CONTEXTUALIZING CONTESTATION: FRAMEWORK, DESIGN, AND DATA*

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This article presents the theoretical underpinnings, design, methods, and measures of the project, Caught in the Act of Protest: Contextualizing Contestation. This effort examines street demonstrations that vary in atmosphere, organization, and target. The project particularly focuses on participants, exploring who participates, and why and how people got involved. Data are collected before, during, and after a number of demonstrations, and captures the entire "demonstration moment." We develop standardized measures and techniques for sampling and data collection at the individual demonstrator level and at the contexual level. Evidence was gathered not only from the demonstrators but also from police, organizers, and the mass media. Data-gathering efforts were standardized through identical methods, questionnaires, fact sheets, and content analysis protocols. The CCC project examines demonstrations in Belgium, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Spain, Switzerland, and Sweden between 2009 and 2012. Teams from Italy, Mexico, and the Czech Republic joined the project at a later stage. The project has covered 61 demonstrations and 12,993 questionnaires have been completed to date.

Caught in the Act of Protest: Contextualizing Contestation project (CCC) is set up to combine interview data from individual demonstration participants with multilayered con-textual data. This combination provides insight into the relationship between individual participation and meaningful contextual differences. To that end, we developed standardized measures and techniques for sampling and data collection both at the individual demonstrator level and the context level (Klandermans, van Stekelenburg, van Troost, van Leeuwen, Walgrave, Verhulst, van Laer and Wouters 2010). This essay presents the CCC project, its theoretical underpinnings, design, methods, and measures. To start, we briefly elaborate upon the phenomenon of street demonstrations.[1]The

STREET DEMONSTRATIONS

Street demonstrations are examples of contentious performances. Tilly (2008) argues that contentious performances obey the rules of strong repertoires. Participants are enacting existing scripts within which they innovate, primarily in small ways. Like an improvising street theatre group, people who participate in contentious politics normally have several roles they can play, but these are not infinite (Tilly 2008). Similarly, participants in protest and the organizers match their performance to local circumstances. As a consequence, street demonstrations are both the same and different every time they occur. There is much variation in how street demonstrations look and feel in their atmosphere, organization, and targets. These

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dynamics affect who participates, why they get involved, and how they do so. All this depends on the many contexts within which the protest is staged. This is precisely what the CCC project explores: how to best account for systematic variations in who, why, and how people protest across countries and across issues.

Following Casquete, we define street demonstrations as "collective gatherings in a public space whose aim it is to exert political, social, and/or cultural influence on authorities, public opinion, and participants through the disciplined and peaceful expression of an opinion or demand" (2006: 47). Note that the peaceful and disciplined nature of a street demonstration event may vary, but that demonstrations clearly differ from riots or street violence. Distinguishing demonstrations from collective gatherings in general, Fillieule (2011) proposes that demonstrations have four distinctive traits. They are:

(1) temporary *occupations* of open physical spaces―both public (e.g., streets, squares, parks) and private (e.g., hotel lobbies, shopping malls).
(2) *collective* action, which excludes individual political action (e.g., buying and/or boycotts);
(3) *expressive* through visual affirmation of social/political demands for participants and public, which excludes gatherings of heterogeneous crowds lacking a unifying principle (e.g. shoppers at a market);
(4) *political* through making social/political demands, which include many apparently non-political events such as ceremonial rallies (e.g., "politicized funerals/processions") and politicized festive parades (gay or love parades).

Demonstrations are vehicles for ideas and beliefs. They are forms of political communication: externally—aiming at authorities, media, and public opinion—as well as internally—conveying and/or consolidating a message to the participants themselves. Casquete (2006) mentions three[2] different functions of demonstrations:

(1) *Persuasion.* Demonstrations are staged to persuade authorities, to acquire and exert influence for social or political change by influencing formal policy making processes;
(2) *Ventilation.* This refers to the benefit of participation for the participants themselves by publicly voicing their anger, indignation, or moral discontent;
(3) *Consolidation.* This also refers to the benefits of participation since ritual behavior such as protest demonstrations serve to build, convey, and conserve this sense of "we" and foster sustained commitment among participants in a social movement.

