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Shooting Citizens - Saving Regimes?

A Case-Centered Approach to the Puzzle of

Protest-Repression Interactions

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Abstract

This paper investigates the interaction of protest and repression, drawing on Islamist protests and state repression in Tunisia and Algeria in the early 1990s. Putting the findings from large-n quantitative studies to the test in a case-centric design, it identifies serious shortcomings in current, largely static, approaches and proposes a shift towards a dynamic understanding of the relationship between protest and repression: Specific repertoires and practices of protest interact with and make more likely specific repressive responses (and vice-versa) in cycles of escalation or de-escalation. Building on this dynamic understanding, the paper specifies escalating and de-escalating practices and context conditions.

About the author

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Introduction

The interaction of protest and repression were once again catapulted to the forefront of international attention as the protests of the "Arab Spring" swept across the Middle East and North Africa. Protests everywhere were met by violent government repression, but repression was as variegated as the contexts and outcomes of these protests: rulers toppled in Tunisia and Egypt, reforms prompted in Jordan and Morocco, and destructive slides into violence and towards divided polities or civil war in Bahrain, Syria, Yemen, and Libya. These recent developments add special urgency to questions surrounding how protest and repression interrelate: When does repression escalate protest and when does it weaken movements and demobilise its adherents? How does repression affect protest strategies and ultimately the success of broad-based social movements militating for social change? The present paper, written before the events of the "Arab Spring," explores these issues in depth, drawing on the protest trajectories of Islamist movements in Tunisia and Algeria in the early 1990s. As we will see, beyond its illumination of a turning point in the recent political history of the Maghreb, examining these cases speaks strongly to concerns that should exercise scholars trying to understand the protests of 2011.

The present study begins with a puzzle. In February 1992, Algerian security forces arrested an estimated 14,000 Islamist activists, sympathizers and suspected sympathizers, attempting to crush a movement that had just won the national legislative elections with a massive show of force: with tear gas, bullets, and mobile security courts that meted out exemplary justice (Willis, 1996a: 257). This repression, however, did not stop Islamist protest. Quite to the contrary, it appears to have fuelled militants' grievances, pushing more and more people to oppose the state by force of arms, as Algeria spiralled into a cycle of violence and counter-violence that led to civil war. In Tunisia, by contrast, the arrest of 8,000 Islamist activists (in a country with one-third the population of Algeria), policing with tear-gas, bullets, and security courts in 1991, led not to civil war, but to the breaking-apart of the Tunisian Islamist movement and its disappearance—for a time—from the political scene (Shahin, 1997: 101).

The contradictory outcomes and similar points of departure of the Tunisian and Algerian cases present ideal prerequisites for investigating the relationship of protest and repression and for testing the limits of a literature on protest and repression that has come a long way in the past two decades, but whose focus on quantitative investigations of large numbers of cases using indicators at a high level of

aggregation poses serious problems. In the following, I therefore subject the insights developed in the large-n protest and repression literature to intense scrutiny based on a case-centric design, investigating the divergent trajectories of Algeria and Tunisia using a focused, structured comparison. I ask, first of all, "can existing approaches to the interaction of protest and repression convincingly account for the differences between the cases?" and, secondly, inquire "how can we, building on existing approaches, best account for their diverging trajectories?" Such an investigation promises not only to illuminate an important turning point in the recent political history of the Maghreb, but to highlight the limits of the current literature on repression and protest, and to use the exploratory possibilities of case-study designs to help solve the puzzle of protest-repression interactions.

To accomplish these aims, I begin by introducing, in Chapter 1, the state of the art in research on protest and repression. I identify three main propositions around which research has coalesced. Introducing these approaches, which I label "level," "timing," and "target," I describe the logic of the argument underlying each and present some of the evidence that appears to support their central propositions. As we will see, however, all of these approaches adopt a narrow and static understanding of protest-repression interactions and use highly aggregated data unsuited to capture dynamic interactions. I therefore also take some time in Chapter 1 to explain why these approaches threaten to miss essential elements of the interaction between protest and repression and go on in Chapter 2 to offer a renewed conceptual engagement with protest and repression that allows for a more complex and disaggregated understanding.

Chapter 3 is methodological. It introduces the case-centric design used here to test the approaches introduced in Chapter 1 and to develop them further. The formidable capabilities of case studies to challenge and advance a quantitative research agenda have recently been demonstrated in the field of civil war research (e.g. Collier, Hoeffler et al., 2005) and have begun to be integrated into work on protest and repression (Davenport, Johnston et al., 2005: particularly the contribution by Zwerman and Steinhoff). In this Chapter, I explain why a focused structured comparison is a particularly suited case study design and elucidate it's focus – the specific cases or episodes selected for investigation – and its structure – the set of standardised theoretically-derived questions I ask of them. It also discusses the sources used, issues of bias inherent in them, and how data was coded from them.

In Chapter 4, I introduce the two cases under investigation, placing the contentious episodes, very briefly, in their historical context and providing a broad outline of the key protest events over the respective 20-month periods under investigation, thus describing what exactly is to be explained.

These cases are further investigated in Chapter 5. Drawing on the three main approaches in the protest-repression literature, I investigate to what extent "levels" of protest, its "timing," and its discriminate or indiscriminate "targeting," can explain the two cases. I examine these propositions in the light of the detailed events-data generated for the two cases, which gives a highly detailed dynamic picture of how protest and repression developed over time, and confront them with insights from case-studies. The events-data in combination with case study insights suggests that the "level" approach is unsuited to explaining protest-repression interactions and correlations on the macro-level here appear to be artefacts of lower-level dynamics. The other two approaches are more useful, but a detailed look at the smaller-scale dynamics, as we will see, suggests that both are linked to additional factors that have not received the necessary attention in the protest and repression literature.

Chapter 6 therefore goes beyond the test of extant explanations and shows how the existing approaches can be expanded upon. Drawing on recent insights from social movement theory, research on civil wars, and the events-data, I advance a dynamic understanding of protest-repression interactions, which places the escalatory impact inherent in violent protest and repression at its centre and specifies the conditions under which such a dynamic is likely. We will see that the impact of specific forms of state counter-mobilisation on protest and the importance of time-dependent enabling factors has been insufficiently considered.

1. The Literature

The study of protest and repression forms an important sub-branch of a much broader literature on social movements. It is premised on the assumption that protest and repression interact, that, more concretely, social movements adapt their strategies to political opportunity structures and that these structures are at least in part regulated by strategies of repression (McAdam, 1996: 26-28; Brockett, 1991; Tilly and Tarrow, 2007: 48; Alimi, 2009). At the same time, it assumes that repressive strategies are chosen by states to respond to specific challenges (Davenport, 2005: xv-xvi; Bueno de Mesquita, Smith et al., 2003: especially Ch. 8). This literature is broadly rationalist, building on the synthesising work of Charles Tilly, Sydney Tarrow and Doug McAdam that places collective action problems at the centre of explaining social movements, while recognising the importance of mobilising frames and socially constructed repertoires of action for overcoming them (Tarrow, McAdam et al., 1996; McAdam, Tarrow et al., 2001). Their work has placed a special emphasis on the mobilisation of resources as central to sustaining contention. Without the resources necessary for coordinating activities and offering selective benefits to participants, discontent is rarely translated into action (Regan and Norton, 2005:322; Tilly, 2003).

Within the protest and repression literature, there is now a consensus that repression can both decrease protest activity and make protest more likely; that is, this literature is faced with a puzzle of aggregate effects, in which the escalatory and de-escalatory effects of repression are difficult to disentangle. Repression always raises the cost of collective action by attaching sanctions to specific forms of protest behaviour, thus demobilising actors with a low level of involvement. At the same time, it may create new grievances, increase group cohesion, favour violent tactics for attention or self-defence, or contribute in other ways to increasing violent protest and protest intensity (Lichbach, 1987; for a recent and useful reformulation see Regan and Norton, 2005: 324; Tilly and Tarrow, 2007: 101). Thus, the study of the interaction of repression and protest has become a search for the conditions under which one or the other tendency prevails (Opp and Roehl, 1990: 523).[1] This search has been conducted in a very rigorous, generally quantitative manner, looking to discover law-like regularities linking protest and

repression. In the following, I introduce the three dominant approaches to explaining when protest-repression interactions lead to mobilisation and escalation, and when they result in an end to protest. As we will see, these approaches provide multiple important insights and form an essential point of departure for the subsequent study. However, as some researchers have begun to recognise, "some seemingly well-understood truths about repression and mobilisation are much more complex than we normally acknowledge" (Davenport, 2005: xvii) and all three approaches suffer from significant short-comings: an insufficient conceptual engagement with protest and repression and consequently a lack of disaggregation of what are complex phenomena; the assumption of a uni-directional interaction in which repression causes changes in protest;[2] and, particularly in the "level" approach, a reliance on over-aggregated indicators incapable of capturing the dynamics in question.

Looking at "Levels"

One promising approach, which has received the most attention to date, views the intensity of repression as key. It assumes, in differing versions, that "how much" repression there is, is central to understanding whether repression de-mobilises or mobilises protest. Most of the literature in this tradition has argued that the effect of repression can be graphed as an inverted U: low levels of repression lead to low levels of protest; increasing levels of repression up to a certain threshold serve primarily to annoy and harass protestors and movement activists, increasing group cohesion, fuelling grievances, and in some cases, increasing public sympathy for the protestors. However, beyond a certain threshold, repression becomes very costly for movement activists. Once states begin locking up opponents for years, torturing activists, and shooting protestors, the demobilising effects of repression predominate (Gurr, 1970: especially Ch. 8; Tarrow, 1989; Muller and Weede, 1990: 626). By contrast, Mason and Krane (1989) first argued that the inverted U was only part of the story and provided evidence suggesting a 'backlash' effect was operational at very high levels of repression. Particularly intense repression, such as massacres perpetrated by death-squads, can backfire and incite protest behaviour, especially if repression is indiscriminate and targets not only committed movement activists, but entire quarters, and people caught in 'the wrong place at the wrong time.' Their hypothesis has received substantial backing (Fran-

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1 It is important to note that the literature on protest and repression does not aim to explain protest per se, but only how repression impacts its development. Repression thus forms one (important) component of the political opportunity structure that determines how protest develops (Tilly and Tarrow, 2007: 189-90).

2 Joel Migdal eloquently criticises this approach as the prize-fighter model: researchers send two factors into the ring to fight it out, rather than recognising that their interaction transforms both (Migdal, 2001: 23).

cisco, 2005; Moore, 1998), although recent evidence suggests that the effect may be less straightforward than postulated and additional factors matter (Ortiz, 2007; Lee, Maline et al., 2000).

While this approach is intuitively appealing, it is highly problematic when probed more deeply because it assumes that repression influences protest at a glacial pace without regard to substantial evidence that its effect occurs rapidly, conceptualises protest and repression as uni-dimensional phenomena, and assumes that repression determines protest without sensitivity to the fact that protest impacts repression in an interrelated process. Thus, first of all, because proponents of both the inverted-U and backlash hypotheses work largely with large-n quantitative studies, for ease of operationalisation they tend to assume that the relationship between protest and repression is slow and stable over time. Ortiz, for instance, uses data aggregated over seven years. However, as we will see below, there is reason to believe that protest and repression are significantly more mercurial phenomena. Whole social movements form and disband in less than a decade and individual protest cycles and movements' reactions occur on a significantly shorter time-scale (Della Porta and Diani, 1999: 207). When the authorities begin dismantling an oppositional organisation, its militants do not "wait until the end of the calendar year to react" (King and Lowe, 2003: 617). Moreover, while Mason and Krane's (1989: 175) qualitative investigation argued that death-squads, as a specific form of repressive practice, provoke backlash, subsequent studies have lost sight of this specificity and the implied multidimensionality of repression, using indicators of civil and political rights as proxies for "levels" of repression.[3] This ignores the specificity of different repressive practices and loses sight of the fact that public executions, for instance, particularly ones that take place outside of the state, are highly fragile and ambivalent displays of power.[4] The most serious problem with the "level" approach, however, is the postulated uni-directional interaction of repression and protest, for, as Christian Davenport has argued for some time (Davenport, 2000: 3-5; Davenport, 2005: xi), the most consistent finding of research on protest and repression is not the disputed and complex link between repression and protest, but the straightforward insight that states increase repression when faced with protest. The two activities are interrelated.

Thinking about "Timing"

The second main thrust of investigations of the relationship between protest and repression has focused on timing, on when repression takes place relative to protest mobilisation. Ted Gurr (1986: 51-53) argues that violent repression is a reaction to well-developed movements, while Anne Costain (1992) complements that argument with the view that early repression, which takes effect before movements have fully mobilised, tends to end protest. Others distinguish between two "logics" of repression around "reactive" and "proactive" policing of protest and link the former to violent protest (e.g. Della Porta and Diani, 1999: 210). This argument is taken up by Mohamed Hafez who explains that "pre-emptive repression will likely discourage rebellion…[It] denies activists the opportunity to expand material and organizational resources rapidly and thus disempowers supporters and sympathizers who may wish to act, but see no feasible means of affecting change" (Hafez, 2003: 73). In addition, supporters of young movements organisations under conditions of repression have no way of gauging the level of support their movement enjoys and thus face considerable uncertainty that makes collective action more difficult. Moreover, because trust and the willingness to engage in activism on a micro-level is only built-up in the course of contestation (Wickham, 2002: 163; Opp, Finkel et al., 1995; Wickham, 2004), pre-emptive repression robs movements of the opportunity to build essential networks and the infrastructure for protest.

The literature centring on the timing of repression is less dominated by quantitative approaches than the literature concerned with levels. It has a similar intuitive appeal, elegantly building on one of the key insights of social movement theory, the importance of organisations and the mobilisation of resources for sustaining protest (compare e.g. Tilly and Tarrow, 2007: 74-75). If repression occurs before such organisations and mobilising capacity can develop, protest will not occur, and, more importantly, even if protest peaks briefly, it will not be sustained over time. The fact that the "timing" approach incorporates the temporal dimension of protest-repression interactions, viewing them dynamically rather than mechanistically, is likewise a strength. However, like the proponents of the "levels" approach discussed above, advocates of "timing" fail to disaggregate the multiple dimensions of repression and protest and pursue a unidirectional research agenda in which the influence of repression on protest is examined without sensitivity for their interrelation. These are more than just theoretical quibbles. As we will see in Section 4.2 below, these issues mean that "timing" cannot deal appropriately with the

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3   Ortiz (2007) e.g. uses the political and civil rights index of the *World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators III* data set. Similarly Francisco (2005: 59) asks "How much repression is sufficient to deter mobilization without provoking backlash." Aside from the problematic agenda of social control this implies, the question "what sort" rather than "how much" repression may be the more revealing as we will see in the following.

4   The literature on repressive practices and technologies of domination is vast. One obvious starting point is Foucault, 1998 [1977].

cases. Repression is rarely visible when there is little to repress: the existence of a movement in a position to seriously challenge the state suggests that the state's reaction to such a movement is almost by definition reactive.

Taking "Target" Seriously

The third major approach focuses on the 'target' of repression. Mason and Krane (1989: 818), though 'claimed' by proponents of "level", can perhaps be more accurately read to advance an argument focusing on the targeting of repression. For it is not just that the death-squads they examine killed people, but that they did so in an arbitrary or indiscriminate way that provokes 'backlash' protest mobilisation. Their argument has received recent support from Hafez's investigation of the role of indiscriminate repression in inciting rebellion in Islamic contexts (Hafez, 2004; Hafez and Wiktorowicz, 2004; Hafez, 2003) and complementary explanations for why indiscriminate repression by governments tends to play a major role in escalating protest and violent episodes to civil war (Kalyvas, 2004). Building on the insight that mobilisation can often be best accounted for in terms of a reaction to threat, not as a demand for change (Bayat, 1997: esp. 163; Goldstone and Tilly, 2001: 182-183), proponents of the 'target' view argue that indiscriminate violence, as "a type of violence that selects its victims on the basis of their membership in some group and irrespective of their individual actions," defeats deterrence and creates incentives for mobilisation: The recruitment of insurgents increases as the risks of passivity and insurgency equalise (Kalyvas, 2004: 97, 104). At the same time, violence increases the value of the protection protest movements and particularly armed groups can offer their members against repression (Regan and Norton, 2005: 324), as well as legitimising militancy among the targeted population and stabilising oppositional identities through shared experiences of discrimination (Kalyvas, 2004: 115-122; Hafez, 2003: 75-76). Insurgents are often aware of this mechanism and may attempt to provoke indiscriminate repression for its value as a recruitment tool (Zwerman and Steinhoff, 2005; Kalyvas, 2004: 113).

Like the argument about timing, the "target" approach has the virtue of focusing on one particular dimension of repression rather than attempting to explain behaviour in an undifferentiated recourse to "how much" repression there is. Moreover, it provides a thorough grounding in micro-level mechanisms and, although it differentiates repression only along one dimension, it provides a clear view of the sort of violent protest indiscriminate repression provokes (Hafez, 2003: 22). Yet, like the two other

approaches presented, it fails to reflect on the interrelation of protest and repression. Although Kalyvas (2004: 124-133) in his more theoretical discussion of indiscriminate repression examines the conditions under which indiscriminate repression is chosen by governments facing challengers, this interrelation has not made it into the literature examining the impact of indiscriminate repression on protest. Once again, however, this is a serious oversight. Indiscriminate repression is a (poor) way to fight protest, chosen by governments or counter-movements when the resources, particularly the information, necessary for selective violence are unavailable (Kalyvas, 2004: 108-112). This occurs particularly once oppositional organisations begin to control territory and consequently information about individual actions and possibilities to target individuals without great threat to the agents of repression all but disappear. It occurs, in other words, in contexts where protest *already* poses a serious threat to the government claim to the monopoly of violence. Therefore the prediction that indiscriminate repression increases protest activity again takes into consideration only one half of the equation.

For all of their shortcomings, these approaches mark the essential point of departure for the following investigation. We will see in the next Chapter that they help to orient the disaggregation of protest and repression by identifying different dimensions such a disaggregation must accommodate and in Chapter 5 that they help to provide an initial handle on the cases. The fact that they cannot, as we will see, fully explain the cases is not only a problem, it is in attempting to fill their silences and account for their shortcomings that Chapter 6 develops a more encompassing approach to protest-repression interactions.

2. Re-engaging with Protest and Repression

As we saw in the previous Chapter, there is reason to believe that the insights from the current literature may be based on over-aggregated indicators, a mechanistic, uni-dimensional approach to the interaction of protest and repression, and a lack of conceptual engagement with protest and repression and consequently a failure to disaggregate their various dimensions. This, I suggested, may in part be due to the fact that this research has been conducted in large-n, generally quantitative studies, looking to discover law-like regularities. It has too rarely been supplemented by case-centric investigations and as a consequence, has at times seen the necessities of operationalisation trump plausibility and deep engagement with actual instances of the phenomenon. Consequently, testing whether the insights developed at a general aggregate level can account for variation between two concrete cases not only promises an evaluation of the quality of these hypotheses, but also promises to illuminate additional factors in the interrelation between protest and repression not visible at a more highly aggregated level. This Chapter therefore lays the groundwork for examining the relationship of protest and repression at the case level. It does so, firstly, by conceptually engaging with protest and repression, thus developing a way to disaggregate the two phenomena according to coherent criteria that promise analytical leverage on the hypotheses introduced above, without being limited by their shortcomings. Secondly, it explains how we can use these distinctions in conjunction with detailed events-data in a focused structured comparison to examine the hypotheses and how data was coded to do so; and thirdly, discusses the sources used to gather the events-data and the problems of bias and reliability involved in such an undertaking.

