

Why some yes and others no?

Explaining the emergence of collective action in Yemen and the status quo in Algeria, in the light of social movement theory

A work in progress

Panel1a: More Continuity than Change? Understanding the Resilience of
Oppressive Political and Social Structures

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Change and Continuity in the Arab World

Why some yes and others no?

Explaining the emergence of collective action in Yemen and the status quo in Algeria, in the light of social movement theory

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Recent and popular developments of the so-called “Arab Spring” reached Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen and Syria in 2011, offering a unique opportunity to research the causes of the emergence of collective action. The empirical evidence leads us to a two-part puzzle: Why have some countries experienced collective action while others have not? Which are the causal mechanisms of the emergence of the collective action? This paper focuses on the period prior to the onset of collective action to examine its nature and dynamics in the light of the social movement theory. Its aim is twofold: on one hand, to revise the social movement theory to clarify the phenomenon and on the other, to analyse the causes of the emergence of collective action in Yemen and the prevalence of the status quo in Algeria. The concept of “collective action” is outlined based on necessary and sufficient conditions and family resemblance approach. Cases are studied using a process-tracing methodology to identify causal mechanisms in order to explain our outcome. Finally, the paper provides some insights to study the phenomenon in future research.

Introduction

Since late 2010, popular developments of the so-called “Arab Spring” in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) embrace diverse manifestations that are related to collective demands for political changes or for changes that bring about improvement in the quality of life of people. Collective demands are made from below by individuals that on the basis of shared beliefs are engaged in more or less cohesive collective action with the aim of achieving common goals¹.

MENA has experienced an ‘exceptionally rapid, intense, and nearly simultaneous explosion of popular protests across an Arab world united by a shared transnational media and bound by a common identity’². Collective demonstrations demanding change have their particularities, though. While Tunisians once looked the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi, a series of increasingly violent demonstrations in streets brought about tensions for almost two months, from December 2010 to 14 January 2011 when President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali was overthrown³. The ‘Tunisia-style explosion’⁴ was not unique in MENA. On January 25 and for

¹ Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, *Contentious Politics* (Paradigm, 2006), p.4; Donatella della Porta, *Social Movements: An Introduction*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006).

² Marc Lynch, *The Arab uprising: the unfinished revolutions of the new Middle East*, (New York: Public Affairs 2012), p.9.

³ Christopher Alexander, ‘Tunisia’s protest wave: where it comes from and what it means’, *Foreign Policy*, 2011, [online] Available at http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/01/02/tunisia_s_protest_wave_where_it_comes_from_and_what_it_means_for_ben_ali [Accessed 30 April 2012].

⁴ Jack Shenker, ‘Warning Egypt could follow Tunisia’, *The Age*, 2011, [online] Available at <http://www.theage.com.au/world/warning-egypt-could-follow-tunisia-20110119-19wly.html> [Accessed 30 April 2012].

18 days, similar events occurred in Egypt against the government and President Mubarak after some attempts at political reforms, he stepped down transferring the power to the Armed Forces of Egypt⁵ and later the military made moves that had all the markings of a coup. Similar events have occurred with different intensity in Syria, Bahrain, Algeria, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Yemen⁶ and so on.

Collective action demonstrations have their particularities. For instance, the developments in Tunisia were short-lived and they managed to overthrow the regime. They are closer to a form of revolution. The forms of contentious collective action in Syria are long-standing and increasingly violent, but they have yet to act to achieve their goals which are to change the regime. Libya is an example of civil war in which other factors were needed to overthrow the regime, such as the international military intervention of NATO. Yemen is an example both of a successful rebellion which achieved to overthrow the president Ali Abdallah Saleh, and of an attempt at political revolution which is still in process. Cases such as Algeria and Morocco have had a limited participation in collective action. In Algeria, developments started on 7 January 2011 over issues such as unemployment and food prices and finished on 12 February 2011. These events had as responses to restore subsidies to oil and sugar. In Morocco, protests began on 20 February and expressed desire for great freedoms. The Moroccan government responded with a series of constitutional amendments and the first parliamentary election since the start of movements in the region, which were won by Islamist Justice and Development Party (PJD).

These events while not new phenomena in the region⁷ are leading to a new regional politics with new actors, the formation of social movements, challenging dynamics between populations and authorities, internal conflict and changes in the domestic political environment, such as rebellions, civil wars, some types of revolutions with overthrow of regimes and so on. Therefore, the current scenario offers a unique opportunity to research the causes of the emergence of collective action in MENA, leading us to a two-part puzzle: Why have some countries experienced collective action while others have not? Which are the causal mechanisms for the emergence of collective action?

Today, MENA is perhaps best described as a set of 'diverse diversities', not only because of variation in the outcomes achieved by different forms of collective action, but also in the forms of collective action developed and the different causal mechanisms that brought about the onset of collective action as well as its evaporation. This empirical evidence may prove fruitful to social movements and scholars of revolution in order to advance as far as theory-evidence is concerned. It is yet to be determined, however, whether these distinctions also shape the configuration of collective action forms deployed by civil society in MENA.

This paper is an attempt to advance on the study of collective action providing the first panorama on causes of collective action in a context of demanding political change in MENA. For this purpose, it focuses on the period prior to the onset of collective action demonstrations and as a result, is not a study of all revolutions, rebellions or riots; the paper focuses on a subclass of such events, in this case collective action demonstrations starting in late-2010 in Algeria and Yemen. The aim of the paper is twofold: on one hand, to revise social movement

⁵ Hamza Hendawi & Sarah El Deebe, 2011, 'Egypt's Mubarak refuses to quit, hands VP powers', *My Way*, 2011 [online] Available at <http://apnews.myway.com/article/20110211/D9LA9H180.html> [Accessed 30 April 2012].

⁶ Garry Blight, Sheila Pulham and Paul Torpey, 'Arab spring: an interactive timeline of Middle East protests', *The Guardian*, 2011 [online] Available at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/interactive/2011/mar/22/middle-east-protest-interactive-timeline> [Accessed 15 February 2012].

⁷ Marc Lynch, *The Arab uprising: the unfinished revolutions of the new Middle East*, p. 64.

theory to clarify the phenomenon and on the other, to analyse the causes of the emergence of collective action in Yemen and the prevalence of the status quo in Algeria. The concept of collective action is outlined based on necessary and sufficient conditions and family resemblance approach⁸. Cases are studied using process-tracing methodology⁹ to identify causal mechanisms in order to explain the outcome. Finally, the paper provides some insights to study the phenomenon in future research.

Why some yes and others no?

The issue needs firstly to be located on the period prior to the onset of collective action¹⁰ in MENA of the so-called Arab Spring. Why have some countries experienced collective action while others have not? This is because some countries such as Algeria has experienced limited or evaporated collective action demonstrations since late-2010 in comparison with the massive developments in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen. However, in the prior-2010 internal political history of Algeria such demonstrations are not new¹¹.

According to the index of Domestic Conflict of CNTS¹², from the post-Cold War period to 2010, Algeria has experienced twelve episodes of revolutions¹³: nine between 1994-2002, and three between 2004-2006; two episodes of general strikes¹⁴ in 1991; five episodes of guerrilla warfare¹⁵ between 1996-1998, one episode in 2002 and another in 2009; six episodes of major government crises¹⁶ between 1991-1992 and 1994-1995; nine episodes of riots between 1991-1992, one episode in 1995 and other 2001; and eleven anti-government demonstrations between 1991-1993, 1995 and 2001-2002. Therefore, there is evidence that in Algeria the so-called 'status quo' is not really an appropriate term. Manifestations of collective action are part of the history of Algeria which started before the fall of Mubarak in Egypt and the beginning of the Arab Spring. Thus, the question that is concerned is: Which are the conditions that prevent the collective action in Algeria, in the context of Arab Spring?

⁸ Gary Goertz, *Social science concepts: A user's guide* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

⁹ Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2005).

¹⁰ Scholars use the term "uprising", "riots", "revolts" and so on. In this study I will use "collective action" as a concept which includes different forms of cohesive demonstration demanding political change. See Annex A in which I outlined this concept.

¹¹ Ibrahim Sharqieh, Yemen: 'The Search for stability and development', in Pollack, K. M. (and others) *The Arab awakening: America and the transformation of the Middle East* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2011), p.222. See also Marc Lynch, *The Arab uprising: the unfinished revolutions of the new Middle East*, p. 105.

