RESEARCH ARTICLE

MOROCCO'S HIRAK AL-RIF MOVEMENT: "YOUTHS OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD" AS INNOVATIVE PROTESTERS?

Ahmed Chapi

University of Lausanne

ABSTRACT: This article examines how protesters produce new tactics by focusing specifically on Hirak Al-Rif, a protest movement which took place in Morocco in 2016–2017. Drawing on several sources (e.g. semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, live-streamed Facebook videos, and digital traces), the article shows how new tactics can derive from routine activities and, by focusing on the role of newcomers, suggests to go beyond a strictly top-down model of mobilisations. Newcomers relied on everyday routines at the neighbourhood level and amplified the dynamic of protests in a way that went beyond the initial expectations of core activists. Tactical innovations can thus be fostered through pressures and reappropriations enacted "from below", which bind core activists to the wider base of the movement through moral obligations. Biographical experiences, prior bonds, and the individuals' positions in the mobilisation networks also prove to be relevant matters in the plural and contingent making of tactical innovations.

KEYWORDS: Morocco, newcomers, protest movements, tactical innovation, youth activism

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR: ahmed.chapi@unil.ch

1. Introduction

Starting in October 2016 and for longer than 10 months, the Rif region of Morocco witnessed a significant wave of contention led by the activists of the "Popular Movement in the Rif" (*Al Hirak al-sha'bi bi al-Rif*). The protests began after the tragic death of Mouhcine Fikri, a fish seller crushed to death in a garbage truck after he protested against the confiscation of his merchandise by police authorities. In late May 2017, hundreds of participants were arrested, and some of them sentenced to up to 20 years of imprisonment. The handling of the movement by state authorities marked an

important turning-point in King Mohamed VI's reign: the Hirak's grassroots support, its longevity, and the repressive response by the authorities are indicative of this having been one of the most powerful protest movements ever witnessed in contemporary Morocco. The movement's repression is in line with the growing crackdown on public liberties in the country. Notably, authorities have curtailed with particular severity the freedom of demonstration and expression through the prosecution and imprisonment of independent journalists, activists, and social media users. A few demonstrations in support of the Hirak were organised in other Moroccan cities, and support committees for political detainees and their families were created locally. However, the dynamic of protests was circumscribed mainly to the Rif region. It is worth noticing that the mobilisations in support of the Hirak also have taken place internationally, largely led by the Riffian diaspora in countries such as Belgium, Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, and France[1].

The movement has recently attracted academic attention. Some works have emphasised the history of conflictual relations between the region and the central state (Wolf 2019), while others highlighted Hirak activists' weak bonds with traditional channels of mobilisation such as political parties and associations (Suárez-Collado 2018), which have prompted them to operate outside of the networks of power (Jebnoun 2019) while also addressing the king directly (Masbah 2017). Some authors have argued that the youth of this peripheral region mobilise because of socio-economic difficulties which cause a feeling of relative deprivation (Goeury and Deau 2019). Others have emphasised the re-enactment of the categories of popular Islam and historical tribal bonds as a way to unify protesters (Esmili 2018). Mobilisational strategies and tactical innovations have attracted some attention (Esmili 2018; Jebnoun 2019). However, they were often depicted as heroic and spontaneous, overlooking their genealogy as well as the networks whose work and creativity introduced such (more or less) new practices of mobilisation.

In this article, I will pay particular attention to the innovative tactics employed by the Hirak movement. While protesters used forms of action stemming from the traditional repertoire of contention (e.g. marches, sit-ins, and strikes), alternative contentious actions also emerged. These include *chen-ten*[2] (surprise demonstrations), *tentana* (pot-banging protests)*,* beach-based protests, and even car horn protests. The majority of these were unprecedented in the Moroccan contentious space. This research is geographically limited to the city of Al-Hoceïma, which was the main site of contention, although protests occurred in other towns and villages of its province and, to a lesser extent, in other provinces and towns of the Rif region[3].

During the first three months of the protests, the locations and times of demonstrations were publicly announced prior to the event. Among the tactics were marches, rallies, and strikes. However, as a result of the police ban on demonstrations, activists had to find new ways to overcome repression. It is at this time, in February 2017, that a new tactic, *chen-ten,* emerged[4]. Thanks to such "surprise demonstrations", activists managed to take to the streets again. While the impact of repression on the emergence of new tactics has been highlighted in the literature already (Tilly 1978), in this article, I focus on the process of the making of tactical innovation within protest movements. Tactical innovations can derive from routine activities (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001) and tactical choices

---

[1] As of 2016, several actions (demonstrations, hunger strikes, conferences, awareness-raising campaigns targeting European parties and institutions, etc.) were held in those countries, producing one of the most important transnational mobilisations targeting the Moroccan state in recent years.

[2] A typical expression of northern Morocco which can be translated as "done quickly".

[3] By centring the focus on peripheral protest sites, I seek to bypass studies focusing exclusively on the main sites of contentious politics (i.e. political and economic capital cities). Among the works that decentred the perspective towards the peripheries are Allal and Bennafla (2011) or the special issue edited by Huber and Kamel in *Mediterranean politics* (2015).

[4] I discuss the *chen-ten* in the following sections.

may be linked to specific dispositions and positions in a protest group (Fillieule 2010; Péchu 2006) or to particular emotions, moral visions, and tastes (Jasper 1997). However, most of the literature focuses on the leaders as the main shapers of new tactics (Aminzade, Goldstone and Perry 2001; Tarrow 2011), thus overlooking the role of newcomers. What role do newcomers play in the making process of new tactics? The present article answers this question. It shows how such new tactics can derive from routine activities and suggests going beyond a strictly top-down mobilisation model by focusing on the roles of newcomers.

The term "newcomers" here refers to the involvement of first-time protesters in a sustained protest campaign, as compared to "experienced" activists with an extensive participation record. I will also use "core activists" to refer to those with a strong influence over the elaboration and introduction of new protests and tactics. These categories are ideal-types as the modalities of participation in social movements must be viewed dynamically.

