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Culture And Repression Management

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The paradox of repression is often more a cultural phenomenon than a political one, and its occurrence more a consequence of cultural processes than straightforward political confrontation. As Doron Shultziner notes in chapter 3, repressive events often become transformational, radically shifting the political climate and upending long-held attitudes, beliefs, and even social structures and institutions. They are what Victor Turner (1967) calls "liminal moments" in which the world is turned upside down. They open up space for more permanent transformations.

This chapter focuses on the culture of repression and its management—that is, the more symbolic aspects of repression and its backfire, seen more as a dance between a power and its dissidents, a regime and its insurgents, as they contest the frames used to make meaning of events and social arrangements, of justice and injustice. We will examine the two sides of this framing struggle: first (in this chapter) by focusing on efforts of change activists to choreograph actions in order to enhance the backfire effect of repression, and then (in chapter 8) by examining the growing efforts of elites to be more strategic about how they use repression in order to mitigate the effects of its potentially backfiring.

Repression Management and Preemptive Choreography

In this volume, we address the management of repression by social movements trying to bring about change in a system. It is perhaps

more apropos to refer to this strategic practice as the "arts" of facing repression, since "management" conjures up notions of clean, efficient processes and predictable causes and effects. Hardly anything could be farther from the truth in the give and take of political contention. However, we follow James Jasper's (2010) lead in subscribing to the idea that tactical choices are important. In the harried flow of conflict, strategic decisions are made in a whirl of incomplete information, past experience, cultural taste, biographical experience, and reciprocal anticipation. Nevertheless, there remains the possibility of "virtuosity," and chains of choices that can influence the trajectory of a conflict in desired directions. "Artfulness is crucial here, for people make choices, and those choices matter" (Jasper 2010, 320). Tactical choices within social movement organizations (SMOs) that anticipate and attempt to mitigate or transform repression to their own advantage command our attention in this chapter, and we turn to the theoretical models of framing and cultural pragmatics, both of which trace their lineage back to Goffman's (1959, 1974) work on dramaturgy and frames (cf. Vinthagen 2015).

Repression can jolt one's sense of identity and sharpen the sense of belonging or not belonging to one of the parties of a conflict—a movement participant, a member of the establishment seeking to mitigate or destroy the movement, and so forth. An uninvolved bystander may then decide either to avoid assiduously any connection or appearance of connection to the movement, or, alternatively, to become involved because of a perceived resonance between their identity and the frame proffered by movement participants. Repression gets people's attention and precipitates a choice regarding a movement campaign. Similarly, a member of the elite perpetrating oppression may find their identity shifting if they become sufficiently repulsed by the brutality of the repression. This is, of course, exactly the kind of frame shift that movement leaders will try to facilitate. It is worth noting that most authorities—even the most authoritarian among them—recognize that there are limits to repression based on their understanding of public opinion and the popular legitimacy on which their authority rests. They tend to reserve repression as a measure of last resort

to avoid triggering the very social psychological effects that we are addressing in this chapter.

One primary task of nonviolent actionists, we argue, is to set the stage, so to speak, on which repression takes place. Erving Goffman's (1974) dramaturgical approach to interpreting social interaction sheds light on the process by which movement actors attempt to manage the repression they almost inevitably face as they confront and try to change unjust systems. Just as Goffman observes that individuals and groups engage in impression management through a variety of dramaturgical tactics, so too we see SMO actors engaging in repression management.

Cultural Pragmatics and Performance Theory

In his work on cultural pragmatics, Alexander (2004, 540) re-energizes the field of performance studies and argues that in increasingly complex differentiated societies, public performance of rituals is increasingly problematic as symbolic action becomes professionalized and disconnected from communal life, leading to "the appearance of greater artifice and planning. Performative action becomes more achieved and less automatic." Alexander focuses his attention on what is necessary for actors to align various aspects of performance so that they connect with audiences in convincing and authentic ways. If actors can achieve this fusion of elements, the performance becomes ritual-like in that the audience, through psychological identification with the authors, cathect to the meaning intended by the performers. Successful performances fuse actors with audiences against background representations through means of symbolic production. Alexander also notes that the public sphere has become increasingly available to a broader range of political actors. As Shakespeare has said, "All the world's a stage." This applies equally to SMOs, and Alexander cites one of the most prominent nonviolent actions in US history, the Boston Tea Party, as an example of the way in which a collective action dramatized colonists' resistance to British rule. Such successful performances enact scripts that draw on collective background representations, "the universe of basic narratives and codes and the cookbook of rhetorical

configurations from which every performance draws" (Alexander 2004, 550). Successful scripts coordinate narratives and codes to condense meaning into symbols and narratives that are agonistic, pitting good against evil.