Disaggregating Repression

Recent scholarship has seen a fruitful conceptual engagement with repression. Moving away from understandings of repression overly focused on "severity" (Della Porta, 1996: 65-66) as identical with more or less "intense" human rights violations perpetrated by governments (e.g Davenport, 2000: 6; Ortiz, 2007 : 223-225), or typologies that are little more than "catalogs of repressive tactics only loosely organized by salient, theoretically driven nomenclatures" (Earl, 2003: 46), it has disaggregated various types, targets, components, and dimensions of repression according to theoretically salient criteria (Davenport, 2007: 47; Bueno de Mesquita, Smith et al., 2003: 339-340; Earl, 2003; Earl, 2006).

One key point of reference in this undertaking has been a re-reading of the early work of Charles Tilly, who defined repression as "any action by another group which raises the contender's cost of collective action" (1978: 100), before moving to narrower understandings himself (2005: 222). Although this broad definition may seem question-begging, we will see that it begs the right questions. For if repression is "any action that raises the cost of collective action," it challenges us to ask what type of activities raise the cost of collective action and how they do so; if repression can be carried out by "another group," it prompts us to enquire about which actors engage in repression, rather than assuming that this is a prerogative of governments; and by glossing over who is affected by repression with "the contender," it challenges us to think hard about who is targeted by repression. Thus, if we adopt Tilly's definition, it would appear that repression can be disaggregated by the agents that employ repression, the means they use, who they target, and how they do so.[5]

This fourfold disaggregation presents several important departures from the conceptualisations of repression currently used in the protest and repression literature, which generally views repression as human rights violations by governments. The first such departure is in the domain of means. Collective action can not only be impaired, in Tilly's terms, by the immediate and obvious costs of arrests, violence against demonstrators, or torture, although these are important elements of most repressive strategies. It can also be rendered more difficult by reducing important prerequisites for protest, that is by improving people's position and thus increasing the opportunity costs for protest (Collier, Hoeffler et al., 2005: 7) through negotiation and the redress of grievances. In addition, the cost of collective action can be increased by restrictions on organisation that make communication difficult and stop movement supporters from being able to gauge levels of support, particularly in authoritarian settings (Johnston, 2005: 108)[6] and finally by counter-mobilisation and claim-making that invests the political space where movements make themselves known and recruit followers and thus creates alternative movements that may use informal means of social sanction to discourage collective action (Della Porta and Diani, 1999: 212). Consequently, the spectrum of repressive actions ranges far beyond arrests and torture to include negotiation, claim-making, counter-mobilisation, and the redress of grievances.

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5   Interesting work has been conducted on the cases, particularly on Tunisia, investigating mechanisms of domination (e.g. Hibou and Hulsey, 2006). It is important however, not to expand the concept of repression to the point where it is identical with social control. Repression, as the definition used here makes clear, is intimately bound up with controlling protest as a particular form of claim making. It thus forms only one element in broader practices of social control.

6   In such contexts, violence can become a means for gaining information (Fearon and Laitin, 2003: 80).

Concerning the agents of repression, there has been an implicit or explicit assumption, particularly in the protest-repression literature, that governments are its sole authors. Indeed, in his newer work, Tilly (2005: 222) has defined repression as violence by governments (compare also Davenport, 2000: 6). Yet as Jennifer Earl convincingly argues, there is no reason to assume that repression is a prerogative of governments. To begin with, it is useful to distinguish between central and local government agents of repression, particularly in federal or decentralized systems that face severe principal-agent problems. Moreover, paramilitary groups, party organisations or informal organisations like the Klu-Klux-Klan engage in practices of repression and social control that can drastically raise the costs of collective action for protest movements. Yet they have only tenuous or unclear links to, and follow different logics from, formal government institutions (Earl, 2006: 129-132; Della Porta and Diani, 1999: 207-208). Therefore it is important to distinguish between the central state, local government authorities, and counter-movement organisations as actors of repression.

The differentiation between different targets of repression follows from thinking about repression in terms of practices that raise the costs of collective action for a movement whose contours are not fixed a priori. Instead, movements are constantly engaged in a quest to recruit new members, while their opponents strive not only to limit the capabilities of existing movement members but also to inhibit the movements' growth more broadly (Earl, 2006: 130; Regan and Norton, 2005: 326; Tilly and Tarrow, 2007: 100-102). Thus, the different strategies of repression outlined above can be applied to a broad variety of targets, ranging from core movement activists and structures, over movement sympathizers and armed groups,[7] to government supporters, activists involved in other oppositional movements or parties, international audiences, and finally the population as a whole. For instance, legal restrictions as a repressive means can be targeted at the population as a whole (a curfew, a state of emergency), be tailored only to affect the core movement directly (outlawing the party newspaper), might affect movement sympathisers only (restrictions on wearing certain "trademark" clothes like the qamis in Algeria), or the oppositional spectrum more broadly (modifying the law on political parties).

Finally, repressive actions can be undertaken in different ways; the mode of action can differ. Drawing on the distinctions made by Earl, I differentiate between open and clandestine action (what Earl, 2003:

47 calls observable and unobservable action). This distinction is allied to, but distinct from, the distinction between formal and informal modes of action. Informal actions may well be open, particularly in contexts where informal institutions and networks determine day to day life and movement recruitment (Singerman, 2004). Together, they draw attention to and differentiate between repressive actions that might otherwise escape our scrutiny, although the visibility of informal and particularly clandestine action is by its very nature low and thus likely to be difficult to capture through newspaper sources.

This disaggregation yields four dimensions of repression that I label "agent," "means," "target," and "mode." These different dimensions and the possible values they can be assigned are summarised in Table 1. I contend that this return to the terms in which Tilly originally framed the question is helpful and more helpful than other promising current work, like that of Jennifer Earl, who identifies "three key theoretical dimensions of repression [...] (1) the identity of the repressive agent (2) the character of the repressive action; and (3) whether the repressive action is observable" (Earl, 2003: 47). Earl's dimensions closely correspond to what I call agent, means and mode, while only insufficiently addressing the key question of who is targeted by repression. However, as we saw in the discussion of the protest and repression literature in Chapter 1, perhaps the most promising research on the interaction of repression and protest has focused precisely on the question of how repression is targeted. A conceptualisation that is unable to distinguish repression along this dimension thus appears problematic. Levels of repression and its timing, the other two salient dimension identified in the literature in Chapter 1, are a function of the distribution of repressive events over time and are thus also captured by the re-conceptualisation put forward.

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7   In the regional literature, the question of how closely violent actors were and are to the Islamist parties is hotly debated. I explain in the following Section why I choose to treat them as distinct categories.

Dimension	Questions	Possible Answers
Agent	Who are the agents of repression?	Actors of the central state, local authorities, non-state actors/ counter-movements
Target	Who is targeted?	The core movement, movement sympathisers, armed groups, government supporters, opposition groups, international audiences, the population as a whole
Means	What means are used?	Negotiation, claim, address of grievances, restrictions, arrests, physical violence, counter-mobilisation
Mode	How is repression used?	Open or clandestine, formal or informal

Table 1 Dimensions of Repression

Taking Apart Protest

Protest has seen less conceptual engagement than repression in the literature on protest and repression, but the broader social movement literature can help us specify its character. There is substantial agreement, with varying emphases, that protest is a collective or individual activity designed to make public claims on authorities that bear "on someone else's interests." This authority is often the state (Tilly and Tarrow, 2007: 4). The definition of protest as a collective or individual activity designed to make public claims on authority raises much the same questions as the definition of repression does. The fact that protest is "collective or individual" claim making, prompts questions about the agent who protests; the vague "activity" invites us to investigate by what means claims are made and, analogous to the mode category developed in thinking about repression, prompts us to think about how these activities are carried out. Finally, the fact that these claims are made on "authority" invites us to think about the target of protest, especially once we realise that the target of protest activity can also be actual or potential supporters. Much movement activity is consecrated to activities of movement survival and recruitment. These dimensions are summarised in Table 2.

Analogous to repression, where the agents engaging in repression can vary, protest can be conducted by different groups that differ in terms of their organisational structures, their membership, and other factors. Social movements usually comprise multiple more or less distinct formal and informal organisations, parties and branches, are based on broader networks of support and sympathy in the population, and move in a broader political field shared with other contenders who constitute possible allies, op-

ponents, or rival claim-makers (Della Porta and Diani, 1999: 224-225). Since the following examination deals with Islamist protest actors,[8] a distinction between different parties and groups is important. Within the spectrum of the Islamist movement, I distinguish between the Islamist parties, student organisations, and armed groups. Although these three groups are more or less linked and despite a substantial and at times polemical debate over whether the armed groups are merely an extension of the parties themselves, I disaggregate them. To begin with, there is now substantial evidence suggesting that the armed groups and the party organisation were organisationally distinct (e.g. on Tunisia Amnesty International, 1992c). Moreover, no matter what the extent of their ties, they were different organisations, with different organisational structures, engaging in different strategies according to different logics (Labat, 1995b: 220; compare the discussion of organisational structure and strategy in Della Porta and Diani, 1999: 151-152). This core of the movement mobilised Islamist supporters, a broad and diverse category of people outside of the formal party organisations who believed, in one form or another, that 'Islam is the solution' (compare Martinez, 2000: 23). It attempted to invest unstructured protest activities,[9] while sharing the political field with the organised (non-Islamist) opposition.

Dimension	Questions	Possible Answers/ Values
Agent	Who protests?	Islamist Party, student organisations of the party, armed groups, party sympathisers, non-Islamist opposition groups, unstructured protest
Target	Who is targeted?	The central government, local government institutions, the police, counter-movement activists/ government supporters, party sympathisers, resources, international audiences
Means	What means are used?	Negotiations, claims, mass demonstrations, direct action, violent confrontations, armed violence, sabotage
Mode	How is protest conducted?	Open or clandestine, formal or informal

Table 2 Dimensions of Protest

8 This work, following a growing body of highly productive thinking about Islamist movements, "builds on the now widely accepted notion that Islamism can and should be analysed not as a singular movement that can be understood only in terms of immutable theological visions of 'Islam,' monolithic and inherently violent, but as social movements linked by a shared Islamic frame of reference and vocabulary" (Ayoob, 2008).

9 Spontaneous uprisings occur in reaction to specific events, but cannot be sustained unless protest becomes more organised and these organisations mobilise sufficient resources (Tilly and Tarrow, 2007: 90).

The targets of protest are as variegated as the targets of repression. Claims on authority occur at the multiple levels that this authority is organised at, so that targets of protest not only include international organisations and audiences, the central government and local government institutions, but may come to encompass the police, as the direct "adversary" and the immediate face of the government, as well as organised counter-movements (Della Porta and Diani, 1999: 209, 212). Additionally, when we acknowledge that procurement of the essential prerequisites for protests is one of the main preoccupations of social movements and that consequently they spend at least as much energy on keeping their members mobilised in order to make claims as they invest in those claims themselves (Tilly and Tarrow, 2007: 92-93), it is clear that "protest" includes actions targeted at party sympathisers and activities for mobilising supporters or resources as well.

As a consequence of this variety of agents and targets, a broad range of means of protest is at the disposal of protest movements. Because protestors face more severe collective action problems than hierarchically organised agents of repression, having a repertoire of available contentious performances – a familiar and standardised model of action that provides clear expectations of appropriate behaviour (the demonstration, the strike, the coup, the guerrilla war) – is key to collective action (Tilly and Tarrow, 2007: 11 ; Tarrow, McAdam et al., 1996: 23). These specific forms vary by time and place and must therefore be inductively inferred (see Chapter 4 below), rather than enumerated a priori. In the Algerian and Tunisian context, protest forms ranged from negotiation and claim-making, mass demonstrations, direct mass action (strikes, the occupation of public buildings and squares), violent confrontations (unarmed violence or violence using improvised weapons such as rocks and sticks in situations of direct confrontation with the 'forces of order'), armed violence (violence involving weapons that imply preparation and premeditation like firearms, bombs, or Molotov cocktails), and acts of sabotage. Like repression, protest can be conducted openly or clandestinely and encompasses both formal and registered actions as well as informal activities.[10] These dimensions of protests are summarised in Table 2.

3. Methods & Research Design

The re-conceptualisation of protest and repression put forward, building on social movement theory, marks the first step in developing a case-centric approach to the puzzle of protest-repression interactions. The following Section explains the next steps in this undertaking: the choice of the two cases under investigation and how the two sets of theoretically-derived questions (compare Table 1 and 2 above) will be applied to the cases and coded to generate a highly differentiated catalogue of events that allows the tracing of protest-repression interactions over time (Tilly and Tarrow, 2007: 36-38). Doing so allows us to make use of the comparative advantage of case study designs, their rich empirical detail and exploratory possibilities, to suggest additional variables of interest for a literature arguably stuck at an impasse (George and Bennett, 2004: 19-22).

Case Selection

I focus on two key moments in the Islamist protest cycles, each lasting 20 months, during which protest-repression interactions diverged in the two countries. As explained in the Introduction, Tunisia and Algeria are particularly interesting cases for examining the interaction of protest and repression because, despite initial similarities, they took radically different trajectories. In both of these majority Arab-speaking, Muslim and middle-income countries (World Bank, 2010), a growing Islamist movement contended for influence against similarly restricted authoritarian-populist regimes in transition towards greater openness. The Tunisian Islamist movement, considered the strongest in the Maghreb until the late 1980s, lost this status to the Algerian during this time, but remained formidable (Leveau, 1995b: 16). The similarity of the cases should not be over-stated, and the brutal Algerian experience of decolonisation, economic problems during its 'black decade' from 1986 onwards,[11] and the greater numerical strength of the Algerian Front Islamique du Salut (FIS) during our period of investigation, mark important differences. However, the similarities do provide a comparable point of departure, from which subsequent developments diverged: Repression "worked" in Tunisia, while apparently contributing to an escalation to civil war in Algeria. In both countries, movements were forced to develop new strategies to deal with similar waves of mass-arrests, heightened policing, and the dismantling

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10   These two dimensions can and should be disaggregated. A mass protest is by its nature an open action, while at the same time it may be carried out illegally in contravention of government restrictions.

11   Compare Martinez, 2000: 2-5 for an overview of the literature on the 'black decade' and why we, in his view, should not care about it.

of their formal organisational structures. In Tunisia, this period spans the time from 1 May 1990 to 31 December 1991, during which the Tunisian Islamist movement went from mass mobilisation, attacks on government installations and the possible planning of a coup d'état to seeing its formal structures dismantled and its mobilising ability reduced completely. In Algeria, the period under investigation spans the same time period one year later: from 1 May 1991 to 31 December 1992.[12] The Algerian protest cycle, at the beginning, appears to approximate the Tunisian one, with similar, though larger, mass mobilisation of FIS followers early in the period under investigation. However, while protest ended in Tunisia, it escalated after the military's armchair coup of January 1992 in Algeria. Unlike in Tunisia, violent attacks on police and military installations and state-run enterprises in Algeria did not remain individual sporadic occurrences but increasingly became the dominant form of contention so that by autumn 1992 Algeria was well on the way to a full-scale civil war.

These two time periods are investigated using a focused structured comparison. Using the two sets of questions about protest and repression developed in the sections "Disaggregating Protest" and "Taking Apart Repression" above as standardised questions to ask of each event, I use case-studies and news sources to compile a detailed and multi-dimensional database of protest and repression activities in the two countries under investigation (compare George and Bennett, 2004: esp. 67-71). Despite problems of bias that will be discussed in the next section, newspaper sources are the best available for capturing a large number of events across the two countries under investigation. They are thus essential for any analysis of protest (and repression) that focuses on actions and interactions and particularly for the comparative and quantitative study of social movements. In light of these advantages, recent research has argued that, despite its imperfections, newspaper data is a highly valuable source and when compared to other source materials, "does not deviate markedly from accepted standards of quality" (Earl, Martin et al., 2004: 76-77).

Sources, Bias, and Coding

Events-data was compiled from several sources to "ensure a broader range of coverage, which is likely both to capture more events (addressing selection bias) and to provide multiple accounts of each event (addressing description bias)" (Earl, Martin et al., 2004: 74). The detailed annual chronologies compiled on each of the Maghreb states in the Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord, form one important source of events-data and function as a common baseline for the two cases (Daoud, 1991; Daoud, 1990; Rouzeik, 1991; Cesari, 1992). They were used, in conjunction with the many case studies I draw on (see below), as the measure against which the plausibility of other reported events were assessed. To flesh-out the detail, I drew on one weekly newspaper and one daily newspaper in both of the countries under investigation, of which I conducted full scans, as far as possible in light of problems of access, over the two twenty month periods. This was done to avoid bias through sampling. In both countries, local newspapers, despite serious problems of bias and censorship that will be discussed below, were used because they provide significantly higher quality data than is available through international news sources, despite the fact that they are not available in digital format.[13] The higher data quality offered by local newspapers is particularly marked in episodes of non-violent protest events, which, in these 'peripheral' countries, are generally not considered sufficiently news-worthy to make headlines (Galtung and Holmboe Ruge, 1965: 68, 71).[14] These sources were complemented by any additional events that could be gleaned from the detailed chronologies and blow-by-blow narratives provided in a broad range of case-studies (inter alia: Burgat and Dowell, 1997; Evans and Phillips, 2007; Hamdi, 1998; Labat, 1995b; Martinez, 2000; Willis, 1996b; compare the Bibliography for a full overview).

For the Tunisian case, I drew on the independent weekly newspaper *Réalités*, which is counted amongst the oppositional spectrum and marks one of the "very few qualified exceptions" to the monotony of pro-government propaganda that is the Tunisian press during this time (Sadiki, 2002: 71). *Réalités* was available for the whole period under study, though five issues could not be accessed. In addition, I drew on the daily newspaper *Le Temps*, the largest 'independent' francophone newspaper in Tunisia. Due to

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12 The Algerian and Tunisian regimes and the Islamist movements in both countries watched developments in the other closely. The cases thus pose the 'problem' that they are not truly independent: learning and anticipation effects are likely. However, the fact that protest in Tunisia ended before that in Algeria escalated suggests that if learning took place on the part of regimes, it certainly was not very successful. More importantly, the benefits in terms of similarities and comparability afforded by geographically and temporally proximate cases occurring in similar context outweighs the problems posed by their mutual influence.