¹² The Cross-National Time-Series Data Archive [online] Available at <http://www.databanksinternational.com/> (To see data subscription is mandatory).

¹³ CNTS understands revolution as 'Any illegal or forced change in the top government elite, any attempt at such a change, or any successful or unsuccessful armed rebellion whose aim is independence from the central government'. See: Cross-National Time-Series Data Archive [online] Available at <http://www.databanksinternational.com/>, User's manual, p. 7

¹⁴ CNTS understands general strikes as 'Any strike of 1,000 or more industrial or service workers that involves more than one employer and that is aimed at national government policies or authority', See: Cross-National Time-Series Data Archive [online] Available at <http://www.databanksinternational.com/>, User's manual, p. 7

¹⁵ CNTS understands guerrilla warfare as 'Any armed activity, sabotage, or bombings carried on by independent bands of citizens or irregular forces and aimed at the overthrow of the present regime'. See: Cross-National Time-Series Data Archive [online] Available at <http://www.databanksinternational.com/>, User's manual, p. 7

CNTS User's manual, p. 7

¹⁶ CNTS understands major government crises as 'Any rapidly developing situation that threatens to bring the downfall of the present regime - excluding situations of revolt aimed at such overthrow'. See: Cross-National Time-Series Data Archive [online] Available at <http://www.databanksinternational.com/>, User's manual, p. 7

It is equally interesting the case of Yemen, because the collective action demonstrations are not new phenomena¹⁷. There is evidence of manifestations of collective action before the fall of Ben Ali, Mubarak and Qadhafi. From post-Cold War period to 2010, Yemen has experienced one major government crises in 1994; two episodes of riots in 2005 and 2008; one revolution in 1994 and others two in 2009, and two anti-government demonstrations between 2008-2009¹⁸. Thus, the question that arises is Why some yes and other no? Something is happening on the ground that permits to spread the Arab Spring to some countries and not to others. What are these conditions and causal mechanisms? Why are Yemen and Algeria so different in the context of Arab Spring when both have a past of intense collective action? For this purpose I will explore both the causal mechanism that led to Yemen to collective action and the causal mechanisms that prevent the collective action in Algeria.

Seeds of the Arab Spring: searching for insights

The literature on social movements, though spreading to contentious politics and revolutions has attempted to explain the engagement in collective action to pursue certain goals. Explaining the why, when and how of collective action emerges is the central goal of collective action-work literature¹⁹. In this study the concept of collective action is understood as *interactions among actors whose claims bearing on someone else's interest, leading to coordinated, organized or spontaneous efforts on behalf of shared interests and common goals, in which authorities are involved as targets or third parties*²⁰.

There are specially two causal factors – political opportunity structure and resource mobilization – that have not only been widely emphasized in studies of social movements and contentious politics, but prominently featured in research on movements of protest, civil wars and revolutions.

Underlying the ‘Political opportunity structure’²¹ (POS) is the assumption that demonstrations of collective action are very unlikely to develop under stable political conditions. Any collective action, in this sense, should be seen as responses to disruptive changes that either grants new opportunities/leverage to potential challengers. In short, any change in the political environment facilitates/prevents citizen activity in pursuit of common goals²². Furthermore, any condition

¹⁷ Ibrahim Sharqieh, ‘The Search for stability and development’, p. 206; Marc Lynch, *The Arab uprising: the unfinished revolutions of the new Middle East*, p. 105

¹⁸ The Cross-National Time-Series Data Archive [online] Available at <http://www.databanksinternational.com/> (To have data access subscription is mandatory).

¹⁹ J. Goldwin and J.M.Jasper, *The Social movements reader: Cases and concepts* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003); Dough McAdam, *Political process and the development of black insurgency: 1930–1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982); G. Marwell and P. Olivier, ‘Collective action theory and social movements research’, *Research in social movements, conflict and change* 7, 1984, pp.1-28; John McCarthy & Mayer Zald, ‘Resource mobilization and social movements: A partial theory’, *The American Journal of Sociology* 82, 1977; P.K. Eisinger, ‘The Conditions of protest behaviour in American cities’, *American Political Science Review*, 67, 1973, pp. 11-28; D. McAdam, S. Tarrow & C. Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

²⁰ I have outlined the concept searching for insights from social movement theory. See: Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, p.4. See also Donatella della Porta, *Social Movements: an introduction*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006).

²¹ P.K., Eisinger, ‘The Conditions of protest behaviour in American cities’, 1973.

²² P.K., Eisinger, ‘The Conditions of protest behaviour in American cities’, 1973; C. Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (New York: Random House, 1978); S. Tarrow, *Power in movement: Social movements, collective action and politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); D. McAdam, *Political process and the development of black insurgency 1939-1970* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1999); J., Goldstone, J. & C., Tilly, ‘Threat (and opportunity): Popular action and state responses in the dynamics of contention action’, In R.R.

that is called political opportunity structure should be related to the goals of individuals to become a POS²³.

The objectivist definition of POS does not take into account the role of people's perceptions but the 'change the objective likelihood of goal attainment'²⁴. Examples of POS under this concept are: presence or influence of allies²⁵ or a reduction of the power disparity between a given challenging group and the state²⁶. On the other hand, the subjectivist definition states that 'POS are only given if there are perceived changes in the environment'²⁷. Under this view Tarrow takes in account the incentives for people to participate in collective action, because there is a change in the expectations for success or failure of the engagements²⁸.

Under resource mobilization approach (RM) is emphasized that benefits of external resources may help in launching and sustaining a movement²⁹. It is equally important the role played by feelings and emotions both in the production and reproduction of social movements³⁰. Conditions such as deprivation³¹ discontent, generalized beliefs, ideological justification³²,

Aminzade, J. Goldstone, D. McAdam, E.J. Perry, W.H. Sewell Jr, S. Tarrow & C. Tilly, eds., *Silence and voice in the study of Contentious Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

²³ Dieter Opp, *Theories of political protest and social movements: A multidisciplinary introduction, critique, and synthesis* (New York: Routledge, 2009), p.162.

²⁴ Dieter Opp, *Theories of political protest and social movements: A multidisciplinary introduction, critique, and synthesis*, p.177.

²⁵ S. Tarrow, S., *Power in movement. Social movements, collective action and politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 86-89.

²⁶ D. McAdam, 'Initiator and spin-off movements: Diffusion processes in protest cycles', In M. Traugott (ed) *Repertoires and cycles of collective action* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995), p. 217-239.

²⁷ Dieter Opp, *Theories of political protest and social movements: A multidisciplinary introduction, critique, and synthesis*, p.177.

²⁸ S. Tarrow, *Power in movement. Social movements, collective action and politics*, p. 85; S., Tarrow, 'States and opportunities: The Political structuring of social movements', In D. McAdam, J. Mc Carthy & M.N. Zald (eds) *Comparative perspectives on social movements, political opportunities, and cultural framings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 54; H., Kriesi, 'The Political opportunity structure of new social movements: Its impact on their mobilization', In J.C. Jenkins & B. Klandermans (eds) *The Politics of social protest. Comparative perspectives on states and social movements* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), p. XIII; B., Klandermans, *The Social psychology of protest* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1997), p. 168.

²⁹ See: J.D. McCarthy & M. N. Zald, *The Trend of social movements in America: Professionalization and resource mobilization* (Morristown, NJ: General Learning Corporation, 1973); J.D. McCarthy & M. N. Zald, 'Resource mobilization and social movements', *American Journal of Sociology* 82, 1977, pp. 1212-1241; D.C., Minkoff & J.D., McCarthy, J.D., 'Reinvigorating the study of organizational processes in social movements', *Mobilization*, 10, 2005, pp. 289-308; Suzanne Staggenborg, 'The consequences of professionalization and formalization in the pro-choice movement', *American Sociological Review* 53, 1988, pp. 585-606.

³⁰ D., Snow & R., Benford, R., 'Ideology, frame resonance, and participant mobilization', *International Social Movement Research* 1, 1988, pp. 197-218; D., Snow & R., Benford, R., 'Master frames and cycles of protest', In A. Morris & C. McClurg Mueller (eds) *Frontiers of social movement theory* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press., 1992).

