State Repression and Social Movement Tactics: The LGBTI Movement in Turkey20

Kasan, Derin

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Student: Derin Guney Kasan (s2164523)

Supervisor: Dr. Corinna Jentzsch

Second reader: Dr. Vasiliki Tsagkroni

Date: 04.06.2021

Word count: 7628

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"We were here before, we are here now, and we will always be here!"

Introduction

In 2016, one year after the first police attack on the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans Intersex (LGBTI) Pride march in Turkey, the authorities declared once again that the annual Pride march would not be allowed based on "security concerns". However, some activists were determined to perform the march even though the police officers encouraged activists not to participate (Muedini, 2018, pp. 1-3). Contrary to 2015, the protestors did follow the most familiar announcement by the Turkish police: "This is the last warning! Disperse! And let life go back to its normal course!". Thus, as they scattered, the movement discomposed and reformulated its classic tactics. Participants of the 2016 Pride smartly dispersed to each corner of Istiklal Street. The movement invoked every activist to read a common press statement wherever they dispersed and film it. This tactic facilitated the movement to reach out further than the substantial location of Beyoglu which has been a historically critical space for sexual dissent (Cabadağ & Ediger, 2020, pp. 198-199).

Studying repression has always been a part of social movement research. The phenomenon of repression is "paradigmatic" for scholars who combine different disciplines of research and any wider analysis shall arise from it (Peterson & Wahlström, 2015, p. 635). The literature on social movements has realised the government's capability and tendency to limit dissent and in turn forming opponents' reactions (Moss, 2014, p. 261). The impact of repression on protests together with mobilisation rates or tactical choices, the so-called "repression-dissent nexus", is a key question asked by scholars (Earl, 2011, p. 267). However, the findings vary to a considerable aspect and there is not one single understanding of the impacts of repression. The suggestions of previous research include that repression can escalate further dissent, hinder activism, may reduce non-violent tactics, or urge to adopt more contentious approaches (Earl & Soule, 2010; Lichbach, 1987; O'Brien & Deng, 2015).

This prompts the question of why the LGBTI movement in 2015 reacted by resisting severe police violence through forming human barricades and followed a different tactic in 2016. Scholars who are interested in the "repression-dissent nexus" traditionally analysed solely one or two types of state repression while disregarding others. Moreover, predominant arguments in the literature do not discuss repression that focuses to deter opposition but rather focus on repression employed against

overt dissident activity (Davenport & Inman, 2012, p. 622). It has not yet been established what are the concrete effects of repression on dissident activity. Besides, few researchers have built on the distinction of state repression types. Therefore, this thesis will attempt to answer *"How do different types of state repression impact tactics employed by social movements?"* through a case study of the LGBTI movement in Turkey. In the meantime, there is a considerable amount of literature that analyses queer rights movements in the West but there has been little discussion on the topic outside of the region especially in the Middle East (Muedini, 2018, p. 6). This thesis will first give a review of the relevant literature followed by a theoretical framework of the concepts and theories that will be used to formulate an argument. Then it will describe the methods applied to examine the effect of repression on tactics as well as give further justification for the case selection. Finally, it will analyse the case in detail and identify the limitations of the research project.

Literature Review

Over the past decades, various researchers analysed the impact of repression on dissident action to discover the "true" association between them. The focus of the studies includes the circumstances influencing the use of repression; the timing, scope, and intensity of the repression; and the dynamic interaction between repression and dissent (Boykoff, 2007, p. 282). One of the central questions in repression literature is the effects of repression (Earl, 2011, p. 267). The "repression-dissent nexus" is a topic that has been tackled by various researchers from different fields. The social movement scholars have studied the topic because of the implicit belief that state repression matters by impacting the dynamics of contention. Scholars mainly focused on the impact of repression on following rates of protests and the effect of repression on the tactical choices made by social movements (Earl & Soule, 2010, p. 76).

The question of whether dissidents can manage to survive and enhance their mobilisation activities when faced with state repression has crucial meanings for social change (Moss, 2014, p. 262). However, research on the topic proposes different relationships; repression may discourage activism, may enhance activism, can have curvilinear impacts on activism, or may have no impact on activism. Some other scholars put forward reciprocal relationships and analysed the timing of repression. Research on the meso- and micro-level only provides deterrence or escalation as a reaction to repression (Earl, 2011, p. 267). The crucial question asked by previous research is whether repression decreases or increases subsequent protest. Rational choice scholars suggest that

repression diminishes protest because it heightens the costs related to protesting. By contrast, various other scholars advocate that repression heightens mobilisation due to social psychological reactions. Besides these linear findings, previous research also found nonlinear results on the relationship. For example, some research proposes that "repression-mobilisation nexus" follows a U-curve while other scholars argue for an inverted U-curve. Therefore, it should be highlighted that findings on the topic have been heterogenous (Earl & Soule, 2010, pp. 78-79).