13 For instance, according to the data available in LexisNexis, the New York Times ran only 5 articles with Tunisia in the headline or lead in January 1991, only one of which mentions protests in passing. Levels of coverage in francophone newspapers are similar. By contrast, the coded events-data includes 48 distinct events for this time period. Coverage provided by news agencies, particularly Agence France Presse is of higher quality and approaches the level of detail attained in the coded events-data. However, it is only available from January 1992 onwards and thus could not be used because it covers only a fraction of the time periods under investigation.

14 For a discussion of the practical import of newsworthiness on social movements see Barranco and Wisler, 1999.

problems of availability, *Le Temps* could only be consulted for the events reported between 1 May 1990 and 31 October 1990.

For the Algerian case, I consulted the independent francophone weekly newspaper *Algérie Actualité* and the independent francophone daily *El-Watan*. Due to the low density of coverage available – only 27 issues of *El-Watan* over the 20 month period could be accessed[15] – holes in coverage were filled by relying on the daily newspaper *El Moudjahid*, "the government's main francophone newspaper, which has long been the country's most important" (Gafaïti, 1999: 56). However, this additional coverage could only be guaranteed from May 1991 until October 1992 so that the quality of the events-data and thus the reliability of events counts is significantly reduced for October, November and December of 1992.

Even under the best of circumstances, events reported in newspapers are affected by selection (what is reported) and description (how it is reported) bias according to criteria of news-worthiness, corporate interests, and the explicit and implicit expectations of audiences, which leads, most notably, to an over-reporting of large and violent events (Earl, Martin et al., 2004: 69-71; compare also Barranco and Wisler, 1999) and an under-reporting of phenomena in areas considered peripheral or of low interest (Galtung and Holmboe Ruge, 1965: 71). Yet, Algeria and Tunisia do not represent the best of cases and thus the problem of selection bias is aggravated and complicated. In a dual press landscape of francophone and arabophone news sources, audiences and journalists of the francophone newspapers investigated here tended to take a particularly dim view of the Islamist movements, which coloured their reporting, focusing on stories that confirmed their imagination of Islamism as a retrograde movement (Burgat, 2003: 110; compare also Marzouki, 2002). Moreover, during the period under investigation, the press in Algeria and particularly in Tunisia was not free and all newspapers faced significant pressure. Tunisia was marked by the "verrouillage systématique des espaces d'expression de la société civile, et par la poursuite d'une stratégie policière qui vise à provoquer, dans la population, l'intériorisation de la peur et de l'autocensure" (Lamchichi, 1997: 141), despite a limited opening that occurred with government financial support for certain opposition newspapers (compare Chouikha, Labidi et al., 1992; and Angrist, 1999: 95 on a later similar measure). In Algeria, where the press saw a veritable flowering after 1988,

the degree of press censorship was initially lower. However, the military coup in January 1992 made reporting more difficult and from late summer 1992 the government began more closely controlling the flow of information, seizing several newspapers in August (Cesari, 1992: esp. 657) and passing a new anti-terrorism law in September that "made reporting and journalistic work in general practically impossible" (Gafaïti, 1999: 57). This degree of government control of information is overtly visible in the fact that over the twenty month period under investigation, five issues of Réalités were unavailable due to censorship. More subtly, and more seriously, government repression does much to exacerbate the problem of selection bias. Therefore, understanding in what ways this bias distorts coverage is essential to working constructively with the data.

Regarding the coverage on repression, one common assumption is that, in contexts of press censorship, newspapers will underreport the amount of events that are "highly repressive." This bias is often seen as unproblematic, because it should strengthen our confidence in findings linking protest and (generally "high") repression (Ortiz, 2007: 203). Yet, as the conceptual disaggregation of repression demonstrated, neither is it clear what exactly "high" repression is, nor is it obvious that it will not be reported. Instead, press coverage in the two countries under investigation appeared to underreport potentially damaging events and over-report news that fits the government narrative. Certain "highly" repressive events are reported, even over-reported, when they are liable to re-enforce government claims to a Hobbesian legitimacy of might and order (compare Bozarslan, 2008: especially his Chapter on the Algerian Civil War). Consequently, the Algerian press reported in some detail about military operations involving heavy weapons and the killing of possibly inflated numbers of Islamist maquisards, sold as successes in a war on terror, while probably underreporting the civilian deaths of policing.[16] Although "no one can report on the army's illegal and arbitrary methods [and] editors and reporters have been imprisoned for publishing information 'prejudicial to security and to the forces of law and order'" (Addi, 1998: 49), reporting on the army, the police, and the gendarmerie in heroic, albeit not necessarily any less brutal terms, was commonplace. Moreover, government legitimating strategies may be over-reported in both Algeria and Tunisia. The choice of independent newspapers reduces this tendency, yet, particularly in Tunisia, praise of the government was accorded a very high news value.

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15   The volumes available were (all 1992): 9 March, 19 March, 17/18 April, 24/25 April, 26 April, 6 July, 7/8 August, 10 August, 13 August, 24 August, 25 August, 26 August, 8 September, 22 September, 23 September, 24 September, 2/3 October, 6 October, 7 October, 9/10 october, 28 October, 12 November, 30 November, 3 December, 14 December, 16 December, 31 December.

16   For instance, an investigative article in *Algérie Actualité* No 1342 (4-10 July 1991) reports the killing of four people by the army during a single day of the June-August 1991 curfew. The people interviewed for the article report that this is a regular occurrence, yet this violence is not otherwise reported.

Regarding protest activity, the picture is similarly ambiguous. Thus, the Tunisian government attempted to consistently portray Nahdha, as a party, as a small and socially irrelevant minority, all the while exaggerating the "Islamist menace" to sell itself domestically and internationally as the sole rampart against "fanaticism" (compare Rogers, 2007). Thus, we may expect Islamist protest generally to be under-reported in Tunisia, while certain forms of violent protest are likely to be over-reported and possibly sometimes completely fabricated.[17] The situation is similar in Algeria where, however, at least in 1992, a journalistic culture of "keeping track" developed with a "crime" page dedicated to protests, arrests, assassinations and sabotage becoming a fixed feature of both *El Moudjahid* and *El Watan* from May 1992 onwards. At least until the late summer, the police published regular updates both about the number of "terrorists" arrested and the numbers of police, army or gendarmerie members killed or wounded. The quality of this information decreased in the autumn as control of the press increased (Cesari, 1992: 657; Gafaïti, 1999: 57-58).

These reflections on bias affect coding of the sources. Thus, because we can expect counter-mobilisation in Tunisia and to a lesser extent in Algeria to be over-reported, reports of counter-mobilisation were only accepted into the event database if it was clear that actual mobilisation took place: an organisation was founded or a march or a meeting occurred. A press conference or a communiqué was not coded as a counter-mobilisation event. Beyond trying to address bias in coding, we must be more broadly cautious interpreting the data. The multiple sources of ambivalent bias identified – incentives to exaggerate Islamist violence combined with incentives to stress stability and normalcy,[18] a tendency to inflate successes of repression while under-reporting repression by certain means – make the data suspect. However, the fact that similar sorts of bias appear to be operational in both countries means we can have some confidence in comparative findings, even if absolute levels remain suspect. Moreover, as the brief comparison with coverage in western newspapers above made clear, this data, for all its imperfections, is likely to be as good as it is going to get for the time being. As Gary King and Will Lowe remind us, journalism-based events-data is "imperfect, and much additional research could and should be done to identify and correct the biases, but journalism is the source of most information that academics have about the international community outside of official government sources" (King and Lowe, 2003: 617).

Drawing on the sources, I constructed a database that includes 333 distinct protest or repression events in Tunisia and 663 in Algeria. Doubts about the reliability of the news coverage are behind the decision to triangulate events from multiple sources (Earl, Martin et al., 2004: 74), including events from the chronologies in the Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord, and various case-studies as well as the newspapers. Using this range of sources, every reported instance of repression or of protest was coded as a separate "event" and assigned a date on which it occurred, a type (protest or repression), and values for agent, target, means, and mode in line with the disaggregation of protest and repression undertaken above. The variables, possible values, and descriptions of the possible values can be found in the Appendix.

Despite the range of sources used, 139 events in Tunisia and 115 events in Algeria are probable events, that is to say protest or repression events that are referred to in the sources without sufficient information to code them normally. They include events for which dates were vague ('a major Islamist protest took place in late June') or for which coverage was aggregated ('in a series of police raids, 200 people were arrested'). In the first instance, a "probable" protest event was coded on a random day in late June, leaving information that was missing and could not be inferred about target, agent etc. blank, while in the second instance, a small number of "probable" events in the preceding days was created to capture the 'series of raids' reported. As all coding was conducted by one person, issues of inter-coder reliability did not arise.

The coded events-data, which captures developments on a day-to-day basis, is ideally suited to tracing dynamic interactions over time and to capturing both short-term and longer-term interactions between protest and repression. To capture longer-term interactions, the data was aggregated by month for conducting most analyses. The underlying day-to-day data was always referred to however to inform analysis and where dynamics appear to have occurred more immediately, is analysed in depth.

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17 The veracity of a number of government claims about alleged Nahdha plots have been called into question. Amnesty International (1992b) and Lise Garon (2003: 18-19) are particularly vehement in declaring the government charges to be fabricated. For a contrary view see Dunn (1996).

18 As Addi (1998: 49) pointedly remarks about Algeria during the Civil War: "looking through Algerian newspapers, a reader might feel that he was living in a country where social and economic life was more or less normal, apart from occasional massacres by desperate bandits who are about to be apprehended."

4. The Protest Cycles Under Investigation

The three approaches introduced in Chapter 1 all attempt to explain protest through reference to practices of repression. A brief overview of the development of this protest activity in the two cases – a presentation of what needs to be explained – therefore forms a useful preliminary to the evaluation of the rival explanations. This overview also provides an opportunity to evaluate the overall strength of the protest actors in question and to embed the observed protest activities in the broader political, social and economic contexts of the two countries, providing an opportunity "to thicken explanations" (Collier, Hoeffler et al., 2005: 2) and thus to utilise the advantages of a case-centric approach to the full.

The Crushing of a Movement: Tunisia May 1990 to December 1991

In Tunisia, Islamist protest took place in a domestic context defined by coalition-building and the re-negotiation of the political field after Zine el Abidine Ben Ali's constitutional coup to depose President Habib Bourguiba in 1987. At the time of the coup, several commentators saw Tunisia on the brink of civil war because of Bourguiba's intransigent and confrontational stance against the Tunisian Islamist movement (Leveau, 1989a: 6; Burgat and Dowell, 1997: 225; Daguzan, 1999: 33). To defuse the situation, Ben Ali multiplied liberalising reforms in the first years after he took power, freeing several hundred political prisoners, holding Tunisia's first multiparty elections, and completing a structural adjustment programme begun under Bourguiba that saw Tunisian economic growth accelerate in the early 1990s. Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, he undertook a symbolic repositioning of Islam, which led to a brief honeymoon with Nahdha (Rogers 2007: 9-12; Larif Béatrix, 1988: esp. 746; compare also Faath, 1992: 516-520). However, from 1989, confrontation predominated, particularly after the legislative elections of 1989 had "confirmed to the regime the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of confronting the Islamists in regular elections unless they wanted to admit the principle of alternating power" (Burgat and Dowell, 1997: 234).

These legislative elections of 1989 not only mark a turning point in regime-Islamist relations but are also the sole opportunity to gauge levels of support for Nahdha within the Tunisian population and thus to attempt to understand the strength of the Islamist movement in Tunisia more broadly. However, the reported election results are suspect and contradictory. Ostensibly official figures cited by various academics credit Nahdha with anywhere from 10% to 22% of the vote nationally, with reported local results diverging further still. No full breakdown of results was ever published and both the legal opposition and Nahdha charged the government with electoral fraud.[19] The low numbers of registered voters and the dense web of control the RCD had both over individual voting decisions and the final vote counts, suggests that Nahdha's real levels of support were higher (Halliday, 1994: 104; Garon, 2003: 32-33).[20] Indeed, the Secretary General of the government party, the RCD, later admitted that Nahdha had received more than 60% of votes in a number of circumscriptions (Le Temps 27.5.1990). Overall, it is likely that Nahdha enjoyed the support of roughly 30% of the population, and almost certainly had the backing of a majority of people living in Tunisia's cities (Halliday, 1994: 104-105; Burgat and Dowell, 1997: 234), making it a serious contender for power without, however, the same level of popular support as Algeria's FIS (see "Towards Civil War" below).

During the period under investigation, protests initially were concentrated at the universities and had their origins in Ben Ali's decision to appoint a secularist, anti-Islamist education minister in late 1989 (Daoud, 1989: 687). This mobilisation reached its preliminary high-point in May 1990, with major strikes and protests paralyzing the education sector. In Figure 1, which provides a general overview of the development of the Tunisian protest cycle over time, showing the absolute number of repressive and protest events coded for each month, this protest is visible as the first clear peak in the protest graph in May 1990. The second peak visible in Figure 1, during September and October 1990, resulted from the overlay of renewed student protest after the end of the summer break with protests surrounding the Gulf Crisis. As elsewhere in the Arab world, the build-up of an imposing international arsenal of force under US leadership after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was framed as an attack on Arab power and prestige more broadly and contributed to large-scale mass-protest in Tunisia (Allani, 2009: 265). In this international context conducive to mobilisation, Nahdha attempted to extend its reach beyond its core constituency of students, conducting regular Friday protests (Ismail, 2003: 149), which reached a sustained peak after the police shot several Islamist protestors.

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19   The most popular figure appears to be 17% (Hamdi, 1998: 68; Ayubi, 1991: 117; Halliday, 1994: 104; Hermassi, 1991: 200). For differing accounts of the election results and the quality of the reported figures see: Leveau, 1989b: 10; Hermassi, 1995: 118-119; Garon, 2003: 20; Burgat and Dowell, 1997: 234.

20   Nahdha itself claims crushing and perhaps similarly suspect majorities in the major cities, citing the figure of 92% of votes in Tunis, and 80% in Ben Arous as original numbers sent to the Interior Ministry by the returning officers and smuggled out by supporters of the party (Garon, 2003: 32).

Protest (and repression) reached its highest level in Tunisia in January just before the outbreak of the Gulf War, when Nahdha conducted a series of daily protests from 2-8 January, during and surrounding which countless activists were arrested and several were killed (Burgat and Dowell, 1997: 242). Throughout January 1990, Nahdha maintained high levels of mobilisations with
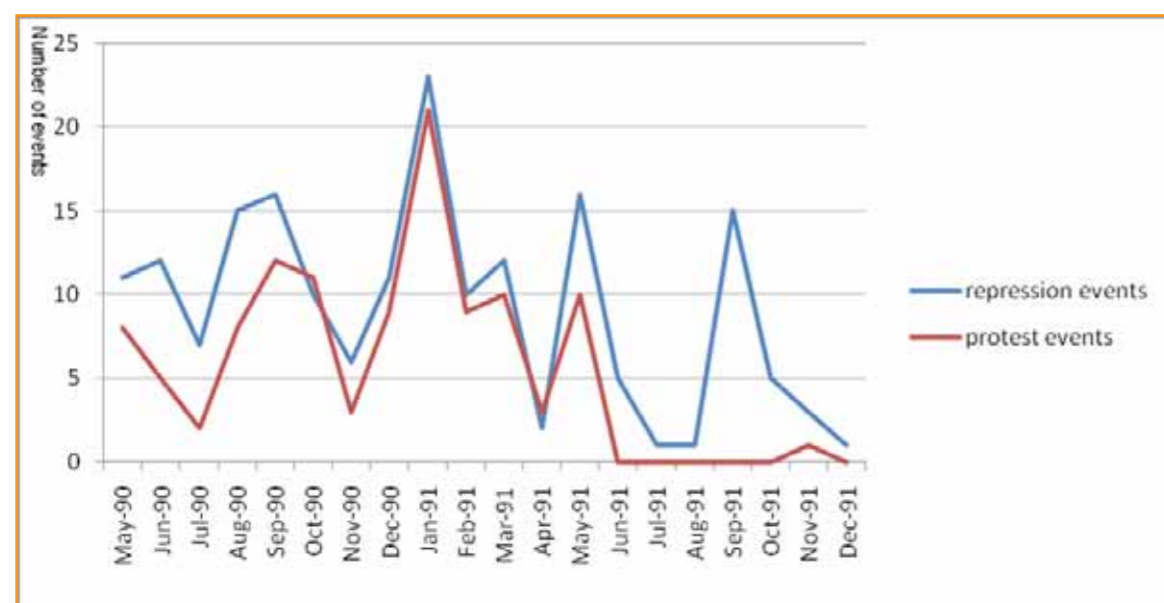

Figure 1: Overall Levels of Protest and Repression in Tunisia 1990-1991

marches, clashes with the police, and the first attacks on government installations by "commandos" of militants. On 17 February 1991, a group of young Nahdha militants set fire to one of the RCD bureaus that they "knew to be at the heart of repression" (Burgat and Dowell, 1997: 241), killing one watchman and severely injuring the second. Despite the fact that the Nahdha leadership officially condemned the attack, the public confessions of its militants on TV and the image of the burned guard, which the government exploited to great effect, spelled a crucial turning point in the battle for popular opinion (Hamdi, 1998: 71-72) and much has been made of the subsequent "breaking apart" of Nahdha (compare e.g. Hermassi, 1995: 105; Dunn, 1996: 160). However, it would appear that a split within the leadership did not necessarily translate into a division of the membership. Although, under intense government pressure,[21] the Secretary General of Nahdha, Abdelfattah Mouru, and two further high-ranking officials suspended their participation in the party and condemned its choice of violent tactics, as Figure 1

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21   Compare Hamdi, 1998: 72. Burgat and Dowell (1997: 244) contend that Mourou was tortured.

illustrates, contention continued to spike in March and May,[22] when Nahdha's militants took to the streets one final time in an unsuccessful bid to defy arrests and repression and launch a broader wave of mobilisation against the government as they had succeeded in doing in 1987. Thereafter, reported protest ends, although the government in May and September announced the discovery of a series of alleged 'diabolical plots' by armed groups and elements of Nahdha, suggesting that clandestine protest continued and may have escalated in the second half of 1991 in Tunisia.[23]
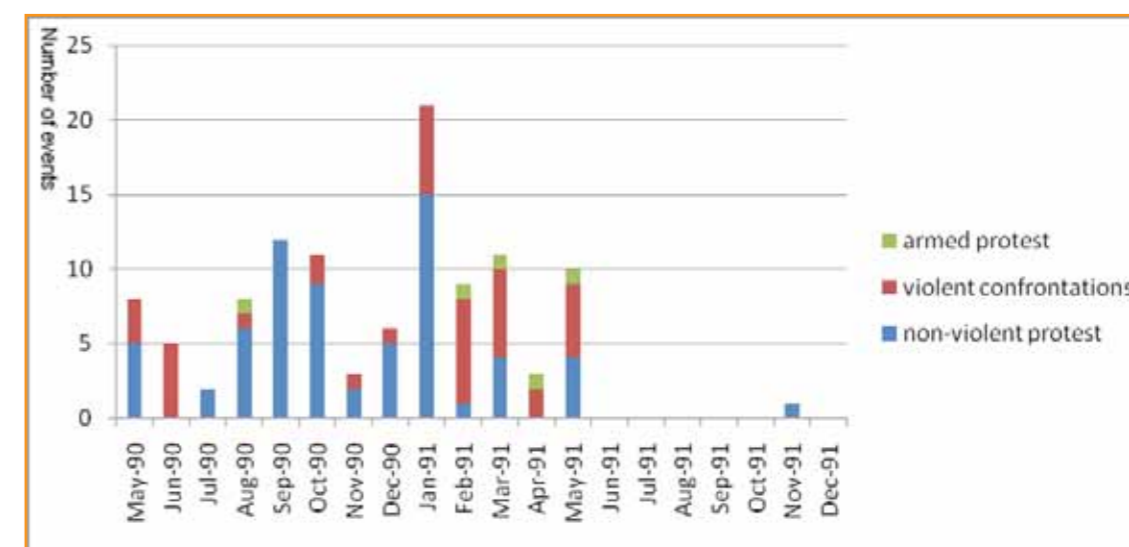

Figure 2 Protest Means in Tunisia

Although contention thus appears to end in violence in Tunisia, Figure 2, which provides an overview of the use of different protest means in Tunisia over time,[24] shows that armed violence accounted for only a small minority of coded protest events, with two coded events in February and April 1991, respectively, and two further events in May and June. Instead, before February Nahdha almost exclusively

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22   The events-data thus lends credence to Shahin's (1997: 102) minority opinion that Mourou's demission had "only a minor effect" on the movement as a whole.