In the Hirak Al-Rif, newcomers, or "youths of the neighbourhoods", engaged for the first time in a sustained campaign of protests. They were deeply involved in the making of new tactics, thus amplifying the protest dynamic in a way that exceeded the initial expectations of core activists. Neighbourhood youths consistently pushed core activists to devise new tactics, embedding those core activists in a dynamic of collective moral obligations. These youths thus played a critical role in the contingent and on-the-ground making of new forms of action.

After reviewing the literature on tactical innovations and presenting the study's methodology, I will examine the genealogy and implementation of surprise-demonstrations called *chen-ten*. Throughout the analysis, I will refer to the ways in which biographical experiences, routine activities, prior bonds, and positions within mobilisation networks relate to the making of tactical innovation.

2. Theoretical perspectives on tactical innovation

Following Tilly, we know that the protest routines available to protesters are limited: "In a given time and place, people learn a limited number of claim-making performances, then mostly stick with those performances when the time to make claims arrives" (Tilly 2008, 4). Hence, protesters usually make their claims using well-known tactical performances. These tactics are part of their repertoires, their know-how and routinised schemes of perception and action. The availability of resources, new political opportunities, the presence of in-group conflicts, groups' history, and the opponents' tactical moves inspire and constrain tactics (Smithey 2009, 664). However, protesters innovate. They do so "to maintain solidarity, attract new supporters, and keep opponents off balance" (Tarrow 2011, 102; see also Fedele in this Special Issue). A tactic can be deemed innovative if it includes "new performances and combinations of performances; the abandoning of existing performances or transformations of their meaning; changes of connections and alliances between protest groups" (Fillieule 2010, p. 92) or "if it incorporates claims, selects objects of claims, includes collective self-representations and/or adopts means that are either unprecedented or forbidden within the regime in question" (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001, 49).

Scholars have emphasised external factors that enable the adoption of new protests, whether it be repression (Tilly 1978), the emergence of a new protest cycle (Tarrow 1995) or political defeats (McCammon 2003). One line of works has highlighted the importance of the organisational dimension, such as pre-existing domestic resources and networks in the case of the civil rights movements (McAdam 1982; Morris 1984), cultural frames and the structural power of the participants (Taylor and Van Dyke 2004, 274), the effects of ideology and organisational structures (Staggenborg 1989) as well as internal divisions (McCammon 2003). Another research stream posits a positive relationship between a movement's informal dimension and its ability to adopt new tactics, echoing earlier contributions arguing that the institutionalisation of a movement's structure hinders more disruptive protests (Piven and Cloward 1977). In the same vein, more egalitarian mechanisms of decision-making are believed to facilitate innovation (Polletta 2002). Other scholars have focused on

collective identity as different micro-cohorts of activists can bring new tactics (Whittier 1995), on the diffusion of tactical innovations across movements (Tarrow 1995; Soule 1997, 1999), or on the link between movements' types of claims and tactical innovations (Soule and Wang 2016).

Aiming to go beyond homogenising and objectivist approaches, other scholars have stressed the plural and heterogeneous uses of tactical performances (Traugott 1993; Offerlé 2008), and the need to look into "the practical dilemmas" faced by protesters during efforts at innovation (Dobry 1990, 363). Other scholars, more sensitive to the biographical dimension, emphasised the linkage between dispositions towards a tactical action and the individual dispositions of protesters (Crossley 2002; Péchu 2006; Fillieule 2010), while others placed everyday individual forms of resistance and collective forms of protest on the same continuum (Bennani-Chraïbi and Fillieule 2003; Péchu 2006). Others have argued that the politicisation of symbolic rituals (Kurzman 2003) or space (Routledge 1997; Boutros 2017) can enable the development of new tactics.

Centring culture in social movement analysis, Jasper (1997, 320) argued that strategic and tactical choices "reflect movement culture, leader biographies, and available resources as well as purely strategic judgments". This move sought to bypass rationalist approaches – which tend to overlook cultural and biographical dimensions – and to integrate in the same framework the cultural, strategic, and interactive dimensions of protest (Jasper and Volpi 2018). This shift towards culture understands tactical choices "as a process of gathering, interpreting, and evaluating information within dynamic, uncertain and often-contradictory contexts" (Larson 2013, 876).

As the growing literature on the subject contends, social media have become key to organising and coordinating protests (Tufekci and Wilson 2012), as well as to connecting different protests groups (Lim 2012). While social media may reduce the costs of organisation and identity-building (Bennett and Segerberg 2012), offline and online activities should not be artificially separated. Moreover, the use of social media for mobilisation has not replaced traditional face-to-face patterns of communication (Costanza-Chock 2012).

Tactical innovations have also been linked to everyday experiences and activities (Tilly 2000; Auyero 2004). Hence, the tactical innovations of the civil rights movement have been described as "creative modifications or extensions of familiar routines" (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001, 49), while the origins of the barricade (as a symbol of resistance) have been framed "as a by-product of collective experiences" (Traugott 1993, 313). This study is in line with the scholarship depicting tactical innovations as an extension of everyday routine activities, and also pays attention to studies emphasising the importance of prior bonds and biographical experiences in the making of new protest performances.

Tactical innovations have predominantly been analysed through the role of the leaders who introduce them in protest patterns. According to Tarrow (2011, 29) "leaders invent, adapt, and combine various forms of contention to gain support from people who might otherwise stay at home". In this article, however, I suggest explaining tactical innovations by focusing on the processes through which they come about and unfold, as well as on how newcomers contribute to their plural and contingent making. Thus, in authoritarian settings, mass politics is not only fuelled by the everyday practices of atomised individuals in the framework of non-social movements (Bayat 2010), but everyday routines can also shape new tactics in the framework of a social movement with shared objectives and active networks[5]. In this sense, I place informal practices of mobilisation and more open collective actions on a continuum. Furthermore, I argue that innovation has the power to amplify protests: it pushes activists to take to the streets and makes them feel obliged towards each other.

---

[5] Other works aiming to decompartmentalise Middle East and North Africa (MENA) area studies and social movement theory have stressed the centrality of informal networks in the emergence of protests, as contentious actors and practices evolve in an authoritarian context (Beinin and Vairel 2011; Volpi and Clark 2019).