On the other hand, Lichbach (1987) advocates that the contradictory conclusions on the effects of repression on subsequent protests can be explained by the true alteration that occurs in tactical substitution. This effect implies that states can impact the tactics used by protestors through selective repression (Earl, 2011, p. 268). Lichbach's (1987) research reinforces three propositions: 1) An opposition group alters its tactics according to the government's repressive agendas. For instance, a rise in the government's repression of nonviolence can lower the nonviolent strategies of an opposition group, however, enhance its violent strategies. 2) An opposition group changes its activities correspondingly to the government's accommodative arrangements. For example, a rise in the regime's repression boosts or reduces the opposition group's overall conflict action depending on the government's compromises to the opposition group. 3) In this way repression may generate mixed impacts on contention e.g. consistent government repressive policies lower dissent as inconsistent policies heighten it (pp. 267-268). Francisco's (1996) research on Germany and Northern Ireland empirically supports the tactical substitution effect. His adaptation hypothesis, which suggests protestors change their actions to escape coercion, gets preliminary support from statistical models (p. 1196). Moreover, Moore (1998), also finds statistical support for Lichbach's model which suggests repression may be used to shape dissident behaviour. His analysis of Peruvian and Sri Lankan opponents supports the argument that states can tempt dissidents to give up violent tactics for nonviolent tactics and vice versa (p. 870).

Despite the contradictory findings on the "repression-mobilisation nexus", scholars are inclined to accept that employing repression to break up a demonstration, march or sit-in is generally a turning point for the alteration of contention form. As a transformative event, repression does not solely impact the subsequent protest rates, it may also affect tactical choices. Opponents may shift their approach and organise underground mobilisation instead of public action when faced with the threat of repression. They can also prefer more confrontational tactics when met with forceful suppression. Even though there exists a considerable body of literature on the effects of repression

on protest frequency, how repression impacts the change from one tactic to another is rarely analysed (O'Brien & Deng, 2015, pp. 458-459).

The literature on repression focuses to a great extent on protest policing at the expense of other more quiescent forms of repression. This type of research neglects a broad variety of alternative dissident activities as well as diverse fine-drawn state attempts (Boykoff, 2007, p. 284). State repression of social movements happens in various forms; however, the majority of the existing literature gives attention to physical violence. Governments may adopt coercive forms of military or police control, they may use less detectable soft forms, or employ channeling (Shriver & Adams, 2010, p. 333). According to Earl (2003), scholars "must acknowledge and study" a broad range of repressive activities (p. 46). Oberschall (1973) presented the difference between channeling and coercion decades ago and Tilly's (1978) definition of repression gives the opportunity for such differentiation. Nevertheless, many studies on repression disregard channeling and other types of repression unassociated with uses of force (Earl, 2003, p. 46).

Overall, repression may increase or decrease the number of protest events but it is more useful to have a closer analysis of how social movements alter their tactics as they interact with repressive state organs. Also, only a few scholars have demonstrated that movement actors will change their tactical strategy when met with repression (Chang, 2008, pp. 651-652). Therefore, this paper will seek to analyse the relationship between repression and tactical substitution by further acknowledging the differences between state repression which most prior research neglected. Thus, the research question is: *"How do different types of state repression impact tactics employed by social movements?"*.

Theoretical Framework

Core concepts

Repression

Several authors have attempted to define repression but currently, there are still shortcomings in the definition. Significantly, previous explanations have not clarified theoretically crucial discrepancies between several forms of repressive activity when comparing research findings. One common definition of repression in social movement research is "any actions taken by [government] authorities to impede mobilisation, harass and intimidate activists, divide organisations, and

physically assault, arrest, imprison, and/or kill movement participants" by Stockdill (1999). However, Earl argues that Tilly's (1978) definition of repression as "any action by another group which raises the contender's cost of collective action" is better than other traditional definitions because it ensures to include frequently neglected findings in repression research (Earl, 2003, pp. 44-46). Consequently, Earl identifies three dimensions of repression: 1) the identity of the repressive actor (e.g. state agents who are closely connected to national political elites, state agents who are loosely tied to national political elites, private citizens, or groups). 2) The character of the repressive action (coercion vs. channeling). 3) Whether the repressive action is observable (covert vs overt) (p. 47).

Furthermore, Boykoff (2007) takes a middle stance and describes repression as a process in which groups or individuals interfere to reduce dissident action, collective organisation, and mobilisation through either increasing the costs or limiting the utilities of such action (p. 283). Moreover, Peterson and Wahlström (2015) conceptualise repression as the governance of domestic dissent and identify three dimensions (p. 635). Firstly, the scale dimension implies the geographical scope of an actor's ambition of governance. For instance, a national institution can enforce repression on the local level or local institutions may co-organise repression on a greater scale (p. 636). Secondly, the institutional dimension refers to the distinction between governmental and non-governmental action against dissidents (p. 637). Thirdly, the functional dimension emphasises the difference between features of governance that include policy-making, agenda-setting, and facilitating change ("steering"), and those that involve implementation and the on-the-ground application of control ("rowing") (p. 639).