³¹ T.R. Gurr, *Why men rebel* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1970); R.N. Turner & L. Killian, *Collective behaviour* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1970); N.J., Smelser, *Theory of collective behaviour* (New York: Free Press, 1963).

³² Karl-Dieter Opp, *Theories of political protest and social movements: A multidisciplinary introduction, critique, and synthesis*, pp. 128-129.

social network ties³³, grievances³⁴, infrastructure such as pre-existent networks; occupational structure and growth³⁵; cross-class coalition³⁶ constitute RM.

Political opportunity structure and resource mobilization may create reasons for collective action, but what about identity? So far we have revised macro perspectives but identity perspective is a micro variable linked to the actor which has not been taken into account yet. The identity perspective appeared in work by Melucci³⁷ and the key concept is collective identity, which refers to 'results of purposes, resources, and limits, as a purposive orientation constructed by means of social relationships within a system of opportunities and constraints. The actors *produce* the collective action because they are able to define themselves and to define their relationship with the environment'³⁸. Collective identity can be seen as a property of individual actors (i.e. being a member of a group) or as a property of collective actor (i.e. shared visions of members on goals of collective action). Thus, collective identity can influence the emergence and the form of collective action. Can there be collective action without collective identity? On one hand, scholars such as Klandermans³⁹, state that collective identity is a necessary condition to collective action. In contrast Polleta and Jasper⁴⁰, state that collective identity can be absent in the mobilization. However, it is common between scholars that the stronger identification with a group, the more likely the individuals engage in collective action. Here collective identity means identification with a group⁴¹, the homogeneity of a group and common goals⁴².

Similarly, it is important to mention that if there is a strong collective identity there is some likelihood that it influences collective action⁴³. In this respect, collective identity approach is strongly related to framing approach. Framing means 'action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organization'⁴⁴ as well as 'processes that lead to more congruence or homogeneity of the frames of SMOs and non-mobilized persons'⁴⁵. Framing can have the meaning of a cognitive process in

³³ J. Goodwin & M. Jasper, *The social movements reader: Cases and concepts*, p.14.

³⁴ E.J. Walsh, *Democracy in the shadows. Citizen mobilization in the wake of the accident at three mile island* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988); J. Goodwin & M. Jasper, *The social movements reader: Cases and concepts*, p.14; Timothy Wickham-Crowley, *Guerrillas & revolution in Latin America: A comparative study of insurgents and regimes since 1956* (Princeton University Press, 1992); R. Gould, *Insurgent identities: Class, community and protest in Paris from 1848 to the commune* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995); J., Goldstone, J. & C. Tilly, 'Threat (and opportunity): Popular action and state responses in the dynamics of contention action';

³⁵ Karl-Dieter Opp, *Theories of political protest and social movements: A multidisciplinary introduction, critique, and synthesis*, p. 229.

³⁶ Jack A. Goldstone, 'Cross-class coalitions and the making of the Arab revolts of 2011', p. 462.

³⁷ A. Melucci, A., 'Getting involved: Identity and mobilization in social movements', In B. Klandermans, H. Kriesi & S. Tarrow (eds) *International social movements research*, 1 (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1988), pp. 329-348.

³⁸ Karl-Dieter Opp, *Theories of political protest and social movements: A multidisciplinary introduction, critique, and synthesis*, p.205.

³⁹ B. Klandermans, 'The social construction of protest and multi-organizational fields', In A.D. Morris & C. McClough Muleler (eds) *Frontiers in social movement theory* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 81

⁴⁰ F. Polleta & J.M., Jasper, 'Collective identity and social movements', *Annual Review of Sociology* 27, p. 291.

⁴¹ B. Klandermans, 'The demand and supply of participation: Social-psychological correlates of participation in social movements', In D.A. Snow, S.A. Soule & H. Kriesi (eds) *The Blackwell companion to social movements* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), p. 364.

⁴² Karl-Dieter Opp, *Theories of political protest and social movements: A multidisciplinary introduction, critique, and synthesis*, pp. 210 & 219.

⁴³ Karl-Dieter Opp, *Theories of political protest and social movements: A multidisciplinary introduction, critique, and synthesis*, p. 230

⁴⁴ Robert D. Benford & David A. Snow, 'Framing processes and social movements: An overview and assessment', *Annual Review of Sociology* 26, 2000, p. 614.

⁴⁵ Karl-Dieter Opp, *Theories of political protest and social movements: A multidisciplinary introduction, critique, and synthesis*, p. 235.

which people adopt, change or apply frames or a process of communication in which people articulate their frames⁴⁶.

Framing brings about framing alignment which may conduce to collective action. In theory of frames⁴⁷, some types of frames are diagnostic, prognostic and motivational. The first one refers to identification with a problem, attribution of blame; the second one, to solutions of problems, tactics and strategies, and the third one, refers to a call to arms. Thus, the degrees in which these three tasks are attended affect the variation of the success of collective action. Gamson⁴⁸ uses the concept *collective action frames*, highlighting its three components: injustice, agency and collective identity. For instance, a government decision such as raise taxes or food prices can be perceived as an injustice by population constituting an emotional pathway whereby anger in response to it motivates action. Agency implies some sense of collective efficacy, where the belief that issues can be solved collectively increases the likelihood of collective action. Finally, the collective identity is a *we-feeling* or identification with some group which motivates the engagements in collective action.

For the purpose of exploring and explaining the differences between Yemen and Algeria in relation to collective action, I hypothesize that three broad master variables, each of which has subcomponents, explain *why some yes and other no?*: POS, RM and FR

Based on the mentioned approaches, it is hypothesized that:

H1: The presence of POS is a necessary condition for the emergence of collective action.

H2: The presence of RM is a necessary condition for the emergence of collective action.

H3. The presence of a FR is a necessary condition for the emergence of collective action.

Therefore, POS and RM and FR are necessary conditions for the emergence of collective action and the causal vision of the collective action has the structure of a conjunction of three necessary causal conditions POS*⁴⁹RM*FR that are jointly sufficient to constitute a collective action.⁵⁰ Therefore, if at least one of these conditions is absent, collective action does not occur⁵¹.

The collective action can be outline in the following function:

$$CA = POS*RM*FR$$

The components of each master variables are: POS (Appearance of influential allies to support collective action; emerging splits within the elite; decline in the state's capacity or will to repress dissent)⁵²; RM (Population linked to social network ties; population experience of levels

⁴⁶ M.W., Steinberg, 'Tilting the frame: Considerations on collective action framing from a discursive torn, *Theory and Society* 27, 1998, pp. 845-846.

⁴⁷ D. Snow & R. Benford, ' Ideology, frame resonance, and participant mobilization', pp. 200-204

⁴⁸ W.A. Gamson, *Talking Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992)

⁴⁹ The symbol * means logical AND, i.e POS and RM and FR as a conjunction are sufficient to produce collective action.

⁵⁰ See figure in Annex A

⁵¹ See: Gary Goertz, *Social science concepts: A user's guide* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005)

⁵² Dough McAdam, 'The framing function of movement tactics: Strategic dramaturgy in the civil rights movements', In D. McAdam, J. McCarthy & M.N. Zald (eds) *Comparative perspectives on social movement. Political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and cultural framings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

of grievances; cross-class coalition⁵³; occupied infrastructure) and FR (Sense of collective efficacy; collective identity).

By studying this phenomenon, is applied a methodological technique which is called *process-tracing* which involves ‘attempts to identify the intervening causal process – the causal chain and causal mechanism – between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable’⁵⁴. This technique is suitable to explore the causal mechanisms or causal forces that are between X and Y. A causal mechanism is understood as ‘a complex system, which produces an outcome by the interaction of a number of parts’⁵⁵.

Process-tracing as ‘processes through which agents with causal capacities operate in specific contexts to transfer energy, information or matter to other entities’⁵⁶ permits gaining a deeper explanatory knowledge about the cause-effect link that connects independent variable and outcome which is unwrapped and divided into smaller steps or parts so that the researcher looks for observable evidence of each step⁵⁷.

The ambitious of the study is case specific. Its purpose is to build minimally sufficient theoretical explanation of the different outcomes in Yemen and Algeria. Case selection strategy has been done based in the different outcomes, both substantively and theoretically important. Cases have been chosen because the ambition is to prove minimal sufficiency of causal mechanism (or set of mechanism) in a single important case.