Most demonstrations fulfill all three functions, but some functions will likely prevail under specific circumstances. For example, if the government is targeted seems to be ready to make concessions, the persuasive function will probably dominate. Reactive demonstrations on valence issues, such as random violence, mostly serve as ventilation. Both examples show that the issue and the broader context are likely to shape the demonstration's function, and motives for participation will differ across demonstrations. We believe a comparative design that scrutinizes issue and context is needed, and in this article we propose such a design.

Demonstrations, their composition, participants' motivations, and mobilization trajectories are social phenomena that develop in multiple interactions between different actors, involved in the demonstration "moment" (Favre 1990 as cited by Fillieule 2011). There are the demonstrators themselves, consisting of various societal subgroups and segments, organizers and nonorganizers, leaders and followers, stakeholders and sympathizers. Then there are also the targets of the demonstration, sometimes physically present in the form of a counterdemonstration or a company headquarters, but often physically removed from the demonstration site, despite being its focal point. This target can be bosses, politicians, bureaucrats, or even society at large. Then, at a protest event itself, the forces of law and order enter the field. This can be the police, but also other public order forces: the army, private militia, etc. Finally, there are various publics, from casual bystanders, to journalists covering the event, to intellectuals and/or scientists who influence public opinion through their interpretation

of the facts. Therefore, the design of the CCC project not only covers the protesters themselves, but includes these other actors and factors as well. Who shows up, why, and how is determined by the interaction with and between these various factors and how these are structured by the issues that instigate the protest in the first place.

CCC DESIGN: COMPARISON ACROSS CONTEXTS

The CCC project examines how variations in street demonstrations result from differences in the context and how demonstrators interact with these contexts. This requires a comparative design that is rare in studies of contentious politics. Yet, as Klandermans and Smith (2002: 6) argue, "Comparative research of movement participation is important. It tells us that what holds for a participant in one movement, or at one point in time, or at one place is not necessarily true for a participant in another movement, or at a different time or place."

The most common comparison is across *space* and examines the same movement in different locations. A classic example is Walsh's (1981) study of citizens and activists in four communities in the neighborhood of Three-Mile Island. This study demonstrates that contention is shaped by characteristics of the local communities in which the movements are embedded. Had Walsh neglected to make this comparison—either by restricting himself to a single community or by simply analyzing aggregated data—he would erroneously have believed that the contention in each community was the same. So far, the most ambitious study comparing similar movements in different countries and taking diverging social and political contexts as key independent variables is Walgrave and Rucht's (2010) study of the February 15, 2003 worldwide demonstrations against the imminent war on Iraq. Their most important finding was that the size and composition of the anti-Iraq war demonstrations, the motivation of the participants, and their mobilization trajectories strongly varied between countries. Although the different protests were organized on the same day, were staged within an internationally collaborative framework, and employed the same action repertoire, and although they dealt with the same clear-cut issue—opposition against the same war—remarkable differences *among* nations were found. Mobilization, coalitions, protest turnout, demonstration composition, and the features, attitudes, and mobilization trajectories of the individual protesters all varied. The key variable to account for these differences between countries was the stance of government regarding the war and opposition in a country. In a follow-up study, Walgrave and Verhulst (2009) found that in countries where both government and opposition parties were opposed to the war (e.g., Germany and Belgium)—countries with a "favorable" political context, so to speak—the diversity of the people demonstrating against the war was systematically higher than in countries were government and/or opposition supported the war (for example, the US and the UK). All this to say that mobilizations on the same general issue, occurring at the same moment in time, and even which are precipitated by the same events attract very different publics in different contexts. Protest is shaped not only by the demand for protest opportunities but also by the very context that generates this demand (see Klandermans 2004).

Comparisons across movements and issues enable us to answer different questions, the most common of which concerns the similarities and differences among participants. These differences may concern demographic characteristics, motivations, identity, attitudes, and mobilization trajectories. For example, research by van Stekelenburg and colleagues (2009, 2011) in the Netherlands alludes to the context-dependency of motivational constellations, showing that demonstrators in a protest staged by labor unions are more instrumentally motivated while demonstrators in a protest staged by an antineoliberal alliance were more ideologically motivated. Different movements appeal to diverging motivations (van Stekelenburg, Klandermans, and van Dijk 2009, 2011). Similarly, Verhulst (2011) compared an array of different-issue demonstrations in Belgium and found substantial differences.