For this research Boykoff's (2007) definition of repression will be adopted because of its middle-ground position. This study aims to distinguish the features of state repression, therefore the "identity" and the "institutional" dimensions become irrelevant. However, the distinction of "coercive vs. channeling" and "steering vs. rowing" is the critical point that this study will try to further develop upon. Coercive repression includes demonstrations and/or applications of forces as well as other types of traditional police and military activity such as the use of tear gas and rubber bullets. On the other hand, channeling implies less direct repression to influence the structure and timing of protest as well as the influx of resources such as tax restrictions on non-profit-groups and regulations that limit protests on university campuses (Earl, 2003, pp. 48-49).

Social movement tactics

Charles Tilly (1977) presented the most-cited concept for analysing the kinds of tactics employed by contentious challengers: "the repertoires of contention". This concept implies that contentious actions in any specific time and space incline to concentrate on a small number of types that are fairly limited compared to the broad theoretical options (Franklin, 2013, p. 176). Scholars use the term "repertoires of contention" to define the different tactics and strategies improved throughout time and utilised by protest groups to collectively make claims (Taylor & van Dyke, 2004, p. 265). Besides the best-known conceptualisation of contentious tactics by Tilly, other scholars have also studied several types of the phenomenon (Franklin, 2013, p. 178). However, there is no sole acknowledged typology of forms of contention. Some scholars have studied "violence vs. non-violence" while some scholars identify hundreds of different types of nonviolent tactics (Franklin, 2013, p. 181).

Moreover, Tarrow (2011) argues that the repertoire of contention proposes three extensive forms of collective action: disruption, violence, and contained behaviour. The violent ones involve the willingness to harm and risk repression. The contained forms establish routines that elites will approve or even accelerate. Finally, the disruptive ones interrupt the routine, surprise the audience and leave elites confused at least for a while (p. 99). Furthermore, contemporary studies incline to distinguish between non-confrontational (insider) tactics and confrontational (outsider) tactics (Taylor & van Dyke, 2004, p. 267). The first implies actions that try to apply pressure within the limits of an institutionalised political system whereas the latter includes actions that seek to apply pressure by other means (Soule et al., 1999, p. 243). This thesis will emphasise the typology of confrontational vs. non-confrontational tactics.

Argument

The importance of tactics to social movements comes from being outside of the polity. Challengers lack the privilege of members which implies no ordinary access to judgements that impact them. The main challenge for insurgents is to find an approach to circumvent the inherent weakness of institutionalised political inability. Thus, the solution to this problem lies within tactical choices (McAdam, 1983, p. 735). This idea comes from McAdam's (1983) tactical innovation theory where he suggests that insurgents usually need to overcome regular decision-making channels and find a way through non-institutionalised tactics to push their opponents outside the traditional arena. Moreover, to survive a movement needs to maintain its leverage through the application of these

tactics. However, even the most successful tactics may be repressed by movement opponents when trusted for a lengthy period. Subsequently, McAdam (1983) argues that the velocity of insurgency is affected by "the creativity of insurgents in devising new tactical forms" and can be defined as tactical innovation (pp. 735-737).

Social movement tactics are crucial both for movement outcomes and endurance. Hence, a movement's strategic employment of tactics is frequently shaped by state responses such as the extent of political sanctions and restrictions. As changes occur in the type and level of state repression, movements alter their strategy accordingly (Shriver & Adams, 2010, p. 334). Social movements' tactical innovation arises from the unstable connection between mobilisation and state response. When movements are met with heavy repression they may alter their strategies toward more subtle forms (Shriver & Adams, 2010, p. 349). Furthermore, Sullivan and Davenport's (2018) study on dynamics of repression and challenger adaptation provides similar insight. When governments utilise repressive actions such as arrests and killings, which are publicly visible and usually violent, they lead challengers to adapt more clandestine forms of tactics (pp. 176-177).

However, McAdam's argument is insufficient to explain how different types of repression will impact the tactical choices of the movements. Tactical adaptation argues that activists may alter their tactics when repressed. Hence, this claim is only helpful to explain that challengers change their tactics from one to another but do not provide further explanation on the different forms of repression (Davenport & Inman, 2012, p. 624). Moreover, the mechanisms of repression argued by Boykoff (2007), give helpful insights to develop a hypothesis for this thesis. Indeed, he explains that through resource depletion the state deteriorates the capability of social movements to take part in dissident activity. Direct use of force on protestors exhaust human resources while intimidation arrests and exceptional regulations incite "resource-draining and legal labyrinths" (pp. 294-295).