The choice of symbols used in action is critical to its overall effect, as it is central to the communicative capacity of the event. It is also important to remember that each action is situated in a web of meaning that is connected to all other possible interpretations of the event, including all possible reactions by the regime. George Lakey (1973) describes a campaign against chemical warfare in the United States in 1970. Campaigners wanted to plant pine trees on the grounds of the Edgewood arsenal, a chemical weapons facility in Maryland. After repeated confrontations and arrests, the arsenal eventually accepted the tree. Lakey asserts, "The point is that if rival symbols were to be juggled, the tree had them licked before they started. In symbol language, when the tree said life, all Edgewood could say back was death, no matter how daintily it picked its phrases" (107). Lakey calls this creative and careful use of choreography "propaganda of the deed."

So far, the application of performance theory to social movements has revolved around issues of mobilization, essentially extending framing theory to the dramatic potential in collective action. Eyerman (2006) argues that movements progress by "fusing individuals into collectives and collectives into focused and directed social forces. This is accomplished through social conventions like public demonstrations and their constitutive ritual practices" (207). We, of course, agree that protests and demonstrations can become "ritual-like," building solidarity and calling people to further action (Alexander 2004). However, we also believe there is a great deal of analysis to be done regarding the tactical choices that SMOs make. Eyerman (2006, 203) ventures into this territory citing Gandhi's choice of traditional clothing to challenge Western images of masculinity and to disarm opponents. Gandhi was a master of making dramatic strategic choices that were symbolically rich (see Kurtz 2008; Johansen and Martin 2008). His preference for traditional clothing was significant not only in relation to potential Western allies and opponents but also because

it symbolized in dramatic ways for a mass movement of Indians the injustice of British economic policy regarding the cotton trade in India. He turned religious practices like fasting, praying, and going on pilgrimage into protest tactics, and secular activities like spinning into symbolic acts that were simultaneously political and sacred. The low-risk tactic of spinning one's own clothes became the predominant symbol of participation in the Indian freedom movement, and Gandhi regarded it as a kind of spiritual meditation practice as well as a mode of resistance. Even though everyone knew what the tactic meant, and the Congress Party handed out free spinning wheels, it was impossible for the authorities to arrest people for spinning their own clothes.

We want to build on work that reveals the cultural underpinnings of social movement, and in this chapter we restrict ourselves to examining ways in which certain symbolically rich tactics can draw on widely recognized narratives that dramatize a problem (e.g., religious, ethical, or cultural) to mobilize public opinion, particularly in situations of repression. In other words, these tactics are tailored for the possibility of repression, either preventing it or helping to ensure that repressive events are interpreted in ways that favor the movement.

Eyerman (2006, 210) asserts that "social movements move even those who view them from afar, but whom they move and in which direction is not something easy to control or predict. The world that is watching is multifaceted, and the media which mediates the message adds its own refraction. Movements move, but in differing directions." Indeed, as W. I. Thomas and Dorothy Swaine Thomas said, if people "define a situation as real, it is real in its consequences" (1928, 572); it is mutually constructed out of the dialectical dance between authorities and dissidents (Lyng and Kurtz 1985). As Brian Martin (2007, 189–90) asserts in his book *Justice Ignited: The Dynamics of Backfire*, regimes can be highly adept at framing and "agenda management," especially since they usually have unequaled access to the media. He details common methods, such as covering up acts of repression, stigmatizing activist groups, seeming to concede with small gestures or meaningless inquiries, and bribing or intimidating critics.

We agree the challenge is difficult, but it is not impossible, even against formidable elites; nor is it so unpredictable as to preclude a field of study that focuses on the strategy and execution under duress of effective symbolic action, or repression management. What we are proposing is that much of repression management is in fact the pre-emptive management of the *perception* of repression. In this section, we explore the dimensions along which movement activists attempt to manage repression by identifying four ways in which choreography and strategic tactical choices can contribute to repression management.