3. Methodology

The present research is based on a qualitative analysis of semi-structured interviews with Hirak activists, non-participant observations, live Facebook protest videos, and other digital traces. I conducted the semi-structured interviews (N=24) between 2018 and 2020 during several research trips with Hirak activists based in Al-Hoceïma and in several European cities, where various activists have moved to escape arrest. The core of the analysis draws on the interviews and videos related to the *chen-ten*. The chosen approach was mainly inductive. It was during the first exploratory interviews that my attention was drawn towards innovative tactics, since they signalled ways in which protesters circumvented state repression and because they nurtured the dynamics of protest. Later interviews were used to elicit biographical elements, prior bonds with other activists, everyday routines, the uses of messaging applications and social media, as well as concrete and detailed accounts of mobilisation-related tasks and division of labour. The interviews were conducted in Moroccan dialect (*Darija*) and the excerpts mentioned in this article are therefore translated from *Darija*[6]. They lasted from one to three hours. Interviews were conducted with activists from several backgrounds, core activists as well as newcomers. Although women were involved in the mobilisation, the majority of the interviewees were men. Gender relations, conventions, and expectations may have favoured easier access to men than women. A significant number of live videos related to Hirak protests were broadcast on citizen journalism Facebook pages. I downloaded most of these videos from "Rif 24" and "Awar TV". The Facebook Live video dataset (N=97) shows the presence of different types of tactics during the whole sequence of protests: traditional demonstrations, *chen-ten*, pot-banging, "party-like" gatherings in city districts, car horn protests, general assemblies and public speeches, public calls to demonstrate, gatherings in neighbouring localities, ordinary everyday activities (such as singing in cafés or at the beach), and ordinary mobility between districts. In this article, I focus largely on videos related to *chen-ten* (N=11). The dataset also includes Facebook posts. The collection of different posts allows one to understand shifts in perceptions and the range of possible alternatives. Indeed, "to understand an individual's behaviour, we must know how he perceives the situation, the obstacles he believed he had to face, the alternatives he saw opening up to him" or her (Becker, 1970, 64). Similarly, it helps one to provide an account of the lived experiences without linking them in a linear fashion to the inevitable outcome of events (see Tackett 1996; Kurzman 2004). The different digital traces (mainly pictures and posts on Facebook) enabled me to grasp the actors' perceptions *in actu* – whereas in interviews, motives can be reconstructed ex-post (Pohl 2020). The combined analysis of multiple data types has proven very valuable since it enabled me to see the concrete and uncertain unfolding of actions. Interviews with activists playing key roles in launching surprise demonstrations have provided the social and relational background for the analysis of the videos. In order to avoid a socially disembodied analysis of visual data, these interviews allowed me to cross-check my interpretations of the video footage. Considering the fact that I did not participate in the 2016/2017 demonstrations and that some activists are still imprisoned, digital traces and live Facebook videos provide very valuable data. Therefore, I follow Lambelet (2010) who states that digital data can provide information on the viewpoints of their producers and on what is at stake in the action itself. In a similar vein, Philipps (2012) states that the analysis of protest images can reveal activists' intentions and dispositions. I also adopt a "localised approach" as outlined by Briquet and Sawicki (1989), which focuses on localised practices, on the particular history of a site and of local activist networks. As I focus on face-to-face interactions, this article sheds light on "the microfoundations of political action" (Jasper 2004, 4) following a relational and dynamic approach (Bennani-Chraïbi and Fillieule 2012).

4. Tactical innovations in the Hirak Al-Rif movement

[6] The everyday language and mother tongue of the activists is Tarifit, a variant of Tamazight (the Amazigh languages).

The discussion of the empirical analysis is divided into four subsections. First, I provide a general picture of the groups of activists examined in this research. Second, I analyse the concrete making of the *chen-ten* and highlight how it relates to a practice-based conception of protesting (third subsection). Finally, I show how the offline and online tools work to "spread the word" about mobilisation.

4.1 Hirak activists: newcomers in the space of social movements?

The very night of the tragic death of Mouhcine Fikri on 28 October 2016, a gathering took place on the scene of the tragedy, with the governor and the general prosecutor meeting the outraged crowd. One of the key speakers at the gathering was Nasser Zefzafi, who would later become the most prominent figure among the protesters. In the days that followed, activists met in cafés, gathered at public squares, and held demonstrations. The notion of moral shock can be useful for understanding what triggered the mobilisation, as it refers to "an unexpected event or piece of information [which] raises such a sense of outrage in a person that she becomes inclined toward political action, with or without the network of personal contacts emphasized in mobilization and process theories" (Jasper 1997, 106). However, becoming an activist is not as spontaneous as the notion might suggest. Most of the activists leading the movement had a track record of participation in protests – such as in the 20 February movement – and were inclined towards collective action.

During November and December 2016, demonstrations were held in Al-Hoceïma's central square. The locations and times were publicly announced, and logistic preparations often took place in the square itself – as did informal discussion circles where activists and inhabitants discussed their daily problems and grievances. Heightened publicity marked the initial phase of protests. General assemblies were broadcast via Facebook Live videos, during which participants discussed the next steps, made decisions, and assigned tasks. Activists heavily used Facebook since the movement's inception: they spread calls for protests using pictures or video posts, and also systematically live-streamed the protests. They created new pages to live-stream and share information about the movement, such as Awar TV or Araghi TV. Moreover, pre-existing pages were now used for these purposes, such as Rif 24. During a general assembly in November 2016, activists agreed that Nasser Zefzafi's Facebook page should become the official page of the Hirak movement. Live streaming of different events was extensive, whether it be (surprise) demonstrations, gatherings, debates, speeches, reactions or clarifications by Nasser Zefzafi, and mobility from one protest venue to another.

The nascent movement was built independently of partisan, associative, or union structures. In mid-November 2016, leadership struggles emerged between activists belonging to the far-left of the political spectrum[7] and activists (the vast majority of them) without any party or organisation affiliation. The "*Al-Hirak al-sha'bi*" (Popular Movement) denomination came into being in the same period with the aim of distancing it from party and associative structures (labelled as "political shops" and "mercenary associations", respectively) and claiming the representation of popular masses. This stance was tirelessly defended by Nasser Zefzafi, a 37-year-old[8] unemployed activist who had a record of participating in demonstrations and broadcasting critical videos on YouTube. Zefzafi emerged as the leading figure of mobilisations on the ground: he was ceaselessly active, delivered a wealth of speeches, called for protests, and visited neighbouring towns. Zefzafi adopted a straightforward and

---

[7] Most of these activists were affiliated to different organisations such as the Democratic Way, the National Association of Unemployed Graduates of Morocco, or the Moroccan Association of Human Rights, and were involved in university-based far-left groups. They were routine protest entrepreneurs in the city of Al-Hoceïma and were deeply involved as well in the 20 February movement.