23   The government announced the discovery of 'Nahdha's Security Wing' in May 1991 and announced 400 arrests. Those arrested included 100 members of the military "with ranks as high as major" (Burgat and Dowell, 1997: 245; *Réalités* 299 24-30 May 1991). It announced an alleged plot by the Parti de la Libération Islamique in August (*Réalités* 312 30 August – 5 September) and a plan to assassinate President Ben Ali with a Stinger missile in October (*Réalités* 317 4-10 October 1991; Hamdi, 1998: 73). On the plausibility of these claims compare note 17 above.

24   The Figure shows the absolute numbers of protest events for each month and shows the relative importance of armed protest events, violent confrontations, and non-violent protest as its component parts. E.g. the graph shows that in January 1991, 21 protest events were coded. Of these, 15 were non-violent protest events and six were violent confrontations.

used non-violent forms of protest like demonstrations and certain forms of direct action. From February onwards, confrontational violence, that is events which began as peaceful protests and escalated to riots or clashes with the police, sometimes involving the use of improvised weapons like stones or sticks, predominated as a protest strategy. Since confrontational protest requires someone to confront, this pattern suggests that here, at the latest, protest directly interacted with and responded to repression and consequently, if they function at a more disaggregated level, we would expect the approaches introduced in Chapter 1 – "levels," "timing," and "target" – to have explanatory traction.

Towards Civil War: Algeria May 1991 to December 1992

Algeria's protest cycle, too, occurred during a period of economic and political liberalisation and what appeared to be a period of transition from single-party rule to multi-party democracy. After large-scale riots in 1988 in reaction to the deteriorating economic conditions in Algeria – which were to continue to worsen throughout the period under investigation (Vandewalle, 1997: 41), Algerian President Chadli Benjedid launched a series of sweeping political reforms that ushered in a brief and tension-filled phase of genuine multi-party democracy in Algeria. The most important of the new parties, next to the former single party Front de Libération National (FLN), was the Islamist Front Islamique du Salut (FIS). The FIS made its triumphant entry onto the Algerian political scene in the 1990 municipal elections when, during the first free and fair ballot in Algerian history, it won control of a large majority of communes, gaining majorities in nearly twice as many local assemblies as the FLN, and in 32 of the 48 regional assemblies (Burgat and Dowell, 1997: 279). As the 1992 legislative elections underscored, the FIS was – for multiple and sometimes contradictory reasons (Martinez, 2000: 28-31) – by far the most popular party and enjoyed absolute majorities in most of the large cities (Willis, 1996b: 230). Yet, unlike in Tunisia where Nahdha's success led to the breakdown of relations between the party and the government, the FIS enjoyed a period of political honeymoon with Benjedid, who benefited from the FIS's strength to balance rivals within the FLN, and won its tacit support for his ambitious and in many respects highly unpopular economic liberalisation drive (Roberts, 1996: especially 125-7). However, this informal non-aggression pact broke down with the Gulf Crisis (Botiveau, 1992: 216). With legislative elections nearing, Benjedid pressed for a new electoral law, whose gerrymandered districts were to ensure a continuing FLN majority.[25]

The period under investigation in Algeria begins with protests in May and June 1991, visible in Figure 3 as an initial peak in both protest activity and repression. To force the government to redress the blatant gerrymandering of the new electoral law, the FIS declared a general strike on 25 May, and, when this appeared to be met with only limited success, launched a series of mass-marches and occupied central Algiers. FIS activists were soon joined by members of armed Islamist groups, who were responsible for the first peak in armed violence visible in Figure 4, which provides an overview of protest means in Algeria.[26] The army brutally ended this first wave of protest with the declaration of a state of emergency and a curfew. The crackdown cost the lives of an estimated 500 protestors.[27] Yet, despite or perhaps because of the presence of the army, protest continued at a relatively high level throughout June, but then nearly ceased for the rest of 1991. In this lull, the FIS was busy re-grouping following the mass arrest of its militants and leadership in June and internal divisions over the May strike strategy.

While certain "moderates" reproached the leadership for having called a strike at all, more "radical" groups criticised that the strike had been called off in June. One of these "radical" offshoots, which had only been loosely affiliated with the FIS before the strike and broke with it after, raided a border post, followed by a several-day shoot-out with the police and army, contributing to the small peak in protest activity visible for November in Figure 3 (compare Willis, 1996b: 227-228).

However, this brief episode is eclipsed by the massive peak in protest activity in January and February 1992. Following the victory of the FIS in the legislative elections, where it was well-placed to win a two-thirds majority in the second round, the army conducted a coup d'état and began mass arrests

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25 In the sparsely settled south of the country, where the FLN continued to be the strongest force, multiple new circumscriptions were created. Under the new law, the FLN would need only as many as 7,000 votes to secure one seat in areas where its support was high, while in urban circumscriptions where the FIS was strong, one seat required 75,000 votes (Willis, 1996b: 171).

26 The Figure shows the absolute number of protest events for each month and a breakdown into the number of events involving non-violent protest, violent confrontations, and armed protest. The graph shows e.g. that in February 42 coded protest events occurred. Of these, 19 were non-violent, 10 involved violent confrontations, and 13 involved armed violence by protestors.

27 According to official figures, 84 people were killed and more than 400 injured. The Ligue Algérien des Droits de l'Homme (LADDH) based on medical records estimates 500 dead (Labat, 1995b: 118).
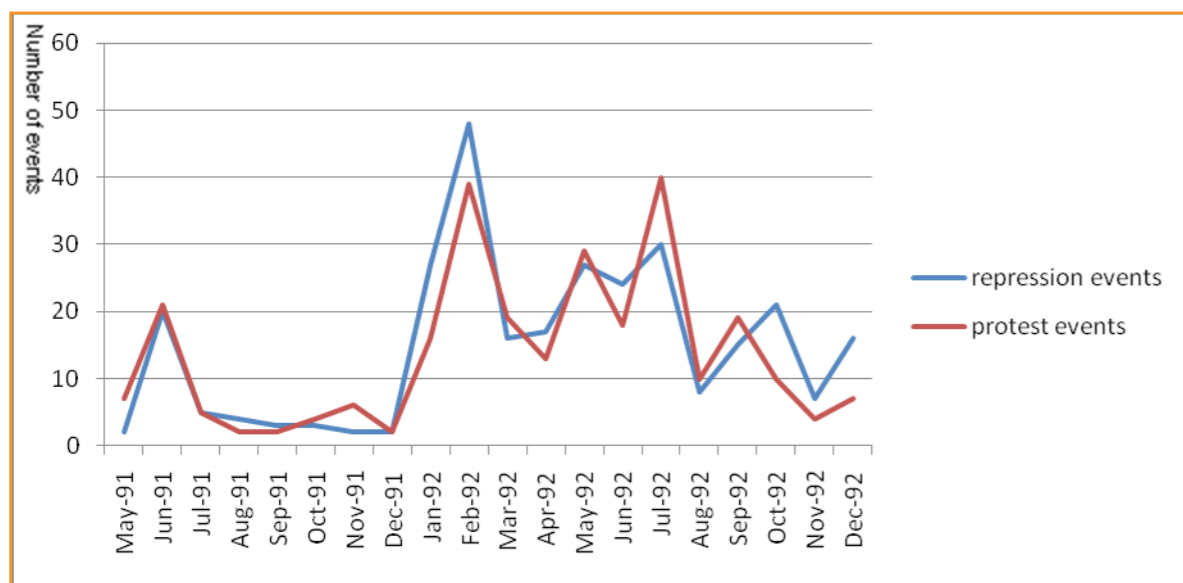
Figure 3 Overall Levels of Protest and Repression in Algeria 1991-1992

Comité d'État (HCE), Mohamed Boudiaf, and during the trial of the FIS leaders Abassi Madani and Ali Benhadj, a new wave of mass-mobilisation was attempted. As Figure 4 illustrates, armed violence made up approximately one-quarter of all protest events in February. Its absolute level remained fairly constant in March and April, although in a context of decreasing mobilisation in the face of intense repression, it marked a growing share of protest activity. By May, armed protest accounted for the vast majority of protest activity and increased in absolute levels as well. The summer of 1992 became the summer of the Islamist maquis.[28] Between May and October, armed groups were responsible for more than one reported event of armed violence every two days, ranging from assassinations of individual policemen over acts of sabotage and bomb attacks on public buildings and state enterprises, possibly including a spectacular attack on Algiers' airport,[29] to ambushes and raids of military bases and patrols.[30]

of FIS activists. The party responded with calls for calm and several mass protests. However, as the government forced a "battle for the mosques" in February, protest activities multiplied and began to escape the FIS's organisational control, particularly as the party was being rapidly dismembered and was dissolved on 4 March. Thereafter, armed groups dominated protest activities, although in July, after the assassination of the military-installed President of the Haut
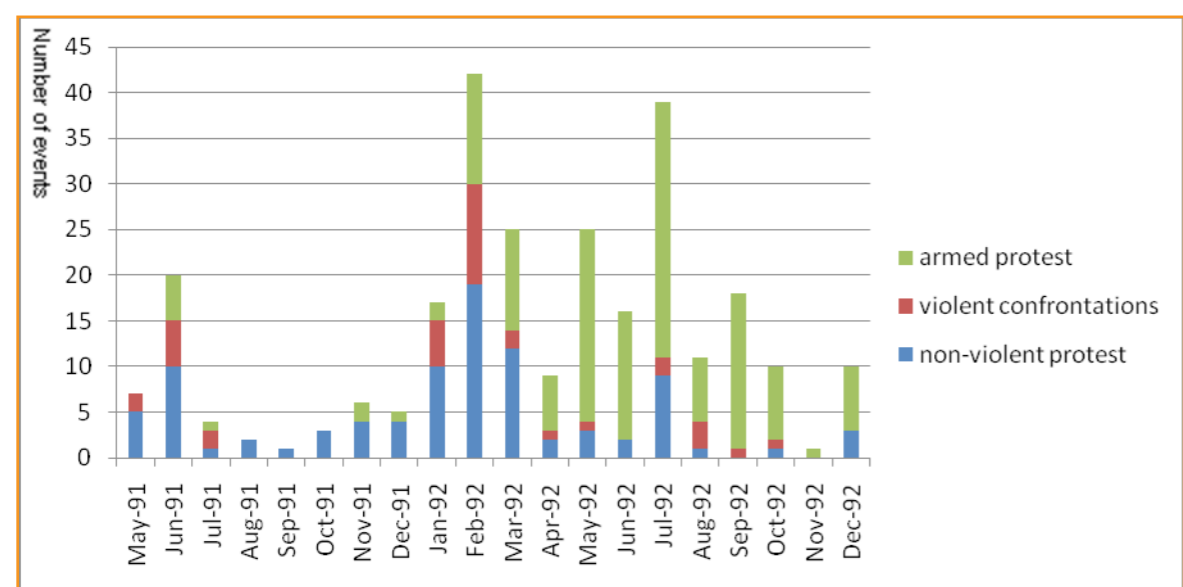

Figure 4 Protest Means in Algeria

28   The number of violent events was to increase significantly in 1993. While approximately 600 people were killed by armed groups or the security forces in 1992, this number quadrupled in the next year (Willis, 1996b: 301; compare also the general overview in Hafez, 2003: 33).
29   Some well-informed commentators question whether Islamist groups were responsible for this attack, positing either inside support (Willis, 1996b: 294-95) or else arguing that the attack as a whole was an operation conducted by (elements of) the government (Burgat, 2003: 113).
30   The low numbers of protest events coded in October, November, and December 1992 are suspect due to low levels of coverage and increases in censorship. Compare "Sources and Bias."

5. Explaining Protest With Repression: Evaluating the Approaches

The way violent protest became dominant in Algeria as other forms of protest ceased, contrasts markedly with the way protest ended in Tunisia. To explain this divergence in protest trajectories, I draw on the three dominant approaches in the protest and repression literature introduced in Chapter 1 and investigate to what extent "levels" of repression, its "timing," and its discriminate or indiscriminate "targeting," can explain the developments of, and the differences between, the two cases in light of the detailed events-data.

The Limited Explanatory Power of "Levels"

Viewing the protest trajectories described in the previous section in terms of "levels," we would expect to be able to explain the differential outcomes through reference to the "level" of repression used in the respective countries. Based on the observed differences in protest activity, however, the inverted-U and the backlash hypothesis provide us with contradictory explanations. Arguing from outcomes, we could expect, with the inverted-U hypothesis, that the level of repression was higher in Tunisia, thus ending protest, while medium levels of repression in Algeria encouraged the escalation of protest. The backlash hypothesis, by contrast, would lead us to suspect that levels of repression were higher in Algeria, thus leading to a backlash that encouraged the high levels of observed protest, while lower levels of repression in Tunisia ended protest. As we will see in the following, it is not just these contradictory predictions that should make us wary of "level"-based approaches. Indeed, the events-data suggests that apparent causal relationships in protest-repression interactions identified by the "level" approach on the macro-level, appear to be artefacts of lower-level interrelations.

What does the events-data allow us to say about "levels" of repression in Algeria and Tunisia? Figure 5 and Figure 6 show the number of different types of repressive events over time in the two countries. They distinguish between three types of repressive events: legitimating activities, which includes the redress of popular grievances and the (counter-)mobilisation of government supporters; arrests and restrictions, which constitute the 'classical' repertoire of repression; and armed police violence, that is events that involved the death of protestors or the use of firearms by the repressive agents. One fact immediately apparent from the Figures is that the number of events varied sharply from month to month, suggest-

ing that thinking about repression in terms of a steady state at the level of country-year data or using still longer time periods for aggregation, as most "level" approaches do and as is perhaps inherent in an attempt to measure "levels" of repression as a stable indicator, appears to miss dynamics of escalation. If we nonetheless attempt to arrive at an evaluation of overall levels, comparing Figure 5 and Figure 6 is the obvious point of departure. Ignoring the differential dynamics of legitimating activities, which most proponents of the level approach with their narrow understanding of repression do not consider repressive activities at all,[31] several differences in "levels" seem apparent. First of all, the absolute number of repressive events is significantly higher in Algeria and secondly the number of armed repressive events is significantly higher. However, the absolute numbers are hardly comparable due to substantial differences of size and population between the two countries and uncertainties regarding the sample and levels of
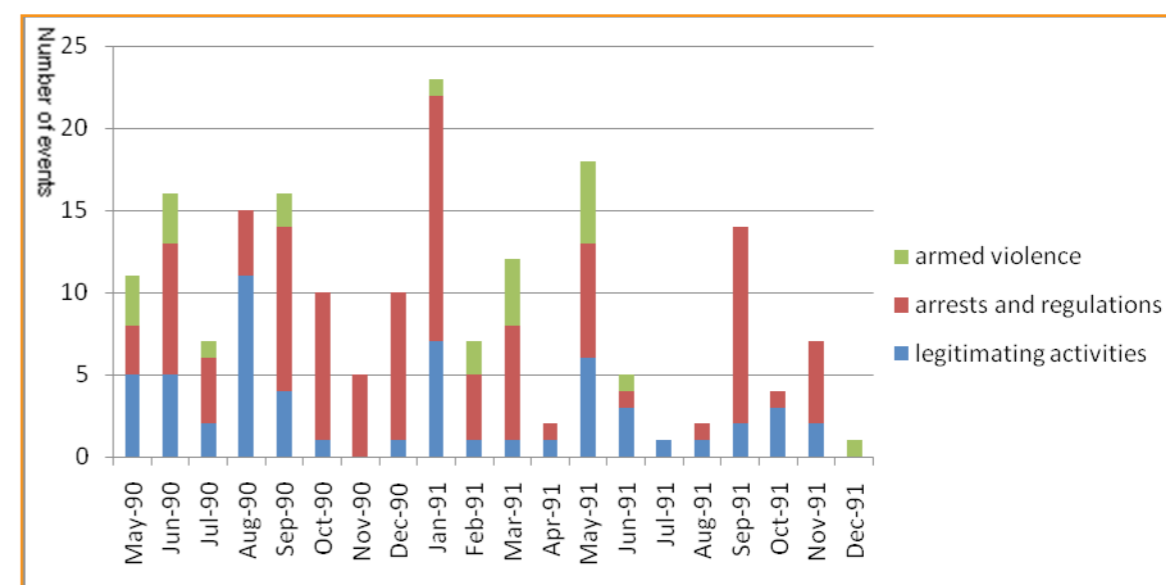

Figure 5 Repressive Means in Tunisia

coverage. Moreover, although the share of events where authorities used armed violence against protestors is higher in Algeria, repression in the form of arrests and armed violence against protestors taken together makes up almost exactly the same proportion of coded events – approximately 40 percent – in both countries.

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31   compare e.g. Ortiz, 2007. Legitimating activities will be discussed in the section "Conditions II: From 'Timing' to the Micro Foundations of Legitimacy" below.