People taking to the streets to support asylum-seekers are very different from people taking to the streets to protest layoffs. Verhulst claims that the issue at stake strongly affects the composition of the event and the motivation and mobilization trajectories of the participants.

Comparisons across *time* examine the same movement over a certain time span. Movements expand and contract in phases of mobilization and demobilization. In which stages of a protest cycle are demonstrators likely to feel and behave more radically or rather moderately? We do not know much about the extent to which the composition of the crowd and their motives change over the life course of a movement and what causes this variation. A rare example of a study that compares the same movement through time is Walgrave and colleagues' (2012) study of information and communication technology (ICT) use among peace protesters from 2003 to 2006 in Belgium. They find ICT's role in producing diverse organizational memberships increases significantly through time.

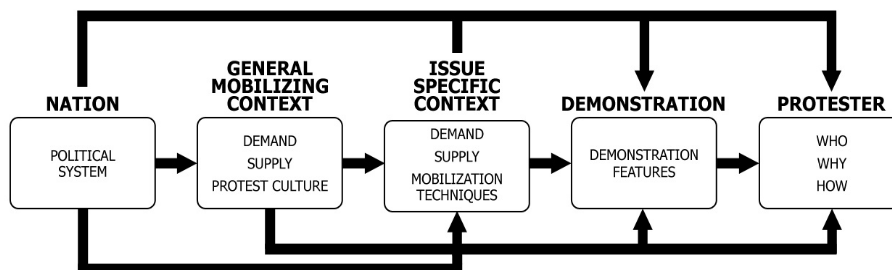
These examples of research comparing demonstrations across space, movement/issue, and time show the advantage of comparative designs and the kind of questions they can be used to answer. We know that demonstrations staged by the same movement on the same issue—but in different countries—produce diverging protest participation. The same is true of demonstrations that happen in the same country, but are staged by different movements on different issues. However, we are not aware of any comparative study that systematically compares national *and* movement/issue effects. This is precisely what the CCC project does. It is the first study that employs a *country* x *issue* design. The key idea is that features of countries and of movements or issues interact to mobilize participants with a specific socio-demographic profile, a specific motivational constellation, and a specific mobilization pattern.

Our theoretical framework draws on four contextual "layers" that influence directly and indirectly who shows up, why they attend, and how they are mobilized. Different contextual layers, as presented in figure 1, "generate"—or rather appeal to—a specific type of protest participant. "Higher" contextual layers (on the left of figure 1) affect the "lower" layers, and altogether they determine the "who," "why," and "how" of participation. Demonstrators are nested in demonstrations, demonstrations in issue-specific mobilization contexts, issue-specific mobilization contexts in general mobilization contexts, and general mobilization contexts in nations. Analytically, these four contextual layers can be distinguished, but in practice some of these layers are confounded (for example, the general mobilization context and nation often coincide to a large degree). Before elaborating on each of these layers, we briefly discuss the primary dependent variables: the characteristics of the protesters.

Protesters

Who are the protestors? What are their sociodemographic characteristics, what types of political participation have they chosen in the past, to what extent are they interested in politics, and what are their political views? Next, how were they mobilized, through what channels, by which techniques, within what kinds of networks and milieus? And, why do they

Figure 1. Overview of Contextual Layers



protest? What are the specific attitudes, motivations, and emotions that pushed them onto the streets? The basic claim of the CCC project is that these protestor characteristics are highly context-dependent. The type of demonstration, the mobilization context, and the features of a country determine who shows up, why, and how.

A multilevel comparative design allows us to examine the dynamic process by which the microlevel participation of individuals is coupled with the macro context, thereby generating demand and opportunities for participation by means of a mesolevel that channels the willingness to participate in a specific event. The links between these levels of analysis—context layers as we call them in the CCC project—is one of the more important but thorny problems in the literature on social movements and protest participation (Diani and McAdam 2003; Klandermans 2004).