[8] He was born in Al-Hoceïma in 1979.

ordinary tone of speech (in Riffian, classical Arabic, and Darija), which allowed him to reach broad sections of the population. Many protesters, especially among the youth, strongly identified with him. Zefzafi's speeches emphasised the defence of the "popular masses", strongly dismissed political intermediaries, virulently criticised the Makhzen[9], and celebrated the Rif region, its inhabitants, and its glorious history of resistance. By dismissing elections, elected institutional and state representatives, and political parties, Zefzafi promoted a model of action based on grassroots activism, street-based protests, and the embedding of solidarity in local moral codes and historical narratives. These latter strongly resonated with the population because of the conflictual relationship between the Rif region and the central state. In the past, several episodes fuelled a feeling of mistrust towards the central state: the collusion of the sultan with Franco-Spanish forces during the Rif War in the 1920s, the brutal clampdown of the 1958-1959 Rif uprising, the crackdown of the January 1984 uprising, and the case of the five young people whose bodies were found burned in a bank on 20 February 2011. More generally, inhabitants criticise the economic marginalisation of the region and the lack of appreciation for its cultural heritage and historical symbols[10]. The narratives of this conflictual relationship circulate through different processes and instances of socialisation: the family, peer groups in the neighbourhood or school, associations, etc. It is through the lens of these narratives that we should understand the existing forms of local solidarity and the sense of belonging to a community. That said, it should not be forgotten that narratives do not circulate in a unilateral and homogeneous fashion, but are instead dependent upon the context and the effects of the socialising experiences.

Political parties and associations were accused of bargaining over the containment of popular mobilisations in exchange for political and material privileges. Mistrust in elections, representatives, institutional politics, and politicians was significant. More specifically, Hirak activists blamed political parties and associations for the "failure" of the 20 February movement[11], denounced political parties as pawns of the Makhzen, and criticised the abstract ideological references of leftist activists hailing from university campuses, which were said to have little connection to the people's needs. What lies behind these arguments is a different conception of political action: Hirak activists fostered innovative protest tactics to go beyond the routinised modes of action of other political organisations. They used an ordinary, direct language as opposed to (more conventional) top-down linguistic interactions with the public, and nurtured independent, street protest-like forms of activism, rather than a vertical, party-like political *modus operandi*. These processes fostered the autonomy of the space of action of the social movement (Mathieu, 2019) and enabled the Hirak to direct its message to a larger popular base.

While the majority of the core activists had long histories of protest participation, others were less experienced and were new to participation in protests. The notion of "protagonists" was developed by Burstin (2013) to account for those ordinary individuals who engaged in the French Revolution and who were radically transformed by this participation. It allows us to think about these newcomers transformed by their involvement in protests. In the experiences of the activists, street demonstrations seem to be the most legitimate way of participating politically, for most of the participants have a disposition towards them, on which they also draw most of their know-how about protesting.

[9] In the Moroccan political context, the Makhzen refers to the Royal Palace and its main institutional and informal extensions (security services, armed forces, the Ministry of the Interior, high-ranking bureaucrats, businessmen, local notables, state-controlled media, and religious officials).

[10] The marginalisation of the region was more blatant during the reign of Hassan II. The region suffered from a deficit of infrastructures and jobs. This situation favoured the emigration of inhabitants to European countries and other Moroccan cities. Since the beginning of Mohamed VI's reign, a relative opening up of the region has occurred and the King has signalled his interest in the region through annual summer trips to the Rif. Nevertheless, there has not been any large-scale development policy, which would have promoted job creation in the region.

[11] The 20 February movement was the major movement leading demonstrations in Morocco in 2011. For a dynamic and processual account of the movement, see: Bennani-Chraïbi and Jeghllaly (2012).

The overwhelming majority of activists were in their twenties or thirties. Some of them encountered difficulties in having a stable professional or marital life. Usually, connections among some of them were pre-existing. They used to share the same practices of sociability, such as helping each other, having long discussions in cafés, or going to the beach together. The majority worked in ordinary, working-class jobs (e.g. as carpenters, taxi drivers, waiters, cooks, retail employees), with occasional periods of unemployment. Some did not complete their degrees, but others – who did – perceived a mismatch between their university degrees and their actual job. Despite certain differences, they belonged to the same social world. Tilly already argued that "the more connected the histories of actors outside of contention, the more similar their repertoires" (Tilly 2008, p.68). It is worth noticing that the broadening of the basis of participation also included women. While female participation in demonstrations in the Rif is not something new, the Hirak enabled a more active participation of "novice" or "ordinary" women. These women shouted slogans, called for protests in videos, marshalled demonstrations, and were actively involved in micro-mobilisations.

4.2 Innovating in protest tactics

During the initial phase of the protests, from late October 2016 to early February 2017, the locations and times of protests were widely known, and the performances were drawn from the conventional repertoire of contention. However, from January 2017, the police banned Hirak activists from holding protests in public spaces. Consequently, they started thinking about alternative actions to make their voices heard. It is at this moment that the *chen-ten* emerged: a surprise demonstration beginning in a strategic venue, following a call from Nasser Zefzafi broadcast in a Facebook Live video. The idea emerged during informal discussions. The first *chen-ten* was held on 24 February 2017 to commemorate the victims of the 2004 earthquake that hit the Al-Hoceïma province. Immediately after his short video call, Nasser Zefzafi and fellow activists marched up a major downtown avenue. They began shouting their slogans, and incrementally, the demonstration grew in size. Activists managed to march in the city for over two hours and thwarted the authorities' repressive grip on the city. *Chen-ten* thus reflects more an innovation in starting than running a demonstration. The ultimate goal is to form a march with its usual conventions such as walking in ranks, shouting slogans, holding signs and a front banner, forming human chains, and delivering speeches. In so doing, "protesters innovate within and around culturally embedded repertoires" (Tarrow 2011, 120).