Exploring the Yemen’s black box: Why has Yemen massive and intense demonstrations of collective action while Algeria has not?

The following diagram represents the relationship of the three variables or conditions and its effect. The central aim is exploring the black box between POS*RM*FR and the emergence of collective action. The question that arises is how do the structures of political power and institutions, resources and framing and the character of collective actions interact? The path we want to find is of deductive inference, from the set of mechanisms POS * RM * FR towards collective action, as a set of facts / evidence.

⁵³ Empirically crass coalition refers to a group of diverse kind of people engaged in collective action. For instance, as Goldstone mentions ‘Islamist and secularists; residents of the capital city and rural towns; workers, students, teachers, lawyers; and defecting soldiers all contributed to the revolutionary effort’ See: Jack A. Goldstone, ‘Cross-class coalitions and the making of the Arab revolts of 2011’, *Swiss Political Science Review*, 17, 2011, pp. 457–462.

⁵⁴ Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences* (Cambridge, Mass., : The MIT Press, 2005), pp. 206-207

⁵⁵ Stuart S. Glennan, ‘Mechanisms and the nature of causation’, *Erkenntnis* 44 :1, 1996, p. 52.

⁵⁶ Andrew Bennett, Andrew, ‘The mother of all “isms”’: Organizing political science around causal mechanisms’, In *Revitalizing causality: realism about causality in philosophy and social science*, ed. Ruth Groff, 205-219 (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 207.

⁵⁷ Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to methods for students of political science* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 64.



Figure 1: What is happening in these black boxes?

As was noted in the previous section, POS*RM*FR are necessary conditions to the emergence of collective action. The black box between each conditions and the outcome contains the causal forces that is explored in the following sections:

Theoretical causal explanations to collective action emergence

Change in the political environment →perceived as a chance by population to get previous goals→creation of an us-them distinction between people and government→change of sense of identity (we-feeling, shared grievances)→production of connections among previous weakly or unconnected sites→diffusion→ ‘call to arms’ on the base of shared interest and common goals→collective action demanding political change→governmental responses→emulation of collective action→governmental responses...

Empirical analytical causal explanations to collective action emergence in Yemen prior to 2010

In exploring theoretical causal mechanisms, it is necessary to go back to the 1990s in the political history of Yemen, which witnessed the country’s unification in 1990 and its adoption of a multiparty democratic system⁵⁸. A joint system of power was built to unite the Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Yemeni Arab Republic at the same time as the right of association was recognized. The graph in Figure 2 offers a panorama of stability in Yemen at the beginning of the decade 1990s, where this change in the political environment allowed for the development of a framework of political expression, the formation of parties and the development of an ‘incipient civil society’⁵⁹. The opposition parties also developed communication resources to present their proposals and discussions, facilitating popular understanding of anti-government speech allowing the rise of activism by people who used the internet and tribal poetry to protest against the regime.

⁵⁸ Leila Hamad, ‘Yemen: De la revolución pacífica a las luchas por el poder’, in Ignacio Gutiérrez de Terán and Ignacio Álvarez-Ossorio (eds), *Informe sobre las revueltas árabes. Túnez, Egipto, Yemen, Bahreín, Libia y Siria* (Colección: encuentros 12, 2011), p. 90.

⁵⁹ Leila Hamad, ‘Yemen: De la revolución pacífica a las luchas por el poder’, p. 90.

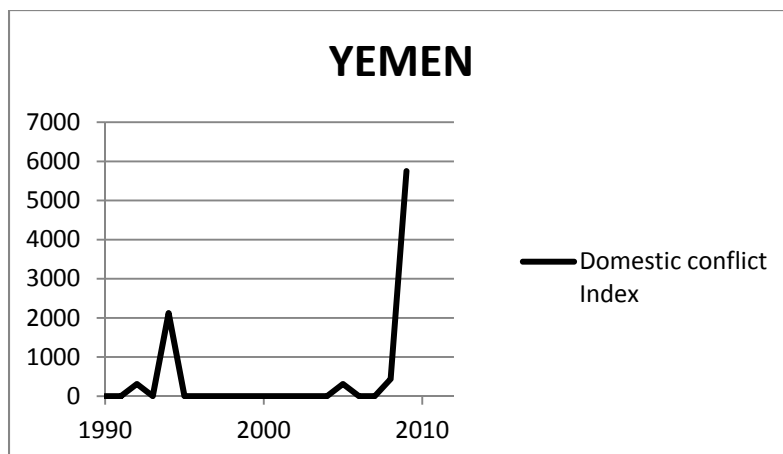


Figure 2: Graph trends of domestic conflict in Yemen 1990-2010. Source: own elaboration from CNTS data⁶⁰

The revolution of 1994 was partly due to distrust and distancing between the Yemeni Socialist Party and the General People’s Congress, later creating a gap between the political elite. This led Saleh to try to establish an alliance with the Islah party, create a coalition of government, eliminate socialist ideas and exalt those of the Shari’a in the country’s constitution as a source of legislation. Saleh also used the strategy of co-optation to integrate them to his personal sphere, whose leading figures were Abdelmajeed al-Zindani and Abdullah al-Ahmar. However, after al-Ahmar’s death in 2007, the system of loyalties of Saleh’s regime, the Islah party and the tribes, was affected⁶¹. In addition, Saleh’s regime faced a crisis of legitimacy due to the unfulfilled promises made in 2005 on his withdrawal of the election. He justified his candidacy to elections by displayed popular support⁶².

The population was plunged into disappointment and frustration, mainly because another government of Saleh meant the inability to obtain collective goals demanded by the people for political change. Saleh was synonymous of continuing poverty, corruption, high unemployment rates of 45 per cent⁶³, and the constant deterioration of the quality of life⁶⁴. Therefore, all these claims raised the level of grievances by the population (activists and non-activists) which further boosted their demands for political change, resulting in three episodes of revolution in 2009.

The analytical causal explanation of the collective action in the period prior to 2010 can be traced as follows:

Multiparty system and freedom of association recognition → development process of civil society thinking → opposition parties with technological resources (media, internet) to spread message → formation of activists (we-feeling) → dissemination through Internet and tribal

⁶⁰ Domestic conflict index is Domestic 9 variables in the CNTS, which “is used for weighted conflict measures, the specific weights being variable. As of October 2007 the values entered were: Assassinations (25), Strikes (20), Guerrilla Warfare (100), Government Crises (20), Purges (20), Riots (25), Revolutions (150), and Anti-Government Demonstrations (10)”. See: User’s Manual, p. 12, [online] Available at <http://www.databanksinternational.com/>

⁶¹ Leila Hamad, ‘Yemen: De la revolución pacífica a las luchas por el poder’, pp. 95-96.

⁶² Marc Lynch, *The Arab uprising: the unfinished revolutions of the new Middle East*, p. 105.

⁶³ Tobias Thiel, ‘Yemen’s Arab Spring: From Youth revolution to fragile political transition’, In Nicholas Kitchen, (ed) *After the Arab Spring: power shift in the Middle East?* (London: IDEAS reports- special reports, 2012), p. 45.

⁶⁴ Leila Hamad, ‘Yemen: De la revolución pacífica a las luchas por el poder’, p. 97.

poetry→discursive activism→new POS (fragmentation of the elite)→perceived as an chance to achieve goals→framing alignment for avoiding Saleh continuity→collective action emulation.

Demonstrations of collective action in the context of the Arab Spring 2010-2012

Significant changes in the political environment in Yemen can be traced back to 2006 after the presidential election period, when the country was plunged into political crisis and when Saleh committed before the international community to reform the Electoral Act to improve the democratic system. Although this reform had to take place before the 2007 parliamentary elections, it was never carried out, and a block in the negotiations between the government and the opposition led to postponing reforms for a period not exceeding two years. Finally, it was not materialized. In addition, and as proximate cause (a POS), is the announcement of a governmental initiative that sought to grant the title of *President for life* to Saleh, which was perceived as a threat by the opposition as well as by the Yemeni population. These events triggered an increase in the level of popular grievances, coupled with feelings of frustration due to the low quality of life offered by the Saleh's regime.

