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Do protests make a difference?

Social movements against privatisation

Based on my PhD thesis: *“Do Protests Make a Difference? The Impact of Anti-Privatisation Mobilisation in India and Peru”*

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Content

- (1) Goals – what and why?
- (2) Theoretical background
- (3) How? Cases, data & method
- (4) Results

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Three goals

...to examine and answer 2 questions:

How the mobilisation of protests affects public policy?

Which protest strategies and political contexts help social movement to achieve its goals?

... to complement the research on social movement outcomes with a data from developing countries

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Study: protests against privatisation in India and Peru

- Why privatisation?

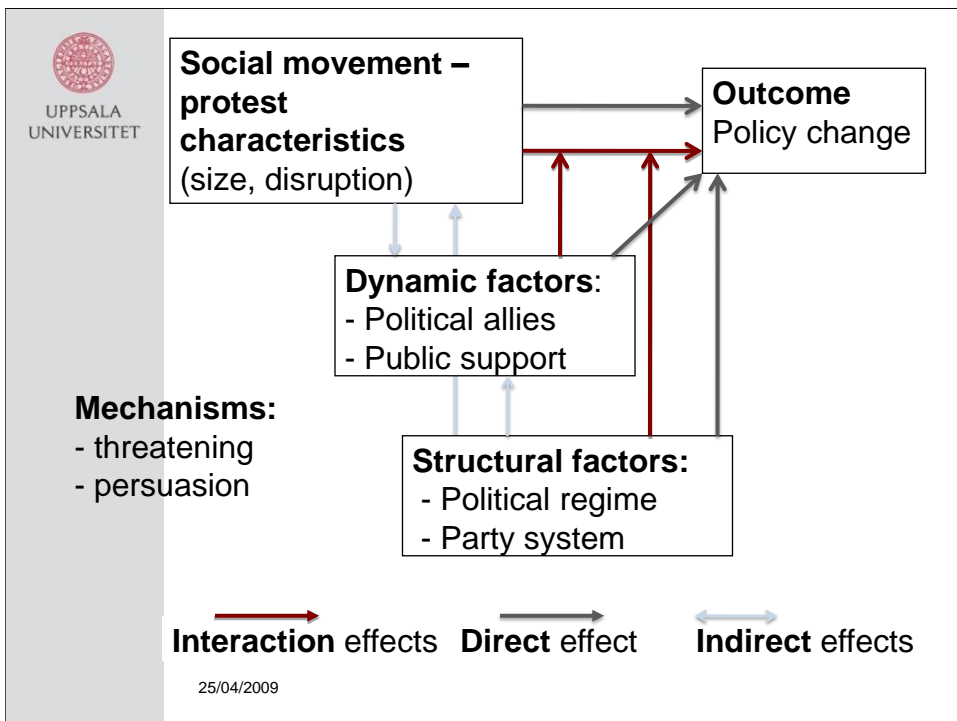
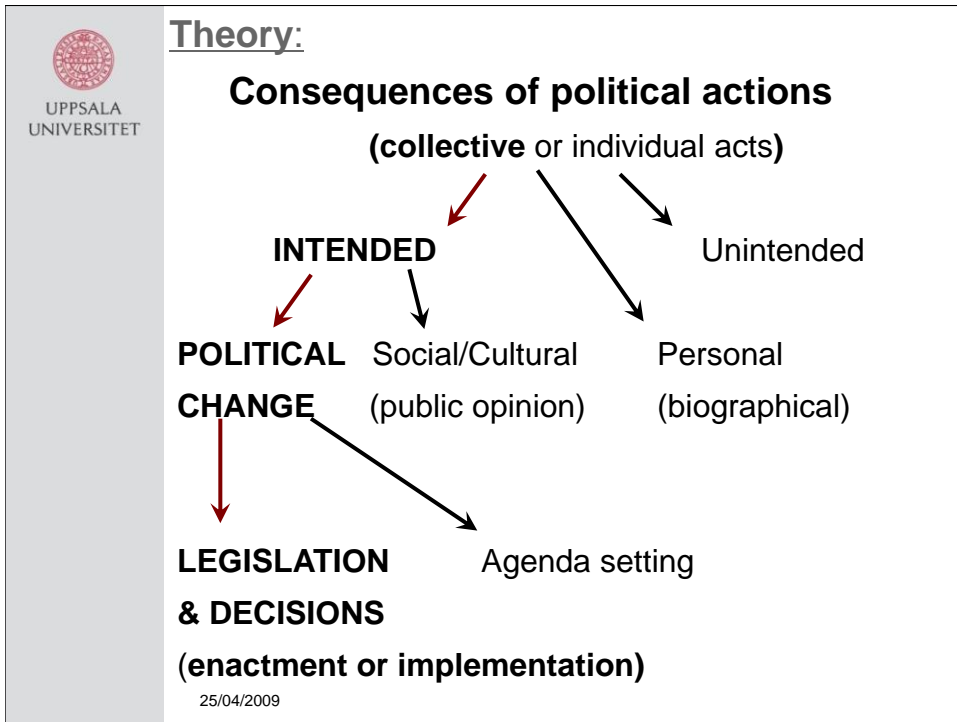
An important policy-issue affecting many citizens, not only public employees

- Why India & Peru?

