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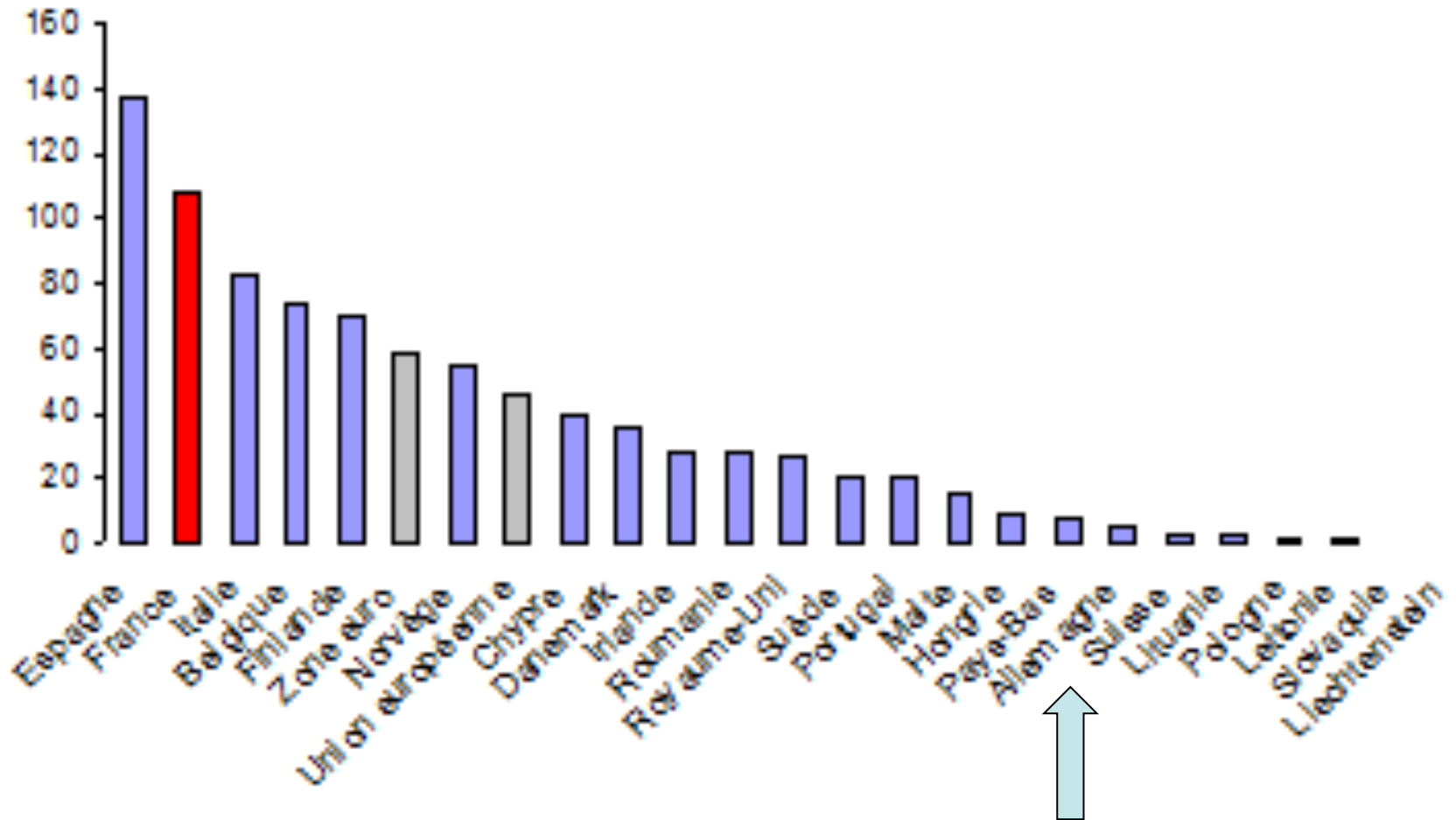


Swetha Rao Dhananka, Indo-Swiss Conference, 10.9.2014

Understanding political opportunities and rethinking social welfare governance



Number of days of strike



Eurostat, 2007

Structure of argument

Rethinking social
welfare governance
(Rothstein & Uslaner 2005;
Standing, 2013)

Political opportunities
in France, Switzerland
(Kriesi et al, 1995)
India

Political
well-being
(Przewoski, 2000)

Defining political opportunities

Political opportunities refer to those more structural aspects of the political system that affects the possibility that challenger groups have to mobilize effectively.

(Giugni, 2011, 271).