For example, regarding the composition of a protest crowd, the fact that different issues will attract different kinds of protesters is evident. But furthermore, as these issues are also dealt with differently by different political actors, media, and public opinion in a given society, the barriers and thresholds to participate will likely vary according to these differences. The question of why people take part in protest largely deals with their motivation. We conceive of motivation in terms of grievances and emotions and assign a central role to identification processes (van Stekelenburg, Klandermans, and van Dijk 2009, 2011). First of all, for people to take action, they need to feel aggrieved in one way or another. But, for collective action, a sense of collective belonging and shared understandings of an unjust, wrong, or improvable situation are indispensable. A shared identity is needed in order to develop shared grievances and emotions. Motives can be more instrumental (people participate because they believe it will make a difference), they can be ideological (they participate because they feel the moral obligation to express their views), or they can be identity-driven (they participate because they feel the social obligation to stand by their people) (van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2007). The question is to what extent the typical motivations of protesters vary across demonstrations, issues, mobilization contexts, and nations, and then to what extent these differences are shaped by these contexts and issues.

In terms of mobilization, the question is to what extent mobilization patterns differ across countries and/or issues. From a previous anti-war study we know that mobilization channels vary strikingly between countries (Walgrave and Rucht 2010). Some demonstrations are the result of "open" mobilization processes, potentially targeting the public as a whole, while others are the result of "closed" mobilization processes, targeting only specific subsections of the population. But we still know very little about how processes of mobilization vary across issues and demonstrations. In one of the rare studies on this subject, Boekkooi (2012) shows that organizers who rely on different mobilizing structures—coalitions of formal organizations, networks of informal networks, or both—reach different subsets of a movement's mobilization potential.

Nation

The level of the national context is the most "distant" explanatory layer. We expect it to affect mostly the intermediate layers and to have relatively small direct effects on the who, why, and how of individual participation. Nations vary in terms of the circumstances they create for political protest. These are the typical stable and structural features of a country's political system that are implied by the political opportunity structure. These features affect all types of movements and protest on all kinds of issues. They relate, for example, to the openness of the political system to challengers and the access points that are available to actors willing to defend their interests and express their opinions (Tarrow 1998; Tilly 2008). In open political systems, such as the Netherlands, there is space for challengers to enter negotiations with decision makers, whereas in closed political systems, such as France, this is much less the case. This may imply that the French, being excluded from easy access to

politics, are generally more motivated to participate in protest than the Dutch. Indeed, in the Netherlands protest demonstrations are rare, while in France they eventually became the most frequently employed form of contention since their introduction in France around 1830 (Mayer forthcoming).

Another example of a national-level factor is the difference between countries in their pre-vailing styles of conflict and conflict resolution. Take for instance Great Britain and Sweden, where open and pragmatic elites avoid extreme forms of repression. In contrast, Italian and Spanish elites resort to violence in order to exclude groups from political representation (della Porta 2003). One may therefore expect that in Italy and Spain protest is much more likely to become a matter of principle than one of interests, whereas for protesters in Sweden or Great Britain interests are more likely to prevail as a protest instigator. This distinction is important since conflicts on material interests are usually solved by compromise whereas conflicts on principles often lead to deadlocked situations and, consequently, to fierce confrontations (Harinck and De Dreu 2004).

Mobilization Context

Each protest in a given country takes place in both a *general* and an *issue-specific* mobilization context. The general mobilization context refers to the general "demand" and "supply" of protest and to the general protest culture in a country, regardless of the issue. The issue-specific mobilization context is more particular and regards demand and supply and protest culture regarding a specific issue.

The General Mobilization Context

Protest does not originate randomly but in the context of unequal power relations rooted in manifest or latent political cleavages or social divisions (Kriesi, Koopmans, Duyvendak, and Giugni 1995). Traditionally, protest dealt with divisions between classes, religions, regions, or sectors. Yet during the past decades, Western societies have undergone far-reaching social and cultural transformations; traditional cleavages withered and were complemented or cross-cut by new schisms between "winners" and "losers" of modernization (Inglehart and Welzel 2005), globalization, denationalization (Kriesi, Grande, Lachat, Dolezal, Bornschier, and Frey 2008), and by recent conflicts such as those on environmental issues, citizenship, animal rights, and ethnocentric nationalism (Jansen 2011; Roggeband and Duyvendak forthcoming). Along these traditional and new cleavages, opposing identities emerged and organizational fields crystallized or formed (cf., Lipset and Rokkan 1967).