1. Activists can set the stage by framing their cause in popular ways and encouraging the development of ethnic, national-ist, or other collective identities. Thus, when the movement is attacked, bystanding publics who have adopted the overarching nationalist or ethnic identity are more likely to feel as if the attack were directed at them as well.

2. Careful choreography of tactics can contribute to diagnostic framing in which the action itself labels or reveals injustice. Repression only makes the frame resonate even more strongly.

3. Preexisting collective identities can be activated by choreograph-ing events that symbolically or ritualistically express deeply held, sometimes sacred, identities, raising the likelihood that repression against fellow followers will generate moral outrage.

4. Tactics can be designed to encourage ethical dilemmas by fram-ing confrontation in ways that force agents of the regime to reconcile repression, on the one hand, with their own ethical systems, on the other. When repression occurs, it is more easily interpreted as violating shared ethical norms and can precipitate divisions within the ranks of the regime or encourage sympathy for the movement among bystanders who subscribe to the same ethical system.

Before going any further, we must emphasize that the first rule in suc-cessful repression management is to *remain nonviolent*. This in itself is a fundamental choreographic decision. Nonviolent discipline is cru-cial for helping to ensure that any violent repression is understood

to have been instigated by the regime and should be defined as illegitimate or disproportionate. Sharp (2005) has pointed out that state regimes often welcome the use of violent tactics by SMOs because it allows them to more easily justify their own use of violence. They have been known to deploy *agents provocateurs* to provoke violence by protesters. Indeed, the very fact that repression needs to be justified signals the presence of countervailing norms calling for limits to the use of violence. Working to ensure that those norms prevail is at the heart of repression management. Beyond nonviolent discipline, however, there are other ways to enhance the likelihood that public opinion will shift in favor of social movements or, more precisely, shift away from the regime.

Setting the Stage: Framing Collective Identity

Even in apparently asymmetrical conflicts, what Vaclav Havel calls the "power of the powerless" can be evoked through effective repression management that causes the broader public—and sometimes even adversaries in a conflict—to reframe and redefine themselves and the situation. Framing has been brilliantly developed by what could have at one time been called the Texas School of movement scholarship, which was initiated by David Snow, Burke Rochford, Steven Worden, and Robert Benford (1986, 21), drawing on Goffman's social theory for the study of social movements. Their framing perspective emphasizes what Goffman calls the "'schemata of interpretation' that enable individuals 'to locate, perceive, identify, and label' occurrences within their life space and the world at large" (464). As Benford and Snow (2000, 214) put it, "Frames help to render events or occurrences meaningful and thereby function to organize experience and guide action." The ability of movement actionists to be successful in having their frame accepted by their potential audience is profoundly related to "frame resonance"; that is, the degree to which their preferred frame appeals to others in that it is credible, salient, and generally produces a positive response in the intended audience (Benford and Snow 2000, 218).

Effective framing involves an adept handling and reshaping of the flow of history in a desired direction. Sørensen and Vinthagen (2012,

449–51) emphasize the impact of borrowing powerful symbols, such as national flags, religious icons, and even images from popular culture. This exemplifies one of the most important cultural dynamics of contention: symbols, rituals, or other familiar practices may be appropriated for insurgent ends. The "worthiness or legitimacy" (Sørensen and Vinthagen 2012, 451) associated with the symbols can be transferred to movements and their claims (Smithey and Young 2010). During the Iraq War, one often saw bumper stickers, banners, and flags in the United States proclaiming "Peace is Patriotic" in an attempt by antiwar activists to "harness hegemony" (Woehrle, Coy, and Maney 2008, 34–35). As Tarrow (1988, 118) puts it, "The lesson of the civil rights movement is that the symbols of revolt are not drawn like musty costumes from a cultural closet and arrayed before the public. Nor are new meanings unrolled out of whole cloth. The costumes of revolt are woven from a blend of inherited and invented fibers into collective action frames in confrontation with opponents and elites."

Sørensen and Vinthagen (2012) go even further and argue that fundamental cultural principles or "'old' culture" can be appropriated or simply highlighted to elevate the status of nonviolent activists. Jenni Williams describes in chapter 6 how the Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) movement borrowed motherhood and Valentines tropes from their traditional culture to challenge the Zimbabwean regime. WOZA activists claimed authority as mothers to scold the president and regime elites for their misbehavior and held major annual demonstrations on Valentine's Day to demonstrate their love for their country and its people.