Following these arguments, this study proposes that coercive forms of repression will lead movements to adapt non-confrontational tactics whereas channelling forms of repression will lead activists to employ confrontational tactics. The proposed hypothesis is induced from the relevant literature findings and theories. The channelling forms of repression will block the non-confrontational approaches that a social movement can adopt and thus, will lead to the employment of more confrontational tactics. Whereas coercive forms block mainly the human resources and

activity consequently, the movement becomes obliged to employ non-confrontational tactics to a certain extent.

Methodology

Research Design

To answer the research question, a qualitative multiple within-case comparison will be conducted. One of the strengths of such analysis is that it provides a fairly strong method for controlling the influence of omitted variables. Tests of predictions of within-case variance obtain powerful controls thanks to the uniform features of the background circumstances of the case. Furthermore, assessing explanations that portray how the independent variable (IV) influences the dependent variable (DV) is usually more suitable with case-study than large-n methods (van Evera, 2015, pp. 51-54). Case studies provide three types of methods to test theories: comparison, congruence procedures, and process tracing (van Evera, 2015, p. 56). Thus, this thesis will adopt the congruence procedure because it is the most adequate method for this case study.

Case Selection

Koopmans (1997) suggests that researchers should test theoretical propositions within theoretically similar locations to minimise causal heterogeneity when examining the impacts of repression. He even claims that scholars should concentrate more on specific movements and refrain from cross-movement comparison (Earl & Soule, 2010, p. 77). One of the major benefits of a case study is that by concentrating on a single case the researcher gets the chance to intensively study the case. Thus, case studies are an extremely strong tool to investigate whether concepts and theories hold in different contexts than where they are essentially formed. When determining a case for this aim, Geddes (2003) proposes two main principles for case selection. Firstly, the case needs to be representative of the realm of the theory that is tested. Secondly, the case must be distinct from cases in which the theory is induced (Halperin & Heath, 2017, pp. 214-216). Therefore, in this research project, I will study the LGBTI Movement in Turkey.

The LGBTI movement in Turkey started gaining visibility in the 90s and became one of the most important social movements of the country in the 2000s (Yilmaz & Demirbas, 2015, p. 235). The activism by LGBTI individuals was focused on institutionalising the movement during the 90s but they also had initiatives to organise public events. Nevertheless, the attempt to organise a Pride

march in Istanbul in 1993 was not successful because it was banned by the Governor of Istanbul. The movement increased its activities by making contacts with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), individual members of the parliament, and political parties (Cetin, 2016, pp. 11- 12). However, in late June 2015 police assaulted the Pride march by using tear gas and water cannons to stop people from getting together in Taksim Square. Moreover, the subsequent year marches as well as press releases concerning the LGBTI movement were banned. Thus, activists who did not comply with the ban faced police violence and detentions (Savci, 2021, p. 2). The case is a good fit thanks to its variance on both repression and tactics and none of the theories related to the relationship have formed based on Turkey nor LGBTI movement.

Type of congruence procedure

Congruence procedures allow the researcher to analyse the case by looking for congruence or incongruence between values discovered on the IV and DV. The method has two types of procedures, firstly the comparison to typical values and secondly the multiple within-case comparison. The latter is more suitable with the aims of this thesis since it works best if the chosen case has many observations of values on the independent and dependent variables, and if the values vary to a great extent. Multiple within-case comparison requires that the researcher makes several paired observations of values on the IV and DV across a broad variety of situations within the case. Subsequently, the researcher examines whether these values covary according to the estimates of the hypothesis. Hence if they covary, the hypothesis passes the test (van Evara, 2015, pp. 58-62).

However, multiple within-case comparison may shift towards a large-n study when the number of within-case examinations increases to a great extent (van Evara, 2015, p. 63). To avoid this problem, I will identify three critical points in the history of the social movement. This choice is based on the concept of “transformative events” developed by McAdam and Sewell (2001). They argue that events become turning points in structural change and the event has a temporality distinct from lengthy change process or protest cycle (p. 101). Moreover, transformative events are often public, shown in the media, and clearly visible thus, they offer representative moments for tactical evaluation (Grimm & Harders, 2018, p. 3).

1) The attack on Pride march in Istanbul in 2015
2) The ban on all LGBTI theme events in Ankara in 2017
3) The prosecution of Middle East Technical University (METU) Pride defenders in 2019

The events are chosen because of their significant influences on the direction of the movement as well as their places on time. All the chosen transformative events are close in time frames to stabilise the political opportunity effects. Tarrow (1998) argues that contentious activities are tightly linked with opportunities and constraints for the collective endeavour. When individuals discover moments to benefit such as the opening of institutional attainment, fractures among elites, encounter with allies, or low competence of state repression, dissidents are more likely to increase their activities. Indeed, altering opportunity structures need to be considered together with more consistent factors like the power of the state and the traditional type of repression it adopts (p. 71). Since the LGBTI movement has a long history beginning from the 1970s and Turkey has experienced different types of governments throughout the time including a military rule, the events are chosen from a specific time frame.