As mentioned, the general mobilization context in a country can be described in terms of supply and demand (Klandermans 2004). The supply of protest refers to the characteristics of the social movement sector in a society. The demand for protest refers to the protest potential in a society. A demand for protest always starts with grievances in a society (Klandermans 1997). For grievances to become an engine for collective action, those involved must politicize a collective identity. Politicization implies that people become aware of the fact that their grievances are shared by others, that opponents are defined, and that attempts to generate public support are undertaken (Simon and Klandermans 2001). The demand for protest is generally on the rise in most Western societies. Not only has the economic financial crisis deepened and widened the pool of grievances, but it also made grievances easier to politicize. As a consequence, more population groups employ protest as a means to communicate their grievances (Klandermans 2001; Meyer and Tarrow 1998). Also, increased immigration engenders grievances and heightens the demand for protest in many Western societies (Koopmans, Statham, Giugni, and Passy 2005). Grievances also become more global as populations in different countries realize that their concerns are not specific or idiosyncratic but cross borders. In terms of the CCC project, then, the question is to what extent the general

level of grievances in a country (for example, due to austerity measures), the increasing diversity of the population in a country (due to immigration), and the increased internationalization of discontent in that country (due to membership in supranational organizations) translate into a demand for protest.

The supply side of protest concerns the characteristics of the broad social movement sector in a country, its strength, its diversity, and its contentiousness. Traditionally, the social movement sector is conceived of as a conglomerate of movement organizations (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996) that provides the infrastructure on which protest is built (Diani and McAdam 2003). Increasingly, however, people seem to avoid long-term engagements and instead opt for loose engagements in informal, often ephemeral networks embedded in liquid communities (Roggeband and Duyvendak forthcoming; van Stekelenburg and Boekkooi forthcoming). And at the same time, we witness the emergence of a "global social movement sector" (Smith and Fetner 2007). In sum, social movement sectors are different in different countries and they probably change at a different pace in different countries and this in turn affects the general supply of protest opportunities they generate.

Issue-specific Mobilization Context

Specific population segments are affected by specific government measures, specific situations, or specific events, leading to issue-specific grievances and thus a particular willingness to participate in protest focusing on that particular issue. As government policies differ across countries and issues, we expect the issue-specific demand to differ strongly across countries. For example, soon after the global financial crisis broke out in 2008, Belgium ended up in a deep institutional crisis leaving the country without a government for almost two years. Elsewhere in Europe, large protest waves against often-drastic austerity measures increased. But in the absence of a government, hardly any anti-austerity measures were taken in Belgium and thus no demand for anti-austerity protest was generated. Another example is the varying position of Western governments regarding the war on Iraq. In countries with governments participating in the war and sending troops to Iraq the protest demand was much larger than in countries that officially opposed the war (Verhulst and Walgrave 2007, 2009). Issue-specific demands differed dramatically. The same applies to the supply-side. Between countries, and within countries, the supply of protest opportunities regarding specific issues differs strongly. In some countries a specific social movement industry—for example the environmental movement—is particularly strong, contentious, and diverse, while in a neighboring country a totally different set of factors may obtain. This most likely affects who shows up for environmental protest, why they do so, and how these people are mobilized.

Demonstration

First and foremost, demonstrations vary in terms of the issue they address. Issues are situated at different levels in figure 1. Since issues are features of the issue-specific mobilization context, as we discussed in the previous section, they essentially define this context. But an issue is also a feature of a specific demonstration. Verhulst (2011) proposes a two-dimensional distinction between old, new, and consensual issues on the one hand, and particularistic and universalistic issues on the other. Old and new issues differ on the "new" survival vs. self-expression value cleavage (Inglehart and Welzel 2005). Many old issues tend to focus on socioeconomic factors, such as inequality, social security, and industrial relations while newer issues often deal with moral, cultural, and lifestyle issues such as gender, sexual orientation, abortion, animal rights, and peace and war issues. But often, the direction of an issue (pro or against abortion, or pro or against environmental measures) is what really matters and what allows them to be placed in the "old" or the "new" category. Consensual issues are in essence "cleavageless." These are valence issues, such as opposition to drunk

driving or random violence. Nobody is in favor of drunken driving or random violence; there are no opposing political positions and no organized opposition on these issues. Furthermore, an issue also differs in the way and degree to which it appeals to, and potentially activates, relevant publics. Universalistic issues are those that in theory concern an entire population, such as global warming. Taking action on an issue like global warming requires different motivations and mobilization techniques than does taking action on a particular issue, for example, protesting against a factory closing down in a community. Different people are affected by different issues leading to different motivations and often also to different ways in which they end up demonstrating.