The consequences of repression for movement mobilization may be profoundly affected by how nonviolent actions and repression are framed and whose frames dominate cultural discourse both within the movement and in the larger society. A movement is more likely to benefit rather than just suffer from repression if it can manage the frames through which the repression is interpreted (Woehrle, Coy, and Maney 2008). The rich literature on the relationship between identity and cultural meaning in new social movements has also yielded much new understanding about social movement mobilization, but this literature

has seldom focused on the actual acts of participation—the tactics and methods of movement actors.

In an exception, Kern (2009) draws on Alexander's cultural pragmatics, claiming that the Minjung movement in South Korea following World War II cultivated a broad, populist Korean identity, including a Buddhist messianic vision against which to contrast the state's attempts to consolidate its legitimacy through a cultural "One-People Principle" program. Through the deployment of traditional practices and rituals, such as dances, music, and recitation, intellectuals and artists encouraged mobilization by establishing a frame that not only drew distinctions between the state and the people but drew powerfully on myths and collective memory, thus successfully fusing South Koreans' national identity with the democracy movement's agenda. Activists promoted a framing of Korean history in which the Minjung repeatedly challenged repression, a narrative that, through the inclusion of traditional practices, was reenacted in each protest. "In this way, protest events removed the boundary between the present and the (mythic) past; every tear gas grenade that exploded and every arrest of activists strengthened the faith of the (mostly) students and stimulated further confrontations" (Kern 2009, 311). By successfully reviving a widely known agonistic narrative, democracy activists managed to influence the interpretation of contemporary confrontations with the state. Because the stage had been set in the minds of South Koreans, state repression was more likely to be interpreted according to the movement's framing and lead to mobilization.

In some cases, the preservation and appropriation of histories of repression can prepare activists and publics to interpret contemporary repression as yet another affront and indignity. Activists in Hungary made significant use of historical processions and funerals during resistance to Soviet rule in the late 1980s. On March 15, 1989, one hundred thousand Hungarians participated in a Revolution Day march that passed six locations connected with the democratic Hungarian revolution of 1848, linking the contemporary movement with a widely shared nationalist history. Three months later, another powerfully symbolic event was held to commemorate the death of Imre Nagy, a

Hungarian communist prime minister, who had supported another revolution in 1956 against the Stalinist People's Republic of Hungary. Soviet forces brutally repressed the 1956 revolution, but the resulting indignation remained suffused in popular memory and was revived when Hungarian demonstrators commemorating Nagy's death were violently dispersed by police in 1988. In 1989, the Communist Party had agreed to the reinterment of Nagy's and other revolutionaries' remains in hopes of appropriating the legacy of the revolution, but instead the funeral became a critical opportunity for contemporary opposition. Commemorations in Hungary not only tapped into powerful and almost sacred nationalist narratives to rally participation but also came to inscribe memories of repression and thus sustained indignation over decades, reminding us that the paradox of repression is not limited to discrete events but can accumulate over time, creating a rhythm of resistance (Kern 2009; Smithey and Kurtz 1999).

Diagnostic Framing

Benford and Snow (2000, 614) identify three core tasks in the framing process: the diagnostic, the prognostic, and the motivational, all of which SMO actors use to manage impressions. As they put it, movement adherents negotiate a shared understanding of some problematic condition or situation they define as in need of change, make attributions regarding who or what is to blame, articulate an alternative set of arrangements, and urge others to act in concert to affect change.

A major aspect of the diagnostic process is the establishment of what William Gamson (1995) calls "injustice frames" that define movement participants as victims. Injustice frames are thus a mode of interpretation that often precedes "collective noncompliance, protest, and or rebellion" (Benford and Snow 2000, 614). Strategic actions can be choreographed to present a diagnosis of a social problem and undermine a regime's authority. If authorities react to the framing with repressive measures, they only serve to strengthen the diagnosis. Lakey (1973, 103) refers to such actions as "dilemma demonstrations": "The best kind of action is one which puts the opponent in a dilemma: whichever response he makes helps the movement. If he allows the

demonstration to proceed, the movement gains that opportunity to educate the people. If he represses the demonstration, the people are awakened further to the underlying nature of the regime." Thus, the repression itself amplifies and dramatizes victimization in a way that movement participants cannot do by themselves, and ends up ironically as a collaborative effort between the regime and its dissidents.