Firstly, the police attack in 2015 had been the first violent incident towards Istanbul's Pride march in twelve years. It marked a crucial breach of the right to freedom of gathering which was formerly protected and esteemed by Turkish officials (ILGA-Europe, 2015). Secondly, the Governor of Ankara had restricted all "events organised by LGBTI NGOs" in Ankara for a limitless period. The governorship argued that the decree was taken to ensure the "public safety, protection of public morality and health, and protection of rights and liberties of others" (KAOS-GL, 2017a). After the ban in Ankara, several other events in different cities were banned but at the same time, the bans attracted considerable negative reaction and support for LGBTI on social media (KAOS-GL, 2017b). Finally, in 2019, some students were taken into custody in the traditional METU Pride march in Ankara. Even though the ban on all LGBTI events in Ankara was lifted prior to the march, the university management went against it and contacted the police to interfere. The crowd was separated through disproportionate force by the police including tear gas and plastic bullets. Consequently, twenty-one students and one professor were arrested and a criminal lawsuit was processed against nineteen of them (ILGA-Europe, 2020).

Data Selection

For the purposes of this thesis, the necessary information will be collected through NGO reports and newspaper articles. Amnesty International reports and research papers will be used to critically examine the events since it is an internationally well-known credible organisation. The search for the relevant information is done by selecting Turkey as the country; news, research, and campaign as content type; and LGBTI rights as the topic. Furthermore, "lgbtinewsturkey.com" provides

English language translation of news, reports, and opinion pieces on LGBTI rights in Turkey. The suitable information from this website is derived through filtering the month of the transformative events identified above. This website is preferred because it contains both mainstream media articles and the LGBTI movement-related media outlets' articles. This will give me the opportunity to reduce my bias and the chance to analyse events from both the government's and the activists' points of view. Moreover, kaosgl.org, a news portal for LGBTI, will also be used to get detailed information on the movement's responses to state repression. The collection of data from this website is done similarly by filtering the dates of the events as well as inserting keywords that describe the happenings.

The aim of analysing these reports and newspaper articles is to gather information on what specific tactics both the state and the movement employ. For instance, actions such as boycotts, legal responses, lobbying, press statements, and petitions will be identified as non-confrontational tactics. Whereas, sit-ins, marches, demonstrations, barricades, strikes, and symbolic acts will be classified as confrontational tactics (Taylor & van Dyke, 2004, p. 267). On the other hand, the information searched for the concept of repression is whether the state uses executive decrees, legislative procedures; or entrusting police and military forces to regulate opposition (Peterson & Wahlström, 2015, p. 639).

Analysis

This part of the thesis will critically examine the three transformative events to identify the type of state repression and the tactics employed by the LGBTI movement. This will allow making paired observations on the variables in turn to test the hypothesis explained above.

Historical Background of the LGBTI Movement in Turkey

LGBTI movement can be defined as a liberation movement since it struggles for equal rights, fair treatment, and formal political presentation for all discriminated communities. The activists who are involved with the movement cooperate frequently with feminists, labourers, leftists, Kurds, and other disadvantaged groups (Cetin, 2016, p. 6). Even though Turkey does not prohibit "same-sex sexual acts" or illustrations of "gender non-conformism" by law, they are customarily subject to the oppression of public institutions and police forces (Ozbay & Oktem, 2021, p. 1). During the 70s,

due to the increasing police violence, especially towards transgender individuals, LGBTI individuals came together as a community to combat institutional oppression. Nevertheless, the military coup in 1980 hindered the endeavour to mobilise for their cause. The political atmosphere of military rule highly affected the LGBTI community; they were forcibly relocated, arbitrarily arrested, and persecuted. Thus, the first tactics that the movement started to use are organising small-scale demonstrations, protests, and gathering signatures for the adoption of new regulations (Cetin, 2016, pp. 7-9).

However, the movement did not become apparent until the 1990s when the famous Pride conference got banned by the Governor of Istanbul. Turkish officials took foreign representatives, who were about to make a press release, into custody and were intimidated by strip searches and HIV tests (Yenilmez, 2016, p. 289). The activism and efforts to institutionalise the movement increased to a great extent during the 1990s. Many LGBTI associations were formed such as *Rainbow'92, LambdaIstanbul*, *KAOS-GL*, *Daughters of Venus*, and more. On the other hand, the initiative to organise public happenings such as the Pride march was still challenging because the government officials were not allowing it (Cetin, 2016, p. 11). Nonetheless, the aspiration of Turkey to access the EU constrained the government to limit LGBTI activism. The first Pride march in Turkey's history was successfully organised in 2003 in Istanbul. Correspondingly, the marches were held annually with increasing participation until 2015 (Yenilmez, 2016, p. 290). In mid-2015 the government reintroduced its war against Kurdish liberation units which resulted in terrorist attacks and an unsuccessful coup attempt. Public places and any kind of opposition movement turned into specific targets of authoritarian rule under the state of emergency. Thus, these developments highly restricted the activities of the LGBTI movement (Cabadag & Ediger, 2020, p. 198).