As the demonstrations were nothing new in Yemen, joining in collective action was expected, especially because there were common feelings among the population for political change, to stop corruption, to improve the quality of life of people, and to make Saleh cease his permanence in power. The first manifestations were made from activists who were illegally and arbitrarily detained⁶⁵, such as Khaled al-Ansi of the national organization for defending rights and freedoms, Abdullah al-Sufi, journalist of al-Arabiyya, Abdulkarim al-Jewani, journalist, Naeif al-Ansi, leader of al-Baath, and the current Nobel Peace prize Tawakol Karman⁶⁶. However, this was not reason to stop the demonstrations for change.

Many people attempted to occupy the central square of Tahrir in Sanaa, although it had already been occupied by supporters of Saleh to avoid a repetition of what happened in Egypt. However, as an alternative, many students used the infrastructure of their universities to make collective demonstrations against the government, which was dubbed as "Sahat al-Tagir" (The square of the change).

After joining the anti-government movement, the opposition called for a "Day of Rage" through its leader Tawakel Karman⁶⁷ which was massive in Aden city, and was dispersed by the security forces with live ammunition and tear gas⁶⁸. Another "call to arms" was done on 18 February named "Friday of Anger", where tens of thousands of people joined in anti-government demonstrations in Ta'izz, Sana'a and Aden. On the 11 March, there was another call to arms named "Friday of No Return" calling for Saleh's ousting in Sana⁶⁹. After Saleh's negative to signing his resignation from power, the anti-government movement of youth set the goals of overthrowing the regime and overhauling the political system⁷⁰, developing a movement supported by a cross-class coalition. On the 18 March the peaceful youth movement had as governmental response the so-called "killing of Saleh", which led to national and international

⁶⁵ Leila Hamad, 'Yemen: De la revolución pacífica a las luchas por el poder', p. 99.

⁶⁶ Leila Hamad, 'Yemen: De la revolución pacífica a las luchas por el poder', p. 99; Marc Lynch, *The Arab uprising: the unfinished revolutions of the new Middle East*, p. 106.

⁶⁷ Marc Lynch, *The Arab uprising: the unfinished revolutions of the new Middle East*, p. 105.

⁶⁸ 'Opposing protesters rally in Yemen', Aljazeera 2011, [online] Available at <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/02/201123105140512715.html> [Accessed 27 April 2012].

⁶⁹ Haley Sweetland Edwards, 'Protesters stage huge rally in Yemen's capital' *Los Angeles Times* 2011 [online] Available at <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/mar/12/world/la-fg-yemen-protests-20110312> [Accessed 25 April 2012].

⁷⁰ Ibrahim Sharqieh, Yemen: 'The search for stability and development', p. 221

public opinion to repudiate such events. Such was the shock of the killing of these young people that the figure of General Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar joined the movement, leaving his role as head of the First Armored Division and military commander of the northwest sector to protect young people. In addition, the figure of Sadiq al-Ahmar, shaikh al-mashaij of Hashid, the main Yemeni tribal confederation, joined the youth movements. Thus, the movement was supported by the opposition as possible allies, named Joint Meeting, which began in 2003 as a platform that brought together 5 parties: the Islamist party *Islah*; Yemeni Socialist Party; former leader of the south, al-Haqq party; the Nasserist Unionist Party; and the Union of Popular Forces⁷¹. In addition, several major tribes in Yemen had joined the anti-government protests forming a cross-class coalition which included students, young people, and opposition, increasing the size of demonstrations to well over 100,000 in several days⁷².

Under this situation, Saleh called for a national unity government, but opposition leaders rejected the proposal and called for Saleh to step down immediately.⁷³ The crisis in Yemen led to attempt to mediation from the Gulf Co-operation Council on April of 2011 to end to the crisis, drafting several proposals for a transition of power. In fact, Saleh was willing to accept a plan to leave power one month after signing and provided for a national unity government in the lead-up to elections. However, it was done neither on April nor on May.⁷⁴ These events led to an intensification of violence and social manifestations across the country⁷⁵. Even, several days later, Saleh stated that he would be willing to leave power by the end of the year or even sooner, but he later stated that he would not step down.⁷⁶

The violence in Yemen was of high intensity. Opposition demonstrators had occupied the main square of Ta'izz since the start of the demonstrations against the rule of president Saleh which were for the most part peaceful. However, on 29 May, when the military started an operation to crush the protests and remove people from their camp at the square, troops reportedly fired live ammunition and from water cannons on the protesters, burned their tents and bulldozers ran over some of them. This event was described as a massacre.⁷⁷ Given the state of emergency, a ceasefire was proposed by the 31 May. However, the ceasefire had broken down and street fighting continued in Sana'a.

On the 3 June, a bombing at the presidential palace left Saleh injured as well as seven other top government officials wounded. Saleh, the prime minister, the deputy prime minister, the parliament chief, the governor of Sana'a and a presidential aide were wounded while they were

⁷¹ Leila Hamad, 'Yemen: De la revolución pacífica a las luchas por el poder', p. 88.

⁷² 'Major tribes join Yemen protests', *Press TV* 2011, [online] Available at <http://www.presstv.ir/detail/167110.html> [Accessed 15 March 2012].

⁷³ 'Yemen opposition rejects unity deal', *Aljazeera* 2011, [online] Available at <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/02/2011228204148506367.html> [Accessed 15 March 2012].

⁷⁴ 'Reports: Saleh refuses to sign exit deal', *Aljazeera* 2011 [online] Available at <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/04/201143094747158908.html> [Accessed 21 May 2012].

⁷⁵ Jeb Boone, '13 reported dead after Yemeni forces open fire on protesters', *Washington Post* 2011, [online] Available at http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/13_reported_dead_after_yemeni_forces_open_fire_on_protesters/2011/05/11/AFvL7csG_story.html [Accessed 17 March 2012]; 'Several protesters killed in Yemen cities', *Aljazeera* 2011, [online] Available at <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/05/201151114938490911.html> [Accessed 21 March 2012].

⁷⁶ 'Thousands in Yemen march against Saleh', *Aljazeera* 2011, [online] Available at <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/03/201132511732578174.html> [Accessed 14 May 2012]; CNN Wire Staff, 'In Yemen, a day of rival demonstrations', *CNN* 2011, [online] Available at <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/meast/03/25/yemen.unrest/> [Accessed 21 May 2012].

⁷⁷ 'Yemen forces 'kill 20 protesters' in Taiz', *BBC News Middle East 2011* [online] Available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-13592935> [Accessed 21 May 2012].

praying at a mosque inside the palace compound.⁷⁸ Later Saleh left the country until the 23 of September when Yemeni state-television announced that Saleh had returned to the country after three months, increasing turmoil with gun battles on the streets of Sana'a and deaths.

On the 23 November 2011, Saleh signed the Gulf Cooperation Council plan for political transition in Saudi Arabia. He agreed to legally transfer the powers of the presidency to his deputy, Vice President Abdu-Rabbo Mansour al-Hadi, within a period of 30 days and formally step down by the 21 February 2012 presidential elections, in exchange of immunity from prosecution for him and his family. Thus, the Assembly of Representatives of Yemen approved the immunity law on 21 January 2012. Saleh left Yemen to seek medical treatment in the United States, and is reportedly seeking exile in Oman⁷⁹.

I develop the narrative until this last event, because is not the purpose to this study to deep in the process of political reforms in Yemen, but mainly to explore the causal mechanisms that led to the emergence of the collective action.

The development of empirical analytical causal explanation for the case of Yemen from 2010-2011 can be traced as follows

POS: Saleh's government initiative to grant title of president for life → initiative perceived as a threat by population → framing alignment → start of collective manifestations → governmental responses such as illegal and arbitrary detention and central square occupied by supporters of Saleh → Universities infrastructure occupied by student as a message's diffusion place → leaders of oppositions are allies of antigovernment movement → call to arms: 'Day of rage' → governmental responses with security forces → call to arms: 'Friday of Anger' → cross class coalition → collective action emulation → governmental responses: security forces and 'killing of Saleh' → International public opinion reaction → General Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar, joined the movement → cross class coalition → collective action emulation → call to unity from Saleh's discourse → opposition leaders rejected the Saleh's proposal → crisis in Yemen → mediation attempts by GCC → Saleh does not want to leave the power → massive demonstration demanding political change and high level of violence → new attempt to leave the power by Saleh → new failure of leaving the power by Saleh → massive Youth action movement → new cross class coalition → use of square of Ta'izz → repression from security forces → state of emergency → ceasefire → cease fire broken down → Presidential Palace assassination attempt → Saleh leaves the country → Return of Saleh → Turmoil with gun battles on the streets of Sana'a → power-transfer deal, GCC plan → Domestic responses → resignations from the ruling party and government → Arrests and repression → International reactions → collective claiming (pink colours symbols, Opposition factions; Southern groups; Al Qaeda...