Thus it would appear to be difficult based on the events-data to specify where levels of repression were higher. Perhaps, however, it is not necessary to observe a difference in levels of repression because both countries can be seen to have experienced a certain type of backlash. In Tunisia, repression lowered the incidence of public protest, pushed protest underground and encouraged plans to overthrow
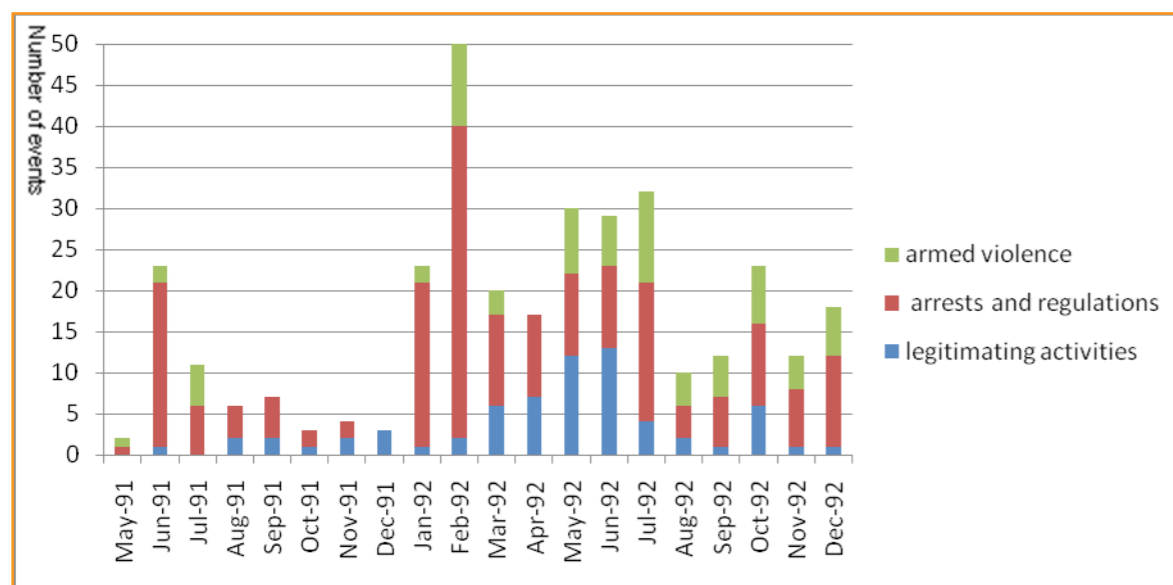

Figure 6 Repressive Means in Algeria

the government, prompting armed groups with an unclear relationship to Nahdha to infiltrate the military with the aim of conducting a coup d'état (see "the Crushing of a Movement" above). In Algeria, repression also succeeded in demobilising peaceful mass protest, but rather than pushing groups into clandestine plotting and infiltration, it created a surge of support for Islamist armed groups and guerrilla war. Yet this dodge hardly saves the "levels" approach, for viewed in this way, 'backlash' collapses into the original insight, described in Chapter 1, that repression always has both a radicalising and a de-mobilising effect – encouraging violence while making all forms of protest more difficult – without helping us to specify when which tendency will predominate.

If we thus return to attempting to specify where higher "levels" of repression occurred, case-studies beyond the coded data may help provide support for the backlash hypothesis. Although the systematic torture of detainees and extended periods of arrest without charge marked repressive practices in both countries and, indeed, the mass arrest of 5-8,000 Islamist activists in Tunisia represents a higher

proportion of the population than the 14,000 reported arrests in Algeria (Burgat and Dowell, 1997: 240; Willis, 1996b: 56-57), the number of civilian deaths through repression was significantly higher in Algeria (Amnesty International, 1991b; Amnesty International, 1992b; Amnesty International, 1993b; Amnesty International, 1993a).[32] This suggests that, particularly if we return to Mason and Krane's original (1989) formulation of the backlash hypothesis concerned with death-squads and not abstract "levels" of repression, thinking in terms of a backlash to very harsh repression does help explain events in Algeria.

Although "levels" understood as the open killing of civilians thus appears to be able to help explain differences between the cases, it is not convincing alone. There is a danger in thinking about overall "levels" of missing more dynamic changes. Once we use the events-data to delve deeper into how repression progressed over the course of the year, it becomes clear that initial strategies of repression and overall "levels" are two very different things. Initial repressive strategies during the 1991 protest-repression cycle in Tunisia and in Algeria in 1992 did not differ substantially. Both were built on mass-arrests, aggressive policing that led to the deaths of protestors, shut down mosques by force, and incorporated systematic torture. Viewed both in terms of the number of arrests and the relative number of events, "levels" of repression were actually higher in Tunisia than in Algeria during the first half of the two time periods under investigation. Yet, while repression maintained this "level" in Tunisia, it escalated in Algeria in reaction to escalating violence.

This dynamic in Algeria is visible in Figure 6 in that armed repressive events become a regular and constant fixture of state repression only from May 1992 onwards. This suggests that repression reacted to the high levels of armed protest in Algeria (compare Figure 4 above). Only because standard policing proved unable to deal with protest, was a state of siege declared and were army units used in protest policing. Only because this prompted violence against army and police in urban areas, were whole quarters shut down and were broad elements of the population harassed. Only because of the initial success of this strategy did activists take to the maquis, prompting an escalation of guerrilla warfare and the use of heavy armaments… Therefore, to begin with an observation of the high levels of repression at

32 Bearing in minds the caveats about data quality made above, the events-data for Tunisia includes information on 11 protestors killed by police and 7 detainees who died under torture. By contrast, in Algeria even conservative figures put the number of civilian deaths in May-August 1991 alone at nearly 100 (*El Moudjahid* 14.07.1992). Official sources cited by Amnesty International acknowledge that in January to March 1992, 70 unarmed protestors were killed by security forces (Amnesty International, 1993b). In both cases actual figures are likely to be significantly higher, compare e.g. Stone, 1997: 191.

the end of this process and conjecture that they caused protest by provoking a 'backlash' is misleading. The obverse is just as true: The fact that high levels of repression and high levels of violence in protest tend to accompany one another (and consequently produce highly significant correlations) should not mislead us into thinking that *one* can be said to cause the other.

The events-data thus suggests that "levels" of police violence may have a role to play in explaining differences between the cases, but also that attempting to identify "levels" as a relatively stable indicator misses dynamics of escalation and runs the risk of explaining the interaction with its result. Moreover, the difficulty we had in specifying whether "levels" were higher in Tunisia or Algeria made clear that operationalisation of repression in terms of "levels," particularly levels of human rights violations, is in and of itself already problematic and ambiguous, failing to provide clear criteria of evaluation. In this sense, the events-data also contributes to addressing at least one of the shortcomings of this approach. The data suggests that if "levels" of repression are to provoke a backlash effect, the levels in question are those of the public or at least publicly-known killing of civilian protestors (and not, at least in this case, of torture, unfair trials or quotidian abuse and harassment, which appear to have been similar in the two countries under investigation) – a finding that fits with Mason and Krane's original (1989) exploration of death-squad activities that has perhaps been lost from view.

Putting "Timing" to the Test

The "timing" approach, through its explicit reference to the temporal dimension, should be better able to deal with the dynamic interaction of protest and repression over time. It postulates that pre-emptive repression, which occurs early-on during movement mobilisation tends to end protest, while repression that is re-active and occurs during an ascending phase of movement mobilisation and after a movement has had time to develop popular support and mobilising structures – and consequently has something to lose – is counterproductive (compare "Thinking about Timing" above). Thus, the "timing" approach

Figure 7 Arrests, Police Violence, and Restrictions Versus Islamist Protest in Tunisia

would explain escalating violence in Algeria through reference to the reactive nature of repression there, while in Tunisia, we would expect to find pre-emptive repression that ended protest. Looking only at the events-data, and thus at levels of actual mobilisation as opposed to the infrastructure of mobilising potential, it appears as though reactive repression was used in both countries. Figure 7 shows that
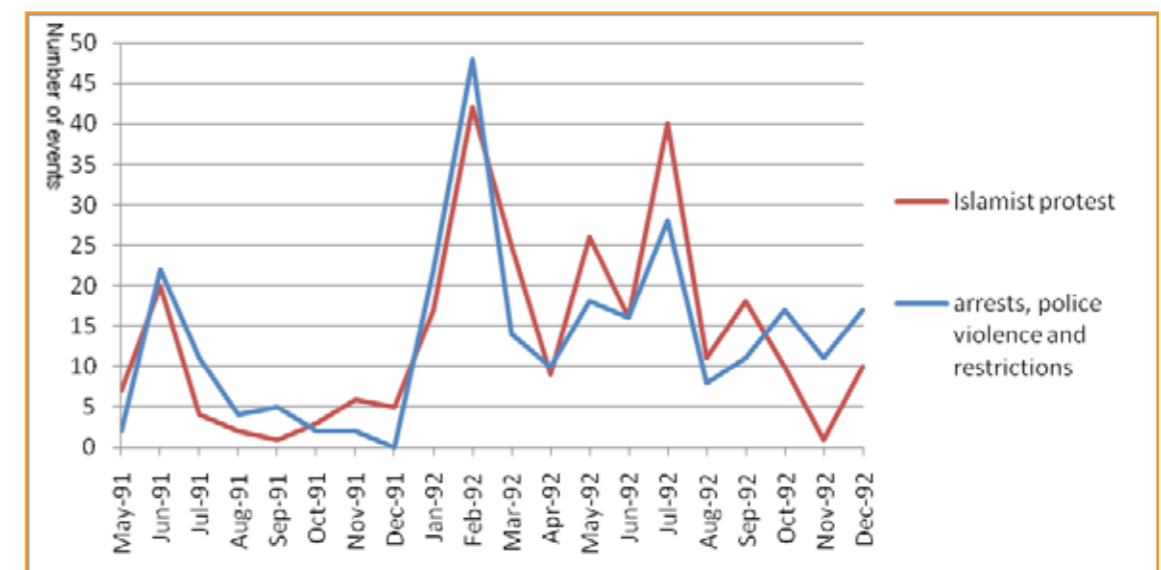

Figure 8 Arrests, Police Violence, and Restrictions Versus all Islamist Protest in Algeria

in May and August 1990 in Tunisia, protest peaks before repression – conceptualised narrowly as arrests, police violence, and legal restrictions[33] – does. This suggests that repressive strategies reacted to preceding high levels of protest. In addition, the fact that the total number of Islamist protest events in every month from January to March 1991 is higher than the number of repressive events, may lead us to think that repression responded to and was unable to regulate, at least for several months, protest activities. Figure 8 appears to tell a similar story for the Algerian case. If anything, repression would appear to be less reactive in Algeria because the number of repressive events, rather than tracking the number of protest events, moves synchronously with them when viewed at the country-month level. Oddly, when we focus in on only the violent protest events, since Hafez, in particular, argues that the effect of "timing" is on violent protest (Hafez, 2003: 22), the picture reverses itself: suddenly both the Tunisian and the Algerian regime appear to have engaged in pre-emptive repression. As Figure 9 and Figure 10 show, in both countries the highest peaks in levels of repression occurred before confrontational and armed protest activity peak. In Tunisia (Figure 9), confrontational

and armed protest peak in January and February 1991 after high levels of arrests and police violence in December 1990 and January 1991. In Algeria (Figure 10), the imposing spike of repression that marks the interruption of the elections in January and February 1992 leads to increasing levels of protest in February and March, which continue to increase until July despite lower numbers of arrests and police violence.[34]

Figure 10 Arrests, Police Violence and Restrictions Versus Islamist Armed Protest in Algeria

It would be premature, however, to dismiss the "timing" approach on the basis of these apparently contradictory findings. Ultimately, Figures 7-10 do little more than to illustrate the basic insight that repression responds to protests and makes protests globally less likely, while providing incentives for armed protest actions. They do little to illuminate why protest was short-lived in Tunisia and continued to escalate in Algeria over the coming months and years. It is neither surprising that a peak in numbers of repressive events post-dates protest but pre-dates violent protest, nor is it particularly interesting. Yet, these figures do highlight the fact that the "timing" approach is not (or should not be)[35] concerned with levels of actual mobilisation, but with the infrastructure for mobilisation, the potential for protest of a movement.
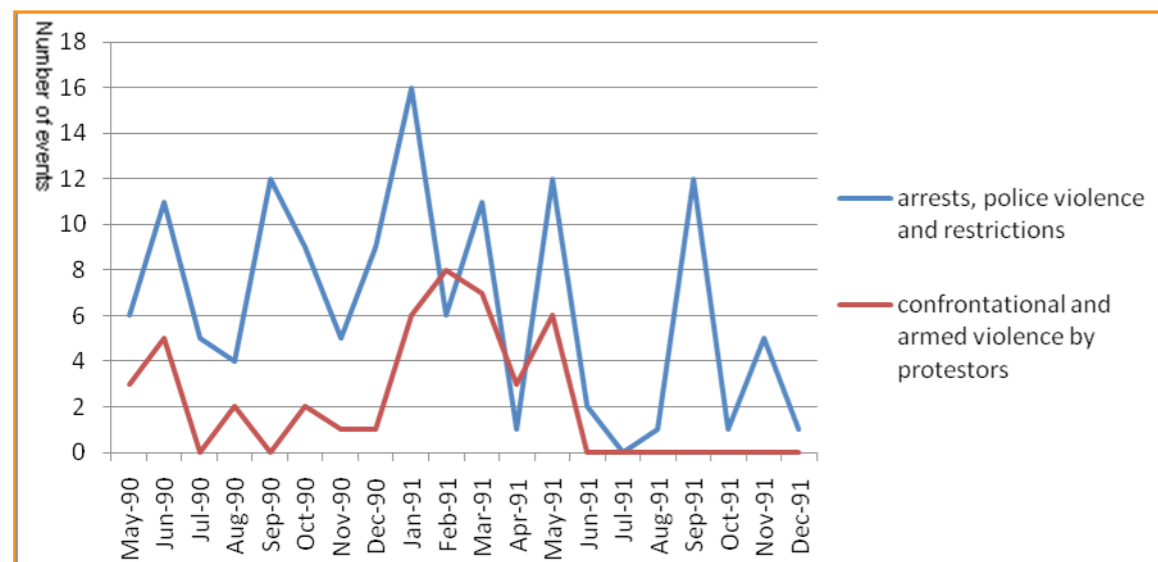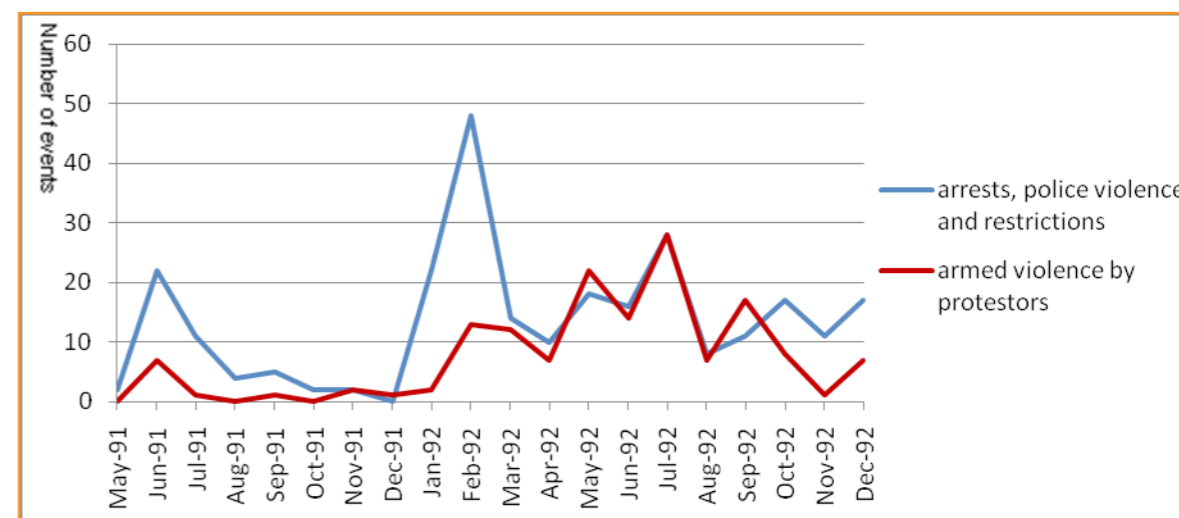

Figure 9 Arrests, Police Violence and Restrictions Versus Islamist Armed Protest in Tunisia

33 This narrow conceptualisation thus excludes all repressive events coded as claims, negotiations, redress of grievances and counter-mobilisation.

34 Because of very low levels of armed protest in Tunisia (the events-data includes only 6 instances), both confrontational and armed violence events are included in Figure 9, while Figure 10 for Algeria includes only armed protest events.
35 Gurr (1986); Costain, (1992); and Tarrow, (1989) can all be read to be arguments about actual mobilisation. Insofar as they really are intended as such, the events-data strongly suggests they are not convincing.

Focusing on the potential for mobilisation – and consequently moving away from the coded events-data to more anecdotal evidence from the case studies – the "timing" approach initially appears far more promising. Mohamed Hafez, who unfortunately gives Tunisia and other potentially illuminating deviant cases where repression did not lead to sustained violent protest short shrift in an otherwise excellent study, seems to imply that "timing" can help us understand differences between Tunisia and Algeria (Hafez, 2003: 63, 71-72). He argues convincingly that Algeria experienced reactive repression. The army suspended the legislative elections and began to arrest thousands of FIS activists after the party had clearly won the first round of elections. The FIS and its supporters could thus be certain that it was by far the most popular political force in Algeria and many movement supporters had much to lose. As mayors, deputies of the regional and local assemblies, imams for the party or as local notables that had lent their support, they found themselves suddenly facing arrest and torture for being members "of what had been a legal party," thus arguably driving them "into the arms of jihadi groups that might otherwise have remained marginal" (International Crisis Group, 2004: i; compare also Hafez, 2003: 77). In addition, the fact that the FIS had been in control of a majority of the country's communes for nearly two years, controlled 8,000 mosques (Willis, 1996b: 255) and may have had as many as 1 million dues-paying members (Entelis, 1997: 45), underlines the presence of a formidable potential for mobilisation.

By contrast, Nahdha never had the same amount of legal space to organise. Although the activities of the party were tolerated from 1987 until the crackdown under investigation in 1991, the regime never legalised the party, no part of Tunisian territory was ever under official Nahdha rule, and the Tunisian regime at all times took the policing of mosques far more serious than its neighbour in the west (Frégosi, 1995: 108, 113). For all of the rhetorical opening of Ben Ali's *Changement*, the freedom to invest oppositional spaces that existed in Algeria did not exist in Tunisia (Ismail, 2003: 151-156, 159). Indeed, it is possible to argue that Tunisia had experienced a state of siege since the mid-1970s (Camau and Geisser, 2003: 206). In the events data, this appears to be reflected in the fact that the number of repressive events in Tunisia is far more cyclical, more regular over the whole time period under investigation, and less obviously linked to the number of protest events, than in Algeria (compare Figure 9 and 10).