Some narratives have depicted this protest episode as spontaneous and heroic, with inhabitants suddenly learning about the protest and joining the charismatic leader within a few minutes. However, one should keep in mind that the day before, and hours prior to the event, activists had already begun to spread the news that a protest was going to be held. In fact, a dozen of activists had met and agreed that a protest would start at roughly 6 pm, and that it would start with a Nasser Zefzafi Facebook video. The time was chosen (in part) so as to attract high school students leaving class. Each activist or micro-group of activists went to one or more neighbourhoods to spread the word about the likelihood of an imminent protest. The neighbours were then invited to further disseminate the information among acquaintances they deemed trustworthy. Hakim, a core activist, explained to me what the initial conception of *chen-ten* was:

> "*In reality, we had another idea at the beginning. But the manner in which crowds of people interacted with this idea … they expanded it, improved it … For us, chen-ten, originally, was going out with small marches. One from here, one from there, a small march coming from each district, and we all come together. Even if the Makhzen wants to curb a march, the others will continue*".

We can see that, originally, activists expected participants to initiate marches from their neighbourhoods. However, participants tended to go to the best-known places where demonstrations usually started or sat down in downtown cafés and joined the burgeoning march as soon as they knew

about its launch. The discrepancies between strategic conceptions and effective action, and the ordinary reappropriations of mass participants, shed light on the contingent fabric of innovation. Furthermore, the activists did not expect that such a significant number of people would so rapidly join the fledgling demonstration, which suggests that scholars should pay more attention to uncertainty in perceptions and calculations.

To grasp the concrete way in which *chen-ten*, as an innovative tactic, came about, I rely on the lived experiences of newcomer activists, such as Abderrazaq.[12] He went to different neighbourhoods on his scooter and informed his acquaintances about the organisation of a demonstration at approximately 6 pm. He targeted strategic locations: schools' entrances, street corners, and cafés. He knew in what cafés his friends typically spent time and went there without calling in advance. He would only disseminate information to trustworthy friends who would themselves share the message with other trusted peers:

> "*What I did? I went to different districts on my scooter. If I saw four or five guys that used to demonstrate with us, I told them to stay ready and to watch carefully their phones. And when they saw the "live" [video], they had to move quickly […] I did not talk about this to guys I didn't know*".

Abderrazaq was a well-known figure among the youth because he previously was a leading member of a local football team's ultras group. He had no history of activism before joining the movement and was part of those newcomers who conducted important forms of mobilisation at the neighbourhood level and would acquire protest know-how on an accelerated basis. His social visibility and dense connections were reinvested in innovating protest performances. Fellow friends and neighbours "listened to" Abderazzaq. He was recognised socially thanks to his record as a football fans' leader and had a reputation of moral integrity (he was not known for carrying "deviant" acts in this conservative city). In turn, his proactive role in the movement further enhanced his social visibility.

Yassine, for his part, was a close friend and neighbour of a core activist. Together with other friends, they used to have late-night conversations on the doorsteps of an abandoned house in their neighbourhood. When the activist in question came to announce that a surprise demonstration was going to take place, Yassine "knew what he had to do" and spread the message through his network of friends:

> "*I had a contact with [M.], he lives next to my house. So, one night, he came to see us. We talked, as usual. Then he told us 'to wait for something' and told me to inform the other guys. So, I told it to my friends. And since then, it [this form of protest], has been called chen-ten*".

Fellow neighbours of Yassine "listened to [him]" as well. The social visibility of Yassine stems from the fact he was working in a strategically situated shop in the neighbourhood, where friends used to meet. Furthermore, he played in the city's inter-districts football tournaments. He was known as being "very straightforward" and "adventurous". He viewed most of elected officials as "untruthful", but he fully trusted the leader of the movement, Nasser Zefzafi: "When you listen to him, you are reassured, you know he's not an impostor, he's not going to hurt you or betray you. He's very straightforward. People found something in him". As for Abderrazaq, we can see how new figures with locally-built legitimacy emerged at the neighbourhood-level, reinvesting proximity bonds in the making of new protest performances. Such new, local figures strongly identified with the

---

[12] All names are anonymised.

"straightforward" protest leader in contrast with the "flawed" world of party leaders and elected representatives.

The disruptive effects of this new performance must be related to new routines, spaces, and figures of mobilisation. Before the *chen-ten*, several forms of mobilisation could be pursued. For instance, an activist working as a barber could announce the holding of a surprise demonstration while in the workplace. The barbershop is a routine spot where friends and relatives usually gather. People go there unannounced and stay for a short time while the barber eagerly talks with his customers. Another activist could mobilise people while running errands, by informing a trustworthy grocer about an upcoming demonstration. The grocer, usually a familiar figure in the neighbourhood, would spread the word among trustworthy customers. Another activist regularly spending time at a café could also inform his acquaintances about a protest. Hence, the message is diffused through familiar figures (such as the neighbour) and spaces (such as the café or the barbershop), and it is channelled through networks of trust. An activist can mobilise people while working, while another could do so while performing routine activities. The channels, spaces, and actors of mobilisation highlighted above refer mostly to a male-dominated social world. Nevertheless, female activists also mobilised in women's spaces, such as a downtown commercial street frequented mostly by women, social gatherings in houses involving acquaintances and neighbours, as well as school entrances[13]. These insights indicate how significant are the intersections between routine activities and contentious actions (Tilly 2000; Auyero 2004). This has been highlighted by Carlier (1995) in his work on the historicity of Algerian nationalist and Islamist mobilisations, or by Wiktorowicz (2001) who showed how Salafi networks operated outside state control by relying on face-to-face interactions to recruit, announce activities, and diffuse religious interpretations. My findings also highlight the importance of informal networks as vehicles for mobilisation.