In the case of Yemen, POS*RM*FR are present to produce collective action. The three hypotheses that were mentioned from social movement theory seem to prove this statement. Conditions to collective action is not sufficient to understand the dynamics of how the facts occurred in this particular case, therefore, applying process-tracing technique was suitable to explore the events as traces to produce the collective action and its emulations.

⁷⁸ Mohammed Jamjoom and Hakim Almasari, 'Witnesses: Tribal fighters take over major city in Yemen', *CNN*, Available at <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/meast/06/07/yemen.unrest/> [Accessed 23 March 2012].

⁷⁹ Laura Kasinof, 'Yemen Leader Leaves for Medical Care in New York', *New York Times*, Available at http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/23/world/middleeast/yemeni-president-leaves-heading-for-us.html?_r=1 [Accessed 30 April 2012].

In the next section, is explores the case of Algeria.

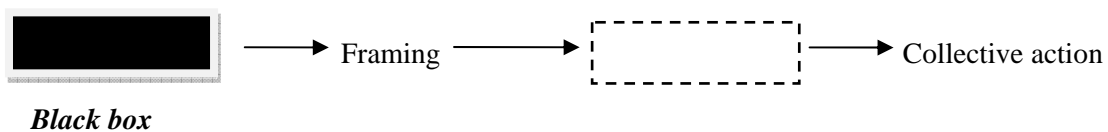
Exploring the Algerian’s black box: Why has Algeria evaporated and minor demonstrations of collective action?

In contradistinction to Yemen, Algeria has not developed the same level of collective action. As noted, there is a black box that contains explanatory elements to understand why collective action in Algeria has not expanded as in other cases, such as in Egypt, Yemen, Tunisia and Libyan. When we reflect on the Algerian case, two important questions arise:

- Why does Algeria not experience collective action emulation?
- What are the causal mechanisms that explain the absence of an emulation of collective action?

The following diagram represents the relationship of the condition “framing” and its effect. What there are in the white box are causal forces that enable the emergence of collective action. What there is in the black box is that prevent the presence of the necessary condition “framing” to cause collective action. Why do I choose framing to explain the case of Algeria? Because “framing” is the route through which POS and RM travel to enable collective action. In a previous diagnostic about POS and RM presence in Algeria there was no evidence of them. Therefore, due to collective action demonstration are not new in the country, I consider that exploring framing can be fruitful to partly explain the case of Algeria.

For this purpose, I want to explain the causal mechanisms that prevent the collective action in Algeria, exploring the black box. As was noted, in case of Yemen, the black box was located between POS*RM*FR and the collective action. For the Algerian case, the black box is located prior to framing condition:



Black box

The specific question for the case of Algeria is:

- Why is framing alignment weak or absence in the Algerian case?

My hypothesis for explaining the Algerian case is:

- Ha: Algerian individuals think that the risk of being linked to collective action is higher than its benefits.

As noted already, in addressing the Yemeni case, the causal mechanism of the independent variables to collective action is not linear but rather cyclical. We have seen how three major approaches allow us to observe the interaction between them given the empirical evidence for understanding the process linked to collective action. Moreover, we have seen that from the beginning of collective action there are interactions between actors, the challengers and the

target, who transform both these forces and the form of collective action. In the case of Yemen, we saw that collective action became a cycle of interactions between government and anti-government movements and the latter emulating his actions, in increasing demands for more political changes, which again provoked governmental responses. In the Algerian case, is intended to explore the conditions and the causal mechanisms that may explain the non-persistence or evaporation⁸⁰ of Algerian collective action in the context of the Arab spring.

The theoretical model of emergence of collective action starts from the presence of a POS, a change in the political environment. One indicator of POS considered in our study is a decline, although still high, of the level of political repression. According to PTS⁸¹, from 2005 to 2010 there was a small decrease in the rate of Political Terror Scale from 4 to 3, from a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is low and 5 is very high. This may be reflected in a decrease in police harassment of citizens, however, there is insufficient evidence to make a statement like this. Under this assumption, and following a theoretical analytical causal explanation, people would perceive this change as an opportunity to achieve their goals and develop the process that leads to collective action. I am not asserting that in Algeria there have had no demonstrations of collective action, what I want to explain is its evaporation. Being engaged in collective action and persisting in it means that the *framing alignment* is high and therefore people are convinced of the effectiveness of collective action. In the theoretical analytical causal explanation apparently the mechanism of identity is failing, because it is linked to the incentives that motivate people to participate and persist in the struggle. The reasons for the failure of this mechanism to collective action in the Algerian population can be explained looking for the causal mechanism which can explain the lack of framing.

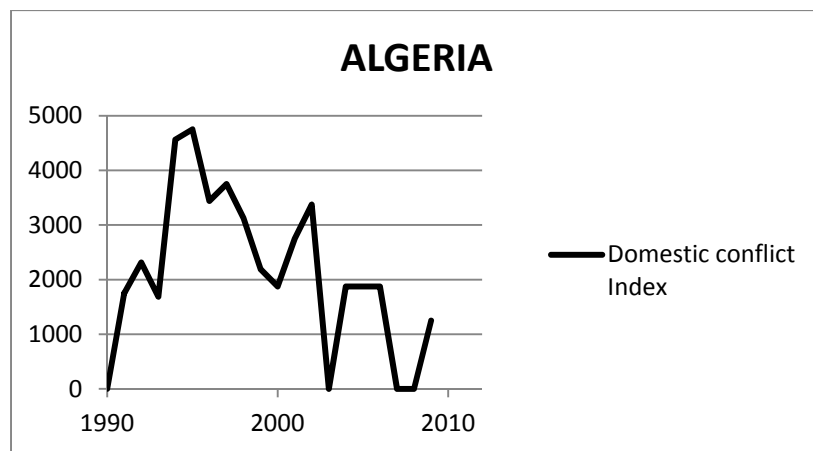


Figure 3: Graph trends of domestic conflict in Algeria 1990-2010. Source: own elaboration from CNTS data

As was stated, a POS is not a sufficient condition for individuals to engage in collective action. In the same way, RM is neither sufficient because both operate under the filter of incentives, namely the framing that makes people finally aligns with a sense of *we-feeling* and is based on the belief that collective action is effective and that identity is strong to stay in the struggle for a common goal. The Algerian case, although it may present some POS, as the possible decline in the level of repression as well as the existence of a history of conflict and mobilization,

⁸⁰ Tobias Thiel, 'Yemen's Arab Spring: From Youth Revolution to Fragile Political Transition', p. 23.

⁸¹ Political Terror Scale (PTS), [online] Available at <http://www.politicalterrorsscale.org/> [Accessed 30 April 2012].

activism, grievances, there are other factors that impede strong belief in collective action as an effective means.

The empirical analytical causal explanation as follows:

Change in the political environment →perceived as a chance by population to get previous goals→possibly weak creation of an us-them distinction between people and government→**absence or weak framing alignment to share a common identity (we-feeling, shared grievances)**→weakness or absence of production of connections among previous weakly or unconnected sites→weak or absent diffusion→weak reception of the ‘call to arms’ on the base of shared interest and common goals→absence of cross-class coalition→emergence of minor demonstrations of collective action→violent governmental responses→**evaporation of collective action demonstrations**→governmental responses and security forces a step ahead...

In the causal explanation mentioned above, a necessary condition for the emergence of collective action and its persistence is the framing alignment. In the Algerian case this condition *as a force* is weak or is absent of the causal mechanism which led to a collective action. This may explain partly the reason for the persistence of the status quo in the country after Arab Spring uprisings.