The pre-emptiveness of repression in Tunisia, however, is not as clear-cut as it might appear. By 1991 Nahdha had contested an election, in which, even according to official figures, it garnered near majorities in urban centres like Tunis, Sfax, and Kairouan and had demonstrated the extent of its implanta-tion by being the only party next to the RCD to be able to contest all of the country's circumscriptions (compare the discussion of the election results in "The Crushing of a Movement" above). It had near-complete control of the universities (Burgat and Dowell, 1997: 231), and had made some inroads into the powerful Tunisian union, the Union Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens (UGTT) and professional organisations (Ismail, 2003: 144; Alexander, 2000: 274-276). Indeed, into the late 1980s, the Tunisian Is-lamist movement was often considered to be stronger than the Algerian one (e.g. Leveau, 1995b: 16) and even viewed as the "Maghreb reference" (Burgat and Dowell, 1997: 182), calling into question the idea that repression truly pre-empted the creation of mobilising networks. Doubtlessly, the political field was never as open in Tunisia as it was in Algeria and its closing occurred more slowly – but this is an argument about salami tactics, not about timing.

The ambiguity of the Tunisian case alerts us to three shortcomings of the "timing" approach. First of all, the fact that the "timing" approach is indeterminate to a certain extent is due to its failure to engage conceptually with repression and protest and consequently to specify what sort of repression – restrictions on organising, protest policing, mass-arrests, etc. – used pre-emptively end protest. Clearer specification might have enabled us to observe clearer differences between the cases. Secondly, the fact that Tunisia displays many elements of reactive repression highlights the fact that pre-emptive repression is likely to be an elusive and hardly observable phenomenon: as soon as a movement emerges in a position to seriously challenge the state it is 'too late' – any response to the presence of such a movement must by definition be at least in part reactive, creating indeterminacy around the type of protests towards which repression can be considered to be pre-emptive. Finally, looking at the interactions on a case-study level and in combination with the detailed events-data, alerts us to the fact that the hypothesised causalities in the "timing" approach are suspect. Although repression in Algeria appears to have been reactive, it is not clear that this had much to do with protest escalation. In some ways, the openness with which the FIS was initially able to organise facilitated its dismantling. Its leaders were known; its accounts could be seized. Moreover, it was rarely the FIS local councillors or others with 'much to lose' that escalated protest strategies in Algeria (Leveau, 1995a: 116). Rather, as the literature on civil war and armed conflict would have us suspect, violence specialists and actors with a low opportunity cost of rebellion were behind the sustained increase in protest activity in Algeria during the second half of 1992 (compare the section "Conditions I: Structures... at the Right Place at the Right Time" below).

Taking "Target" to Task

How does the "target" approach fare when confronted with the events-data? Proponents of the 'target' view argue that indiscriminate violence, as "a type of violence that selects its victims on the basis of their membership in some group and irrespective of their individual actions," defeats deterrence and creates incentives for mobilisation. Because people are targeted irrespective of their actions, inaction ceases to be a safe strategy (Kalyvas, 2004: 97, 104). Building on this proposition, we would expect repressive strategies to have been more indiscriminately targeted in Algeria, thus driving broad elements of the population into protest and feeding recruitment for the Islamist maquis in a rising tide of armed violence from January to July 1992.[36] Conversely, we would expect repressive practices in Tunisia to be marked by more selective repression, which would, according to the "target" approach, favour passivity and thus explain why mobilisation in Tunisia was limited and protest ended in June 1991 (compare "The Crushing of a Movement" above).

Target of Repressive Action	% of Total Repressive Events in Tunisia	% of Total Repressive Events in Algeria
Population	3 %	13 %
Movement Sympathisers	55 %	35 %
Core Movement Activists and Structures	30 %	18 %
Armed Groups	7 %	31 %

Table 3 Targeting of Repression[37]

In conjunction with the argument about re-active repression discussed in the previous section, Hafez makes a very convincing case for how indiscriminate repression fuelled escalating protest in Algeria by pushing former FIS followers to join the radical armed groups that had remained outside the FIS for protection and revenge. He is not alone in arguing that every-day, apparently unmotivated experiences of abuse and humiliation or maltreatment aimed at movement supporters, their friends, and relatives became a key factor driving recruitment (Hafez, 2003: 42-43, 78-80; Martinez, 1995: 41-42; Martinez, 2000). The events-data largely bears out this narrative, but its sensitivity to dynamics and timing adds an important twist.

Using the category "target" of repression coded in the events-data, we can break down how repression was targeted in the two cases. As Table 3 shows, repression in Algeria was more frequently aimed at the population as a whole than it was in Tunisia. Measures targeting the population can be considered to be instances of indiscriminate repression, whereas measures targeted at armed groups or the core movement activists and structures are, ceteris paribus, selective, and measures targeting movement sympathisers, a broad category defined as much by clothing and the attendance of certain mosques as actual identification with and activism for the movement, fall somewhere in-between. The table also alerts us to the fact that repression must respond to protest. The high percentage of repression aimed at armed groups in Algeria is a result of the fact that these groups became the dominant protest actors in the summer of 1992. Looking at Figure 11, we can locate the development of different targets of repression over time in Algeria. We can see that particularly during the curfew from June to September 1991 a great deal of repression was indiscriminate and enforcement of the curfew targeted the population as a whole.[38] The curfew introduced in December 1992, too late to show up in the events-data, replicated this pattern and was instrumental in pushing whole quarters to develop into support organisations for the Islamist maquis (Martinez, 2000: 77-78). More broadly, there is substantial anecdotal evidence that suggests that policing was indiscriminate in Algeria. Particularly the government practice of abandoning certain quarters to avoid the dangers of regular policing, only to invade them with special anti-terrorist forces was, necessarily, a recipe for indiscriminate repression. Without durable territorial control the quality of information and the incentives for collaborating with the security forces decreased and the likelihood of 'collateral damage' increased (compare Kalyvas, 2004: especially 130-1). Although this practice reached its high-point only in 1994, from May 1992, as policemen in certain quarters were either systematically killed or resigned, the day-to-day police presence was already significantly reduced (Martinez, 2000: 74-75, 59).

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36   Compare the section "Towards Civil War" above. Recall that the subsequent decrease especially from October 1992 is uncertain because of increasing underreporting of Islamist violence and limited coverage.

37   Percentages out of 129 total repressive events (not including negotiation, claims, address of grievances or counter-mobilisation) in Tunisia and 266 in Algeria. Percent missing from 100% are repression coded as targeted against the non-Islamist opposition or missing values.

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38   More than one-half of the repressive events targeting the population occurred in June to August 1992 in Algeria.
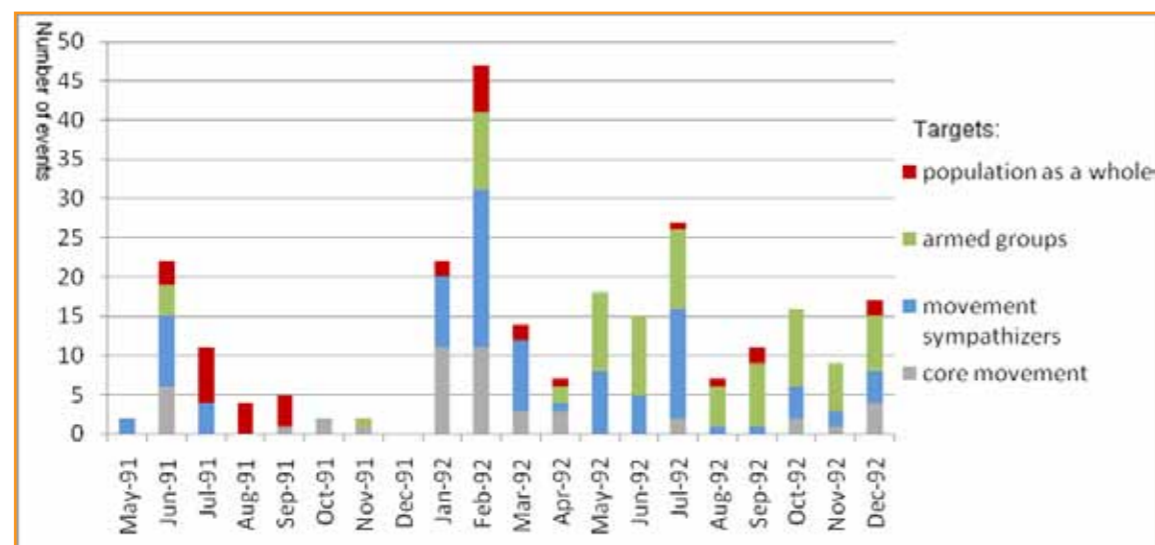
Figure 11 Targets of Arrests, Restrictions, and Police Violence in Algeria

While the Algerian case thus appears straightforward, the Tunisian case, once again, is less clear-cut than it might appear. Repression in Tunisia was less clearly indiscriminate than in Algeria. However, as Table 3 shows, movement sympathisers made up a significantly higher proportion of those targeted by repression in Tunisia than in Algeria. Measures against movement sympathisers have a fuzzy boundary, since the status is as much linked to how people dress, where they live and if they pray, as it is to activism. Thus, Amnesty International highlights the fact that "most of those arrested [in Tunisia in 1991] appear to have been jailed simply for their alleged support for al-Nahda without having been charged with any offence" (Amnesty International, 1992d) and that most of those arrested were released for lack of any clear offence "often after having been held in prolonged garde à vue detention for up to 40 days and tortured" (Amnesty International, 1992c). This suggests that in Tunisia, status not action determined repression and thus passivity was not a safe strategy – a clear indicator of indiscriminate repression (Kalyvas, 2004: 97, 104). Indeed, in terms of the logic of the "target" argument, repression against movement sympathisers may be most liable to encourage further protest and a recourse to violence, since elements of the population close to protestors whose personal networks include members of protest groups are far more likely to become involved in violent activism (Wickham, 2002: 152-153). Moreover, the humiliation of family and friends, which Abderahmane Moussaoui (1998: 258), for instance, identifies as a particular driver of radicalisation in Algeria, occurred in similar form in Tunisia, where the police

combined nocturnal arrests with verbal and physical abuse of family members and the arbitrary seizure of personal possessions (Amnesty International, 1992d; compare also Hibou and Hulsey, 2006: 188-89).

This qualification blurs the straightforward picture of the "target" approach and suggests that many of the postulated mechanisms, if (only) selectivity is the driving force, should also have been active in Tunisia. Consequently, despite the fact that the "target" approach seems to capture important elements of the dynamics present in the two cases, it is clearly no silver bullet. This is at least partially due to the fact that, like the other two approaches discussed here, it subscribes to a uni-directional model whereby repression affects protest. However, in doing so, it threatens to confuse cause and effect to the extent that actors who use repression tend to use indiscriminate strategies only when other means have failed to control protest. Not only is the use of indiscriminate repression dependent on the resilience of protest, however, it is also a reaction to its strategies. Violent protest in particular encourages pre-emptive and protective and thus ultimately indiscriminate violence by security forces. As the Algerian case highlights, it was at least in part the targeted assassination of policemen that led the security forces to adopt a "shoot first" policy and to give up regular policing in favour of armed raids of popular quarters that defeated selectivity (Martinez, 2000: 74-75). Likewise, the fact that the examples Luis Martinez uses to illustrate how repression drove protest activity largely date from after the curfew of December 1992 (e.g. 2000: 77-84), highlights this interrelation, since the curfew was introduced in the face of an increasingly evident failure of standard policing to end Islamist violence. Thus, only over time did repression in Algeria become markedly more indiscriminate and more threatening to broader segments of the population than in Tunisia.

6. Interrelation, Not Causation:
Towards a Dynamic Approach to Protest-Repression Interactions

Investigating the hypotheses from the protest and repression literature revealed that all had serious shortcomings. Although the "timing" and "target" approaches appear to have merit, their insufficient engagement with different types of repression, dynamics, and their lack of consideration of further necessary conditions for the proposed processes actually to be operational make them, viewed from a case-centric perspective, incomplete. We must therefore go beyond the extant literature to develop a more dynamic approach to the interaction of protest and repression, building on those elements of the "level," "timing," and "target" approaches that withstood the test of the two cases, on the events-data that proved its worth in its ability to evaluate them, and recent insights into the importance of escalation in social movement theory (Davenport, Armstrong et al., 2006: 7, 25; McAdam, Tarrow et al., 2001: 12) and civil war research (Sambanis and Zinn, 2003).

Expanding on the target approach, we will see that by using the events-data to further specify what sort of repressive means, targeted at whom appear to fuel protest, we can improve its explanatory power for the two cases. More importantly, incorporating it into a more dynamic understanding of the relationship of protest and repression that takes the possibility of escalation seriously and specifies the conditions under which it takes place, provides us with an approach to protest and repression that not only does justice to the two cases, but can help explain general instance of the phenomenon better. Secondly, after identifying types of repression that appear particularly likely to contribute to escalation, I specify additional conditions necessary for escalation to take place. Finally, returning to those elements of the "timing" approach that withstood the test, and using the detailed disaggregation of repression strategies the events-data provides, allows us to identify one type of repression, counter-mobilisation, whose pre-emptive use appears especially suited to end the escalatory relationship between protest and repression before it gets off the ground.

From "Target" and "Levels" to Dynamics of Escalation

Investigating "targets" suggested that, while indiscriminate repression appears to influence subsequent protest strategies, the repressive means involved need to be specified further and incorporated into a

more dynamic understanding of the relationship between protest and repression. The particular role played by the open killing of civilians we discovered in investigating "levels", offers one promising way in to this specification. In this section, we thus take the "target" approach one step further. We will see that protest escalates when arrests, and particularly violent repression, threatens people's immediate and every-day livelihoods and thus drastically raises the stakes for its targets – the killing of civilians being a particularly extreme instance of this type of repression. Moreover, this section moves beyond "target" by highlighting the fact that the interaction of protest does not end there. "Successful mobilisation of one social movement contender stimulates claim making among both rivals and allies." One group's rising influence or seizure of some portion of state power "alters the prospects for laggard actors, who must immediately choose among alliance, assault, self-defence, flight and demobilisation" (Tarrow, McAdam et al., 1996: 24). As a consequence, repression conditions the choice of protest activities, but these in turn influence repression. If and when violent means on both sides begin to predominate, mobilisation, rivalries, and defensive action all spiral rapidly upward as long as the contenders can mobilise a sufficient number of supporters. Simply put, once violence got started in Algeria it never stopped. In Tunisia it never got started.

In Algeria, it would appear that an upward spiral of escalation took place – initially prompted by particular practices of repression, but rapidly developing a dynamic of its own. Figure 12 shows that the number of repressive events in January 1992 increased sharply in Algeria – and referring back to Figure 6 in "The Limited Explanatory Power of 'Levels'", we can see that repression during this time period was dominated by mass arrests. As we can also see from Figure 12, however, these arrests did not provoke an immediate response in terms of violence by protestors. Throughout the waves of arrests selectively targeted at known FIS members at the middle and upper echelons of the party and despite the fact that the army had blatantly cheated the FIS out of electoral victory, initial protest was very limited. Indeed, as Figure 13 shows, even violent confrontations occurred only once until the final days of January. This situation changed dramatically in February when repression began targeting the broader networks of support for the FIS. This change of dynamic is clearly visible in Figure 13. The restrictions and beginning mass arrests in the weeks starting on 8, 15 and 22 January elicited only limited responses in terms of any kind of mobilisation. However, in the final days of January and the first weeks of February, protest increased markedly and the share of armed violence in protest activity increased from week to

week. It is likely that this efflorescence of violent protest activity was a response to changing patterns of repression, which shifted from the arrests of political leaders to more local policing just at this time, provoking a 'battle of the mosques,' when riot police arrested imams and whole mosques full of wor-
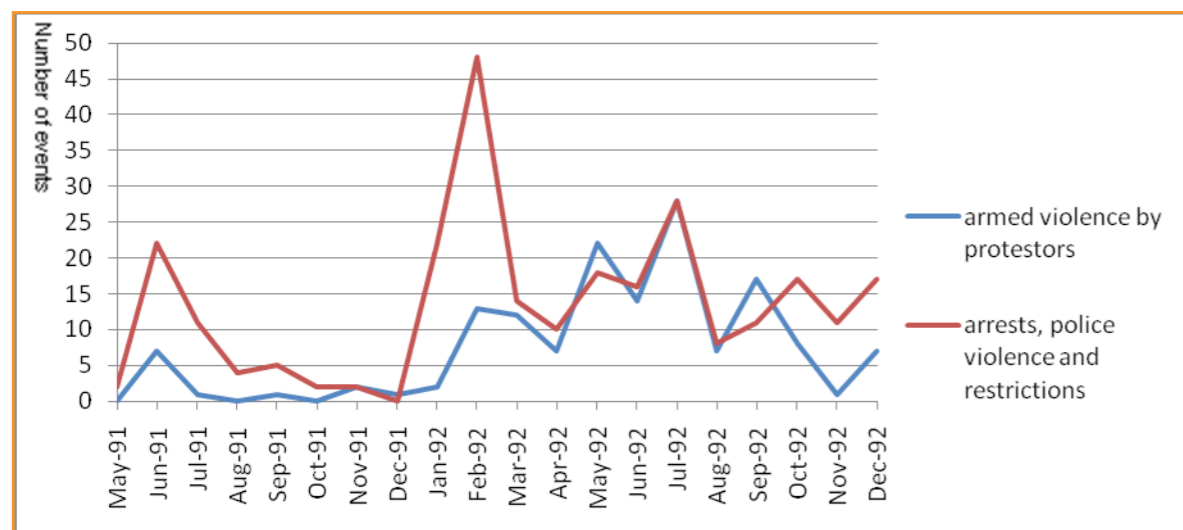

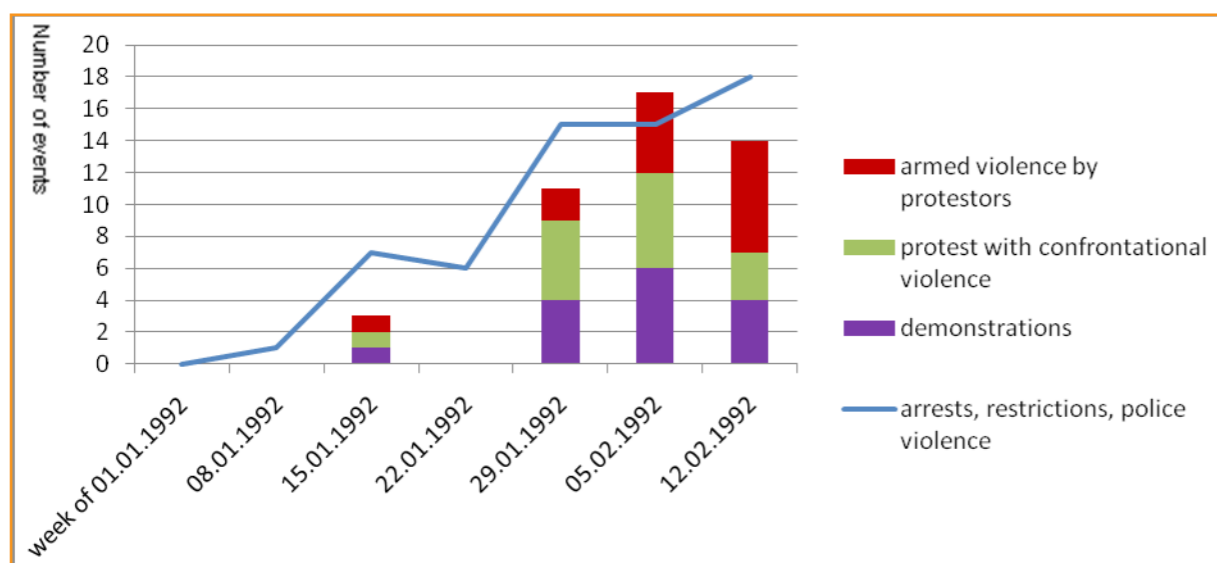Figure 12 Violent Protest and Restrictions, Arrests and Police Violence in Algeria

Figure 13 Protest Versus Arrests, Restrictions, and Police Violence in Algeria, January to February 1992

shippers (compare Stone, 1997: 106; Labat, 1995b: 225).[39] Suddenly faced with a direct threat and the 'invasion' of their quarter and especially the mosques, people tried to defend themselves using everyday weapons ranging from flowerpots to boiling oil and gas canisters – despite calls of the FIS leadership for calm and non-violence (Labat, 1995b: 185; Labat, 1995a: 16, 17).