Diagnosis involves identifying not only aspects of the system that need change but also the linkage between the repression change agents have suffered, on the one hand, and the inherent problems and injustice of the system itself, on the other. The violence of the repression a regime inflicts on a movement is framed as symptomatic of what is wrong with the system in the first place. When Major Dyer ordered his soldiers to fire on unarmed Indian demonstrators demanding Indian independence (demonstrators who were unable to escape the courtyard in which they were meeting), it was not, according to Gandhi, a fluke instance of one officer run amok but characteristic of the very nature of the colonial system, which was held in place by brutal violence and the people's acceptance of it.

More to the point here, certain tactics can dramatize an issue and bring others into the arena. When Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. appeared on NBC's *Meet the Press* in 1960, he was asked by his host if it would not have been more effective simply to boycott white businesses that did not serve "Negro" customers rather than creating the kind of confrontation emerging from lunch counter sit-ins.

> I think, Mr. Spivak, sometimes it is necessary to dramatize an issue because many people are not aware of what is happening, and I think the sit-ins serve to dramatize the indignities and the injustices which Negro people are facing all over the nation, and I think another reason why they are necessary and they are vitally important at this point is the fact that they give an eternal refutation to the idea that the Negro is satisfied with segregation. If you didn't have the sit-ins, you wouldn't have this dramatic and not only this dramatic but this mass demonstration of the dissatisfaction of the Negro with the whole system of segregation (King 2005, 434).

The sit-in strategy was designed to draw attention not only to the lunch counters but also to "injustices which negro people are facing all over the nation." When locals attacked activists in department stores, King's indictment of segregation across the South only resonated more strongly.

Demonstrators entered the lunchrooms in Nashville anticipating that they would be beaten and arrested—it was part of the strategic plan developed by Rev. James Lawson, a United Methodist clergyman who had returned from three years in India studying Gandhi's freedom movement and was sent by Dr. King to work on desegregation campaigns in the American South. The protestors of Jim Crow laws thus choreographed their actions in advance to take repression into account. They were trained to endure violent attacks from bystanders and arrest by law enforcement officials. In workshops prior to the sit-ins, Lawson had them role play various scenarios involving verbal and even physical abuse, thinking carefully about how to respond in a disciplined, nonviolent manner so as to ensure that their frame prevailed (Isaac et al. 2012). By carefully choreographing (including wardrobe), rehearsing, and playing out the lunch counter sit-ins, civil rights activists revealed their diagnosis of Jim Crow practices, ensuring that the beatings and arrests that followed would further support their injustice frame.

Raising the Cultural Stakes: Representing Deeply Held Identities

Tactics that tap into discourses of national identity, religious commitment, or other affinity can also create a strategic dilemma for repressive regimes. Sørensen and Vinthagen (2012) discuss the paradigmatic way in which the Khudai Khidmatgar, a nonviolent army of Islamic Pathans led by Abdul Ghaffar Khan in the British-controlled North-West Frontier Province drew on Islam and the code of Pukhtunwali to mobilize and discipline nonviolent action. The greater jihad or inner "struggle" through which Muslims pursue devotion and justice can be joined with the lesser jihad of external struggle against enemies in a call to nonviolent action. Pukhtunwali sacralized freedom, and thus

acts of repression by British authorities (such as otherwise humiliating strip searches and beatings) could be reinterpreted as opportunities to demonstrate freedom and resistance through disciplined nonviolent resistance. Within their particular cultural context, Khudai Kidmatgars evoked the paradox of repression as the viciousness of British subjugation contrasted starkly with the actions of these nonviolent warriors, violating Pukhtunwali and compelling more Pathans to join the movement.

When authorities are seen as attacking or disrespecting widely shared symbols, they may mobilize people in defense of shared collective identities. Thus, tactics that symbolically invoke events or principles that are deeply embedded in collective memory and identity can take on an almost sacred quality and present a dilemma to authorities who want to repress a movement but would do so at the risk of offending a much larger population.

