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Course Reader

Social Conflicts over Extractivism in Latin America: Concepts, Theories and Empirical Evidence

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Course Reader

Social Conflicts over Extractivism in Latin America: Concepts, Theory and Empirical Evidence

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A. Introduction, Central Concepts and Analytical Approaches

1. Introduction and Learning Objectives

Induced by an upsurge in global demand for mineral and fossil fuels as well as agricultural commodities, investments in extractive industries have grown significantly in the last two decades in Latin America (Bridge 2004). All over the continent, this increase in extractive projects has caused a rise in social conflicts (Hoogenboom 2012; Bebbington 2012a; Bebbington / Bury 2013). Indeed, conflicts over how to use natural resources are among the most visible social conflicts in current Latin America.

These conflicts have profoundly shaped the face of many resource-dependent countries in the region (and continue to do so). They (and their consequences) have a deep impact on peoples' daily lives as well as on their future well-being: they can generate situations of violent confrontations (among people in the local community, with companies or with the state) or they can severely damage social cohesion and trust and thereby impede social and economic stability. On the other hand, social conflicts can produce positive social or political changes, for instance they may lead to processes of institutional innovation that ultimately improve peoples' situations.

This course offers insights into the dynamics and outcomes of current social conflicts over extractivism in Latin America (particularly in the Andean region). It is structured as follows: Firstly, it will present some conceptual and theoretical insights related to the study of social conflicts in general and conflicts over nature in particular. Then it will proceed to an analysis of current conflicts over extractivism in Latin America: the different types, causes, processes of mobilization and organization-building, structural factors that shape them and outcomes. Each session contains recommendations for preparatory reading. All other references can be found in the general biography at the end of the document.

The learning objectives of this course are as follows:

- Students will become familiar with and understand concepts and theories which can be used to study social conflicts over extractivism
- Students will learn how to use different analytical tools in order to investigate and analyze current conflicts over extractivism in Latin America
- In particular, students will become familiar with the political ecology framework and the contentious politics framework
- Students will become familiar with the causes and different aspects/dimensions of social contention over extractivism

- Students will learn about several empirical cases of social contention over extractivism in Latin America
- Students will engage with the theoretical insights produced by several empirical studies on the topic and on the region
- Students will receive an overview of the academic debates and research in the area.

2. Concepts and Analytical Approaches

This section will introduce two analytical approaches that can be used to analyze social conflicts over extractivism: the political ecology and the contentious politics frameworks. While studies conducted in the framework of political ecology focus on the underlying causes of conflicts over nature, the contentious politics framework concentrates on the dynamics of political conflicts and their outcomes. Before explaining these frameworks, we will define what "conflict" means in this context. Similarly, because states are central actors in many socio-political conflicts concerning nature, it is also important to understand "the state" means in this context and what drives its actions in these social conflicts.

2.1. What is conflict?

The term "conflict" is often used and seldom specified (both in the academic literature as well as in its daily use). Consequently, people may mean very different things when speaking of conflicts. On the other hand, because conflicts are evident in any society, the concept would seem on its face not to require any further explanation.

In our understanding, conflict can be viewed as a social action emanating from a relationship between at least two individuals or collective actors who perceive that they have contradictory interests, goals or needs. Conflicts, in turn, are structured through power and interests. The categories of "power" and "interests" serve not only to designate concepts, but also to connect conflicts over resources back to social relationships (such as gender and class relationships, race and/or ethnicity based exclusion and refusal of access) which give rise to the conditions that shape these conflicts. Thus, an analytical bridge can be built between conflicts as social action and structural conditions (Dietz / Engels 2017).

An existing social relationship does not necessarily require those involved in a conflict to know each other personally: few participants in protest movements personally know the people in leadership positions of a multinational company that holds the concessions for gold exploration and exploitation and demand use of the areas - and vice-versa. Contradictory interests, goals and needs are not only features of specific contentious situations but are deeply embedded in overarching social structures (gender and class relations, international divisions of labor, unequal distribution of access to land, etc.), which are inherent to the social world and form the social framework for all social action, including conflict. Conflicts are social acts, but they should be understood as always embedded in overarching (social and political) structures. These structures form the context in which social conflicts may take place, but as such they still do not constitute specific or necessary conflicts. It is only when these social contradictions are perceived, interpreted and assessed by social actors (for example, as being unjust or as a

threat to their existence), that they become significant and thus lead to social action (Moore 1978). If actors translate these contradictory social relationships and the perception thereof into action, then a conflict exists that we can observe and analyze.

However, not every structural inconsistency or collective or personal grievances perceived by an actor or actors will result in social action. Due to asymmetrical power relations, actors may not have the means available for open contestation. Thus, a conflict only exists if a certain sequence of actions between actors can be observed. The sequence and nature of these actions can take very different forms, depending on the strategies, tactics and the resources available to actors.

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- Dietz, K. / Engels, B. (2017): Contested Extractivism: Actors and Strategies in Conflicts over Mining. *DIE ERDE,* 148 (2-3), 111-120.

2.2. What is the State?

Over time, different dominant conceptualizations about the state and its transformations have emerged within the social sciences. During the 1950s and 1960s the dominant theories analytically ignored state agency (action by states independent of society) as a driver of political processes and social change. They understood states to be rather a direct expression of power relations in society. In Marxist theory for instance the state was indicated as “an instrument of exploitation of wage labour” (Engels 2010 [1884]: 210) and therefore as a vehicle for the bourgeois to maintain their power over the proletariat.

By contrast, pluralist theories did not perceive states to be simply an instrument of the powerful, but as a neutral playing field in which conflicting interests were discussed and bargained until participants reached a compromise which would reflect the proportional strength of the conflicting positions (Dahl 1961).

On the other hand, modernization theorists viewed the state as a neutral bureaucratic tool that would help to foster processes of industrialization and democratization in the so-called underdeveloped countries (Lipset 1960; Bell 1962). Behavioralist scholars put the emphasis on decisions and attitudes of individual citizens and their impact on states and the quality of governance (Almond / Verba 1965). All these approaches conceptualized states as homogenous and unitary objects whose actions were determined by external actors and interests. Along these lines, neorealism, the predominant school of thought within the field of international relations, understood the state as a black box whose international relations were

determined by the position of that state in comparison to other states in the international system (Waltz 1959).

During the 1970s and 1980s, the social sciences left behind the idea of an objective state and began to emphasize state agency instead. Nicos Poulantzas (1973) challenged the idea of states as neutral objects of class interests from a Neo-Marxist perspective. Poulantzas argued that the state was not the mere reflection of the complex structural interactions but "exhibits an opacity and resistance of its own" (1978: 130), meaning that it was not a neutral agent, set out only to mediate between conflicting interests. It was rather a contested field of power relations, in which the capacity to influence state actions is very unevenly spread among different interest groups. Furthermore, he argued that the state strategically selects and favors the interests of particular hegemonic classes through their domination of specific state branches and through the preservation of capitalist forms of ownership and appropriation (Poulantzas 1978: 137). But this hegemonic position of specific influential class fractions is not constantly fixed but indeed also contested by subordinated groups that try to change social power relations to their benefit. Hence the state is a contested terrain in which different groups and classes pursue hegemony.

On the other hand, Maynz and Scharpf (1975) investigated the conditions of successful political and social state intervention, while Charles Tilly (1975) and Stein Rokkan (1970) published comprehensive studies about modern state formation in Western Europe. These debates resulted in the formulation of a theoretical approach termed “historical institutionalism” which focuses on the capacity of the state to regulate social and economic processes that have been developed over a long period of time. Hence, states were perceived as significantly shaping their societies through the accumulation of practices over time, not just on behalf of one group or as a neutral mediator among multiple contenders.

However, it proved difficult to demonstrate that states are in fact homogenous actors with clearly defined collective interests. Therefore, Migdal and Schlichte distinguish between “seeing” the state (the image people have of the state as a coherent, unitary actor) and “doing” the state which involves the diverse, multiple actions of state actors as well as the myriad responses and interactions with state officials of non-state actors. These authors propose a definition of the state as “a field of power marked by the use and threat of violence and shaped by 1) the image of a coherent, controlling organization in a territory, which is a representation of the people bounded by that territory, and 2) the actual practices involving those staffing its multiple parts and those they engage in their roles as state officials.” (Migdal / Schlichte 2005: 15). Also Bebbington et al. (2015) stress the rather incoherent structure of states and their institutions which they see as constituting a complex fabric that combines structural features with multiple (collective and individual) agencies. Regarding the first, states can be understood in terms of the laws and rules executed through bureaucratic processes. All of these “exist as

a palimpsest of institutions and organizational forms created by different governing coalitions at different points in time […] It is therefore more than likely that the institutions of the state will pull in different directions in any one point in time" (Bebbington et al., 2015: 6).

