same manner anywhere across the globe. But effective measurements of how the service delivery accomplishments of governments from, say, South Africa to Algeria, can actually be assessed can expand our knowledge of what African and Asian governments do and don't do for their peoples, and how they compare as governments to the managements of older jurisdictions.

Sabaté, Oriol, Universitat de Barcelona

Power sharing and administrative reforms: the case of Chile under military rule (1925-31)

A large body of literature seem to be in agreement on that power concentration increases decision-making efficiency in democracies, but that power sharing is the key to understand critical reform in autocracies. In this paper we shall argue, based on data from a case study of Chile before and after the breakdown of democracy in 1924, that power sharing may indeed block reforms in democracies but that it can also do so in autocracies.

Chile undertook a significant reform of its bureaucracy in the late 1920s. This reform coincided with a period of political turmoil and military dictatorship. Interestingly, some authors suggest that parliamentary control over the executive had been blocking previous attempts to reform and expand the state. Using novel longitudinal data on number of personnel and salaries in the Ministry of Finance, as well as military salaries and a comprehensive compendium of administrative and fiscal reforms, we examine the degree to which the Chilean state reformed its bureaucracy during this period and the role that power-sharing played in it. Our preliminary results suggest that the military dictatorship brought about substantial administrative reforms based on a severe restructuring of the fiscal administration (and the public administration in general) as well as meritocratic rules of appointment and promotion. As a result, the fiscal administration experienced three important changes. First, the number of personnel slightly decreased during the second half of the 1920s, but this was entirely based on customs agents (non-customs personnel indeed increased significantly throughout the period). Second, public expenditure and salaries in the Ministry of finance increased notably under military rule, with some professional categories (e.g., superintendents) reaching historical record high levels. Third, a new generation of civil engineers coped most of the new high-level positions in the Ministry. This resulted in higher direct tax revenues in Chile during this period.

The ability of the dictatorship to sideline previous powerful actors in parliament (mostly landowners) and to gain the acquiescence of the army as well as mining and industrialist interests appear to be key to these transformations. The veto power that powerful actors opposed to state building had during the so-called Parliamentary period (1891-1924) allowed them to block most of the reforms that previous administrations (most notably Alessandri's in the early 1920s) had tried to implement. The dictatorship built a new support coalition based on young officers and middle-class professionals that resented what they saw as an

inefficient oligarchic parliamentary system. The new regime succumbed to the 1930s economic crises and the rise of social turmoil, but some of the administrative reforms persisted, setting Chile on a path to become one of the strongest states in the Southern cone to date.

Skaaning, Svend-Erik, Aarhus University

Does ethno-political exclusion cause civil war onset via grievances? Evidence from comparative case studies

This paper uses qualitative evidence from 14 cases between 1991 and 2021, where a politically excluded group is involved in a conflict onset, to investigate whether group grievances concerning political exclusion explain the onset of civil war. The analysis finds support for the prominent proposition in many cases, where grievance-based mobilization triggers civil war when governments counter mobilized groups with either indiscriminate repression or an incoherent mix of repressive and accommodative policies. These strategies were typically adopted by states that did not have the capacity to selectively target dissidents or to repress or accommodate their challengers consistently. Moreover, the relationship was reversed in other cases, where armed conflict seemed to be a key motivation for rebellion because it led to disruption of public order and the exclusion of ethnic groups. This means that while there is substantial backing for the exclusion-civil war relationship, reverse causality has also been common. These findings call for a revision of unidirectional versions of grievance-based theory and suggest that empirical assessments should do more to tackle endogeneity.

Ting, Michael, Columbia University

Organizational Capacity and Project Dynamics

It is now a truism that organizations are crucial for the outcome of government policies in modern society. Election candidates can make platform promises and legislators can pass laws, but a massive bureaucratic machinery is needed to translate statutes into on-the-ground results. Capturing organizational performance is obviously a formidable task, but practitioners and scholars have increasingly coalesced around the concept of organizational capacity as a central determinant.

The appeal of organizational capacity is seemingly obvious. Higher capacity --- loosely speaking, a better ability to "get things done" --- should produce outputs that are more timely, more efficient, or of higher quality. A wide variety of studies have shown that under-resourced or under-paid organizations produce worse results. This perspective implicitly assumes that organizations have coherent objectives and significant latitude to achieve them. Yet the assumption is tenuous when internal or external interests can exploit institutional processes to reshape outcomes. Under the threat of contestation, the effects of capacity become less clear. To take a simple example, suppose that a legal regime grants broad standing to sue project developers on environmental grounds. A high capacity organization might invite litigation because victors can be confident that it would implement

their proposals quickly. Project designers would then have incentives to shape proposals to prevent delays and revisions.

This paper provides a dynamic theory of the interaction of organizational capacity and the institutional environment on public policy. Capacity is modeled as the probability that the bureaucracy can move a project toward completion, while institutional barriers are modeled as the probability that an opposing interest can revise project characteristics. Regardless of their success, attempts at revision impose costly delays. The model produces several implications for the size and distribution of public projects. Projects invite revisions when they are small in size, unequal in distribution, and institutional mechanisms for obstruction are powerful relative to capacity. In response, politicians design projects to avoid revisions, for example by equalizing distributive benefits, or inflating project costs to deter dilatory revisions. High capacity bureaucracies are exploited to create highly unequal projects, while lower capacity bureaucracies produce more egalitarian projects in expectation. We show that “matched” levels of capacity and institutional barriers produce inefficiently sized projects and minimize welfare. This suggests that political systems are best served by high capacity and low institutional barriers, or low capacity and high institutional barriers.