Apart from the issue, demonstrations can be ritualized, peaceful, or violent, with or without permit, and with or without a mutual understanding with the police. Demonstrations are usually staged by a coalition of organizers, but the composition of the coalition varies. Likewise, the composition of the crowd in the streets varies with the coalition (Boekkooi 2012). For example, the coalition in Spain that organized the demonstrations against the war in Iraq consisted of major political and social organizations, while the coalition staging similar events in the Netherlands consisted of small leftist organizations. As a consequence, the composition of the crowds demonstrating in the two countries differed significantly (Boekkooi, Klandermans, and van Stekelenburg 2011). Also, protest venues and even weather conditions vary across demonstrations, as does media coverage on the issue at stake.

CCC MEASURES: THE IMPORTANCE OF STANDARDIZATION

Researchers tend to study either intentions to participate or past protest participation, often as reported in large representative population surveys. Both methods are flawed. The former because past-behavior questions only reveal information on participation in protest in general rather than in specific protest events, and the latter because intentions to participate are weak predictors of actual participation (Klandermans and Oegema 1987). In the CCC project, in contrast, demonstrators are "caught in the act" of protesting as they are sampled during demonstrations. Interviewees are actually performing protest behavior and not just intending to. We record their behavior in a specific event, staged by a specific movement, and on a specific issue, so that their activism can be fully contextualized.

The CCC project deals with the entire demonstration moment—data are collected before, during, and after the sampled demonstrations. Evidence is gathered from a number of different actors, not only the demonstrators, but also the police, the organizers, and the mass media. Each of these data-gathering efforts is standardized through identical questionnaires, fact sheets, and content-analysis protocols. Standardization is important as we want to be able to attribute similarities and differences between demonstrators in different demonstrations in different countries to real contextual differences, rather than to sampling biases or questionnaire differences.

The CCC project examines demonstrations in Belgium, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Spain, Switzerland, and Sweden between 2009 and 2012. Teams from Italy, Mexico, and the Czech Republic joined the project at a later stage. At the time of publication the project has covered sixty-one demonstrations and a total 12,993 questionnaires have been completed. Articles for this special issue of *Mobilization* only use two types of demonstration data gathered between 2009 and 2011: May Day events and climate change demonstrations, resulting in a dataset of seventeen demonstrations and 3,157 individual participants. The remainder of this section provides an overview of the methods and measures employed to collect data before, during, and after the demonstration from different actors: demonstrators, organizers, and the police (table 1 provides an overview).

Table 1. Overview Content Multilevel Database CCC Project

	Actor	Moment	Method	Key Concepts
Demonstration Moment	Organizers	Before	Telephone Interview	Issue Collective action frame Expected turn-out Relation and influence politics
		After	Telephone Interview	Expected effect Turn-out Atmosphere Policing
	Police	Before	Telephone Interview	Expected turn-out Expected presence
		After	Telephone Interview	Turn-out Police attendance Policing style and gear
	Demonstrators	During	Protest survey (f2f)	Short demographic questions
		After	Protest survey (core questionnaire)	The “who” of participants The “why” of participants The “how” of participants
	Researchers	During	Observations/ Pictures, etc.	Turn-out Slogans/banners/speakers Atmosphere Weather conditions Physical lay-out area
		After	Survey (interviews and pointers)	Assessment method Interaction resp./interviewers Atmosphere
Contextual Layers	Nation	Start project	Secondary data	Political opportunity structure GNP # population
	General mobilization context	Start project	Secondary data	General demand/supply Protest culture
	Issue-specific mobilization	After	Secondary data Interviews Organizers	Issue-specific demand/supply Mobilization techniques
	Demonstration	Before During After	Secondary data Interviews Organizers and police	Issue Turn-out Policing Site Timing in protest cycle