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- Migdal, J. / Schlichte, K. (2005): Rethinking the State, in: Schlichte, K. (ed.): *The Dynamics of States. The Formation and Crises of State Domination*. Abingdon: Routledge, 1-40.

2.3. Political Ecology

Political ecology can best be understood as a cross-disciplinary "field of research", which asks how social power relations, such as class, gender, 'race', ethnicity, mediate knowledge about, access to, and control over natural resources. It has been nourished by various critical theories, disciplines and strands of research (Peet / Watts 2004; Robbins 2004; Leff 2006; Dietz 2014; Perreault et al. 2015).

Political ecologists ask how knowledge about, access to and control over natural resources is mediated by social hierarchies and relations of difference based on power relations. Over the years, the field has experienced a series of productive differentiations. The most prominent approaches that have evolved since the 1970s are neo-Marxian, feminist, post-structural, and post-colonial approaches to political ecology.

2.3.1. Different Approaches of Political Ecology

A *neo-Marxian approach* in Political Ecology conceptualizes nature and social inequality in political economic terms, as grounded in the social relations of capitalist production, distribution, and the international division of labor (Blaikie / Brookfield 1987). David Harvey's analytical lexicon on the concept of 'accumulation by dispossession' (Harvey 2003) is often used to locate place-based struggles around the commodification of nature within the wider scope of recent transformations of global capitalism (Fairhead et al. 2012). In the 1990s a *feminist Political Ecology* gained currency and aimed to bridge both the initial gender gap in political economy narratives and to counter the gendered binary codifications that link nature and emotions to femininity, but culture and reason to masculinity (Plumwood 1993). One key question it asks: is there a gender dimension to the struggles over "knowledge, power and practice, (...) politics, justice and governance" (Watts 2000: 257) that are related to environmental issues? Recent poststructuralist and performative approaches to feminist theory

have explored how gender and gendered subjectivities are constituted alongside other identities and markers of difference (class, 'race', ethnicity) through the material interaction with and symbolic understandings of nature and changes in the environment (Nightingale 2011; Elmhirst 2011). Parallel with the emergence of a feminist political ecology, a *poststructuralist political ecology* had gained momentum. Analyses focus on the micro-dynamics of socio-nature transformation, as well as everyday resistance, subject constructions and different cultural and discursive articulations, practices and meanings. Scholars ask how certain ideas and knowledge about nature, ecology, society and political economy shape the way people and societies perceive and use nature and how this perception shapes subjectivities and power positions, or forms of eco-governmentality (Escobar 1996, 2008). *Latin American political ecology* attempts to sharply question the Western concepts of modernity and development. It challenges Western epistemology by claiming strong continuities of global coloniality which are inscribed into societal relationships to nature and still suppress and exclude subordinate cultures and knowledges. The Latin American perspective is characterized by a "historical and political understanding of the power and knowledge relations that regulate the processes of social-ecological appropriation and reproduction" (Martin 2013; Alimonda 2011; Alimonda et al. 2017; Leff 2006; Ulloa 2015). Hence, the focus of scholars in the tradition of Hector Alimonda, Enrique Leff and Arturo Escobar lies on subalternized knowledges that potentially could become the sites, where alternative de-colonial projects can develop.

2.3.2. Studying Conflicts through the Lenses of Political Ecology

Political ecology approaches claim that nature and society are mutually interlinked and constantly reproducing each other. The environment is not perceived as an object of human agency but as an arena of contested entitlements and cultural meanings related to nature that can vary to a large extent from one region to another (Martinez-Alier 2004: 8; Escobar 2006). Therefore, the focus of analysis lies on historic developments and power relations that evolved over centuries and influenced the emergence of conflicts. From a political ecological perspective, social power relations are inscribed into nature through transformative material practices and symbolic representations. Transformative material practices involve all actions performed by humans to appropriate and modify nature in order to fulfill their own needs. Symbolic representations include social categories as class, gender, and ethnicity which are inscribed into nature through uneven distribution and access to resources. Therefore environmental conflicts are understood as social, economic, political and cultural conflicts at the same time. Conflicts over resources do seldom occur because of environmental properties such as chemical and mineral composition of resources. Resource conflicts usually emerge

because social power relations find their expression in the way that entitlement and access to, control over and distribution of resources is regulated. The effects of humans' transformative material practices on the other hand unfold impacts which in turn influence social actions and institutions. One example is the development of new genetic engineering technologies which would be impossible without the extraction of natural resources. It contains the possibility for multinational corporations to patent particular DNA sequences of seeds that were formerly used and spread among indigenous people in the global South. This essentially modifies not only the global regulation of intellectual property rights but also the access to seeds for indigenous peoples. The consequences can reach from threats to food safety and land conflicts to legal proceedings between intellectual property institutions and multinational companies. To analyze conflict from a political ecological perspective means to ask the following questions: What do different social actors do in relation to nature? How do they perceive and interpret environmental change? How do environmental conditions change and transform social actions and institutions? What are the power sources of different actors and how do social categories mediate environmental conflicts?

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- Perreault, T. / Bridge, G. / McCarthy, J. (Eds., 2015): The *Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology*. London: Routledge (Part I: Introduction)

2.4. Contentious Politics

While the political ecology approach analyzes the relationship between social relations (defined by power positions) and nature and in this way uncovers the social and political causes of many conflicts (over nature), the contentious politics approach aims at understanding dynamics and outcomes of conflicts in general.

The approach or framework was developed by the US American scholars Douglas McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly (2001) with the aim of broadening the field of research (so far limited to European and North American social movements), both concerning the subject of analysis as well as the theoretical and methodological approaches.

The term "contentious politics" is defined as "episodic, public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects, when (a) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the claims and (b) the claims would, if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants." (McAdam / Tarrow / Tilly 2001: 5). Hence, contentious politics combine three main elements: Contention, understood as "making claims that bear on someone else's interests," collective action as denoting the "coordinating efforts on behalf of

shared interests and programs," and politics as a realm of interaction in which at least one of the actors is an agent of governments (Tilly / Tarrow 2006: 4-5). Those making claims are termed "challengers" in the framework´s conceptual language.

"Contentious politics" constitutes a broad concept able to integrate various empirical specifications, such as rebellions, war, terrorism, riots, spontaneous protest actions and social movements. The latter constitute but one form of contentious politics defined as "sustained challenges to power holders in the name of a population living under the jurisdiction of those power holders by means of concerted public displays of that population's worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment "WUNC"" (McAdam / Tarrow / Tilly 2007: 19). Other forms of contentious politics such as single event protests do not qualify as social movements, because they lack temporal duration or because they are dominated by a rationale of (sustained) violence, in which case they would be categorized as civil wars, ethnic or religious conflicts or revolutions (Tilly / Tarrow 2006: 8-9).

The different forms of contentious politics are produced by similar mechanisms that combine into particular processes (McAdam / Tarrow / Tilly 2007: 18). These mechanisms can be structural (i.e. triggered by structural conditions that will not change in a short time-frame), cognitive (which means related to peoples' perceptions and interpretations) and relational (i.e. based in social interactions). Their specific combinations and temporal sequencing leads to the different forms of contentious politics. It should be noted that these forms are not fix. Single protest events can evolve into social movements and social movements may end up in full-fledged civil wars. Hence, one of the objectives of the contentious politics approach is to identify the mechanisms that cause specific forms of contentious politics and understand why they change over time. Moreover, it aims at identifying how specific mechanisms or combinations thereof lead to specific social or political outcomes.

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- Tarrow, S. / Tilly, C. (2006): Introduction, in: Ibid, *Contentious Politics*. Boulder, Colorado: Paradigm.

2.4.1. The Emergence of Contentious Politics: A Theory of Mobilization

In 1965, Mancur Olson formulated his now famous "free rider" problem of collective action (contentious politics are collective actions). Based in economic theory, Olson explained that rational actors tend to not participate in collective actions that may lead to some common benefit or the realization of common interests, since they will prefer to free-ride and expect others to do the work. Olson´s solution to this problem was to focus on the selective incentives

for those that actively participate. Hence, selective incentives explain collective action. Departing from this insight, back in the 1970s social movement researchers concluded that interests or, negatively termed, grievances or problems alone will never be a sufficient condition to incite collective action or contention ("grievances are everywhere, movements not", Japp 1984: 316).