Vogler, Jan P., University of Konstanz

The Political Economy of Public Bureaucracy: The Emergence of Modern Administrative Organizations

How can we explain the significant variation in the organization and performance of public bureaucracies across countries, across regions, and between the levels of the administrative hierarchy that we observe in the present day? Considering high levels of path dependence in bureaucratic organization, this book project explains divergence in the institutions of public administrations through a set of historical analyses focused on the 19th and early 20th centuries—a time period crucial for the establishment of modern bureaucracies. The first part of the book manuscript deals with the influence of socio-economic groups in countries that enjoyed domestic political autonomy. Three social classes had fundamentally different interests in the organization of the state apparatus, and their relative political influence was a key factor determining its organizational characteristics. The second part of the manuscript deals with the impact of foreign rule on the bureaucratic organization of countries that did not enjoy domestic political autonomy. Specifically, an in-depth case study and empirical analysis focus on within-country regional variation in bureaucratic organization in Poland, which was historically ruled by three empires with vastly different bureaucracies. I develop an account of path dependence and suggest that persisting differences in culture and perceptions of public administration are key drivers of regional divergence. Finally, the another in-depth case study and empirical test focus on variation in bureaucratic organization between levels of the administrative hierarchy and provides in Romania, which was historically partially ruled by the Habsburg Empire and partially autonomous. I develop a theoretical framework of imperial pervasiveness that explains differential effectiveness of external rule along the administrative hierarchy.

Wirsching, Elisa, New York University

Politicized Meritocracy: Determinants of Partisan and Racial Selection in US City Government

Issues of representation in bureaucracies are central to debates on how governments should select their employees, and a rich body of research emphasizes the importance of a representative government for policy-making and public service provision. Yet, recent work on the composition of US bureaucracies reveals significant gaps in the descriptive representation of partisan and racial groups in government and their consequences for service delivery. What drives partisan and racial selection in professionalized bureaucracies?

To address this lacuna, I combine fine-grained administrative data on the characteristics of employees across agencies of New York City (NYC), including civil service exam data, payroll information, promotions, attritions, and official voter registration records. This effort provides a detailed picture of selection in one of America's largest bureaucracies, covering more than 560,000 employees on the NYC payroll since 2014.

I illustrate various representational gaps between local bureaucrats and citizens, including differences in representativeness across agencies, geographic regions, and time. For instance, while Democrats and African Americans are underrepresented in NYC's police and fire departments relative to their jurisdictions, these groups are overrepresented in the correction and social services departments.

Next, I focus on selection within the NYPD and unpack the drivers of descriptive representation by tracing the types of individuals selecting into the bureaucracy and examining differential career trajectories of more than 58,000 officers. I find consistent differences in selection dynamics across individual officers by partisanship and race. While most NYPD aspirants (exam-takers who pass the first entry exam) are Democrats and non-White, Republican and White exam-takers are more likely to advance to the hiring stage. Similarly, Republican and White officers are more likely to gain higher ranks in NYPD's hierarchy, are more often appointed to elite units, and receive more departmental awards than Democrats and non-Whites. Additionally, I show consistent trends of homophily: Teams headed by Democratic (black or Hispanic) leaders have lower shares of lower-ranked Republican (White) members and exhibit higher racial diversity. Finally, Republican and White officers are more likely to remain on the force beyond the retirement age and are less likely to be dismissed or terminated.

In a final step, I examine how prominent cases of police violence affect selection in local law enforcement. I show that police killings, particularly the murder of George Floyd, substantially increase turnover at the NYPD and affect the racial and partisan composition on the margins. Leveraging the substantial protest movement following the murder of George Floyd in May 2020 in an event study design, I show that Republicans and White officers were 35% and 50% more likely to leave the NYPD force immediately after George Floyd's death than Democratic and non-White employees, respectively.

By delineating the complexities of selection in modern bureaucracies, this study provides new evidence about how independent, professional bureaucracies are politicized endogenously. I show how dynamics of self-selection, homophily, and institutional inertia in screening and

promotion processes can lead to unrepresentative, politically charged bureaucracies – even without direct political control.

Wittberg, Emanuel, Linköping University

Influence Beyond the Dinner Table: Family Ties and Public Administration Jobs

Do kinship ties affect one's chances of acquiring a public sector job and do they, in such cases, trump formal qualifications? These questions have been subject to scrutiny by both scholars and policymakers, but to date, mainly as a result of data limitations, the empirical evidence is scarce and unclear. This paper explores the role played by kinship in relation to qualified administrative public sector jobs in the context of Sweden, an egalitarian society and top-ranked meritocracy. The paper examines whether an individual's chance of acquiring a public sector job increases if one of his/her parents is already employed in the same part of the public sector and/or organisation. The analysis employs detailed register data that contain complete information on kinship relations. It focuses on state agencies and municipalities in Sweden between 2001 and 2016 and explores the mechanisms behind the intergenerational transfer of public sector jobs in an egalitarian and low-corruption setting. The result reveals that having parents employed in qualified positions at a state agency increases the chance of acquiring a qualified job at the parent's workplace by approximately 34 percentage points. The corresponding parental effect for municipal jobs is 2–3 percentage points. This parental effect can in part be explained by a higher probability of having acquired valuable work experience prior to graduation and the parental effect is stronger for low-achieving graduates.