

SPONSORED BY THE



Federal Ministry  
of Education  
and Research



Freie Universität Berlin

**GLOCON**  
Global Change - Local Conflicts

**“What mining is about?”**

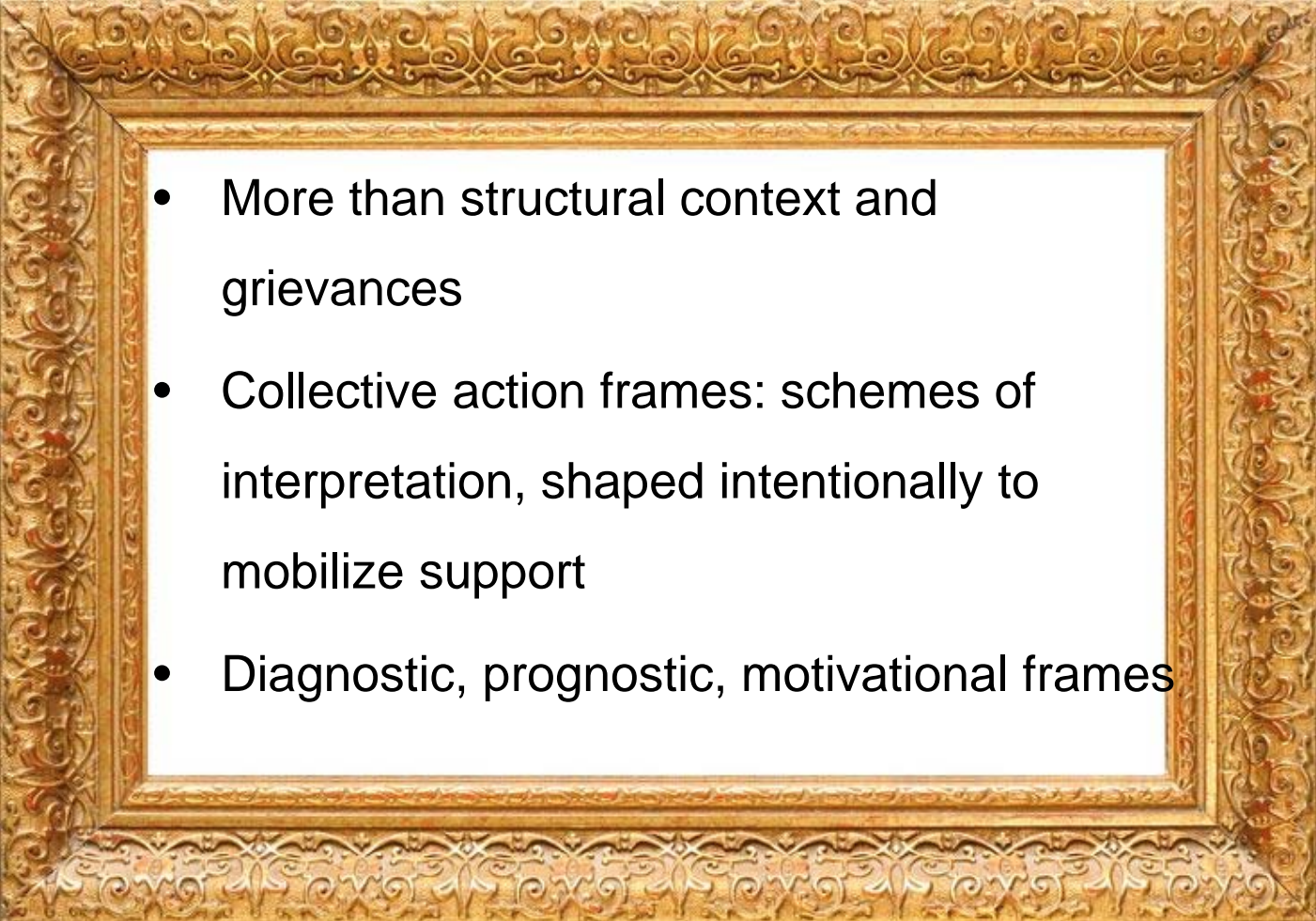
**Social movement actors' choice of framing  
strategies in conflicts over mining**

**Bettina Engels & Louisa Prause**


# What are we going to talk about?

- **Framing approach in contentious politics**
- **Political opportunity structures**
- **Scale**
- **Place**
- **Materiality**
- **Conclusion**

# The framing approach

- 
- More than structural context and grievances
  - Collective action frames: schemes of interpretation, shaped intentionally to mobilize support
  - Diagnostic, prognostic, motivational frames

# What explains framing choices?

- 
- Organizational identities (e.g. human rights organizations)
  - Discursive, cultural & political context
    - not enough to explain framing choices in mining conflicts
  - Political opportunity structures, place, scale & materiality

# Political opportunity structures

- Context matters: protest does not happen in a vacuum
- Openness of political institutions, allies, disunited elites...
- Long or short term (“windows of opportunity”)

Influence on framing strategies in mining conflicts:

- Networks and (potential) allies
- Regime/government change
- Laws, regulations, institutions (e.g. ILO 169, EITI)

# Place

- o Specific socio-cultural meaning of localities
- o Reference point for construction of collective identities (e.g. ethnicity, indigeneity, autochthony, nationality)
- o Resources are “are where they are.” (Dicken 2011: 244)

## Conflicts over mining:

- Religious/spiritual sites: burial grounds, churches, mosques, etc.



# Scale

- Overcoming hierarchical dualism of “global-local”
- Socially produced and productive: active and contested production in social processes
- Focus on scalar practices – instead of “scale itself”

Relevance for framing strategies:

- Frames vary between scales of protest actors and addressees
- Interrelations with other categories, in particular political opportunity structures

# Materiality of resources

- Nature is not external to society but socially produced & culturally constructed
- Nature has a specific materiality of its own
- Unintentional consequences in process of appropriating nature
- Need for specific infrastructure, technologies, chemicals



# Materiality of resources & framing

## What is a resource?

- Exists only in relation to human needs and wants
- Produced not “discovered”
- Social movement actors contest “what a resource is”
- Enabled by the materiality of nature

**GLOCON**

Global Change - Local Conflicts

# Materiality of Resources & framing

- Resources have different meanings across time and space.

“they are sitting on a mountain of gold but are the poorest of the country”

**GLOCON**  
Global Change - Local Conflicts

# Materiality of resources & framing

- Physical and chemical properties of resources require certain infrastructure & use of chemicals
- Offers specific conditions for frames



# Conclusion

- Categories help us to identify conditions that enable certain frames
- Do not determine choice of frames → case specific
- Interplay between different categories:
  - Meanings attached to resources vary across time, societies and scale.
  - Different POS at different scales
  - Materiality of resource often brings about the threat for culturally important places like graveyards



**Thank you 😊**

**Any questions or suggestions?**