Consequently, the emergence of contentious politics must be explained by a theory of mobilization. In a very rough summary, the perspective holds that contention emerges when three mechanisms are triggered (McAdam et al. 2001; Tarrow / Tilly 2006): First, actors (termed challengers in the frameworks' terminology) must attribute opportunity or threat to a specific situation. This in turn can spur processes of social appropriation understood as the whole range of activities realized to command resources needed to mobilize support, further resources and sustain action in order to press for claims (over time). This includes the creation or activation of mobilization structures or organizations, alliance-building with other actors in order to increase strength as well as the construction and diffusion of credibly collective action frames that motivate people to participate in contention (see also next sessions).

Once completed, these processes of social appropriation may lead to contentious action that implies the use of different protest repertoires. These actions, in turn may result in heightened interaction between challengers (mobilized people) and their counterparts. It is important to note that different actors can be involved in contentious politics, beneath state authorities and the actual challengers. The latter may be supported by external actors such as NGOs or foundations, while their opponents may be companies or other private actors or counter-movements (and not the state directly, although it is involved as an object or party to the claims). When collective action elicits reactions by other actors (mostly authorities) contention can feed on itself: Interactions shape further perceptions of opportunities and threat and in doing so may spur next rounds of struggle. They can also strengthen or weaken organizations or alliances and modify strategies, tactics or contentious framings.

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- McAdam, D. / Tarrow, S. / Tilly, C. (2007): Comparative Perspectives on Contentious Politics. In: Lichbach, M. / Zuckerman, A. (Eds.): *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure: Advancing Theory in Comparative Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 260-290.

2.4.2. Opportunities and Threats

Processes of mobilization result from the perception of opportunities and/or threat which are defined as "concrete options, chances, and risks that directly inform mobilizing decisions" (Koopmans 1999: 104) that lead to different cost-benefit calculations with regard to protest mobilization. As to opportunities, actors perceive that the time is right to act (because of some sort of signal). Regarding threat, actors perceive that in the absence of collective action the chances for realizing their interests will lower significantly. In this sense, social mobilization can be *opportunity induced* or *threat induced* (Almeida 2003). However, it is important to note that neither opportunities nor threat are objective factors. They never exist per se, but must always first be interpreted and perceived by actors.

Research has focused on political opportunities or threats defined as “signals sent from the political system” (Meyer 2004) as the main trigger for social mobilization. They can be divided into two types. First, they result from reactions from state actors to protest actors and, secondly, from relations between protest groups and political elites and third parties (Schock 2005: 30). States generally have four options for responding to protest groups: they can ignore it, appease it (conciliate), grant required reforms or suppress it violently (repress) (Ibid: 31). As far as the second type of opportunity is concerned, empirical research has demonstrated a robust positive relationship between alliances of challengers with factions of the political elite and successful protest mobilizations. As a rule, intra-elitist conflicts (elite-split) precede such alliances. Alliances with elite groups increase the chances of success for mobilizations and may increase the resource base and legitimacy of protest actors, which in turn lowers the cost of collective action. The same applies to the support of third parties.

Ideally, political opportunities arise via two paths: In a top-down variant, as mentioned above, when elites are divided among themselves and a fraction seeks to strengthen its own position of power over rival elite groups, it directly or indirectly supports protest movements. In addition, by approaching social organizations and movements, elites can identify themselves as "tribunes of the people" (Tarrow) and thereby gain a greater support base. On the other hand, the mobilized actors are sometimes able to reveal or bring about cracks in the regime (or elite splits) and open up new opportunities for themselves and/or other challengers.

However, not all opportunities are political in nature. Research has shown that also cultural (Hollands / Vail 2012), discursive (Koopmans / Statham 1999) or legal opportunities (Wilson / Rodriguez 2006) may motivate social mobilizations. The logic operating behind these other forms of opportunities is the same as in the case of political opportunities: they signal to potential challengers that the time is ripe for action.

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- Meyer, D. (2004): Protest and Political Opportunities. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 30, 125-145.

2.4.3. Mobilization Contexts, Alliances and 'Scale Shift'

Opportunities (political and others) play an important role for processes of social mobilization, but in themselves are not sufficient to explain their origin (McAdam et al 1988: 709). Before they can carry out protest actions, collective actors must first organize themselves. However, it is important to note that social organizations and social movements are not the same. Organizations may be the bearer of social movements, but they are not the movement itself (defined as "sustained challenge to authorities", see before).

On the other hand, while many social movements are based on professional social movement organizations (SMO; McCarthy / Zald 1977), many others are rooted in informal organizations and networks, which were not created specifically with the aim of social mobilization (Tilly 1978: 54; McAdam et al 1988: 710). Indeed, "mobilization structures" understood as "collective vehicles, informal as well as formal, through which people mobilize and engage in collective action" (McAdam et al 1996: 3) can be very diverse: from family and friendly contexts, through voluntary associations such as church congregations or associations, to individual work departments within companies (McCarthy 1996: 141). These social contexts are particularly suitable for mobilization processes because "networks are powerful shapers of behavior" (Snow / McAdam 2000: 63). People who belong to the same group are usually bound together (admittedly to varying degrees) by a shared collective identity, and therefore interact (more or less) in solidarity. In such contexts, group-compatible behavior is rewarded with social esteem and recognition by others (i.e. incentives for participation exist). Conversely, the prevailing social pressure also increases the individual's cost of not participating in collective action (Friedman / McAdam 1992: 163). In addition, the foreseeable response of the collective raises the individual's expectations for success and thus their willingness to mobilize (*critical mass effect*) (Klandermans 1997; Kurzman 1996). In addition, empirical studies have shown that group solidarity (or even social pressure) acts as a mobilizing factor, especially in situations of violence against collective challengers (Brockett 1995). Moreover, micro-mobilization contexts have at least a rudimentary organizational infrastructure on which mobilization efforts can build. In particular, they often provide the resources needed to establish a social movement or protest in the early stages of development: financial and material resources, as well as the time and work of its members (McCarthy / Zald 1977). Later on, resources may come from other sources (such as foundations or even public agencies) which can have important effects on movement´s strategies and tactics. The "resource mobilization theory" has debated these

issues extensively (McCarthy / Zald 1977). Hence, these mechanisms allow for the mobilization of resources as well as the mobilization of consent and of action (Klandermans 1997).

Not all micro-mobilization are equally effective. Rather, the mobilization potential of a group depends on its specific characteristics: the higher the internal cohesion (and thus the more pronounced the collective identity) and the closer the interpersonal relationships between the group members, the higher is the mobilization potential of a collective (Tilly 1978: 63). In this respect, the recruitment *en bloc* of cohesive social groups has proven to be one of the most effective mobilization strategies (Oberschall 1973: 125). Moreover, research has that alliances among different groups allow for a massive mobilization. So, autonomous organizations rooted in local contexts, organized in a single umbrella organization and coordinated by a formal body, are the most favorable settings for mobilization processes (Schock 2005: 29). In such cases, "mesomobilization" can take place, i.e. the simultaneous activation of all members of the organization by the governing body, which ensures a massive participation in the planned collective actions (Gerhards / Rucht 1992). Alliances between such umbrella organizations are even more effective. To establish such alliances based in common interests, often a "brokering" takes place, i.e. the intervention of a third party that connects so far unconnected sites (McAdam et al 2001: 26). Alliances can also lead to a ‘scale shift’ defined as “a change in the number and level of coordinated contentious actions leading to broader contention involving a wider range of actors and bridging claims and identities” (McAdam et al. 2001: 331). Scale shifts may extend contentious politics from the local to the national or global levels.

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- Gerhards, J. / Rucht, D. (1992): Mesomobilization: Organizing and Framing in two Protest Campaigns in West Germany. *The American Journal of Sociology*, 98, 555-596.

2.4.4. Frames: Collectively Shared Meanings and Identities

From a cultural perspective, social movements and contentious actors in general are "meaning-producing agents" who consciously assign meaning to situations and phenomena. With the aim of mobilizing support and motivating and encouraging protests, they participate in the social struggles over hegemonic interpretations "(...) that is the struggle to have certain meanings and understandings gain ascendance over others, or at least move up some existing hierarchy of credibility" (Oliver / Snow 1995: 587).

This constructivist dimension of social movements is addressed by the framing approach (Snow et al. 1986; Snow / Benford 1988, 1992; Snow 2004). The verb framing denotes the process of “assigning meaning to and interpret relevant events and conditions in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support and to demobilize antagonists” (Snow / Benford 1988: 198). The results of this framing are interpretation schemes or frames of collective action that guide movement participants in their actions and in their thinking.