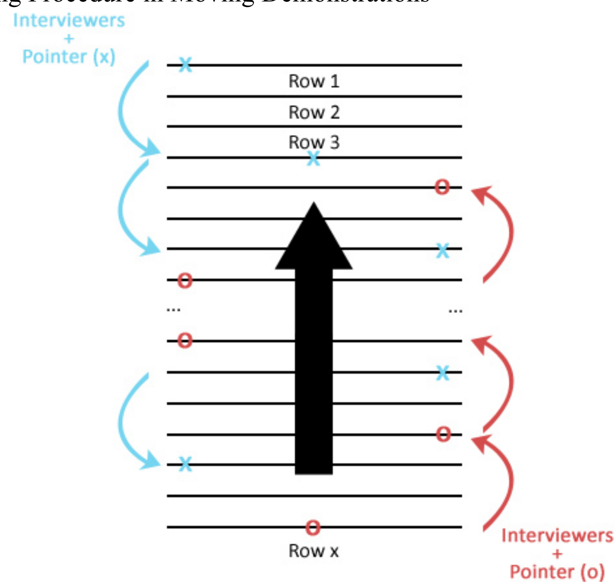
Data on demonstrators are collected following a standardized sampling procedure following the protest survey method (Walgrave and Verhulst 2011). For each demonstration, a team of approximately twenty interviewers distributes 1,000 postal surveys, making sure that each participant has the same likelihood of being selected; 200 of the selected participants are briefly interviewed face-to-face before they get a postal questionnaire to take home, fill in, and send back.

Two principles are crucial to guarantee a representative sample: a strict division of labor between selectors and interviewers and a systematic sampling procedure. Interviewers do not

select the interviewees themselves. This is done by so called "pointers" who steer a team of interviewers and direct an interviewer to a specific individual. Pointers avoid selection biases. Experiments where interviewers could select their own respondents indicate that interviewers are inclined to talk to the more approachable respondents (Walgrave and Verhulst 2011). The pointers guide and monitor their interviewers through the entire process and take decisions when the atmosphere deteriorates.

The sampling is systematic, meaning that pointers do not have much leeway in selecting potential respondents either. Demonstrations are not unstructured masses and interviewers must employ a fixed procedure in order to cover the entire mass and disperse evenly over the crowd. The procedure depends on the layout of the area—a broad avenue in Brussels is different than a square in Amsterdam. Most importantly, procedures are different for moving and static demonstrations. This moving demonstration procedure draws on mobile and counting pointers, each directing a group of interviewers. Pointers count rows to ensure a fair dispersion of questionnaires over the marching column and send interviewers into a row to interview a specific individual they pointed out. The pointers alternately select someone walking at the left side, the middle, and the center of a row (see figure 2). The procedure is meant to guarantee that all demonstrators, no matter where they walk, have an equal likelihood to be sampled.

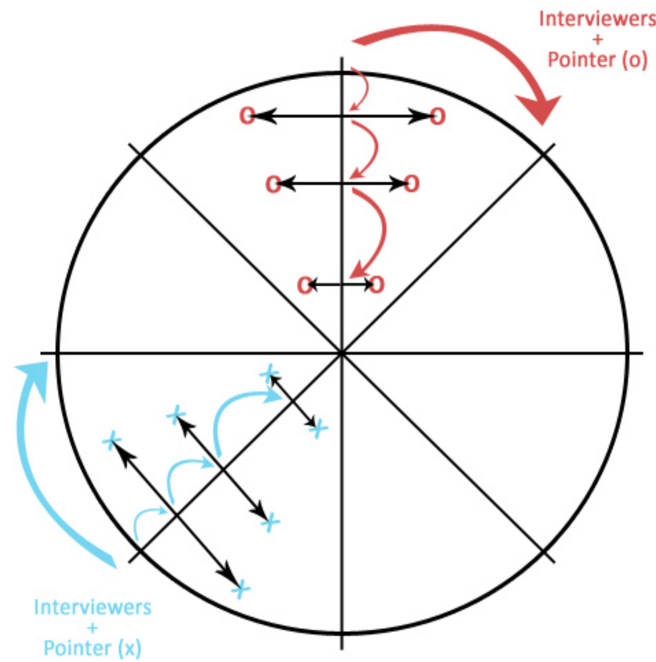
Figure 2. Sampling Procedure in Moving Demonstrations



To fit the environmental circumstances of static demonstrations, which tend to take place on plazas and squares, we employ a slightly different method (see figure 3). Interviewers are equally distributed at the edges of the standing crowd. Pointers instruct their interviewers to start at the outer circle followed by handing out a survey two steps from the outer circle in the direction of the center of the square. Then another questionnaire is handed out another four steps further in the direction of the center of the square and so on (5, 6, 7 steps, etc.). Hence, the number of steps in between two interviews increases as to control for the fact that due to the circular shape of the crowd the number of people as one moves to the center reduces.