The attack on Pride March in Istanbul in 2015

On June 28th 2015, the Turkish officials banned the annual Pride march in Istanbul when it was about to begin and protesters were already crowded together. The decree on restricting the march was not noticed to the organisers of the Pride even though they were communicating prior to the event. Thousands of police officers were present at the location of the march and the first attack to deploy the demonstrators took place half an hour before the official start time. Police forces periodically exerted tear gas, water cannons, and pepper spray towards non-violent protestors (Amnesty International, 2015, p. 1). The immediate response from the movement was to separate

into side streets and attempt to gather again in the Taksim Square, where the march was originally supposed to take place, as well as continue to chanting slogans. The security forces continued their attacks by pressurised water, tear gas, and battering reporters who tried to get footage of the incidents. The aggression by the police proceeded for hours with the same methods and the movement's response was trying to regather, shout slogans, forming a human barricade, and throwing soda cans (KAOS-GL, 2015).

At a later stage, the protestors started marching towards Sisli, which is not a regular route for annual Pride marches, and blocked the traffic. In response, police interrupted the crowd by "militarised police vehicles" and gave the notice of "Disperse!". The LGBTI supporters kept chanting and refused to scatter in turn met with heavy tear gas. The 13th Pride march in Istanbul was finalised with a press release by protesters remarking "We are everywhere, get used to it, we are not leaving.". However, the police persisted with offensive methods including batons, plastic bullets, and pressurised water (KAOS-GL, 2015). Two days later, the Istanbul LGBTI Pride organisers released a press statement where they claimed most of the police officers did not have helmets and registration numbers which would facilitate recognition of their identities. Also, the statement announced that the Pride Week Committee would press a criminal charge against the Minister of Interior, Governor of Istanbul, and police chief of Istanbul due to their part in the intervention of the Pride march (LGBTI News Turkey, 2015).

In this transformative event, both types of state repression can be identified; the ban on the march by the Istanbul Governor is categorised as channelling, whereas the use of force by the police is coercive. The official prohibition of the march is a legislative action to limit future activism. Whereas the use of tear gas, water cannons, and pepper spray are traditional forms of police tactics and, according to the conceptualisation of repression, they are on-the-ground employment of control. However, because the restriction was announced at the last minute, it failed to diminish the gathering of protestors thus, the actions by the police prevail. As an instant response, the movement applied confrontational tactics by resisting police violence through constituting human barricades, chanting, and blocking traffic. Nevertheless, the following action of the movement was making a press statement, later claiming a file, and expressing their complaint through legislative means can be identified as a non-confrontational tactic.

The hypothesis covaries to a limited extent with the happenings of the first transformative event. It was expected that the movement would respond with non-confrontational tactics to police violence. However, the short-term response of the movement can be classified as confrontational, and it needs to be carefully thought whether it was a response to the ban or the police violence. On the other hand, the long-term response is a non-confrontational one and it is clear to state that the tactics were adopted as a result of the coercive repression. Therefore, it covaries with the propositions of the hypothesis.

Moreover, it is important to note the tactic of the movement as a response to the same ban in the consequent year. On 17 June 2016, the Governorship of Istanbul declared a ban for the Istanbul Pride march which was supposed to take place on 26 June (Amnesty International, 2016). The state officials rejected the application of the Pride committee to make a press statement on the grounds that provocative actions may arise because of "sensitivities" and it may threaten "public order, tranquility, security, and welfare" (KAOS-GL, 2016a). As a consequence, the movement took the decision to obey the ban and read out their press statement in various locations instead of gathering in one place. The press release was carried out in many private as well as public places and protestors read it where they stand all around Beyoglu and Sisli instead of the traditional Pride location Taksim (KAOS-GL, 2016b). The first and last lines of the press statement provide a good understanding of the tactic and the goal that lies behind it:

> "Make noise, shout, and scream wherever you are, wherever you are organised #wedisperse" (LGBTI News Turkey, 2016).

> "Banning our march is an unsuccessful attempt to silence our voices. … Unsuccessful because the pride of our existence grows with every oppression. We proudly own all the insults they throw at us to hurt us. We are expanding our limited spaces with solidarity. We are leading a revolution on every street we walk, on every workday, every house, every love and every act of lovemaking …" (LGBTI News Turkey, 2016).

Here, the difference with the prior year is that the movement changed its tactic according to the channelling type of state repression. Because the ban is informed significantly beforehand the Pride march, the movement knew what to expect and planned according to it. The movement preferred a tactic that works outside the limits of the traditional institutional system by dispersing. Thus, it

converges with the expectations of the hypothesis. The limitation of the protest by state officials is a less direct form of repression and restricts resources, therefore triggering the movement to employ confrontational tactics. Moreover, this comparison of the two incidents brings the importance of the timing of the repression into the discussion.