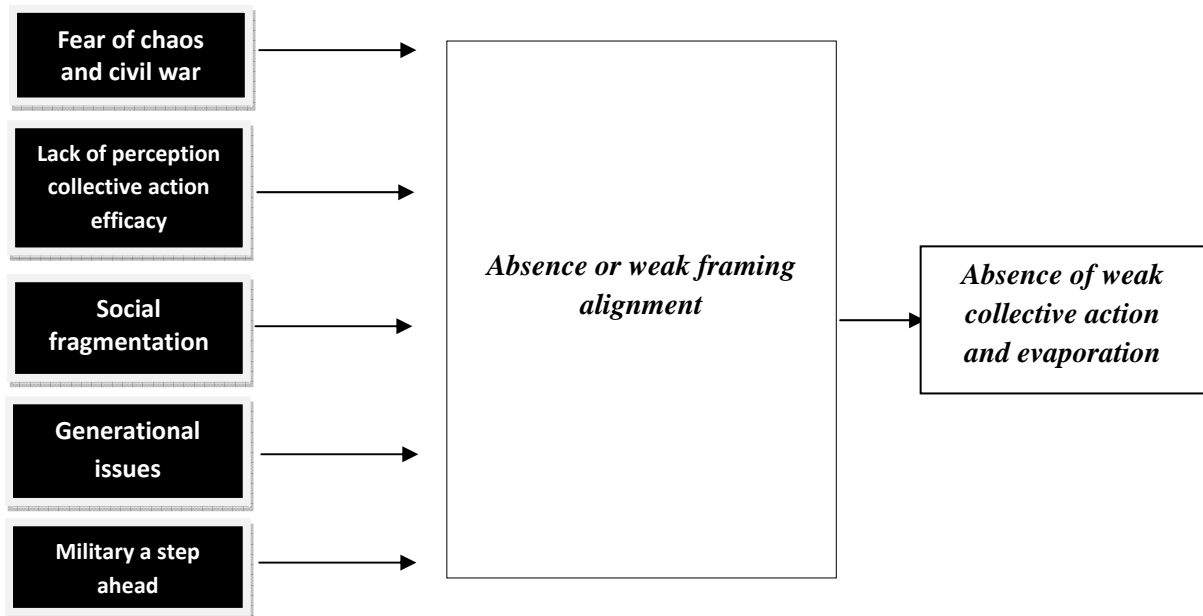


Figure 4: Intervient variables in the black box

By weak collective action is understood minor and not cohesive demonstration with short standing with its eventual evaporation. Under this statement, I will explore the black box or intervenient variables for understanding the process under study.

To address the specific question of the Algerian case I must refer to the past, particularly to the 1990s where Algeria experienced a civil war of high intensity, combined with terror and violence by the army, by Islamist groups, as well as of Groupe salafiste pour la prediction et le

combat⁸². Estimates of the death run around 160, 000 people⁸³ in a brutal insurgency. Therefore, the shadows of the past appear possibly in the collective imaginary as well as fears of instability and civil war. Algerians know very well the role of the police and how they know how to avoid triggering the cycle of violence, being always a step ahead of the people⁸⁴.

As mentioned one of the necessary conditions for the framing alignment is the conviction that collective action is effective. However, Algeria has a very violent past not to ignore, so the role of memory may explain but not entirely, the reasons of the evaporation of the demonstrations in Algeria. Some authors claim that the impulse toward collective action is limited by fear of the return of chaos and civil war as well as of fear of armed clashes. In fact, the Libyan case caused quite a disturbance in Algeria. Algerian had no sympathy for Muammar Qadhafi and its regime, however, as Riedel mentions, 'the division of Libya between Tripolitania and Cyrenaica and the intervention of NATO forces, especially French aircraft, are viewed with alarm in Algeria'⁸⁵ and they do not want to repeat the same in their country⁸⁶.

Algerians also fear the extreme jihadists groups closely tied to al-Qaeda, because they maintain ties with traditional enemies in the region of Cyrenaica that 'date back to the Afghan jihad in the 1980s'⁸⁷. It should be mentioned that in the 1980s a group of Algerians went to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan and return to their lands bringing the jihad. The Algerian military is also alarmed by the Yemeni case due to al-Qaeda had taken advantage of the chaos in Yemen to strengthen its position in the country. Therefore, the shadows of the past, the fear of returning to chaos and violence if the military and the regime loosen up and the fatigue combined with the disappointment of not achieving an improvement in the political situation for having a better quality of life, has affected the perceived effectiveness of collective action. Many people still think that the risk to be linked to collective action is higher than its benefits because history has shown they are already.

The above explanations may be complemented by the fact that Algeria has a social fragmentation due to generational cleavages that may explain the manifestations of collective action does not persist, but that is inhibited or is evaporated in the country. Social fragmentation is an impediment to develop a sense of belonging and collective identity to be linked to collective action. This is a necessary condition which if absent cannot be sustained collective action for long. Social fragmentation can be seen in Algeria ethnically, linguistically (French and Arabic) and geographically. Many of the divisions between French-speaking elite and the Arabic-speaking masses were created by French⁸⁸. Furthermore, in the creation of a nation state with a cultural, linguistic, Arab, Islamic and regional cleavage, authorities tended to fill politics positions with people of their region. Social fragmentation has led many groups were unable to build coalitions to challenge the authorities and the military has prevented the development of collective identity for sustainability of such groups.

⁸² Bruce O. Riedel, 'Algeria: Whistling past the graveyard', in Pollack, K. M. (and others) *The Arab awakening: America and the transformation of the Middle East* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2011), p. 207.

⁸³ Bruce O. Riedel, 'Algeria: Whistling Past the Graveyard', p. 207; Marc Lynch, *The Arab uprising: the unfinished revolutions of the new Middle East*, p.108.

⁸⁴ Marc Lynch, *The Arab uprising: the unfinished revolutions of the new Middle East*, p.109

⁸⁵ Bruce O. Riedel, 'Algeria: Whistling past the graveyard', p. 207.

⁸⁶ Bruce O. Riedel, 'Algeria: Whistling past the graveyard' p. 208.

⁸⁷ Bruce O. Riedel, 'Algeria: Whistling past the graveyard', p. 208.

⁸⁸ Isabelle Werenfels, *Who is in charge? Algeria power structures and their resilience to change* (CERI, Sciences-po, feb 2010), [online] Available at <http://www.ceri-sciences-po.org/> [Accessed 21 May 2012].

Another important aspect that may explain the Algerian case of weak collective action emergency or evaporation of such demonstrations is the role of generational issue. According to Tessler⁸⁹ mentions, in his work on *Political Generations in Developing Countries*⁹⁰, with focus on Algeria, there is a relationship between generational groups and attitudes about political systems, cultural values and economic outlook that combined with social fragmentation reflect a high split in the Algerian political culture thus preventing the formation of cohesive social action movements.

Finally, part of the causal mechanism for the prevention of collective action and its persistence is the role of the Algerian military that exert strong pressure on the population, being always a step ahead to eliminate any source of collective action against regime. Clearly, the opportunities are few so that population can perceive a change in the political environment as an option to participate. This is accentuated even more so when the role of framing is weak, being one of the necessary conditions for the emergence of collective action as well as continuing the cycle.

In the case of Algeria, the combination of a weak presence of POS and a weak presence of RM and the absence of FR can explain the evaporation of cohesive collective action demonstrations. The three hypotheses that were mentioned from social movement theory seem to prove that if they are not present, collective action does not occur. Equally important is to mention that conditions to collective action are not sufficient to understand the dynamics of how the facts occurred in Yemen and Algeria; therefore, applying process-tracing technique was suitable to explore the events as traces to produce/obstruct the collective action and its emulations.

DISCUSSION

This study has had the purpose to explore and explain Yemen and Algeria experiences in the context of the so-called Arab Spring as cases of collective action and status quo, respectively, although the term *status quo* is not appropriate as was noted. We attempt to answer the puzzle which is: Why have some countries experienced collective action while others have not? Which are the causal mechanisms of the collective action's emergence? In doing so, we focused on period prior to the onset of collective action in order to understand the trends of our three main approaches from social movement theory: Political Opportunity Structure; Resource Mobilization and Framing. It was applied the Goertz's principles to outline our outcome concept in three level structures⁹¹ and I studied the cases using a process-tracing technique.

I explored three main working hypotheses:

H1: The presence of POS is a necessary condition for the emergence of collective action

H2: The presence of RM is a necessary condition for the emergence collective action

H3. The presence of a frame alignment is a necessary condition to the individual is engaged in a collective action.