In addition to the 1,000 postal surveys, short face-to-face interviews are conducted with every fifth respondent. The selected oral respondent is asked a few key questions, which are then written down. After the interview the respondent is requested to take the postal questionnaire home and to fill it in. The face-to-face and postal questionnaires are labeled

Figure 3. Sampling Procedure in Static Demonstrations



with an identification number allowing assessment of nonresponse bias. This is possible because response rates for face-to-face interviews are very high (around 90 percent). Response rates for the postal questionnaire hover around 30 percent.

In addition to the 1,000 postal surveys, short face-to-face interviews are conducted with every fifth respondent. The selected oral respondent is asked a few key questions, which are then written down. After the interview the respondent is requested to take the postal questionnaire home and to fill it in. The face-to-face and postal questionnaires are labeled with an identification number allowing assessment of nonresponse bias. This is possible because response rates for face-to-face interviews are very high (around 90 percent). Response rates for the postal questionnaire hover around 30 percent.

Apart from the demonstrators, the organizers of the protest are interviewed and so are the police. A few days before the demonstration takes place the five most important staging organizations are interviewed following a standardized interview scheme. Among other issues, they are questioned about their motives in staging the event, their collective action frames (what's going on, who is to blame, and how the issue/problem should be tackled), the expected turnout, relations with and influence on politics, and police, and so on. Organizers are briefly re-interviewed after the event asking them about the effect of the demonstration, the actual turnout, and the atmosphere during the demonstration, etc. The police are contacted before and after the event as well. They are asked about the expected turnout, their planned presence at the demonstration, etc., and afterwards they answer questions about actual turnout, policing style applied and gear used, and the atmosphere during the demonstration, and so on.

We collect additional data on the demonstrations by interviewing the pointers and the interviewers after the demonstration. Their questionnaires contain questions on the atmosphere of the demonstration, the approachability of the demonstrators, the behavior of the demonstrators, and the police, etc. Apart from information gathered directly from the different actors—demonstrators, organizers, and police—we obtain additional evidence through a

number of secondary sources such as newspaper content analyses, comparative datasets of political system characteristics, etc.

CONCLUSION

Street demonstrations are becoming more common throughout the world. At the same time, as protests are being adopted by groups that did not use them before, the variations among demonstrations seem to increase. In this context, not only social scientists but also citizens, organizers, politicians, and police struggle to understand this new reality. The challenge for researchers is to document and understand these evolving variations in contention.

This is easier said than done. Studies of demonstrations mostly deal with single cases. Therefore, it is impossible to tell whether or not the findings are typical for this specific country, this specific issue, or this specific demonstration. Only comparison enables us to disentangle the general from the unique. Systematic, contextualized knowledge on protest demonstrations is hardly available. The composition of demonstrations, participants' motivations, and the mobilization techniques used are most likely contingent on contextual variation, but so far we lack systematic evidence, and we can only guess what the influence of contextual variation on these variables might be. The evidence yielded by the CCC project probably is the first that has the potential to provide evidence-based answers on fundamental puzzles regarding the context-dependence of protest participation.

The results presented in this special issue show that there is a large variation across demonstrations—who shows up, why they do so, and how varies strongly—even if we limit ourselves to two classic and recurring kinds of demonstrations. May Day and Climate Change events can be better understood when interpreted in their local context, and those contexts differ. All the articles in this issue attest that only by taking the context into account can we make sense of patterns of similarity and dissimilarity of demonstrations across countries and issues.

NOTES

[1] For a more elaborated discussion on street demonstrations we refer to the contribution by Fillieule in this issue.
[2] Actually, Casquete distinguishes a fourth function, communication, but as this function is almost synonymous with the three other functions we only present three of Casquete's functions here.

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