The framing approach claims a connection between the content and structure of frames and successful protest mobilizations: the emergence of social movements depends not only on favorable structural or organizational conditions or opportunities but also on the way in which mobilizers voice their concerns (Snow / Benford 1992: 144).

Two conditions are necessary in order to make frames resonant (i.e. successful in terms of social mobilization): a coherent internal structure and its ability to connect to the external context (Snow / Benford 1988). As far as the internal structure is concerned, a collective action frame has to combine three sub-frames: diagnostic framing (which defines the problem and the persons or groups responsible for it), prognostic framing (which provides a solution and strategy and tactics for achieving it) and motivational framing (which explains why people should participate). In summary, the first two sub-frameworks serve the purpose of "consensus mobilization". Their goal is to convince potential supporters of the seriousness of the condition and the possibilities of its rectification. The motivational frame, on the other hand, is for "action mobilization", the conviction for actual participation in protest activities, "moving people from the balcony to the barricades" (Benford / Snow 2000: 615).

In order to be successful, frames must also fit into the respective cultural context: they must be "culturally resonant" (McAdam 1994: 45, Snow 2004: 385). They also must be compatible with the life worlds of the individuals onto which the mobilization efforts are directed, i.e. they must be empirically credible.

Different from specific collective action frames are so-called master frames, which, while performing the same functions, work on a larger scale. Master frames represent new or transformed general interpretive patterns that can be adopted by different actors. They function as a group integration mechanism. The more open and flexible a master frame is, the more protest groups can adopt it (Snow / Benford 1992: 140-141; Gerhard / Rucht 1992: 580).

Collective actors in contentious politics tend to share a collective identity. Moreover, mobilizers actively promote collective identity because it ensures internal unity and solidarity, commitment and it constructs a cohesive collective actor for outside actors. A strong collective identity may lead to individual cost / benefit calculations in favor of group solidarity, thus effectively addressing Olson's "free rider problem" (Tarrow 1998: 16). Thus, collective identities represent

an important mobilization resource for mobilizers (Snow / McAdam 2000: 47). As a result, part of the mobilizing framing work of movement actors is always identity work (Hunt et al 1994: 185). This identity work entails emphasizing the qualities of the own group, while the opposing side is provided with features that delegitimize their concerns and actions. However, collective identities are not just the product of strategic processes. Collective actions and their consequences also shape the self-conception of social movements and contentious actors (Melucci 1996).

To foster collective identities, mobilizers have two options. They can redesign them (for example, an identity as an animal rights activist) or they can anchor their mobilization efforts in existing collective identities (as it happens with ethnic movements). Research has shown that this appropriation of "previously established, highly salient collective identities" (Snow / McAdam 2000: 56) strongly enhances social mobilization.

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- Benford, R. / Snow, D. (2000): Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26, 611-639.

2.4.5. Repertoires of Contention: Sets of Tactics and Strategies

One of the most salient features of contentious actors, in particular social movements, is their public performance and their interaction with power holders. Research has often classified these behavioral parts of contentious interaction along dichotomy lines such as violent/non-violent (Kriesi et al. 1995), legal/illegal, legitimate/illegitimate or conventional-institutional/unconventional-disruptive (Tarrow 1998). However, empirical research has shown that contentious actors use different instruments from all of these categories (Tilly 2008). The actual instruments actors choose are shaped by the respective cultural, social or political context. In this sense, Tilly coined the term “repertoires of contention” referring to the “whole set of means [a group] has for making claims of different types on different individuals” (Tilly 2008).

Moreover, repertoires are rather rigid phenomenon and not prone to sudden change (Tilly 2006). However, social movement and other contentious actors usually do not choose from the entire sets of repertoires which exist in their political environment, but instead apply similar tactics which are compatible with their particular movement or organizational culture, that is their collective identity, their framing, the social composition of their adherents and so on. This means the choice of a specific tactic or instrument is not a mere rational choice but is culturally constrained (Tarrow 1998; della Porta / Diani 2006; Wada 2016: 462).

In addition, three factors essentially influence the decision processes of contentious actors for specific repertoires: First their form of organization, second their collective action frames and third the structural power of their adherents. McAdam and Tilly (et al. 2001) add two macro-historical factors, for example the development of new technologies or the change of political systems.

This does not mean that collective actors do never use or invent contentious instruments. History provides a wide array of examples of actors introducing new protest tactics into their repertoire such as sit-ins during the US Civil Rights movement or protest camps as in the case of the recent transnational Occupy-Movement. The interesting question then is: when do actors innovate? So far transnational spill over and political or legal changes (which may allow for new forms of collective action such as street manifestations) as well as cultural changes have been found to be influential in this sense. On the other hand, there is also a relation between certain instruments and state behavior in particular and outcomes in general (violent means may keep governments from consenting to reform).

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- Taylor, V. / Van Dyke, N. (2004): „Get up, Stand up“: Tactical Repertoires of Social Movements. In: Snow, D. / Soule, S. / Kriesi, H. (Eds.): *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movement*s. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 262-293.

2.4.6. Structures: What Shapes Contention?

Contentious interaction does not take place in a vacuum, but is shaped by several structural factors (structural in the sense that they are not easily alterable). These structural forces include the cultural fundament (Williams 2004), economic conditions (McAdam / Schaffer Boudet 2012) and the political opportunity structure (POS) i.e. the political system (Kriesi 2004; Meyer 2004).

The concept of ‘political opportunity structure’ refers to the influence of the political system with its particular institutional characteristics on contentious interaction (Kriesi 2004; Meyer 2004; Koopmans / Kriesi 1995). For instance, (relatively) closed systems that provide little or no channels for political participation of citizens tend to have more intense public protests (and potentially violent) as (relatively) open systems that make direct civil participation institutionally available (Ibid; see also Eisinger 1973). The classical examples are France - a closed polity that tends to short and explosive public protests - and Switzerland - an open system with much lesser extra-institutional protests.

Another concept elaborated to establish the influence of structural conditions on collective contention is that of ‘cultural context’ (Williams 2004). The term refers to the socially available array of symbols and meanings that shape contentious action (including contentious repertoires, see before). Although cultural content may change and social movements/contentious actors must actually work towards this end, all sorts of contention emerge in a context of given dominant meanings. In this sense, culture has a structural dimension that acts, analogously, as a ‘cultural opportunity structure’ (Koopmans 1999).

Recently, McAdam and Boudet (2012) provided the study of structural determinants of contention with new impetus. In order to explain variation in contentious opposition against energy-projects in the US, they introduced a range of meso-level. Their first concept is termed “community context” and refers to “variables that are powerfully shaping the subjective interpretations of the project” and therefore decidedly influence perceptions of opportunities and constraints for local struggles (Ibid: 102). In combining economic with cultural factors they found that the dependence of any given place on an industry as well as economic hardship act as powerful preventers of local opposition. In case of ‘company towns’ that depend economically on specific industries, local people are inured to the risks posed by polluting industries. As a result, mobilization efforts (if executed) will mostly fall on deaf ears even if pollution is severely threatening public health and well-being. In the light of economic hardship, the same logic operates: Local people may perceive the project as a benefit and consequently not mobilize against - notwithstanding negative environmental or other consequences.

With regard to cultural features, McAdam and Boudet show that prior experience with political struggles ideally with a similar contend spur the emergence of contention. Communities with experience in mobilization against prior projects or prior political struggles in general are more likely to mobilize opposition than communities without histories of contention (Ibid: 51-52).

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- McAdam, D. / Schaffer Boudet, H. (2012): *Putting Social Movements in their Place. Explaining Opposition to Energy Projects in the United States, 2000–2005*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1-27.
- Kriesi, H. (2004): Political Context and Opportunity, in: Soule, S. et al. (Eds.). *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, Oxford et al.: Blackwell Publishing, 67-90.

2.4.7. Outcomes of Contentious Politics

Identifying or measuring outcomes of contentious politics entails a series of methodological, theoretical and empirical problems (Giugni et al. 1999; Amenta / Young 1999; Andrews 1997, 2001; Cress / Snow 2000; Kolb 2007). The main difficulty lies in proving causality between observed changes and collective action (Giugni 1998: 373). Was it really collective action or the social movement that brought the change about?

Moreover collective actions can have different outcomes which can take different forms and which can be intended and unintended (Andrews 2001: 72; Kolb 2007: 22).