More than 500,000 people attended the funeral of the student Jan Palach in Czechoslovakia in 1969. Palach martyred himself through self-immolation during the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. Twenty years later, civic organizations planned events to commemorate his death, essentially reenacting the repression of an earlier time and, in a sense, harvesting the indignation of the earlier event for contemporary mobilization. Repression of the commemoration in 1989 only compounded the insult of 1969 and helped to activate the paradox of repression. Eda Kriseová (1993, 235) explained how the two events became linked in the movement's favor: "The proud authorities would not allow people to honor the memory of a dead man, and by this they had done more to revive his memory than Havel could if he had spoken, and perhaps more than a new human torch could have done, if one had been lit. Face to face with truncheons, people felt even closer to Jan Palach, who had intended his death to be a warning against this kind of violence. As if by a miracle, the years all merged together."

This case could also fall into our first category of preparing collective identities, but here we want to focus on how discrete events can tap into preexisting core identities and raise the stakes of repression. In

another example, Timothy Garton Ash (1993, 80) has said that repression during the 1989 commemoration of the death of Jan Opletal, who was killed by Nazis, was "the spark that set Czechoslovakia alight" (quoted in Smithey and Kurtz 1999, 100–101).

Besides these examples of historical significance, simply holding certain *types* of events that are widely considered sacred and have a deep emotional connection among the public can improve the chances that repression provokes indignation and mass mobilization. Funerals and commemorations, such as Imre Nagy's, Jan Palach's, and Jan Opletal's, condense meaning (e.g., national pride and, often, religious beliefs) into a specific point in time and space. Similarly, candlelight vigils and "prayers for peace" at the Church of St. Nicholas in Leipzig evoked sacred moments of spiritual reflection among the predominantly Christian German population during the Peaceful Revolution that overthrew the Communist regime in East Germany.

Nonviolent strategy can appropriate cultural values associated with individuals' statuses in much the same way as certain types of events. In some cases, the value of religious authority has been leveraged. In June 1968, 130 Brazilian priests organized by Archbishop Dom Helder Camara formed a chain and placed themselves between police and protesting students (Lakey 1973, 115). In a similar example, during the 1986 EDSA Revolution (*Epifanio de los Santos Avenue*) in the Philippines, two military factions of the Filipino army engaged in a standoff in Manila after one of the factions mutinied and planned to overthrow the Marcos government. Archbishop Sin urged the population to support the mutiny, and hundreds of thousands of people gathered to intervene in the standoff while trained activists, along with nuns and priests, worked to maintain nonviolent discipline and deter the military factions from engaging one another (Johansen and Martin 2008; Schock 2005, 78). In both of these vastly Roman Catholic countries, clergy played important roles in managing protesters and raising the stakes of repression by authorities. (Even representations of iconic and popular figures such as Santa Claus, clowns, and cartoon characters can present a challenge to authorities! [Johansen and Martin 2008].)

Leveraging Shared Cultural Resources
and Encouraging Ethical Dilemmas

Finally, tactics can be designed to signal and appropriate ethical norms that are shared between challengers and the regime. If those observing the repression of a movement share certain values with dissidents, such as justice, proportionality, or equality, then they are more likely to find the movement's frame resonant. Alternatively, if values are shared between elites and the opposition and can be cued through the creative choreography of collective action events, repression may become less likely, or splits may develop within the regime as agents of the state struggle with how to resolve contradictions between state policy and their own ethical systems.

Agents of the regime are often placed in a problematic ethical dilemma when ordered to carry out repression against unarmed disciplined nonviolent protesters. Carefully choreographed actions can amplify this dilemma by making it more difficult for them to overlook ethical or religious proscriptions against killing or harming unarmed opponents. The dilemma can dissuade regime leaders from using repression or can lead to divisions within the ranks of the regime, as some find it prohibitively difficult to violate their own norms. In instances when repression does occur, the coercion can be made to appear as asymmetrical as possible, further violating ethical norms. In the instance of repression during the commemoration of Jan Opletal in Czechoslovakia, protesters made their commitment to nonviolent discipline clear by chanting, "We have bare hands." When security forces attacked protesters, the incident galvanized the nation.

Activists can tap into prevailing understandings of spirituality, citizenship, and gender. While conducting nonviolent trainings in Nashville during the equal accommodations campaign, Jim Lawson described an instance when a friend of his had been tied to a tree to receive a beating from a group of white racists. He began to recite the Lord's Prayer, provoking an argument among the attackers about the propriety of beating someone who was praying. The argument among

the attackers undermined their ability to act collectively and diffused the situation (York 2000).