The ban on all LGBTI theme events in Ankara in 2017

On 19 November 2017, the Governorship of Ankara released an official decision stating that events of LGBTI organisations "such as film screenings, cinevision, theatre plays, panels, talks, exhibitions" were restricted by local authorities. The reasoning behind the decree according to the press release of the Governorship was that these types of events involve "certain social sensibilities and sensitivities" as well as trigger specific parts of society. Thus, they may cause threats to "public security, public order, public health, and other people's rights and liberties" (Governorship of Ankara, 2017). Consequently, two LGBTI organisations based in Ankara, KAOS-GL and Pink Life, took the decision to the court and claimed that the decree was against the international agreements and constitutional rights (KAOS-GL, 2017c). Besides, the movement could only react to the ban via Twitter campaigns; the hashtag #LGBTICantBeBanned got considerable attention from the supporters. The litigation and social media campaigns were the main tactics used by the movement in response to the blanket ban by the state (KAOS-GL, 2017d).

Following the ban, a preeminent LGBTI activist who is one of the founding members of KAOS-GL was taken into custody due to his social media posts. In addition, many other individuals in Ankara were confined because of what they share online. The arrests are regarded as a consequence of the blanket ban by the activists and highlight the ban's severe impact on their activities (KAOS-GL, 2018a). Moreover, the EU Commission report on Turkey's Progress for the year 2018 includes the restriction of the LGBTI events and states that it gives rise to "an international outcry". Also, the report mentions the refusal of the appeal by two NGOs to abolish the ban and emphasises the oppression towards activists in the field (Tar, 2018). The Ankara Regional Administrative Court has decided to remove the restrictions in April 2019 due to the appeals of LGBTI NGOs (KAOS-GL, 2018b).

The blanket ban by the state is a channeling form of repression because it is a regulation designated to impact the structure of activism. However, the movement acted in an opposite way than the

hypothesis suggests. It was expected that activists would prefer confrontational tactics because of the limitations on their activities that are inside the institutional political structure. But the legal responses employed by the movement fit into the operationalisation of non-confrontational tactics. On the other hand, social media activism and the impact of Internet technology on political protest do not have one single theoretical attribute and shall be examined according to the context (Weidmann & Rød, 2019, p. 28). The occurrence of political activism on the internet, which some scholars have defined as "hactivism", led to prominent tactical innovations. For example, hacking, online sit-ins, disrupting websites, data stealing, and email floods (Taylor & van Dyke, 2004, p. 270). In the case of the LGBTI movement's response via Twitter campaigns can be classified as confrontational tactics since it aims to put pressure on the government by non-institutionalised means. Therefore, it covaries accordingly to the expectations of the hypothesis.

The prosecution of METU Pride defenders in 2019

According to METU LGBTI+ Solidarity Association, the university rectorate announced the ban on the 9th annual university Pride march via email and noted that if it was not complied with, the police forces would intervene. The student activists stated that the blanket ban in Ankara was lifted and confirmed through the Presidential Communication Centre. Therefore, the association encouraged all students who aspire to safeguard freedoms and fight against differentiation to attend the march on May 10th as planned (LGBTI News Turkey, 2019). Students attempted to carry out the march peacefully however, the university authorities contacted the police to disperse the students. Police forces entered the university campus and did not permit students to locate under tents, carry a rainbow flag, be seated on the grass, and make a public statement. Furthermore, police officers interrupted the event by employing "pepper spray, plastic bullets, and tear gas"a (Amnesty International, 2019a). Consequently, at minimum twenty-one protestors were arrested and eighteen students and one professor were accused of criminal offences. The Ankara Criminal Court has defined the non-violent Pride march as an "unlawful assembly" and charged the students and the academic with "failing to disperse despite being warned" (Amnesty International, 2019b).

As a response, students started a general boycott of classes to express opposition to the use of excessive force by the police on the campus. Furthermore, the Credit and Dorms Institution stopped the scholarships and credits of those detained during the Pride march due to the request of the Ankara Security Office (Tar, 2019). Following the incidents, Civil Rights Defenders carried out a

press release where they highlighted that the oppression of the supporters of the LGBTI movement persisted even after the protests such as defamation campaigns by pro-government media (KAOS-GL, 2019).