Most social movements or other contentious actors articulate political claims more or less directly and strive towards their realization (Andrews 2001: 72). Hence, one possible consequence of movements' activities are political outcomes, understood as intended and unintended reactions of the political system (Kolb 2007: 22).

The implementation of binding political decisions is preceded by sophisticated decision-making processes which involve different phases and actors. Following the influential work of John Kingdon (1984), the political process can be divided into four sub-processes: agenda-setting, development of policy-alternatives (content-specifying), decision-making of specific policies and policy implementation. Based on this “phase heuristic” Kolb (2007) developed a typology of political effects of social movements that identifies five different types: A social movement can claim agenda impact, if it is able to put a specific issue on the political agenda. If a social movement is able to influence the content of political proposals, it has an “alternative impact”. “Policy impact” is reached if binding laws are implemented which originated in proposals by social movements. “Implementation impact” takes place when policies or resolutions are stopped, decelerated or accelerated. Lastly, “goods impact” can be stated if public or collective goods are indeed provided. In addition to this typology, Kolb distinguishes policy change from institutional political change, which in turn can be differentiated in three types (Kolb 2007: 32-35): Processual change, which provides the social movement with greater participation within public institutions; intra-institutional change, which means shifts within the structures or mandates of political sub institutions; state transformations, that is variations within the basic structures of a political system.

Empirical research has shown that social movements are often involved in the process of agenda setting and achieve implementation impact. The process of content-specifying usually takes place behind closed doors and is carried out mostly by technocratic actors.

However, political outcomes are not the only possible consequences of contentious politics. The literature has also found important cultural or biographic consequences of contentious politics (Giugni et al. 1999). A cultural outcome is given when contentious actors manage to

transform or add meaning (such as that environmental protection is important). Biographic consequences refers to the fact that people participating in contentious interactions acquire experiences that may shape the course of their lives significantly (they may obtain a leadership position in certain organizations or they may be enabled to initiate a formal political career).

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- Giugni, M. (1999): *How Social Movements Matter*: Past Research, Present Problems, Future Developments. In: Giugni, M. / McAdam, D. / Tilly, C. / Tarrow S. (Eds.): *How Social Movements Matter.* Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, xiii-xxxi.

B. Contested Extractivism in Latin America

1. Context and Types

1.1 The Rise of Extractivism in Latin America and its Consequences

Several global, regional and national, political and technological transformations have caused an increase in extractive industries in Latin America (Bebbington 2012): First, new regulations, particularly environmental protection, as well as declining resource reserves in North America and Europe have put the global South, and especially South America, into the focus of transnational companies investing in the sector (Bridge 2004). On the national level, following the neoliberal adjustment programs promoted by international organizations such as the World Bank in the 1980s, Latin American governments opened their markets for private investors and implemented a series of (mainly fiscal) incentives in order to attract foreign investment. Moreover, the sector was widely deregulated. On the other hand, technological innovations helped detect new reserves and made the exploitation of previously unprofitable assets lucrative. Lastly, the global demand for natural resources (mainly minerals, oil and gas) increased significantly mostly driven by the emerging economies of China and India. Combined with the subsequently increasing global prices for minerals and gas, the extractive sector in Latin America – deregulated and with huge potential reserves – went into a boom.

While many Latin American economies (in particular the Andean ones) have been dependent on their natural resource sectors since their independence from Spain, the recent boom cycle in the sector brought an innovation. Starting in the late 1990s all over South America “leftist”, “progressive” or so called “post-neoliberal” leaders were elected into power (Hugo Chávez in Venezuela (1998), Néstor Kirchner in Argentina (2003), Ignácio ”Lula” de Silva in Brazil (2003), Evo Morales in Bolivia (2006) and Rafael Correa in Ecuador (2007). They promoted extractive industries as a development strategy, significantly promoted them and invested parts of the profits from the sector into social programs destined for poverty alleviation. Hence, “extractivism” can be defined as a national, growth-orientated development pathway based on rent-seeking activities, that is, the large-scale exploitation, production and exportation of raw materials (Burchardt / Dietz 2014). This includes the “expansion of frontiers to territories formerly considered ‘unproductive’” (Svampa 2013: 119). The term “neo-extractivism” has been coined in order to grasp the new dimension of Latin American extractive politics which combines a stronger public control over the sector (for instance through the increase of royalties and taxes and the nationalization of companies) and the investment of profits into public programs destined at supporting vulnerable groups.

However, the benefits stemming from this particular development strategy are unequally distributed – and so are the costs. While governments shared the increase in public income,

especially the localities where extraction takes place (mining sites, etc.) suffer from the many negative consequences of extractive projects in their territory. These include environmental degradation such as the pollution of water resources and land (because of oil splits or the use of toxic agents in mining), competition over local resources (also mainly land and water), social fragmentation and forced displacements. As a consequence, social conflicts over extractivism particularly in the communities where the projects are located (or are supposed to be located) have increased (in Latin America and beyond). All over the continent, these conflicts reveal a huge variation regarding the claims involved and the chosen tactics and strategies. Moreover, while many remain locally confined, some conflicts obtained national and transnational attention (such as the conflicts over the Conga or the Tambogrande mine in Peru, the conflict over a planned mine in Esquel, Argentina or the conflict over the Pascua Lama mine in Chile). Moreover, many of these social struggles are more than mere struggles over the use and distribution of a material resource (such as land, minerals, forest plants, water): they also reflect conflicts over political order, competing views of the world and representations of nature, incompatible ideas of territory and sovereignty, divergent economic development discourses, as well as various claims for justice, social participation and cultural recognition (Bebbington et al. 2008a; Dietz / Engels 2017).

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- Bebbington, A. / Bury, J. (2013): Political Ecologies of the Subsoil. In: Ibid (Eds.): *Subterranean Struggles. New Dynamics of Mining, Oil, and Gas in Latin America*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1-16.
- Hoogenboom, B. (2012): Depoliticized and Repoliticized Minerals in Latin America. *Journal of Developing Societies*, 28 (2), 133-158.

1.2 Types of Contention over Extractivism

Although a general increase in contention over extractivism can be stated, not all conflicts follow the same pattern. Rather, different types regarding the interests involved can be observed. Building on the typology of Javier Arellano-Yanguas (2011: 212), at least three different forms of contention over extractivism prompted by different causes can be identified: The first general type takes place on the local level and pits the local population against companies and state authorities over the control of local resources. It can be subdivided in ‘all or nothing conflicts’ in which local populations resist the implementation of new operations or the expansion of operational mines and in ‘more routine conflicts’ in which local populations use contentious tactics not to oppose the project altogether but to negotiate with the company.

In this case, conflict is used in order to enhance the local bargaining position for winning economic or social benefits.

The second type does not arise from the extractive industry itself but from increased revenues stemming from the sector. Local political actors and administrative jurisdictions fight over the access to and use of revenues transferred from the central government to subnational units. Arellano-Yanguas found that the great majority of social conflicts over mining that started in Peru since 2008 were disputes over the distribution of revenues and not environmentally inspired 'all or nothing' conflicts (see also Damonte 2008, 2012). Bolivia and the department of Tarija provide another example where the national and the regional governments started a conflict over the distribution of resources rents: In 2008 a conflict arose between the national and the regional governments over the control of the revenues from the gas sector (Humphreys-Bebbington / Bebbington 2010). When the national government declared its intention to change the system of revenue allocation to foster a more equal system, the regional elite mobilized the population stressing the role of gas to maintain and foster identity-based regional development (Ibid: 143). A third type involves conflicts among local groups over the support or rejection of extractive projects. For instance, Humphreys-Bebbington (2012) analyzes how the Bolivian public gas and oil company caused serious conflicts among Weenhayek communities in the southeastern department of Tarija. The distribution of corporate resources incited competition among communities and particularly motivated leadership struggles that severely weakened Weenhayek organizations. Pellegrini and Rivera (2012) found a similar situation in Northern Bolivia where oil exploration took place. Further cases are provided by Schilling-Vacaflor (2014) on Guarani communities in Southern Bolivia, by Damonte (2008) on Bolivian and Peruvian peasant communities, by San Juan Stauden on the Pascua Lama conflict in Chile (2014) and by Carruthers and Rodriguez (2009) on Mapuche communities.

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- Arellano Yanguas, J. (2011): Aggravating the Resource Curse: Decentralization, Mining and Conflict in Peru. *Journal of Development Studies*, 47(4), 617–638.