The decision to initiate a *chen-ten* was taken by a core group of activists around the movement's main figure. Then, these core activists disseminated the word in one or more districts, mainly their district of residence. They went to street corners or cafés where their friends usually met. Subsequently, neighbourhood youths spread the word to different circles of friends gathered at different locations. Youths of the neighbourhood also contacted their friends in other districts, adopting autonomous initiatives, as Yassine told:

> "When [M.] told me that there is a chen-ten, I accomplished my part of the duty. I went around my neighbourhood, then I contacted a friend in the neighbouring district. He used to gather his guys there, the guys of his neighbourhood trusted him. And I asked my friends living elsewhere if they had received the message, I told them what's going on".

Therefore, we should overcome a strictly top-down model of mobilisation from the leaders to the masses. Information spread horizontally and was circulated through daily interactions. Moreover, Hirak activists were asked for the date of the next *chen-ten* on a daily basis. The introduction of this performance produced expectations and inclinations towards surprise demonstrations amongst neighbourhood youths. Hirak activists were pushed to constantly plan new demonstrations, leading them to be progressively embedded in a dynamic of collective obligation. Indeed, the introduction of new protest forms can nurture the intensity of a movement's activity (McAdam 1983). These insights also support the "self-centred" dimension of demonstrating which may become "an end in itself" (Favre 2007). While activists were randomly sitting at the café, youths of the neighbourhood would question them about the next move, the day of the next protest, as Hakim said:

---

[13] Interview with Salwa. I present fewer women-related practices of mobilisation as the overwhelming majority of interviews were conducted with men (as described in the methodology).

> "*Indeed, we were going through an exceptional situation. People were just waiting for protesting again in the streets. They came towards us and told us: "we have to demonstrate". We could be sitting at a café and these guys from Sidi Abid or Marmoucha[14] walking nearby would tell us "people tell us when we are going to demonstrate. When are we going to take to the streets? We need to take to the streets".*

Instead of viewing activists mobilising a local society in a top-down fashion, we should instead consider all of the pressures, expectations, questions, and solicitations that emerge in different social spheres, and that represent injunctions for activists to pursue their commitments. Activists were indeed caught into networks of moral obligations and heavy social expectations. This trend was fuelled when an oath started to be sworn systematically in protests starting in April 2017. Protesters vowed defending their cause even at the cost of their lives in a highly emotional context. This shows how reversed impulsions "from the below" were constantly pushing core activists to take to the streets and think about new forms of protest. Observing activists moving into micro-groups before the *chen-ten*, other participants suspected that something might be going on. They would directly approach and ask the activists about their next move (interview with Yassine). Core activists thus knew they had the support of the local population; they would only have to disseminate the word among their networks, and it would rapidly circulate. Hirak activists were pushed to sustain the protests as an amplification dynamic emerged. At the same time, to avoid the standardisation of collective action, they had to foster new types of protest (*chen-ten*, collective oaths, "party-like" gatherings in neighbourhoods, banging of pots and pans, etc.). As shown in the Belarusian case, activists had to fashion new scenarios at each novel flash-mob performance, not only to overcome state repression, but also because young participants were more inclined to participate in new, surprise tactics rather than established ones (Shukan, 2008).

The subsequent *chen-ten* followed the same logic. In a Facebook Live video, Nasser Zefzafi, surrounded by core activists, called the people to join them in the streets. The surprise demonstrations started in other main avenues of downtown Al-Hoceïma. In less than fifteen minutes, more than a thousand of participants had gathered. Activists had only to make small adaptations, such as picking a suitable time and place, announcing ahead the information through the movement's networks, and broadcasting a live video to trigger the surprise protest. Waiting until the last minute to announce the exact time and place provided great leverage to protesters. However, this advantage would be ineffective without the rapid aggregation of thousands of participants.

Usually, when announcing a *chen-ten*, Nasser Zefzafi filmed himself or was filmed by another activist who would live-stream the video on a popular Facebook page of citizen media. The use of the video format is not coincidental, it must be related to Zefzafi's personal political experiences. Before the emergence of the Hirak, Nasser Zefzafi used to record videos of himself participating in protests. He also broadcast videos from his home in which – speaking in classical Arabic – he would criticise the marginalisation of his region or challenge an imam who blamed the occurrence of earthquakes in the Rif on the supposed moral deviance of its inhabitants. These videos were mostly watched by Al-Hoceïma inhabitants and gave Nasser Zefzafi a small visibility. While he was not an established activist in activist circles, he was perceived as a young man from a humble background with staunch political convictions. At the same time, in ordinary interactions, Zefzafi always stressed the need to defend the region. He also used to record himself during demonstrations of the Amazigh movement[15],

---

[14] Sidi Abid and Marmoucha are two of the city's districts.

[15] The Amazigh movement consists of heterogeneous associations, groups, or protest movements active in many fields (university campuses, culture, development, human rights, etc.) adopting the Amazighity as a referential and advocating, amongst other things, the political, cultural, and economic rights of the Amazigh people.

or during a protest calling for the boycotting of parliamentary elections[16]. Furthermore, Zefzafi had a professional experience in selling and repairing mobile phones. The use of videos to disseminate ideas and to defend publicly a political stance was a routine practice in his array of dispositions and competences. Protest innovations can therefore be grasped by focusing on the socialising experiences of protesters, at the intersection of individual biographies and experiences of contention (Auyero 2003)**.**

4.3. Fostering a practice-based conception of protesting

The Hirak movement enabled newcomers to assume a proactive role thanks to the success of alternative forms of mobilisation and action, the activation of an ordinary political discourse and the embedding of mobilisation in neighbourhood networks. By relying on neighbourhood networks, the movement promoted the figure of the "young man of the neighbourhood" (*weld lhouma*) as the protagonist of the local contentious space. Al-Hoceïma is a mid-size city of 56,000 inhabitants[17], where "everybody knows everybody". Neighbourhoods are important spaces of social life where young people spend many hours conversing and discussing with friends on street corners or in shop entrances until late at night. Due to high levels of unemployment and a lack of leisure and cultural activities, young people "kill time" during these daily encounters. Since childhood, they are accustomed to playing in the street without supervision. Most leisure activities occur between neighbours who are often close friends: spending time in cafés or at workplaces**,** going to the beach or the surrounding mountains, playing football, or helping each other in everyday tasks. The urban configuration of Al-Hoceïma enables dense social interactions and rapid mobility, as the city is not spatially segmented by highways, train stations, spacious parks, or wide avenues. Districts are interconnected, with high-density housing, narrow streets and alleys. They are often separated by small avenues.

