



# 86th KUASS / 8th KU-TUFS Seminar



Kyoto University African Studies Seminar;  
Kyoto University - Tokyo University of  
Foreign Studies, Research Exchange Seminar

## “Conjunctural State Autonomy and Policy Change in South Africa, 1994 -2014”

 **Tuesday 18 Dec 2018, 15:00 - 17:00**

 **Room #331 (Conference Room II),  
3F, Inamori Center, Kyoto University**

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This presentation narrates the exercise of state autonomy to achieve macro-economic stability and effect incremental policy change in South Africa between 1994 and 2014. Employing a composite case study of the macro-economic policy framework; the Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) (1996) strategy, and two micro policies, Free Basic Electricity (FBE) (2003) and No Fee Schools (NFS) (2006), it demonstrates how the post-apartheid state introduced reforms at macro and micro policy levels. Most importantly, the ability to exercise this relative state autonomy is a direct result of a configuration herein termed conjunctural state autonomy.

Conjunctural state autonomy is comprised of at least three elements, namely, the historical context, the prevailing neoliberal paradigm, as well as a professional bureaucracy. The idea of conjunctural state autonomy is significant for understanding and predicting South African public policy and politics going forward. Conjunctural state autonomy reveals how the exercise of relative state autonomy is structurally mediated. The emergence and exercise of conjunctural state autonomy are therefore contingent on time and space factors hence the identification of the three elements of historical context, the prevailing framework of ideas, as well as a professional bureaucracy. The exercise of relative state autonomy within this configuration is thus time and context specific; its applicability is subject to the concurrent availability of the three core elements that comprise conjunctural state autonomy. Arguing from a historical institutionalist perspective, this presentation typically focuses on determinants at macro-political and economic levels, ideas, as well as on the attendant institutional arrangements.

**Keys words:** *State Autonomy, Institutional Analysis, Conjunctural State Autonomy, Neoliberal Paradigm, Policy-making, Temporality, Path-Dependence, and Classification.*

■ **Mabutho Shangase (PhD)** completed his Ph.D. in African Studies at the University of Edinburgh in 2016. His thesis was titled “Stability and Change in South African Public Policy: 1994-2014”. He holds an MA degree in Development Studies from the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (2008), and an MBA in Public Services Management from Aston University, Birmingham, United Kingdom (2005) (on a Chevening Scholarship). He currently teaches research methodology and public policy at post-graduate level at the University of Pretoria. Dr. Shangase has also conducted research on regional integration focusing on the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the South African Customs Union (SACU).



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