C. Understanding Conflicts over Extractivism through the Lenses of CP

1. Emergence of Social Contention over Extractivism

Different types of contention over extractivism have emerged during the past boom cycle. What causes these different types? As advanced by CP, several studies reveal that attributions of opportunity and threat are crucial. For instance, Arellano-Yanguas (2011: 630) argues that 'all-or-nothing' conflicts erupt when local populations perceive threats to their livelihoods. The same is supported by studies on Tambogrande (Floysand / Haarstad 2007) and the conflict over mining in Cotacachi, Ecuador (Bebbington et al. 2008b). In their most recent statistical analysis on the determinants of social conflict over mining in Latin America – so far the only large-N analysis in the area - Haslam and Tanimoune (2016: 401) support this idea but emphasize that it is perceived competition over scarce resources that motivates company-community 'all or nothing' conflicts.

Other cases suggest that the initiation of contention over extraction depends on activists' mobilization capacities, particularly their ability to foster a credible discourse that stresses potential local economic alternatives. For example, in Esquel, Argentina it was the perception that 'another livelihood is possible' that drove contention and not its actual existence: When the population of Esquel started to mobilize against the gold mine, the region was immersed in a sharp economic crisis which had led to the decline of many alternative economic branches. Because the mobilizers constantly emphasized the importance of alternative livelihoods, people in the local community did not believe the company´s and state´s discourse about mining as the only motor for economic development in the region (Walter / Martínez-Alier 2010). Likewise, the anti-mining movement in Cotacachi actively fostered non-mining livelihoods (such as ecotourism and organic coffee production) as a way to lend legitimacy to its discourse and secure its bargaining power vis-à-vis the company and the state (Bebbington et al. 2008b: 2899). Moreover, almost all conflicts over extraction were sparked by intransparent corporate and government behavior and the lack of mechanisms of social participation that created a perception of collusion and threat and in turn motivated social mobilization.

In contrast, when economic alternatives are lacking or when communities perceive that they will not obtain a proper share of a companies' profits, negotiations over benefits from the company have been found to be more likely to occur (Arellano Yanguas 2011; Damonte 2012). In these cases, the establishment of the extractive industry is perceived as an opportunity and conflict is initiated in order to increase community benefits. Moreover, only cohesive opposition fronts are able to fight 'all or nothing' conflicts (Bebbington et al. 2008b). In cases where there

are divergent local interests, negotiations for compensation and economic benefits are the more likely outcome.

Certainly, the types of contention frequently do combine and intersect. Moreover, as Arellano-Yanguas (2012) puts it, actors may not agree on the nature of a conflict and types may change in time. For example, fragmented local actor constellations can also be fabricated in the course of conflict and do not necessarily need to be present at the outset of conflict.. Companies or authorities may provide selective incentives (money or other material benefits) in order to split (potential) opposition. As a consequence, 'all or nothing' conflicts may be transformed into negotiations conflicts among groups as was the case in the conflict over Pascua Lama, Chile (Urkidi 2010: 224) or over the Yanacocha mine in Cajamarca, Peru (Bebbington et al. 2008b: 2897). Further research may address the conditions that motivate actors to modify their claims or strategies – and thereby changing the type of contention – or also the role of other actors like companies and states in transforming types of conflict.

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- Bebbington, A. / Humphreys-Bebbington, D. / Bury, J. / Lingan, J. / Muñoz, J. P. / Scurrah, M. (2008): Mining and Social Movements: Struggles Over Livelihood and Rural Territorial Development in the Andes. *World Development*, 36 (12), 2888-2905.

2. Shaping Contention over Extractivism: Local Economies, POS and Culture

As previously explained local economic conditions can spur contention over extractivism, such as when livelihoods alternative to extractive industries exist or resources are scarce. Yet, they may also impede it. For instance, a strong local mining tradition can prevent people from joining opposition (McAdam / Schaffer Boudet 2012). In such cases, mining (or other extractive activities) is perceived as a constitutive part of local life and identity. Moreover, it may be the single most important provider for jobs and income (see Gaventa 1980 for an early formulation of this argument). Such economic dependency combined with the cultural foundation confronts challengers with serious difficulties in mobilizing support for anti-extractive movements, as can be seen in current Latin American cases as well: Bebbington et al. (2008b) describe such a situation for the case of the Yanacocha Mine in Peru and Widener (2007) for two traditional Ecuadorian oil sites. The fact that the Bolivian department and city of Potosí, a mining site since the 16th century, as well as many other long-standing mining localities in the Bolivian and Chilean Andean highlands have not seen any significant conflict over mining, although mining-related grievances are high, also supports this idea (see Preston, 2012 for a similar argument). Additionally, states and companies may actively create mining identities via public

opinion campaigns, as Antonelli and Svampa (2012) demonstrate for the case of San Juan, Argentina.

Alongside economic factors the political opportunity structure shapes contention over extractivism in Latin America. The judicial system has been shown to be of particular importance here. For example, in Chile where the number of conflicts over mining and other extractive projects is very high, the relative effectiveness of the judicial system encourages challengers to take their claims to court. Legal means are widely perceived as effective means. Colombia is also an example where challengers, confident about the legal system, have increasingly resorted to judicial means (Dietz 2016). The same can be observed for the opponents: Authorities and companies in these countries also appeal frequently to courts to stop opposition (a tendency referred to as the "judicialization" of conflicts, see Campos Medina 2012). In Peru, to the contrary, the judicial system is weak and mostly absent. Combined with the general institutional weakness, methods used in conflicts over extraction tend to be extra-institutional (and often violent, see below).

Moreover, distributional regimes and allocation systems influence the dynamics of contention. For instance, it seems that the Peruvian compensation-based model that transfers revenues to regional and local entities makes the country particularly prone to local conflicts among subnational entities (alongside local-regional divides). Contrarily, direct allocation from the central government (as in place in Chile or Ecuador) seems to incite lesser contention, while Bolivia´s highly unequal regional distribution system motivates conflicts between regions and the national government (see Damonte / Glave 2012). Lastly, in federal systems such as the ones in Argentina or Brazil, different subnational opportunity structures can be expected to have an impact on dynamics of mobilization and on their outcomes.

Regarding cultural factors, the studies stress the impact of the local history of conflict. As shown for other cases (McAdam / Schaffer Boudet 2012), communities with experience in conflict and activism tend to mobilize with more ease than unexperienced communities. In these cases, transaction costs are very low: An organizational infrastructure already exists that can be activated for contention and people can make use of established contentious repertoires. Furthermore, past success motivates people to engage in contention because they perceive that winning is possible (Tarrow 1995). Collective memory and the cultural foundation apparently also influence the use of violence by challengers which varies greatly within and among countries. For instance, Peru has by far the highest rate of local groups making use of violent means in conflicts over extractivism (see for example the cases of Yanacocha or Rio Majaz or recent clashes in Islay, Arequipa). While Crabtree and Crabtree-Condor (2012) argue that state weakness combined with legacies of armed conflicts (such as those in Peru and Colombia) cause violence, Taylor (2011), discussing a mining conflict in the Peruvian Condebamba valley, is more specific. He found that local violence depended on the respective

cultural fundament that informs challengers. In particular, localities where the peasant organization *rondas campesinas* organized contention were significantly less violent than others. Established during Peru´s civil war the *rondas* have a commitment as local peace-keepers and tend to non-violent conflict resolutions. As a highly hierarchical organization they are also able to control and discipline their members (see the next section). Schilling-Vacaflor (2014) makes a similar point addressing the relative peacefulness of Guarani communities confronting extractivism in their territories. On the other hand, groups with violent legacies and histories such as the Mapuche in Southern Chile tend to use violent means more frequently (Carruthers / Rodriguez 2009).

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- Preston, D. (2012): Household and Community Responses to Mining-related River Contamination in the Upper Pilcomayo Basin, Bolivia. In: Bebbington, A. (Ed.): *Social Conflict, Economic Development and Extractive Industry.* London/New York: Routledge, 187-198.
- Taylor, L. (2011): Environmentalism and Social Protest: The Contemporary Anti-mining Mobilization in the Province of San Marcos and the Condebamba Valley, Peru. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 11, 420-439.

3. Contested Extractivism: Organizations and Alliances

In the course of the last decade, all over Latin America new local organizations have been established and existing ones have been converted into powerful vehicles for mobilization against extractive industries. Particularly traditional local organizations able to generate social cohesion through the imposition of discipline on their members (and with a collective memory of conflict and collective action, see previous section) serve as effective vehicles for mobilization (such as the *rondas campesinas* in Peru or indigenous organizations and communities in general).