In the case of the Rosenstrasse wives in Berlin during World War II, German women who were intermarried with male Jews demanded the release of their husbands, who had been interned. Despite SS troops firing warning shots over the crowd, the women would not disperse. Ackerman and DuVall (2000, 237) explain, "They knew the soldiers would never fire directly at them because they were of German blood. Also, arresting or jailing any of the women would have been the rankest hypocrisy: According to Nazi theories, women were intellectually incapable of political action. So, women dissenters were the last thing the Nazis wanted to have Germans hear about, and turning them into martyrs would have ruined the Nazi's self-considered image as the protector of motherhood." Interestingly, in this case it was both *challenging* the regime's ideology concerning women and taking advantage of patriarchal norms that managed to reduce the likelihood of repression. The intermarried women of Berlin became activists out of their individual commitments to their husbands, not as part of some larger strategic campaign. However, the effect remains significant. Nazi officials knew that violent attacks on German women risked violating fundamental norms of German culture, not to mention revealing flaws in Nazi ideology.

Activists can take strategic advantage of cultural norms to enhance frame resonance by choreographing their actions in ways that emphasize the innocence and nobility of nonviolent activists in juxtaposition to the brutality of the regime. During the movement to overthrow the Guatemalan ruler Jorge Ubico in 1944, nonviolent protests, often by students, were met with beatings, guns, and arrest. During demonstrations, campaigners faced guns and tear gas. Women dressed in mourning prayed at the church of San Francisco in Guatemala City before undertaking a peaceful silent march, highlighting the contrast between the violence of the forces and the legitimacy of the insurgents. The military fired on the crowd and killed Maria Cincilla Recinos, making her a martyr and icon for the movement. Guatemalans

launched a massive general strike in response (Muñoz 2009). The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina deployed a similar performance of mourning as they publicly demonstrated and pressed the military junta to release information about their disappeared children and husbands. In both of these cases, traditional tropes from the local culture were employed to show potential allies and recruits that those calling for change were in fact simply reflecting shared values (Bouvard 1994; Malin 1994; Navarro 2001).

Similarly, student civil rights activists in the lunch counter sit-ins in Nashville were careful to appear as upstanding citizens, wearing their "Sunday best" clothes when engaging in sit-ins or marches. The well-dressed, well-mannered, educated young people (segregated by gender, so as not to take on interracial romance issues) deliberately appeared in stark contrast to the ruffians who beat them up and even the police officers who arrested them. Many Nashvillians were outraged at the sight of fine young college students being rounded up, jailed, and brought into court. If white local ruffians were to harass the protesters, and when arrests were imminent, the students wanted to ensure that the images captured in the media and absorbed by other bystanding African Americans would clearly show that norms of respectability and citizenship were being violated. The arrests of these students led to the galvanizing of African American resistance and the success of widespread economic boycotts (Johansen and Martin 2008).

Campaigns for social change may be more successful when they engage in repression management with attention to cultural themes—choreographing and framing actions that enhance the probability that repression will backfire and increase the credibility of and participation in the movement. This framing can occur both before and after the transformative events of repression (see Shultziner, chapter 3): preemptive choreography as a part of strategic planning may help actionists to shape the kind of repression they face or, more probably, to set the stage for how the event is perceived by relevant actors when it occurs. Of course, these actions are not one sided, but part of a framing contest between insurgents and elites; some authorities are fully conscious of the paradox of repression and have gone beyond brute

force to use what we call "smart" repression, which we take up in the next chapter.

After repressive events take place, civil resisters may facilitate the paradox of repression by amplifying the moral outrage (Moore 1978) or arousing moral concern (Collins 2009) through effective framing. Repression does not backfire unless relevant audiences know about it and find it objectionable, potentially triggering negative attitudes toward repressive structures and their representatives, on the one hand, and positive responses toward the resistance, on the other. If a movement's goals are perceived as resonating with significant elements of its cultural context, elites are more likely to defect, and potential activists more likely to mobilize. The cultural capital of a nonviolent insurgency can be enhanced by civil resisters' active attention to the cultural elements of a conflict, leading to increased participation and greater chances of success.

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