This change in the means of protest in response to changing targets of repression suggests that it is not the arrest of party leaders, but of friends and neighbours that moves people to action. Faced with an immediate threat, the imperatives of self-defence and the defence of close friends and relatives encourage mobilisation and violence rather than demobilisation. Repression targeting whole quarters and the most local levels of party organisations, where many people's primary groups are directly affected, appears particularly important for whether violence escalates; an observation that receives support from research by military historians and psychologists who find that the micro-level factors self-defence (survival) and loyalty to the primary group are the essential drivers behind another type of violence: soldiers' decision to keep shooting and killing (Jones, 2006: 238, 244; Newsome, 2003).

Because of the interrelation of protest and repression, however, the interaction did not end there – as the "target" approach might suggest – rather, violence against policemen provoked these, in turn, to redouble repression. In the context of reciprocal targeted killings (Martinez, 2000: 59), violence became intensely personal. Police forces who experienced the assassination of their colleagues increasingly adopted a "shoot first, ask questions later" policy that significantly widened the web of repression, made it more indiscriminate, and multiplied the harassment and abuse of suspected Islamists to revenge killed colleagues, including such forms of symbolic and physical violence as the burning of suspected Islamists' beards, sexual abuse, and the maltreatment of family members (Amnesty International, 1993b: 70-71).[40] In addition, local police retreated from the most dangerous areas to be supplanted by regular gendarmerie raids that escalated the level of violence further, contributing to the creation of multiple

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39 After the Friday afternoon prayers on 7 February alone, 40 people were killed, 300 injured, and a significant number arrested (Labat, 1995: 225).

40 There is some evidence to suggest that elements of the government itself targeted policemen to discredit the Islamist groups and increase the cohesion of the security forces. However, most of this evidence concerns the later years of the civil war and this practice appears to have been rare in 1992 (Burgat, 2003: 113). Compare also Silverstein, 2002 on the issue of conspiracy theorising in Algeria and its function more generally.

first and second-hand constituencies of seething hatred (Martinez, 2000: 149).[41] Thus, the repressive reaction to protest drove recruitment for further violent protest, whose activities in turn provoked repression that became still more violent and even less clearly targeted with the anti-terror law of 1 October and the December 1992 curfew. In the face of this escalation and to avoid being politically sidelined, the FIS and its individual supporters faced strong incentives to endorse violent strategies and ultimately to deal in violence as the only currency in which political transactions were conducted (compare Stone, 1997: 186-187; Willis, 1996b: 291; Martinez, 2000: 48; Labat, 1995a: 90-91). In addition, violence required violence to sustain itself. The events-data includes ten armed robberies as armed groups turned to protection rackets and particularly robbing banks and state enterprises to finance themselves, a practice that became still more widespread in 1993 (Willis, 1996b: 299). Finally, political violence attracted "des purs actes de gangstérisme, voire des vengeances, vendettas familiales ou tribales et règlements de comptes personnels" that were clad in the rhetoric of resistance and legitimated in the name of protest (Lamchichi, 1997: 15; see also Moussaoui, 1998: 254; Labat, 1995b: 264-66; Burgat, 2003: 115). Similar dynamics appear to be a regular feature of escalating violence more generally (Wood, 2008: esp. 98; Della Porta and Diani, 1999: 212; Kalyvas, 2003).

The fact that violent repression feeds violent protest, which in turn increases the violence and blurs the targeting of repression in a vicious cycle can help us understand differences between the Algerian and Tunisian experiences. As we saw in the previous Chapter, the "target" approach already appears to capture important elements of the two cases' divergence. If, with the escalation approach developed here, we specify it further, it becomes a formidable explanatory tool, particularly once we acknowledge that because of its dynamic nature, small initial differences can become magnified over the course of contention as new supporters are mobilised. In Tunisia, too, high numbers of arrests and violence against protestors in December and January 1991 prompted an increase in the number of protest events obeying a local logic of self-defence or revenge as protests following a broader, "political" logic decreased. High numbers of repressive events in December, January 1990, February, and March 1991, as Figure 14 shows, prompted an increase in confrontational violence, although armed violence by protestors remained rare in Tunisia. With Nahdha falling prey to "une vague de répression d'une rare violence, qui a déstructuré

les organes dirigeants de leur parti," activists in the popular quarters of Tunis took the initiative with violent local protests (Lamchichi, 1997: 127). These included the attack by Nahdha militants apparently acting on their own initiative on the RCD office in Bab Souika in February, in which one guard was burned to death, as well as several other attacks on local RCD cells and police stations with Molotov cocktails (Réalités 287: 22-28 February 1991). However, because the Tunisian state and particularly the RCD was much more firmly implanted in the informal and popular quarters of Tunis than was the case in Algeria, repression on a local level was less indiscriminate. The state did not have to invade the quarters. It was already there (Ismail, 2003: 151-52, 155) – a point we will return to in the section "Conditions II: From 'Timing' to the Micro-Foundations of Legitimacy". Consequently, repression in Tunisia prompted a far lower absolute number of violent protest events and resulted in the recruitment of fewer new protestors. Even at its highest point in February 1991, the events-data includes only six protest events following local logics where violence was used.[42] As a result, and without the systematic killing of policemen that occurred in Algeria, the increase in violent and confrontational protest following local logics did not provoke a similar police response. The interrelated cycle of escalation we saw was operational in the Algerian case, never began.

Figure 14 Arrests, Police Violence and Restrictions Versus Islamist Armed Protest in Tunisia

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41 The imagination of the Algerian state as structurally identical to the Israeli state – and thus as the epitome of illegitimacy in local terms – is a common trope in newspaper interviews with FIS supporters in the aftermath of the June 1991 curfew (*Algérie Actualité*, 1356: 10-16 October). Martinez (2000: 63-64) identifies this imagination of illegitimacy as becoming dominant in 1993.

42 The fact that, as we saw in the section "the Crushing of a Movement," overall levels of support for Nahdha in Tunisia were lower than for the FIS in Algeria is likely to have strengthened this effect.

Conditions I: Structures… at the Right Place at the Right Time

Explaining the difference purely in terms of the differential targeting of repressive practices is not wholly convincing, however, and it is necessary at this point to go beyond the events-data. One crucial initial difference not captured by it is the presence, at the right time, of alternative protest organisations in Algeria and specifically the presence of violence specialists who escaped the first wave of repression.[43] For if protest responds to repression by becoming more violent and more clearly dominated by local logics, it still functions according to the general characteristics of mobilisation identified by social movement scholars. That is to say, without the ability to mobilise the resources necessary to sustain protest (see Chapter 1), it must remain unstructured and transient.

In Tunisia, the dismantling of Nahdha occurred in a context in which other protest groups had already been neutralised. Much internal doctrinal debate in Nahdha took place in the 1980s, which led to divisions and the formation of radical and progressivist offshoots (Lamchichi, 1989: 127-32). Although some of these groups organised for deploying violence, including a Tunisian "Islamic Jihad" implicated in attacks on police stations, post-offices and the bombing of tourist resorts in Sousse and Monastir in the 1980s, these had been dismantled by the regime before the protest cycle under investigation began (Burgat and Dowell 208). The alleged presence of a clandestine armed wing of Nahdha, dismantled after May 1991, does not substantially change this picture, since it appears to have been a closed organisation plotting a coup and thus unable to offer a conduit for action to followers.[44] Consequently, Nahdha activists who escaped government repression had nowhere to turn to continue their struggle, despite the serious threats movement activists, sympathisers, and broader networks of support faced.

In Algeria conditions were markedly different. The FIS emerged far more rapidly than Nahdha, it fragmented later – following the "holy strike" of May and June 1991 and the party's conference in Batna in July – and it coexisted with several armed groups. The tactical choice of most of these groups to wait until the elections before taking armed action, which allowed them to remain undetected, meant that two well-organised armed groups existed when the FIS was dismantled. They offered networks open to former FIS activists or sympathisers to escape arrest and provided the organisational muscle for taking revenge (Martinez, 2000: 56-59; Hafez, 2003: 78-80; International Crisis Group, 2004: i). In 1992 these groups were Takfir wa Hijra, dominated by Algerians who had fought in Afghanistan and the Mouvement Islamique Armé (MIA), whose core organisers were former members of the Bouyali group, an armed Islamist group around Mustafa Bouyali active in the early 1980s.[45] Both groups had consistently opposed the legalist option of the FIS (Burgat, 2003: 106) and although both had longer histories of organisation, the repression of June, July, and August 1991 initiated the consecration of their clandestine strategy and their move to action as they began assembling arms, finding hideouts, and organising logistics (Labat, 1995b: 228). The fact that these groups only began organising then and were still relatively weak, helps explain why the high levels of indiscriminate repression observed in Algeria in June to August 1991 in "Taking 'Target' to Task" did not lead to more violence, despite the fact that the FIS's ability to control protest, as in February and March 1992, had been seriously compromised by the mass arrests of June (Willis, 1996b: 180-181). By contrast, in January and February 1992 significant numbers of militants had a place to turn to escape repression: the armed groups, which had been preaching since June 1991 that the government could not be trusted (Labat, 1995b: 225-228; Willis, 1996b: 296).[46]

Not only were alternative structures available at the right time in Algeria, but the particular character of these structures contributed to escalation. From the perspective of social movement theory and the sociology of conflict more broadly, the Algerian case was marked by the presence of substantial numbers of violence specialists (Collier, Hoeffler et al., 2005: 7; North, Wallis et al., 2009). Because most people use violence in highly incompetent ways (compare e.g. Collins, 2009), the existence of even relatively small numbers of "specialists" can have a substantial impact on conflict dynamics, particularly when, as in the Algerian case, they also have access to means of violence in the form of small arms – in part a

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43 Many case studies also stress the importance of the Algerian War of Independence for providing a repertoire of action: guerrilla warfare was idealized in the teaching of Algerian history and visible in the social standing accorded to the Moudjahidin of the independence struggle (e.g. Labat, 1995b: especially 261; Martinez, 2000). By contrast, the political imagination of violence in Tunisia was an imagination of non-violence, which selectively ignored the violent episodes of recent Tunisian history (Camau and Geisser, 2003: 293, 289) and protest was largely organised along a repertoire of student action (Rollinde, 1999: 119; Shahin, 1997: 76). This ideational factor may well help to explain the presence of armed groups in Algeria and thus appears to be a factor important for understanding their emergence and the two cases. From a more general perspective however, it is the presence of these groups, irrespective of how it came about, that is the key factor.
44 For a reading of Nahdha that places great emphasis on clandestine structures see Hamdi, 1998: 66-68 and 72 on the alleged coup.

45 The Groupe Islamique Armé (GIA), which was to play, at least in name, so central a role in the conflict from 1994 onwards was also founded during this time. However this original GIA only lasted several weeks (Willis, 1996b: 281).
46 The particularly 'incompetent' use of repression in Algeria exacerbated radicalisation. Unlike the Tunisian regime, which used strategies of isolation both during and after periods of detention and prison (Hibou and Hulsey, 2006), the repressive practices of the Algerian regime unwittingly reinforced Islamist networks and encouraged the creation of new organisational ties. The detention camps, where between 9,000 and 30,000 suspected Islamist detainees were largely left to their own devices, organising themselves in harsh climatic and sanitary conditions, offered "le lieu privilégie de la radicalisation de la base islamiste" and freed activists formed the cores of the best organised armed groups (Labat, 1995b: 251, 252, 259). Compare also Lowi, 2005: 231 and Martinez, 2000: 213.

relic of the War of Independence, but mostly a result of informal 'trabendo' smuggling networks that had formed during Benjedid's presidency and converted to weapons as demand increased (compare *El Moudjahid*, 28 February and 5 and 6 June 1992). Moreover, the fact that these violence-specialists had built-up organisational networks, which, due to their clandestine character, survived the first wave of repression of January and February relatively unscathed, meant that discontent had a point of crystallisation and opposition to the government could continue to be expressed at relatively low cost in Islamist-dominated communities through gifts of supplies, cover, and other support for the armed groups and particularly the MIA (Martinez, 2000: 73).

Thus, the events-data suggests that conceptualising the divergence between the Algerian and Tunisian cases in terms of a dynamic of escalation provides a great deal of analytical leverage and helps address some of the shortcomings identified in the extant approaches. Adopting elements from "levels" and "target," we saw that repression that is marked by very high "levels," particularly the open killing of civilians, and is targeted indiscriminately at local structures central to the every-day life- and survival strategies of citizens, provides strong incentives for a violent reaction. Yet only if an organisational infrastructure for rebellion is available at the right time, and in this sense the sequence or "timing" of repression matters too, do these incentives become actualised. To stop there, however, is to miss an essential part of the picture, because the reactions to repression in turn prompt reactions by the agents of repression. Under the circumstances described above, this continual cycle of interaction is liable to be a cycle of escalation in which small initial differences can become magnified over time.

Conditions II: From "Timing" to the Micro-Foundations of Legitimacy

A second important condition for escalation is intimately connected to repressive strategies. Investigating the "timing" approach revealed that although it appeared to have some explanatory merit, its ability to deal with the two cases proved inadequate because it did not differentiate between different types of repressive strategies and took an overly static view of the dynamic interaction of protest and repression. Using the events-data allows us to address these two shortcomings and make an argument based on the timing and presence of a specific means of repression that helps to further specify the conditions under which the dynamic of escalation occurs. Comparing repressive means in "The Limited Explanatory Power of 'Levels'", we came across marked differences in counter-mobilisation as a distinct

repressive practice in the two countries, visible in the events-data thanks to the re-conceptualisation of protest and repression undertaken in the sections "Disaggregating Protest" and "Taking Apart Repression". We will see that this is a type of repressive strategy that can actualise the implicit and explicit claims of the government to control the population (Migdal, 2001: 15-16), and used pre-emptively – that is before or while other repressive means are used – appears to slow and end the cycle of escalation discussed in the previous section, by impeding the recruitment for protest necessary for escalation at every step of the cycle.

It would appear that higher levels of counter-mobilisation played an important role in controlling protest in Tunisia. As we saw in the previous section, repression in Tunisia could be more selectively targeted because the state was present in the popular quarters on a local level. This presence was achieved through a continual policy of mobilising support for the regime, contesting the Islamist's claim to speak for the nation and affirming the government's pretensions to power and a monopoly on the legitimate use of force.[47] Figure 15 shows the development of legitimating activities – that is to say actions by the government that redress grievances or actions by the regime or counter-movements that mobilise opposition to protest – and levels of "harder" repressive measures – arrests, restrictions and police violence – over time in Tunisia. The redress of grievances is likely to decrease recruitment by lowering the potential gains of protest. It fulfills goals protest is aimed to achieve, thus reducing potential gains, while counter-mobilisation can be expected to make protest less likely by signalling government strength and investing spaces of dissidence, lowering protestors' expectations of success and complementing state sanction with mechanisms of social control. We can see that counter-mobilisation in Tunisia accompanied the cycles of "harder" repressive measures and during the autumn of 1990 even predated them. Thus, these bids for legitimacy appear to have been a regular and recurrent element of the government's repressive strategy, incorporating both the redress of grievances and active mobilisation.

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47 For a detailed investigation of the rhetorical strategies by which the Tunisian regime did this and constructed a 'national consensus' to exclude Nahdha from the political field, compare Rogers, 2007.
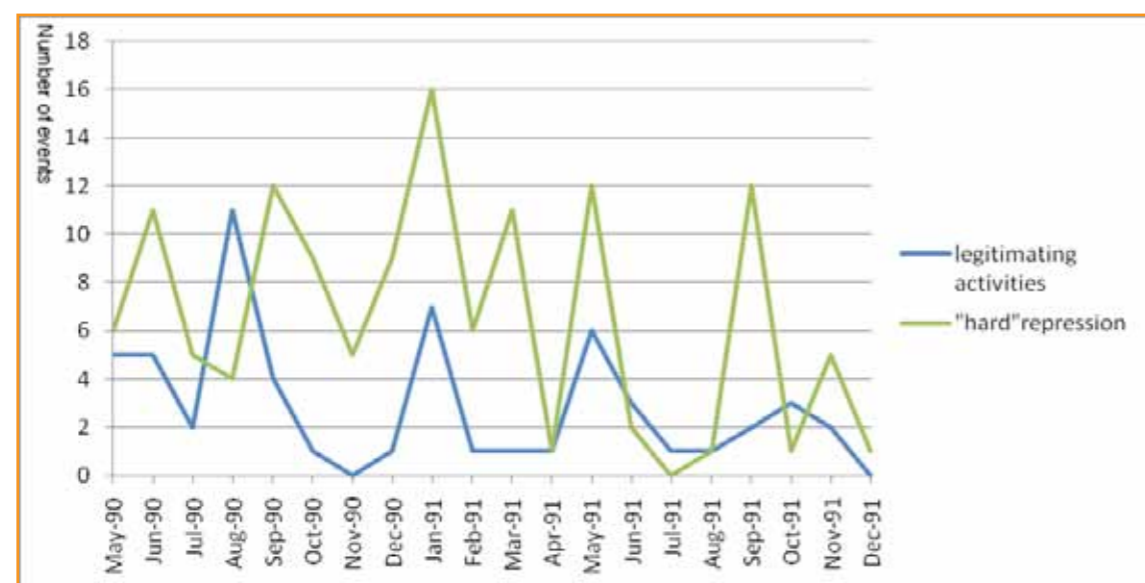
Figure 15 Repression and Legitimating Activities in Tunisia

Breaking down these legitimating activities further reveals that in Tunisia a particularly high proportion were targeted at the opposition and the population more broadly, with a significant share of counter-mobilising events (compare Table 4). This data includes the RCD's campaign for the municipal elections as well as two further concerted bids for mobilising broad support: surrounding the Gulf Crisis in August 1990 and January 1991 and surrounding alleged plots by Nahdha in May and October 1991 – all of which are clearly visible as spikes in the number of legitimating events in Figure 15. In all of these instances, the RCD aimed to generate ostentatious displays of popular backing. Thus in the elections, despite the fact that it ran unopposed,[48] the government party conducted a full-scale campaign and succeeded in gathering a significant number of new members, with an important share coming from former activists of the non-Islamist opposition (Camau and Geisser, 2003: 236; compare also *Réalités* 250: 8-14 June 1990; Daoud, 1990: 784; Daoud, 1989: 684). Similarly, during the Gulf Crisis Ben Ali can be seen to have created "le consensus qu'il avait vraiment cherché depuis 1987 sur le plan interne" (Daoud, 1990: 789) and the RCD played an active role in demonstrations, founding Committees of Support for Iraq, and succeeding in mobilising 15,000 people to demonstrate on 14 August. Nahdha,

which called for a boycott of the protest, followed suit with its own protest a day later, without – at least according to the press reports – succeeding in rallying more than 5,000 people.