In several cases, translocal umbrella organizations that unite different social sectors have been established. Indeed, successful anti-extraction campaigns such as those in Tambogrande, Pascua Lama, Cotacachi or against the Merlin Mine in Guatemala resulted from wide political alliances that transcended ethnic or class boundaries (i.e. Floysand / Haarstad 2007; Urkidi 2010; Rasch 2012). Moreover, support by local authorities (governments or parishes) was decisive for successful local resistance (Bebbington et al. 2008b; San Juan Standen 2014).

Local or regional organizations often extend into the national or global sphere. In recent years in almost all Latin American countries national networks against extractivism have been

formed. Examples are the Confederación Nacional de Comunidades del Perú Afectadas por la Minería (CONACAMI) in Peru, the Frente de Mujeres Defensores de la Pachamama in Ecuador, and the Union de Asambleas Ciudadanas in Argentina. Through these networks, local groups connect with each other and with potential external supporters such as NGOs specialized in environmental conflicts (for instance OLCA in Chile or Grufides in Peru) or oppositional political parties and human rights institutions (i.e. in Peru the Socialist Party or the National Ombudsman, see Arellano Yanguas (2012) and Bebbington (2012a)). In addition, many local or national organizations are inserted into transnational networks that link them with NGOs in other parts of the Americas or Europe as well as with international organizations. Today a dense global organizational network exists that can provide visibility, legitimacy and resources to local challengers and commands large expertise regarding conflicts over extractivism. For instance, several global networks monitor and contest activities of major companies worldwide and support local groups affected by damaging corporate behavior particularly in the case of mining and energy, for instance Mining Watch Canada (https://miningwatch.ca/) or Oil Watch (www.oilwatch.org). These transnational advocacy networks may cause a 'boomerang effect' (Keck / Sikkink 1998) by placing pressure on foreign governments which in turn might try to influence governments of the countries where the extraction is being realized (or is supposed to take place) and where the conflict emerged (see Bebbington 2012b for the Rio Blanco conflict). Transnational activism may furthermore have an impact on evaluations of costs and benefits by companies' shareholders who for their part may press corporate management to modify or stop investments (as happened in the case of Pascua Lama).

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- Urkidi, L. (2010): A Glocal Environment Movement against Gold Mining: Pascua Lama in Chile. *Ecological Economics*, 70, 219-227.
- Walter, M. / Martínez-Alier, J. (2010): How to be Heard when Nobody Wants to Listen: The Esquel Mining Conflict. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, 30 (1-2), 281-303.

4. Politics of Scale and the Transnationalization of Conflicts over Extractivism

Current contention over extractivism in Latin America registers a strong involvement of external actors (mainly NGOs or private agencies) who ally with affected local communities. In some cases, the conflicts experienced a shift in scale and have come to involve national or transnational actors. Empirical studies showed that such alliances among local, national or particularly transnational actors can be highly conflictive. At the same time, various studies stress the difficulties for coalition-building particularly between indigenous groups and NGOs (environmental and others) due to a general distrust or diverging agendas (Carruthers/Rodriguez 2009; Pratt 2012; Schilling-Vacaflor 2014). Additionally, the effects of transnational campaigns on localities in contention are ambiguous. Some authors have been unable to detect any significant influence in their cases (Bebbington et al. 2008 b), some have found transnational alliances empowering local challengers (i.a. Fløysand / Haarstad 2007; Urkidi 2010; Buchanan 2013) and others have even identified a harmful impact (Widener 2007; Pratt 2012). Regarding the latter, scholars stress two potential pitfalls: The incompatibility of local and transnational agendas and the mismatch between local/national conditions and transnational strategies. For instance, in his study on opposition to the Camisea gas project in untouched parts of the Peruvian Amazonia, Pratt (2012) found that indigenous Machiguenga communities faced severe difficulties when trying to balance the support from international environmental and conservation NGOs and the local developmental needs of their impoverished bases. Since they felt that the project would be implemented regardless of their consent, they initiated negotiations with the company over compensations, local development measures and proper environmental standards. As a result, relations with the INGOs that supported the communities in their conflict with the company became strained and were finally suspended.

Analyzing the transnational campaign against an oil pipeline in Ecuador that involved four independent sites (Lago Agrio, Quito, Mindo and Esmeraldas), Widener reached similar results: The transnational campaign emphasized environmental conservation at the expense of development claims thereby failing to address adequately local needs in at least two of the sites involved in the conflict. This mismatch was caused by the differential needs of local and international, particularly Northern, stakeholders that supported the campaign. In order to match Northern expectations, domestic claims had to be deemphasized and simplified. As a consequence, the discourse shifted from one on local environmental justice to one on global environmental protectionism, or as Widener (2007: 21) calls it, from local ‘dignity in life’ claims to environmental protection claims. The author identifies two further negative effects: The environmental protection discourse resonated only with selected groups (‘environmental elites’ in Quito and in Mindo) and thereby aggravated local inequalities. Likewise, it potentially

undermined domestic network building. Groups that counted on transnational support had no incentive to build strong local or national alliances (Ibid: 31).

Both studies also illustrate the failure of transnational strategies when not taking local conditions and power relations into account. Both campaigns targeted the Northern headquarters of the respective company and, in the case of Ecuador, international financing (mainly the Germany-based bank WestLB). In doing so, they failed to address other prime actors: the Ecuadorian and Peruvian governments. Consequently, the projects started as planned and the campaigns ended up not providing any meaningful benefits for the affected communities. However, while transnational campaigns might have no effects in the localities where the conflicts evolve, this does not mean that they have no effects at all: As Rivera (2011) shows, transnational campaigns directed at a particular local conflict might fail on the local level but nevertheless cause changes on the global level

Fløysand and Haarstad (2007) take a more differentiated stance in investigating the conditions of successful transnational campaigns. Studying the case of Tambogrande, Peru they found that the global campaign worked out because challengers managed to strategically adapt the narrative of the conflict (i.e. the frame) to hegemonic discourses on both the national and global levels. While stressing the protection of local (agricultural) livelihoods at the local level, the national campaign emphasized the dangers posed by mining to the production of limes –an important ingredient for a nationally significant Peruvian dish (ceviche) and beverage (Pisco Sour). The global campaign in turn stressed the protection of human rights and democracy.

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- Fløysand, A. / Haarstad, H. (2007): Globalization and the Power of Rescaled Narratives: A Case of Opposition to Mining in Tambogrande, Peru. *Political Geography*, 26, 289-308.
- Pratt, B. (2012): The Camisea Gas Project: Indigenous Social Movements and International NGOs in the Peruvian Amazon. In: Bebbington, A. (Ed.): *Social Conflict, Economic Development and Extractive Industry.* London/New York: Routledge, 172-186.
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5. Contested Extractivism, the State and Companies

Alongside local actors, state agencies and companies play a key role in current conflicts over extractivism. State agencies have been found to actively shape current dynamics of social conflicts over extractivism. In some cases they ignored the conflicts, in others they reacted with repression (through their "security forces", the military or police. See for example the cases of Conga or Tingo Maria in Peru). In other cases, they established mechanisms of dialogue (such as roundtables) or they used prior consultation processes in order to mitigate social opposition. It is interesting to note that significant differences exist regarding the ways that states address conflicts over extractivism with for instance the Peruvian state tending towards repression and the Chilean state tending towards ignoring conflicts over extractivism.

Taylor and Bonner (2017) adduce the cases of Cajamarca in Peru and Catamarca in Argentina to point out how state power, particularly if combined with corporate power, can intimidate and repress opposition movements in order to demobilize their adherents and constrain their ability to contest extractive industries. Using the examples of peasant movements in Argentina and Brazil, Motta (2017) shows how the state not only uses threats and repression but also social concessions such as poverty reduction programs as means to demobilize social movements.

Companies also shape contention in a structural sense as well as with their actions. For instance, Bebbington et al. (2008b: 2893) argue that the size and the resourcefulness of a company decisively affect the success of mobilizations (aimed at preventing the project). The bigger and the richer the company, the less likely it is that local resistance will be successful. In turn, small companies increase the probability of success. Generally, they command few resources and depend on quick success in order to secure further investment capital. Ongoing local opposition may raise their costs to a level no longer profitable for small corporations, as happened in the case of Piura, Peru where a minor Chinese company was forced to leave due to rising costs induced by contention (Bebbington 2012; see also Walter / Martínez-Alier 2010). The same happened in Cotacachi (Bebbington et al. 2008 b). Once again, the quantitative study by Haslam and Tanimoune (2016: 416) suggests a somewhat different picture: the authors found that mid-tier companies provoke social contention more often because they operate mines with large scale effects while retaining the ad hoc community relations of small firms. As a result, they are incapable of securing the social license needed to operate (see below).