- Thesis:
- Mobilisation of social movement is linked to conventional politics in the parliamentary and extraparliamentary arenas of a given country.
- They depend on:
- National cleavage structures
 - Prevailing strategies
 - Alliance structures
 - **Institutional structures**

Table 2.1. The institutional strength of the state

Country	Parliamentary arena	Administrative arena	Direct-democratic arena	Overall
Switzerland	weak	weak	weak	weak
Germany	intermediate	weak	strong	intermediate
Netherlands	intermediate	intermediate	strong	intermediate
France	strong	strong	strong	strong

Strength and Strategy

Table 2.2. The general structural settings for political mobilization

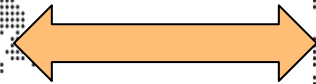
Dominant strategy	Formal institutional structure: strength of the state		
	weak	intermediate	strong
Exclusive	<i>Formal inclusion</i>		<i>Selective exclusion</i>
	Italy	Germany	<u>France</u>
Inclusive	<i>Integration</i>		<i>Informal inclusion</i>
	<u>Switzerland</u>	Netherlands	Scandinavian countries, Great Britain, Austria

Table 2.3. The implications of concrete opportunities for the level of mobilization and action repertoire of social movements

Country	Facilitation	Repression	Success chances	Reform/ threat	Overall
<i>Level of mobilization</i>					
<u>Switzerland</u>	high	–	high	stable	high
Netherlands	high	–	intermediate	intermediate	intermediate-high
Germany	intermediate	–	intermediate	intermediate	intermediate
<u>France</u>	low	–	low	unstable	low
<i>Action repertoire</i>					
<u>Switzerland</u>	moderate	moderate	moderate	stably moderate	moderate
Netherlands	moderate	moderate	intermediate	intermediate	intermediate-moderate
Germany	intermediate	radical minority	intermediate	intermediate	intermediate-radical
<u>France</u>	radical	moderate	radical	radicalization/moderation	radical

Social movement theories

Conditions for social movement emergence ?



Value ?



Quote

“India’s political system can be described as a mediating framework for a dialogue between the two inherited traditions of **governance** and **movement**”

(1964, 126 W.H. Morris-Jones in Mitra, 2006, 50)



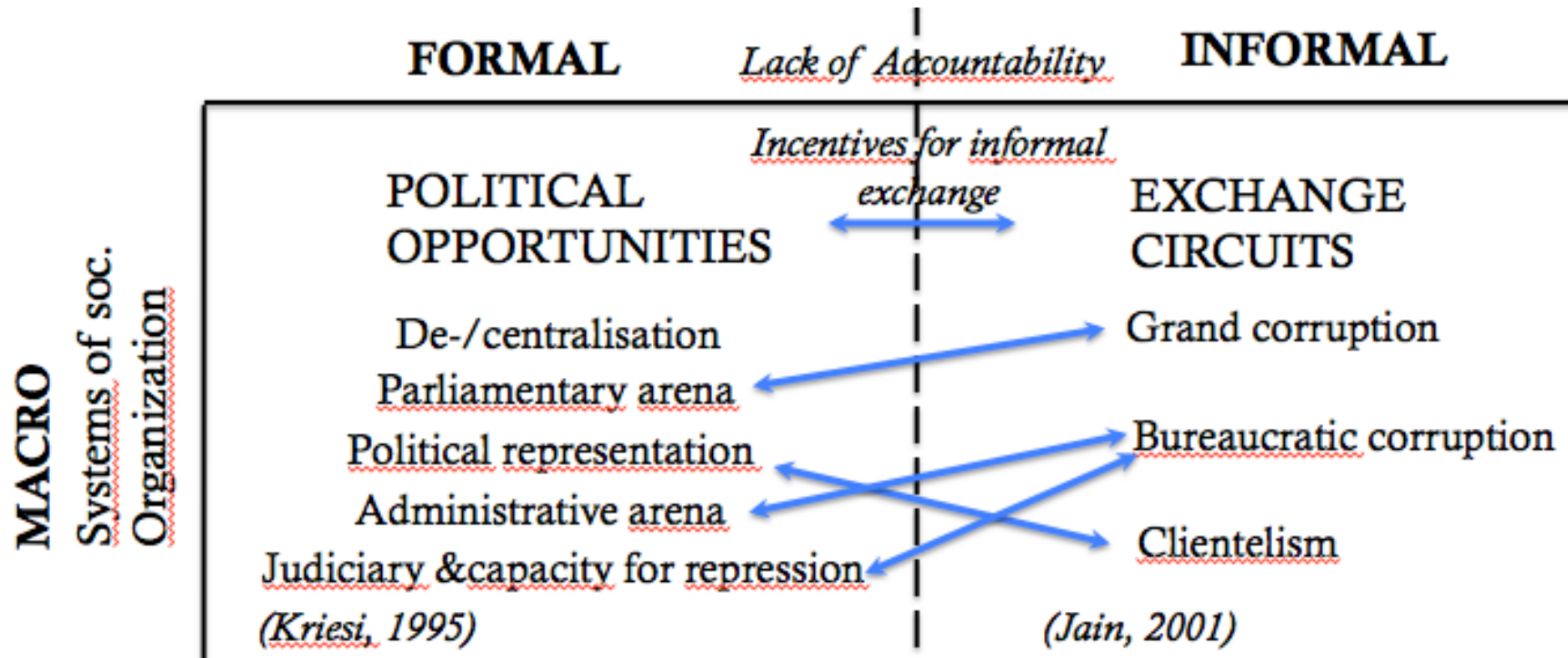
Conditions for social
movement emergence ?