The figure of the "young man of the neighbourhood" as a political actor is not unprecedented. Indeed, it can be projected to pursue a career in the associative sector (Bennani-Chraïbi 2003). Political parties also rely on these figures who – thanks to their connections – can secure votes for their candidates (Iraki 2020). In contrast to these models of commitment, Hirak's "young men of the neighbourhood" had a different role, based on the patterns of protesting described above as embedded in everyday activities. The movement's primary concern was to take to the streets peacefully, regularly, and innovatively. Therefore, young people from the neighbourhood had to use the bonds, activities, and the language of everyday life to sustain the movement. Usually, these youths do not find a suitable framework of participation in more vertical forms of mobilisation where the division of tasks is more rigid and where a different set of skills is considered more attractive, such as mastering formal political rhetoric, generally acquired on university campuses. Thanks to the introduction of new tactics, newcomers played new roles and accumulated new know-how. Dense social connections were formed and day-to-day references to the Hirak were found in all spheres of social life: discussions in homes and cafés, slogans chanted at weddings and in children's games.

Sustaining protests for months required face-to-face communication and a heavy use of social media, such as sharing content, delegitimising adversaries, and displaying support to the movement. By extension, Hirak patterns of mobilisation valued the figure of the on-the-ground activist (*nashit maydani*) who embodies a spontaneous disposition towards protest activities. These dispositions found a suitable context of activation thanks to surprise demonstrations, which require the ability to move

---

[16] He participated in a protest organised by far-left partisan activists at the beginning of October 2016, a few weeks before the advent of the Hirak, and a virulent rhetoric against political parties.

[17] According to the 2014 census, there are 56,714 inhabitants in Al-Hoceïma.

quickly in the city, "biographical availability" (McAdam, 1988) and extended friendship connections. As Hakim put it:

> "*The chen-ten succeeded thanks to the great echo of the masses. The masses viewed it as a victory over repression, a way of protesting that the adversary could not anticipate. And it succeeded because the city is small. New activists emerged, in every neighbourhood, at every point. New activists emerged because they had a responsibility, moving, talking, bringing people … and it made the Hirak grow, there was such a communion between the activists and its inhabitants*".

The disruptive effects of *chen-ten* were therefore nurtured by the density of everyday interactions. Newcomers not only engaged in a sustained campaign of protests for the first time but also contributed directly to the making of new performances. The discovery of new ways of acting fuelled feelings of joy and excitement. This shows how innovations are fostered thanks to breaks in routines and the emergence of new protest actors (Fillieule 2010, 92). The strategic use of social media is part and parcel of this practice-based innovation of protests, as newcomers were already heavy users of Facebook and messaging applications such as Messenger and WhatsApp in their daily life. To live-stream a gathering, one simply needs a Facebook account, a smartphone, and a selfie stick. Thus, activists had at their disposal a communication infrastructure where they could announce and live-stream protests, and virtually interact to foster inter-group solidarity. The involvement of newcomers active at the neighbourhood level and reliant on resources of everyday life generated a break in the interactions between protesters and security forces. According to Vairel (2014), the Moroccan protest space is marked by the routinisation of the interactions between protesters and security forces: the moves of each side (choice of protest actions, handling of demonstrations, use of coercion, etc.) are "self-limited" and generally expected and routinised. They resulted into a "relative stabilisation" of demonstrations, and more precisely of "the explicit and implicit rules of the game (legal framework, practices), based on the history of demonstrations and protest cultures, with the expected actions and predictable moves and the surprises and deviations that are always possible" (Fillieule and Tartakowsky 2013, 18). The introduction of new performances carried out (in part) by newcomers via proximity bonds has obscured the visibility of security forces on the dynamics of protests.

4.4. Spreading the word online and offline

Ahead of another *chen-ten* protest, some Hirak activists widely shared Facebook posts such as "Prepare yourselves, free [people]" or "*Chen-ten*", which either implicitly or explicitly implied the holding of a surprise demonstration. According to Farouk, a newcomer:

> "*On that day, it was on Facebook. A call to everybody. Not as the first time, when it was transmitted by one person to another. On that day, it was on Facebook … I saw that on Facebook, and people reacted to it, they were saying: there is a chen-ten*".

Farouk learned about an upcoming *chen-ten* via the Facebook posts shared by his friends. He said that the call to protest was disseminated online only, while previously information was passed by word of mouth. Farouk had not heard about the holding of a *chen-ten* in face-to-face interactions probably because of his position within the mobilisation's networks. He prioritised his professional commitments and even disagreed with certain orientations of the movement. This contrasts with Oussama, also a newcomer, who covered the demonstrations for a citizens' media Facebook page via live videos. Oussama learned that "something might happen" an hour before the *chen-ten* when he ran into another activist contributing to the same citizens' media page. Activists from this group spent a great deal of time together. In addition to recording demonstrations and organising debates, they

would meet at the café every day and travel together, highlighting the importance of everyday friendship networks in explaining how information circulates. After being told that "something might happen", Oussama contacted a core activist who urged him to attend and live-stream the protest.

The modes of production of tactical innovation are plural: they depend on activists' friendship networks and their different positions within the protest movement – more specifically the extent of their involvement, the proximity to core activists, social visibility, the extent of their contact circle, location of residence and everyday urban mobility. Access to information is fragmented and depends on the positionality of activists: some activists launched the protest, others had an approximate idea about its time and location, some happened to be nearby, while others saw the live video.

The online diffusion of protests, therefore, does not happen randomly, but it is the product of strategic calculations, everyday routines, and contingent interactions. Online and offline logics of mobilisation are largely complementary, in the sense that they reach different publics. Facebook posts suggesting a *chen-ten* were widely shared, reaching participants, raising their expectations, and creating collective emulation. Although the authorities knew that something was being prepared, they could not contain the demonstration because the exact time and location remained secret until the very last minute. When the *chen-ten* started, micro-groups stopped whatever they were doing (sitting at a café, staying at home, running a shop, etc.) and joined the protest. The quick aggregation of demonstrators made activists compare the *chen-ten* to a "river flood" or the "vast expanse of the sea". If Facebook posts and live-streaming were used on a large-scale, the use of a live Facebook video to start a new protest should be placed within an ecology of dense everyday interactions and pre-existing friendship bonds, and connected to (individual) favourable political dispositions.