Moreover, the origin of companies shapes the dynamics and particularly the scale of contention (see also Haslam / Tanimoune 2016). For instance, transnational strategies seem most probable when transnational companies are involved. There might be one exception to this concerning Asian companies increasingly involved in Latin America's extractive industry: As Buchanan (2013) notes, Asian companies and their shareholders tend to be less sensitive

about environmental concerns and questions of human rights. This in turn may seriously affect local opportunities for opposition including scale-up strategies intended to reach national and international support (see also Widener 2007: 32). Likewise, successful resistance seems less probable when state-owned companies are involved (Schorr 2018). There may be various causes for this: In many Latin American countries, state-owned companies enjoy high legitimacy among national publics because they are perceived as guarantors of national development and sovereignty. Moreover, they often constitute powerful symbols for successful national struggles against vested interests (Valdivia / Perreault 2010). Furthermore, national companies seem not to be attractive targets for transnational campaigns since their behavior cannot be connected easily to experiences in other parts of the world. Consequently, activists face major difficulties in raising support against state-run extractive industries.

On the other hand, companies do not remain passive in the face of contention. Since their foremost aim is to realize their projects, they intervene in order to 'tame' contention, i.e. to demobilize challengers or to prevent it altogether. Companies try to influence processes of social appropriation, perceptions of threat and opportunities and dynamics of interactions in a way that grants them the so-called 'social license' needed to realize their business interests. Companies frame such activities as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) – a concept that gained momentum in recent years in companies' discourses and practices, not the least with regard to international shareholders sensitive to issues such as human rights or environmental protection (Owen/Kemp 2012). They employ different strategies and instruments such as extended public media campaigns and social programs (support for hospitals, schools, scholarships, productive projects etc., see Bebbington 2010; Himley 2013) to shift public perceptions on mining in general and the company in particular. In several cases, companies and authorities tried to exploit existing social divisions and coopted strategic groups in order to split (potential) opposition as happened in the case of Pascua Lama (Schorr 2018; San Juan Standen 2014). In Lliquimuni, Bolivia the company rewarded peasant groups that supported its plans and in communities in Northern Argentina (Göbel 2014) as well as in Ecuador (Warnaars 2013), young people were selectively targeted for corporate programs pitting them against elders opposed to the project.

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

- Bebbington, A. (2010): Extractive Industries and Stunted States: Conflict, Responsibility and Institutional Change in the Andes. In: Raman, R. (Ed.): *Corporate Social Responsibility: Discourses, Practices and Perspectives,* London: Palgrave MacMillan, 97-115.
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la minería en Chile. *Estudios Atacameños* (forthcoming).

- Taylor, A. / Bonner, M. (2017): Policing Economic Growth: Mining, Protest, and State Discourse in Peru and Argentina. *Latin American Research Review,* 52 (1), 112–126.

6. So What? Outcomes of Contention over Extractivism

After more than a decade of widespread and ever increasing contention over extractivism on the local, national and transnational levels, so far what are the outcomes? First of all, several communities were able to claim victory in their conflicts with corporations and authorities: Investments were halted and companies left localities (as was the case in Esquel, Cotacachi, Tambogrande, Rio Blanco or Pascua Lama). Moreover, contention over the presence of extractive industries led to an increase in local participation, political experience as well as organization-building and strengthening that certainly will transcend the current moment (Damonte 2008, 2012).

Resource struggles so far clearly had an impact on state – society relations, especially at the local scale. An example thereof is provided by Mariana Walter and Leiri Urikidi (2015) in their analysis of popular consultations on mining in Latin America. The authors conclude that through social mobilizations against mining and by pressing for popular consultations at the local scale, in many places hybrid institutions have emerged that are characterized by new state-society interfaces and which are the result of dynamic interactions between non-state and state actors, formal and informal spaces of participation.

However, neither the victories nor increased participation may be long-lasting: In almost all cases where extraction was prevented by local mobilizations, governments and (often new) companies nevertheless persist in bringing pressure and working towards the realization of the projects (for instance in the Ecuadorian Intag Valley or in Esquel). As a consequence, affected communities are in a permanent state of emergency that might cause an erosion of the willingness to oppose and lead to the general perception that extractivism is inevitable. Furthermore, researchers should pay close attention to the specific mechanisms that caused extractive projects to stop. What might appear to be a result of local combativeness may well turn out to be the product of corporate calculations of costs and benefits dependent upon developments on the world market and not upon local circumstances (see also McAdam/Schaffer 2012 on this point).

Regarding the political outcomes, contention over extractivism was successful mainly in the first phase of the policy cycle. These conflicts managed to put the subject of (neo-) extractivism and its ecological and social problems onto the political agenda (Bebbington 2012b: 215). Yet, as the cycle proceeds, with every phase the outcomes seem more modest. Up to now, as the ever-rising number of conflicts over extractivism suggests, meaningful public policy regulating

the industry and even more so the implementation of regulation remains still a difficult task for the future. Indeed, in several countries, environmental and sector regulation does exist but suffers severe implementation gaps. The root of this is to be found in the structural conditions of ongoing dependence and reliance of many Latin American governments on the extraction of raw material and agribusiness (Burchardt / Dietz 2014). Endowed with such a strategic importance and backed by the general conviction that it is the best way to develop (what Svampa (2013) termed the 'commodity consensus'), regulations are more often than not ignored or twisted.

On the other hand, it does not mean that nothing has been accomplished at all. As the edited volume by Bebbington (2012a) shows, social conflicts over extraction have in some cases contributed to policy change: In Peru contention led to new laws on the distribution of revenues (Arellano-Yanguas 2012; Damonte 2012) and the increase particularly of violent conflicts ultimately motivated the improvement of the regulation of consultation processes (Bebbington 2012a). In Ecuador, an anti-mining moratorium to halt new mining projects was imposed in 2008 (Moore / Velásquez 2012). Although it was later lifted, the new mining mandate introduced inter alia the concept of "no-go" zones in forest reserves and near rivers and put certain restrictions on corporate activities (Kirsch 2012: 204). In Argentina, the federal structure of the country allowed for a somewhat different outcome: Following the conflict in Esquel, 7 out of 23 Argentinean provinces ratified a 'mining ban' prohibiting open-pit mining activities in their territories (Walter / Martínez-Alier 2010: 296). Yet again, this may not last: Both the authorities and companies are working to lift or circumvent the ban. The province of Chubut for instance has already modified the law completely. Even when the implementation is deficient and restrictions on extractive industries are constantly jeopardized, these achievements can lay the ground for further changes. In addition, contention over extractivism helped institutions promoting human rights (for instance the National Ombudsman office in Peru, see Arellano-Yanguas (2011) and Bebbington (2012a)) and environmental institutions as well as NGOs to strengthen their positions in national politics.

Within the context of contested extractivism and resource struggles, the state has always played a pivotal role, both related to the normative and coercive power of state institutions as an object of claims, and as an actor in its own right (Bury / Bebbington 2013). However, as Verbrugge (2017) and Martín (2017) suggest, conceptualizing the state as a fixed set of formal–legal institutions, socio-culturally linked to a national collectivity, fails to capture the actual dynamics of state formation. The latter involves a range of public and private, business and social actors, which are linked to one another by various formal and informal institutions.

Other types of outcomes – such cultural and biographical ones – have so far not been treated directly by researchers. Both would yield interesting topics for future investigations.

Recommended Preparatory Reading

- Bebbington, A. (2012b): Social Conflict and Emergent Institutions: Hypotheses from Piura, Peru. In: Bebbington, A. (Ed.): *Social Conflict, Economic Development and Extractive Industry*, London/New York: Routledge, 67-88.
- Dietz, K. (2018): Direct Democracy in Mining Conflicts in Latin America: The Gold Mine Project La Colosa in Colombia. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies /Revue canadienne d'études du développement* (*forthcoming*).
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About **trAndeS**

trAndeS is a structured postgraduate program based at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (PUCP) that contributes to sustainable development in the Andean region through its research and training activities. The project partners are Freie Universität Berlin and Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (PUCP).

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The objective of **trAndeS** is to create and promote knowledge that can contribute to the achievement of the United Nations Agenda 2030 with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in the Andean Region. It focuses its efforts on identifying how the persistent social inequalities in the region present challenges to achieving SDG targets and how progress toward these targets can contribute to the reduction of these inequalities.

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