Questions addressed

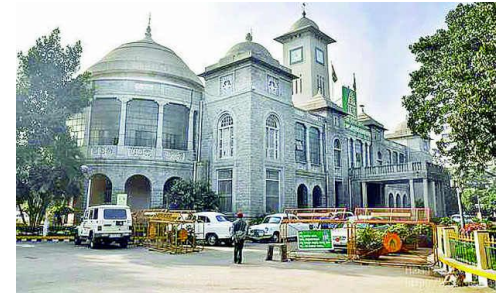
- What formal political opportunities does the **Indian** legal polity offer?
- How does informality intervene?
- Given these opportunities:
 - What kind of political reshaping can be thought of?

Interaction between formal & informal political opportunities

(Helmke & Levitsky, 2006; Khan 1996)



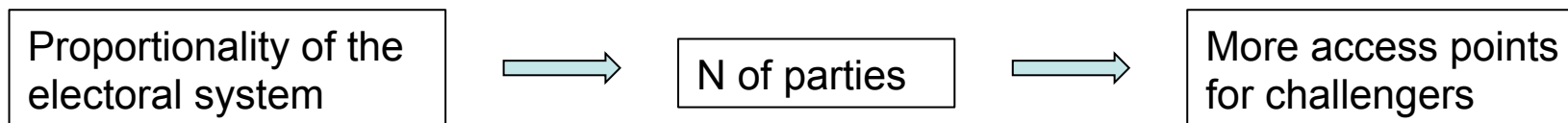
Decentralisation



- Hypothesis: The more centralised a state is organised, the more closed are opportunities for mobilisation = decreased proximity to its citizens.
- Pol Opp: Trend towards higher degree of centralisation
- Incentives for corruption: no real mechanisms for accountability, localisation of corruption
- Conclusion: « legal intentions », but unfavourable institutional arrangements and uncomplying attitudes & practices

Representation and political alliances

- Hypothesis:



The more unstable government, the better chances to find allies

- Pol Opp: proportionality in lower houses and representation of disadvantaged groups, co-option
- Incentives for corruption: lack of public scrutiny, tactical command to restrict access to information, modality of election – constitution of voter lists, corruptly financed electoral circuits, clientelism
- Conclusion: Representation only formal means of participation, modalities can be flawed

Bureaucracy

- Hypothesis: Non-linear relationship between access/openness
- Pol Opp:
 - Operations of welfare benefits through systems of governmentality, dependency of the poor
 - Colonial systems of categories
 - Confusing institutional arrangements
 - More demand than offer turns entitlement into political currency
 - Implementation is a technical exercise
- Conclusion: Politics of access through practices of proof-gathering, prone to bribe collection

Judiciary

- Hypothesis: The more direct-democratic arenas exist, the more open are PO. In India's case « judiciary -the world's most activist judiciary ». Channel to repeal or claim social justice.
- Pol Opp:
 - Availability of legal instruments, but most don't refer to penal code
 - Bias towards better educated - inaccessibility to the poor
 - Prospect of being entitled, silences the beneficiaries
- Incentives for corruption: low integrity of legal profession and police force, inefficient procedures

Judgement of political opportunities

(formal & informal)

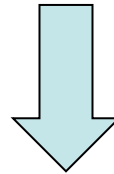
- Open only rhetorically: Opportunities have to be “cracked open”
 - Incentives for corruption foster informal practices
 - Bureaucracy: Few benefits vs large demand = political currency
 - Precarity of urban poor gets them roped in into networks of dependency, perpetuation of clientelistic practices as alternative service delivery
 - Systems of governmentality are at the heart of shaping citizens-states interactions:
- **Create distrust, perpetuate inequality and worsen conditions for mobilising**

Outlook: Rethinking welfare governance

Formal “good governance” prescription only rhetoric

Take informality as modus operandi seriously

Ways to cut through corruption?



- Rothstein & Uslaner (2005): Equality, Corruption and Social Trust
 - Particular policies → low levels of trust: “undeserving poor”
→ perpetuating inequality → corruption
 - Universal basic income → less bureaucracy
- Standing (2013): Unconditional Basic Income: Pilots in Madhya Pradesh

Pilot-study in INDIA: UNICEF – Standing (2013)

- For 18 months all individuals of 8 villages got unconditional monthly payments into bank acc: Adult 300 R, child 150 R
- Design feature: Pilot with RCT, survey and in-depth interviews

Results:

- Financial inclusion / individual bargaining-power / saving
- Improvement of dwelling and smarter energy use
- Cover food needs, improved weight-for-age index – girls
- Completing medical treatments, shift to pvt hospitals and insurance
- Higher school enrolment
- Shift from daily labour to own farming / business

➤ **Improved liquidity**

Initiative in Switzerland

On 11th april 2012, the text of the Federal initiative «For an Unconditional basic income» has been published on the Feuille Federale:

Proposed constitutional amendment:

Art. 110a (new) Unconditional basic income

- The Confederation shall ensure the introduction of an unconditional basic income.
- The basic income shall enable the whole population to live in human dignity and participate in public life.
- The law shall particularly regulate the way in which the basic income is to be financed and the level at which it is set.

Thank you!

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