Counter-mobilisation appears to have avoided the Algerian scenario of "une société laissée à l'abandon" (Leveau, 1995b: 23). Instead, Nahdha was faced with a regime that not only claimed control, but actualised these claims and mobilised support for its "harder" repressive strategies, all the while attempting to diffuse Nahdha's appeal by addressing social and economic grievances,[49] as well as fostering networks of counter-movements in the same physical spaces – the universities and popular quarters – that Nahdha organised in. This becomes most clear during the regime's heavy crackdowns on Nahdha, when the government multiplied favours towards the opposition to solicit its support, holding meetings and consultations with opposition leaders, and providing them and their newspapers with government funding and the promise of better access to national television and radio services – a long-standing demand. These co-optive measures did not fail their objective. "Instead of the support they had shown [for Nahdha] in 1987, the opposition parties signed a joint statement in which they 'condemned Nahdha's decision to resort to confrontation'" (Hamdi, 1998: 72). Moreover, the government conducted a campaign of grassroots mobilisation and helped create networks of counter-movements. The RCD party organisation acted as one of the main actors of repression (Burgat and Dowell, 1997: 239-41). Due to the limited information available, this is not well reflected in the events-data, but the creation of neighborhood "Awakening" committees for anti-Islamist vigilance and new RCD quarter committees from May 1991 onwards (Ismail, 2003: 155-156), underscores the importance the regime accorded to counter-mobilisation and is mirrored by the fact that, in October, after announcing an alleged Nahdha plan to assassinate Ben Ali, the RCD organised pro-government demonstrations in Tunis and the provincial capitals (Daoud, 1991: 949-50). The Tunisian government thus conducted a concerted campaign to re-invest public space and to solicit the active support of at least elements of the population for the government security option.

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48 Nahdha, the Mouvement Démocrate Socialiste and the rest of the opposition boycotted the elections, criticising the growing discrepancy between the government's democratic rhetoric and its practice and citing irregularities with voter registration. Compare *Le Temps* 13.05.1990 and 19.05.1990.

49 As Larbi Sadiki (2002: 59) argues: "the regime is taking no chances with [Islamist] welfarism."

	Algeria		Tunisia	
	all legitimating activities	counter-mobilisation only	all legitimating activities	counter-mobilisation only
core movement	1%	-	-	-
movement sympathisers	26%	-	9%	-
armed Islamist groups	-	-	-	-
regime supporters	28%	24%	9%	7%
opposition	-	-	18%	-
population as a whole	45%	16%	64%	44%

Table 4 Targets of Legitimating Activities[50]

Figure 16 Repression and Legitimating Activities in Algeria

By contrast, the Algerian government was slow to move beyond repression and focused mobilisation, when it occurred at all, on dedicated regime supporters rather than rallying the population more broadly or forging alliances with non-Islamist parties. Table 4 provides a clear summary of this fact. Algerian legitimating activities included fewer counter-mobilising events and were focused far more strongly than the Tunisian on supporters of the government, rather than attempting to increase support from the population as a whole and other political actors. Although the absolute numbers of legitimating activities are similar to the Tunisian figures, the significantly higher number of total events in Algeria would lead us to expect higher absolute levels and the 25% of legitimating activities in Algeria targeted at sympathisers of the FIS could safely be subtracted from the total, since they consisted in the gradual freeing from March to June 1992 of FIS activists incarcerated in the Saharan camps. As we saw above, far from stabilising the government position, these releases contributed to escalating violence. Thus, as Figure 16 serves to highlight, legitimating activities in Algeria followed repression and did so only half-heartedly and with a significant time lag. The FLN and particularly the HCE gave up on Algerian's "hearts and minds" as irrelevant. Yet viewed from the approach developed here, the case of Algeria shows that "le choix en faveur d'une solution exclusivement sécuritaire – sans vision politique ni projet démocratique – n'est pas le bon choix" for avoiding escalation (Lamchichi, 1997: 10).

A serious attempt to rally the opposition, or anyone else, around the HCE line, in contrast to the Tunisian case, was undertaken only two months after repression began, with the formation of the National Consultative Council in late March 1992 and the nomination of two former FIS members, Saïd Guechi and Hachem Naït Djoudi, to ministerial posts. Not until mid-May did the government secure the support of the Association National des Imams in denouncing terrorism and despite sporadic talks, it never received support from the two non-Islamist parties that had won seats in the suspended elections, the FFS and the FLN. The sole peak visible in the number of legitimating activities in Algeria in Figure 16 during May and June 1992 reflects the HCE President Boudiaf's attempt to make a serious bid for gaining popular support when he launched the Rassemblement Populaire National (RPN) in the Algerian frontist tradition to unite Algeria's "silent majority." Incorporating 12 other parties – whose total level of support in the national elections had moved in the single digits – the RPN nonetheless succeeded in building some momentum. This was largely due to a serious drive by Boudiaf in the last two months before his assassination in June, to tour the country extolling his vision, founding local branches, and rallying support.[51] After Boudiaf's assassination in Annaba on one of these tours

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50 Percentages out of 57 legitimating events in Tunisia and 67 in Algeria.

51 That Boudiaf's strategy might have been successful is argued by several scholars well acquainted with the Algerian developments. "Algerians related to his assassination with absolute shock and continue to equate it–and not the coup d'état–with Algeria's tragic descent into civil war" (Silverstein, 2002: 661; compare also Willis, 1996b: 261-263).

on 29 June under suspicious circumstances,[52] the RPN initiative fell apart. As the gradual decrease of legitimating events in July demonstrates, even in its short two-month history, the RPN had developed some institutional capacity and was behind many of the demonstrations and rallies held throughout the country to mourn Boudiaf's death and instrumentalise his killing against the Islamist movement.

Conclusions and Possibilities for Further Research

This study began with a puzzle. Why, given apparently similar repressive practices and comparable conditions, did Islamist protest escalate to civil war in Algeria, while ending in Tunisia? More broadly speaking, when does repression escalate protest and when does it weaken movements and demobilise its adherents? In attempting to find answers to these questions, we saw that protest-repression interactions are a great deal more complex than is reflected in much of the current literature. Three dominant approaches, which were labelled "levels," "timing," and "target," were confronted with the Tunisian and Algerian cases, drawing on events-data generated for the two cases along a differentiated understanding of protest and repression capable of capturing the arguments of the three approaches. This highlighted that all three build on an insufficient disaggregation of protest and repression and assume a static and ultimately highly problematic uni-directional link between the two variables of interest. However, at the same time, we saw that particularly the "timing" and "target" approaches were not so much wrong as incomplete and underspecified.

Building on their insights and expanding them towards a dynamic understanding of protest-repression interactions based on the events-data, allowed us, in Chapter 6, to formulate hypotheses about the interaction of protest and repression. These hypotheses, in addressing the identified shortcomings, can account for the observed differences between the cases and bring us one important step closer to solving the puzzle of protest-repression interactions. They are summarised in Figure 17: A Process of Protest-Repression Interaction. The Figure depicts an idealised and partial process of interaction between protest and repression. It assumes protests are occurring and does not depict the de-escalatory cycle liable to follow from selective, as opposed to indiscriminate repression (i.e. the process that occurs when the question "sufficient information for repressive agents available?" is answered in the affirmative).

The process presented here reflects the fact that repression and protest interact dynamically over time and do so repeatedly in escalating and de-escalating cycles, rather than in a one-off manner. Given the existence of a protest movement, we saw that repression appears to provoke protest when (1) repression indiscriminately targets the every-day life worlds of activists and movements' broad networks of support using violent means. While the logic applies to multiple forms of repression, the open killing of civilians – shooting citizens – appears to be the repressive means with the strongest link to provoking

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52   Multiple factors suggest that Boudiaf's assassin had the support of some very well-placed collaborators within the government. Compare e.g. Hasel, 2002: 128.

protest when it is targeted indiscriminately. (2) For the protest provoked by this sort of repression to be sustained and thus lead to a dynamic of escalation, people individually targeted by repression must find alternative protest organisations available, which provide selective benefits for protesting in the form of protection from repression and a conduit to act on grievances. Where such organisations are present, (3) violence becomes targeted against the local agents of repression, increasing incentives for further indiscriminate repression in a vicious cycle. (4) Finally, both whether information is available to selectively (or indiscriminately) target repression and whether alternative (undetected) protest organisations exist, is strongly conditioned by the availability of spaces of dissidence at the local level. Actualising state presence through counter-mobilisation and to a lesser extent through the redress of grievances greatly reduces the potential for escalation by closing-down and contesting these spaces and by improving information about protest activities and actors available to the government and counter-movements. (5) These practices, the cases suggest, are likely to end protest.
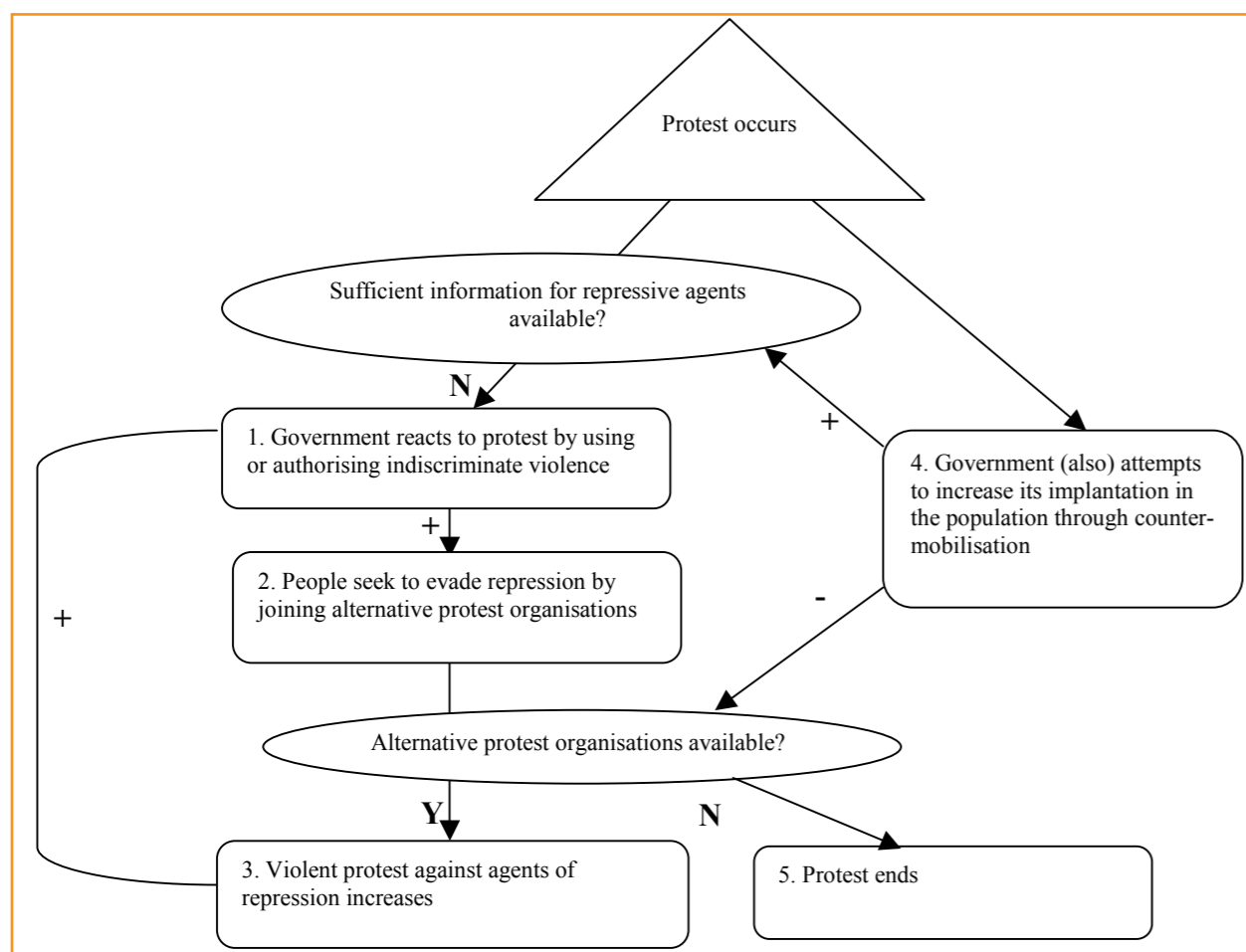

Figure 17 A Process of Protest-Repression Interaction

These findings suggest that students of protest-repression interactions must stop investigating "levels" and would do well to seriously modify the way they think about "timing" and "target." Recent attempts to add interactional elements to the "levels" approach (Lee, Maline et al., 2000), or to further elaborate conditions under which its predictions are to hold (Ortiz, 2007), appear like an unconvincing solution in the face of multiple serious shortcomings. Instead, further research on the interaction of protest and repression should probe the process of interaction sketched in Chapter 6 and summarised in Figure 17 to ensure it is operational in other cases, particularly cases outside the Middle East and North Africa. Such studies are liable to discover additional factors that influence how protest and repression interact and how this interaction ultimately plays out. Only then does it make sense to return to a quantitative research agenda, to test the hypotheses and models developed against a large number of cases and challenge the extent to which their claims really capture regular patterns of interaction. Such an undertaking, however, must be based on events-data rather than highly-aggregated indicators – and ideally events-data as differentiated as that used in the current study. Researchers willing to forego the temptation of using existing data and searching where the light is are likely to be richly rewarded, all the more so as such events data is increasingly available and possibilities for auto-coding (King and Lowe, 2003) mean this availability will increase in the coming years.

Evidently there is much work to be done and many factors are responsible for how protest plays-out, not least questions of movement organisation and support, the attractiveness of a movement's message and its leadership, and the socio-economic context in which it challenges a regime. Yet, repression casts an imposing shadow on movements and their choices and the events of the "Arab Spring" have once again underscored the centrality of repression for dynamics of escalation. Understanding the differential dynamics and unfolding events will occupy students of the region and of contentious politics for decades, but the most superficial of readings suggests that while protestors' consistently peaceful defiance of regime power might appear to challenge the findings of the present study, its insights actually offer significant leverage. The existence of oppositional spaces, some of them virtual, uninvested by regimes seem to have been central in enabling protest everywhere, while heavy-handed and indiscriminate repression in Syria, Yemen and Libya preceded a choice of armed force for protest movements and a decisive shift in actors and dynamics of contention.

Understanding how protest and repression interact is far more than an important question in its own right. It has been identified as one of the major research desiderates in social movement theory (Tilly, 2004: xi) and, as the Algerian case, and more recent events highlight, is central to understanding how and when internal conflicts and civil wars develop. Though unstructured protest and riots may be dispersed by the sort of power that comes out of the barrel of a gun, in dealing with organised protest movements, the killing of civilians is not only an egregious crime, it is a recipe for civil war.

Appendix

This table provides an overview of the variables coded in the event database, all possible values these variables could take and provides descriptions of each possible value used for coding.

	POSSIBLE VALUES	COMMENTS ON CODING
	REPRESSION EVENTS	
AGENT	actors of the central state	Repression by the government or its executing agents such as police and security forces
	local authorities	Repression by local councils or locally-controlled law-enforcement
	non-state actors/ counter- movements	Repression by political party organisations, mobilised populations or vigilante groups
TARGET	core movement	targeting the mainstream Islamist parties as organisations or party members
	movement sympathisers	targeting mosques, imams, and broader networks of support for the Islamist parties beyond party members
	armed groups	targeting armed groups
	government supporters	targeting members and supporters of the governing party
	opposition groups	targeting opposition parties, their members or civil society activists
	international audiences	targeting international actors and the international media (such as interviews given in the foreign press by ministers and heads of state)
	population as a whole	targeting broad sections of the population and the general population (general laws, restrictions and broad police crackdowns shutting-down access to a quarter or large parts of a city)
MEANS	negotiation	meetings and discussions
	claim	public statements and speeches
	address of grievances	righting perceived wrongs, implementing socio-economic policies aimed at delivering additional resources to the target, releasing prisoners, investigating alleged abuses
	restrictions	passing laws or edicts restricting movement and other freedoms
	arrests	arresting at least one protestor
	physical violence	violent policing using riot gear, teargas or firearms and leading to the injury or death of at least one protestor
	counter-mobilisation	mobilising, or attempting to mobilise the target
MODE I	open	open, public operations
	clandestine	plainclothes, undercover or clandestine operation
MODE II	formal	agents of repression acting in their official capacity
	informal	activities nominally illegal and carried out by repressive agents in a private capacity

Protest Event		
Agent	Islamist Party	event organised and/or called-for by one of the mainstream Islamist parties
	student organisations of the party	event organised and/or called-for only by parties' student wings (where parties and student groups called for a protest, it was coded as a party event)
	armed groups	activity by paramilitary groups or terrorist cells
	party sympathisers	activity by movement supporters (such as protests organised around mosques, more unstructured and improvised than party or student events)
	non-Islamist opposition groups	activity by other opposition groups, including legal and illegal opposition parties and independent activists
	unstructured protest	activity by protestors whose political affiliation was unclear or where protests were spontaneous and unstructured
Target	central government	targeting national government institutions
	local government institutions	targeting local councillors or institutions
	police	targeting agents of law enforcement
	counter-movement activists	targeting mobilised counter-movement activists (such as members and supporters of the governing party or vigilante groups)
	party sympathisers	targeting supporters of the Islamist parties (including mobilising party members, mosques and restrictions on Islamist dress or publications)
	resources	targeting securing resources (e.g. bank robberies in Algeria)
	international audiences	targeting international audiences (such as interviews in the international press and appeals to foreign governments and populations)
Means	negotiations	meetings and discussions
	claims	public statements and speeches
	mass demonstrations	peaceful marches by large numbers of people
	direct action	sit-ins, camping in public spaces, strikes, boycotts and other non-violent activities that are not demonstrations
	violent confrontations	bare-handed fighting or fighting with improvised weapons such as sticks and stones
	armed violence	use of petrol bombs, firearms, knives and other weapons
	sabotage	disrupting or destroying public utilities such as telephone or power lines
Mode I	open	open, public activity
	clandestine	undercover or clandestine operation (such as a secret meeting, sabotage or terrorist attack)
Mode II	formal	activity authorised by the government
	informal	activity that defied government bans or restrictions

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