⁸⁹ Mark A Tessler, Carrie Konold, Megan Reif, 'Political generations in developing countries: Evidence and insights from Algeria', *Public Opinion Quarterly* 68:2,2004, p.189.

⁹⁰ Tessler defines five generations in Algeria, which are: Colonialism (prior to 1954), Independence War (1954-62), Boumediene (1965-1978), Bendjedid (1978-1988) and Contestation and Violence (1988-1995).

⁹¹ See annex A

It was found that in Yemen case POS*RM*FR are present as conditions in order to constitute collective action. However, in Algeria these conditions are weakly present and framing which is the filter of POS and RM failed.

In the exploration of causal mechanisms that led to Yemeni people to collective action, I proposed a specific research question:

- How do the structures of political power and institutions, resources and framing and the character of collective actions interact?



I explored the Yemen case applying theoretical causal mechanisms from the social movement theory which was empirically tested. We found that to explore POS is needed to go back in the 90s in order to understand the development of multiparty system and the freedom of association which were keys to the development of an incipient civil society. Furthermore, findings reveal that a RM began to be developed through the use of internet and tribal poetry to give the anti-government speech. These events are important in the extent they permit to understand the roots of the collective action in Yemen prior and post 2010. In the specific period of 2010-2012 POS*RM*FR are present and a series of causal mechanisms were found to explain the mysterious black box. Findings are:

- Saleh’s government initiative to grant title of president for life was perceived as a threat (POS) by population, who convinced of the efficacy of collective action and under a FR alignment is engaged in **collective actions demonstrations**.

The case of Yemen can be described as a cycle of collective action because of the interaction between actor claiming for political change and the government.

- Once collective action manifestations arise, there were governmental responses such as illegal and arbitrary detention and Central Square were occupied by supporters of Saleh.

Occupation of public space and infrastructure is an indicator of RM, and despite to government actions:

- Universities infrastructures were occupied by students as a message’s diffusion place.

Other RM is the presence of allies who support the collective action. In this case:

- Leaders of oppositions are allies of anti-government movement, who under the figure of its leader Tawakel Karman call to arms: ‘Day of rage’.

There were governmental responses again with a display of security forces, but FR was important to call to join to the collective action demonstrations:

- New call to arms: ‘Friday of Anger’, which through cross class coalition developed collective action emulation.

There were new governmental responses to stop manifestations with a new display of security forces: 'killing of Saleh'. This was criticized by international public opinion and the manifestations in Yemen were increasingly legitimized. A new RM appeared:

- General Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar is joined to the movement to support youth movement and a new cross class coalition is formed to produce new collective action emulation.

Saleh calls to unity but opposition leaders rejected his proposal, generating a crisis in Yemen. Therefore, a mediation attempts is carried out by GCC, in which Saleh refuses to leave the power. This negative is perceived again as a threat by population (new POS):

- Massive demonstrations demanding political change and high level of violence are developed in Yemen.

There was a new attempt to leave the power by Saleh, however a new failure of leaving it (new POS) leads to a:

- Massive action by Youth movement who through a new cross class coalition occupied the square of Ta'izz (new RM).

Governmental responses of repression from security forces lead to a state of emergency declaration, with a short time of ceasefire.

- The violence was increasing to the extent that there was an attempt to assassination of President Saleh, who left the country for a short time and whose return was mentioned in Yemeni media causing a turmoil with gun battles on the streets of Sana'a (new POS)

Finally, there was a power-transfer deal, GCC plan, which lead to Saleh to leave the power.

The case of Algeria has its particularities as well. One possible POS studied using the Political Terror Scale (PTS) is a small change of level of repression. But there is no certainty that people may have perceived it as a POS. In this point is needed to do a fieldwork applying some interviews and focus groups with Algerian people in order to find the presence of some POS. The same thing happened with RM and FR. Framing alignment is weak, almost non-existent to permit collective action emulations. Therefore, beyond to find causal mechanisms which explain the obstruction or evaporation of collective action in Algeria from the three conditions to the outcome, it was concerned to explore more specifically, and in an inductive way:

- Why is framing alignment weak or absence in the Algerian case?

Findings which can explain partly this case are: fear of chaos and civil war; lack of perception of collective action efficacy; social fragmentation; generational issues and military a step ahead.

My hypothesis is the following:

- Algerian individuals think that the risk of being linked to collective action is higher than its benefits.

Findings are:

- Fear of chaos and civil war prevent to Algerians to be engaged in collective action.

- Lack of perception of collective action efficacy prevent to be engaged in collective action
- Social fragmentation prevent to be engaged in collective action
- Generational issues prevent to be engaged in collective action
- Military a step ahead prevent to be engaged in collective action

In Algerian case possibly the combination of such situations can explain the fact that people possibly think that is more risky to be engaged than not to be.

As mentioned in previous sections framing alignment refers to the incentives to be engaged in collective action. Whether people believe in collective efficacy of collective action, then, they will join it to achieve the common goals. The lack of this perception is explained by the conditions mentioned above which limit the impulse towards collective action. Shadows of the past can affect the decision to engage in collective action in the individual level. Population does not want to return to chaos and violence, there is fatigue combined with the disappointment of not achieving an improvement in the quality of life.

Framing alignment is obstructed also by the social fragmentation due to a lack of a sense of belonging and collective identity to be engaged to collective action. Generational issues combined with social fragmentation reflect a high split in the Algerian political culture preventing the formation of cohesive social action movements. Finally, the role of the Algerian military that exert strong pressure on the population can be considered as a barrier to collective action.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The study of MENA collective action needs insights not only from social movement theory, but from theories such as democratization, civil society and collective action. There are many others variables which can explain the emergence/obstruct of it. It is not the purpose to make a mix of conditions from these theories, but the purpose is to try to build an integrative theory which can better explain what is happening in the ground in MENA. It is equally important, to define concepts in the study of Arab Spring, because concepts are essential to clarify and explaining the object under study, i.e. what it means and not means. A methodology is crucial to research, because the study of MENA need to have scientific value and being a scientific contribution as well. Therefore, an important step can be start with good research questions, and systematic analysis of the cases to avoid bias and achieving explain the research problem.

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ANNEX A

Outlining the concept of collective action in three level: Basic, secondary and indicators level

Basic Level: In its ontological view, collective action has the structure of a conjuncture of four non causal necessary conditions that are jointly sufficient to constitute a collective action.

Secondary Level: In an attempt to spread the definition of the concept toward to causal vision, is searched for insights from social movements and revolutions theories. The main perspectives and approaches mentioned in the literature which will be explained below are: Political Opportunity Structure Perspective (POS); Resource Mobilization Perspective (RM) and Framing Perspective (FR). In the figure 5⁹², the causal vision of the collective action has the structure of a conjunction of three necessary causal conditions that are jointly sufficient to constitute a collective action. It is important to say that if one of these conditions is absent collective action does not occur (Goertz & Mahoney, 2005: 242).

Political Opportunity Structure (POS) has a substitutability relationship with two indicators, which are “influential allies” and “Split within elites”. A substitutability relationship means that any of both indicators under the symbol “+” logical OR, can contribute to POS. In other words, “influential allies” can substitute to “splits within elites” and vice versa if from one of them there is not empirical evidence. The symbol “*” means that “declining to repress” is a necessary condition which should be present to constitute a POS. The relation between this indicator and POS is ontological non-causal. Finally, it is important to mention that either one of indicators “influential allies” and “splits within elites” should be combined with “declining to repress” to constitute a POS.

Resource Mobilization (RM) provides a family resemblance approach on the relations between indicators and the secondary level of collective action concept. RM has a substitutability relationship with four indicators, which are “Population linked to social network ties”, “Population experience levels of grievances”, “Cross-class coalition” and “Occupied infrastructure”. A substitutability relationship states that any of four indicators under the symbol “+” logical OR, can contribute to RM and the presence of any of them can be a substitute of another.

Framing (FR) provides a conjuncture of two necessary conditions that together, are necessary and sufficient to constitute a framing alignment. The relation between this conjunction with FR is non-causal but ontological.

⁹² See annex A

Figure 5: Collective action concept, outlined on necessary and sufficient conditions and family resemblance approach

