

What happens when international environmental and climate politics are implemented in remote places? How can local support and participation in the policymaking be ensured? How can transparency and accountability be assured?

From her fieldwork in a forest landscape north-east in Argentina, Cecilia Salinas draws threads from global policy-making through the State's need for power in the periphery to the site-specific local context.

In her dissertation Salinas argues that statecraft is produced through deceitful practices that simultaneously undermine and maintain political authority. This paradoxical characteristic is the source of state power and is sustained through elusive appearances that are difficult to discern and hence oppose.

Elusive appearances allow government institutions to create illusions of transparency by the production of documents, reports, and maps that give the impression of solidity. Salinas' dissertation shows that these appearances seldom coincided with the reality they aimed to depict. In this context reporting, accounting and mapping do not create visibility, but blurriness.

Salinas claims therefore that it is more precise to speak about translucency than transparency in relation to policymaking and implementation. Translucency refers to a deceptive transparency where actions are not easily read because they are discrepant, hid or concealed.

The dissertation is based on one-year fieldwork in Argentina among Mbya-guaraní indigenous people, landless tobacco growers and bureaucrats and NGO representatives in Misiones and in Buenos Aires. The case study is the UNESCO *Yabotí* biosphere reserve. The area of concern is an unequal social, political and economic landscape shaped by more than a century of forest exploitation, migration, privatisation, and concentration of resources and land under several cycles of boom and bust. The State has always been involved through complex interrelationships of global trends, and need of economic and political power. These intricate relationships are precisely the focus of this dissertation.

Through a series of empirical examples Salinas shows that policies are not close-ended guidelines for governance, but are subject to exclusionary and cloaked power negotiations that ultimately enable or constrain the provision of services delivered by the State. These measures ensure the concentration of power in few hands and simultaneously structure and shape the possible scope of action of other actors.

The result of Salinas' work is a very detailed account which aims to challenge established policy models and uncover the complexity in the relations that shapes political practice.