India: democratic, active mobilisation against the reforms which started in the 1990s

Peru: varying regime type & varying public support to privatisation

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Operationalisation & hypothesis

Protest mobilisation → government's decision to **postpone or halt the privatisation** of an enterprise it had planned to sell out → longer duration of the process

Hypothesis: Protests led to policy change if...

- ...these are large and disruptive (direct effect)
- ...are mobilised in a democratic context
- ...protesters have political allies or enjoy public support

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How? Data & method

Own database with details on:

- protest actions (when? who? what kind?)
- enterprises (privatised or not-when?, sector)
- background information (public opinion, allies, political regime, economic factors)

Sources: local & international news media, WB data on privatisation, government decisions, official statistics, interviews

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Indian labour movement

Trade union membership and party-affiliation.

Union federation	Political party	Members millions
Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS)	BJP	3.117
Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC)	Congress	2.706
All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC)	Janata Dal, CPI	0.923
Centre of the Indian Trade Unions (CITU)	CPI(M)	1.798
Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS)	non-affiliated	1.477

Sources: Sinha (2004), Candland and Sil (2001)

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← Trade union
activists in Andhra
Pradesh
(Hyderabad, 2005)

→ Leaders of the
Peruvian trade
unions' federation
in a protest for
improving
workers' rights
(Lima, 2006)

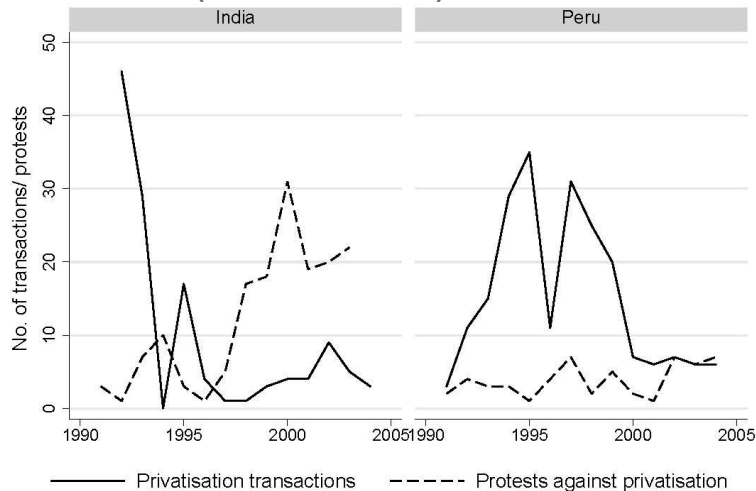


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Protests & privatisation in India & Peru (1990-2004)



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Applied - Event History Analysis

Unit of analysis: enterprise that the government aimed to privatise

Dependent variable: duration of the privatisation process for every unit

Independent variables: protests, political allies, public opinion (Peru), political regime (Peru)

Control variables: economic situation & sector of the unit, % of state ownership for sale & the amount sold to workers, macro-economic situation of a country

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Results – protesting matters!

Direct (independent) effects

Large or disruptive

anti-privatisation protests

} **Longer**
privatisation
process, eventually
no sell-out

Interaction effects:

- protests in a **democracy** are more “successful”
than those in a non-democracy

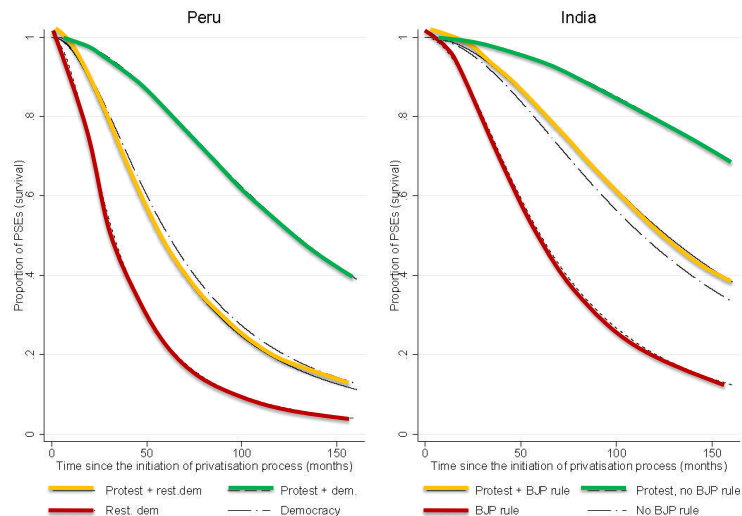
- **public opposition** to privatisation helps protesters
only slightly, as regime effects are stronger

- movements’ **political allies** have a mixed role

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Protest impact is dependent on political regime



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Conclusions

- ... social movement mobilisation can play an independent role for policy change
- ... the impact of anti-privatisation protest is related to its characteristics & political context
- ...future research needs to focus on the role of political allies, study other policy-issues & countries

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