In the first hearing of the case, the university LGBTI+ association was in front of the courthouse to show support for protestors who were arrested. When the group attempted to make a press statement, the police intervened and did not permit it. The case was observed by two members of parliament from the main opposition party, representatives of EU Turkey Delegation, Embassy of Denmark, Sweden, and Canada, Amnesty International, and KAOS-GL organisation. However, the first trial did not come to a conclusion and the second one was delayed to March 2020 (Uzun, 2019). In the second hearing of the case, testimonies of the eye-witnesses were listened to. One of the professors who was present at the campus stated that he did not hear any "Disperse" warning and the police employed gas too quickly. Another professor expressed that they also were subject to the gas inside the library and that she saw students beaten up by the police. The lawyers of LGBTI rights defenders asked for the unprocessed footage by the police; however, the request was not carried out by the officials (Tar, 2020a). In between the hearings, many social media support campaigns were organised including a social media demonstration before the last hearing of the METU Pride trial. The protesters demonstrated solidarity digitally by sharing their Pride march videos, photographs, and thoughts with the hashtags #LetMETUgetitscolorback and #MyPrideMarch (Korkmaz, 2020). Nevertheless, the subsequent hearing did not conclude either and the trial was postponed to April 2021 due to the lack of legal opinion of the prosecutor's office (Tar, 2020b). Currently, the case is still ongoing because the last hearing could not happen due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Similarly, both types of state repression have been adopted by the government in this transformative event. Firstly, the restriction of the METU Pride march is a channeling form of state repression and the immediate response by the movement can be classified as confrontational since the protestors defied the ban and attempted to carry out the march. Therefore, the first part of the event covaries with the expectation of the hypothesis. Because the officials announced the ban early enough the protestors had the time to evaluate which tactic to employ, unlike the first ban of the Pride march in Istanbul in 2015. However, the use of force by the police is a coercive type of repression and the boycott of classes by students is a non-confrontational tactic. Hence, the second part of the event is also in congruence with the predictions of the hypothesis.

Furthermore, the following incidents, prosecution and litigation process are the defining part of the transformative event. The criminal charges by the state are legislative measures to regulate opposition and are thus characterised as channeling. Besides, the constant delays of the trials and postponing strategies by state officials, such as not delivering the necessary evidence to the court and not preparing legal documents, are intended acts to repress dissent in a more subtle form. Hence, these channelling repression tactics lead to exhaustion of resources and judicial labyrinths; hinder the employment of non-confrontational tactics and prompt more confrontational tactics. The response of the movement to the prosecution of METU Pride defenders was to gather in front of the courthouse and organise social media campaigns to show their solidarity as a symbolic act both digitally and in person.

Conclusion

The LGBTI movement in Turkey has been and still is subject to state repression and has employed many different tactics to overcome oppression. This thesis has attempted to analyse how Turkish authorities' repression impacted the tactics employed by the LGBTI movement by differentiating between channeling vs. coercive state repression and confrontational vs. non-confrontational social movement tactics. By building on McAdam's (1983) tactical innovation theory this thesis has pursued to add a further explanation and a new proposition of the complex "repression-dissent nexus". The findings to some extent confirm the proposed relationship that coercive forms of repression will lead to non-confrontational tactics and channelling forms will steer to confrontational tactics.

In general, the results indicate that the limited support arose from the instances in which both types of repression were employed simultaneously. Thus, the first transformative event demonstrates such evidence; it is hardly distinguishable whether the LGBTI movement employed confrontational tactics as a response to the police violence or the exceptional legislative ban of the Governorship. Moreover, the inconsistent evidence to the hypothesis also emerges when the social movement employs both types of tactics concurrently. Indeed, the Twitter campaigns and litigation processes as a response to the blanket ban by the Governorship demonstrate this type of discrepancy.

Overall, ambiguous but considerably confirming evidence has been found in the analysis. The LGBTI movement has changed its tactics according to the type of state repression. When faced with coercive forms such as police violence the protestors are inclined to use non-confrontational tactics. Because of the disruptive nature of the coercion, the protesters lean on measures that are inside the traditional institutional arena. On the other hand, when encountered with channelling types of repression such as legislative bans and prosecutions, the activists tend to adopt more confrontational tactics. Because of the restriction on activities that can occur within the limits of the institutionalised system, the movement turns towards tactics that aim to persuade the government by confrontational means.

Nevertheless, this thesis was limited in several ways. Firstly, the data collection was limited because the events were not highly mediatised thus, the information available was narrow. The analysed newspaper articles were subject to certain bias because the events have been reported mainly by LGBTI media outlets. Even though this type of bias was aimed to minimise by additionally analysing NGO reports and state newspapers, mainstream media channels mostly did not cover the LGBTI movement events. Further research may consider collecting interview data of state officials and movement participants to get more detailed information.

Furthermore, the findings highlight the importance of how the timing of state repression may change the social movement tactics. The most important limitation of this thesis is due to the fact that such differentiation was not considered. The current study has only examined the overall state repression strategies and following social movement tactics. Therefore, the nuances that can occur because of the strategic timing of state repression have been overlooked. Moreover, another shortcoming of this thesis is the neglected distinction between tactics that are adopted as an immediate reaction and long-term responses by social movements. Thus, for further research, these timing aspects of repression and tactics may be a beneficial starting point.

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