5. Conclusion

Focusing on a new tactic (the *chen-ten*), this article discussed how tactical innovations can be the product of an extension of daily routines and sociability. The making of the new performance depended on its on-the-ground reappropriation by participants. If interactions between protesters and security forces conform to a familiar script, these routines can be breached by the emergence of new tactics. In our case-study, newcomers were proactively involved in the making of the new tactic – a role they could barely play within more traditional political groups. Newcomers relied on the routines of everyday life at the neighbourhood level. They mobilised by going to cafés and street corners, or at workplaces, where professional, activist and friendship spheres entangle. The joy of engaging in a valorised social activity (the Hirak received great support among the local population) was fuelled by the pleasure of participating in a new and uncertain way of protesting. The accelerated learning of protest know-how fed their inclinations to take to the streets regularly. In their interactions with core activists, newcomers pushed them to continuously imagine new ways of protesting. Through moral obligations and "emotional loyalties" (Jasper 1997, 205), core activists were embedded in a dynamic of obligation toward the base of the movement.

This article showed that tactical choices do not only have a strategic component, but they also are determined by everyday routine activities and biographical experiences. As the start of the surprise protest is enabled by – and signalled through – a live Facebook video, we can see how social media can be useful not only for coordinating and organising protests (Tufekci and Wilson 2012), but also in the very making of a new performance. Therefore, this paper argues that in the case of the Hirak movement, innovation does not emerge from a vacuum, but it is the result of a hybridisation between informal mobilisation practices, a strategic use of social media, and the ultimate aim of holding a conventional peaceful demonstration.

Acknowledgments

References

Allal, A. and Bennafla, K. (2011), "Les mouvements protestataires de Gafsa (Tunisie) et Sidi Ifni (Maroc) de 2005 à 2009, Des mobilisations en faveur du réengagement de l'État ou contre l'ordre politique ?", *Revue Tiers Monde*, HS(5): 27–45.

Aminzade, R., Goldstone, J. and Perry, E. (2001), "Leadership dynamics and dynamics of contention", in R. Aminzade, J. Goldstone, D. McAdam, E. Perry, W. Sewell, S. Tarrow (eds.), *Silence and voice in the study of contentious politics*, University Press Cambridge: 126–154.

Auyero, J. (2003), *Contentious Lives: Two Argentine Women, Two Protests, and the Quest for Recognition*, Duke University Press.

Auyero, J. (2004), "When everyday life, routine politics, and protest meet", *Theory and Society*, 33(3–4): 417–441.

Bayat, A. (2010), *Life as politics: How ordinary people change the Middle East*, Stanford University Press.

Becker, H. S. (1970), *Sociological Work: Method and Substance*, Aldine Publishing Company.

Beinin, J. and Vairel, F. (2011), *Social movements, mobilization, and contestation in the Middle East and North Africa*, Stanford University Press.

Bennani-Chraïbi, M. (2003), "Parcours, cercles et médiations à Casablanca : tous les chemins mènent à l'action associative de quartier", in M. Bennani-Chraibi, O. Fillieule (eds.), *Résistances et protestations dans les sociétés musulmanes*. Presses de Sciences Po, pp. 295–352.

Bennani-Chraïbi, M. & Fillieule, O. (2012), "Towards a sociology of revolutionary situations: Reflections on the Arab uprisings", *Revue française de science politique*, 5(5-6) :767-796.

Bennani-Chraïbi, M. and Jeghllaly, M. (2012), "The protest dynamics of Casablanca's February 20th Movement", *Revue française de science politique,* 62(5–6): 103–130.

Bennett, W. L. and Segerberg, A. (2012), "The Logic of Connective Action", *Information, Communication & Society*, 15(5): 739–768.

Boutros, M. (2017), "Place and tactical innovation in social movements: the emergence of Egypt's anti-harassment groups", *Theory and Society*, 46(6): 543–575.

Briquet, J.-L. and Sawicki, F. (1989), "L'analyse localisée du politique", *Politix. Revue des sciences sociales du politique,* 2(7): 6–16.

Burstin, H. (2013), *Révolutionnaires. Pour une anthropologie politique de la Révolution française*, Vendémiaire.

Carlier, O. (1995), *Entre nation et jihad,* Presses de la fondation nationale des sciences politiques.

Costanza-Chock, S. (2012), "Mic Check! Media Cultures and the Occupy Movement", *Social Movement Studies*, 11(3–4): 375–385.

Crossley, N. (2002), "Repertoires of Contention and Tactical Diversity in the UK Psychiatric Survivors Movement: The question of appropriation", *Social Movement Studies*, 1(1): 47–71.

Dobry, M. (1990), "Calcul, concurrence et gestion du sens", in P. Favre, *La Manifestation*, Presses de la fondation nationale des sciences politiques, pp. 356–386.

Esmili, H. (2018), "Faire communauté", *Tumultes*, 50: 131–149.

Favre, P. (2007), "Les manifestations de rue entre espace privé et espaces publics", in Favre P., Olivier F., et Jobard F. (eds.), *L'atelier du politiste*, La Découverte, pp. 193–213.

Fedele, V. (2021), "The Hirak. The Visual Performance of Diversity in Algerian Protests", *Partecipazione e conflitto*, 14(2) : 681-701.

Fillieule, O. (2010), "4. Tombeau pour Charles Tilly", in E. Agrikoliansky, I. Sommier, O. Fillieule (eds.), *Penser les mouvements sociaux*. La Découverte, pp. 77–99.

Fillieule, O. and Tartakowsky, D. (2013), *Demonstrations*. Fernwood.

Goeury, D. and Deau, O. (2019), "Déclin des villes moyennes et conflictualité territoriale au Maroc. Les conséquences d'une pluralisation politique inachevée ?", *L'Année du Maghreb*, 21: 193–204.

Huber, D. and Kamel, L. (2015) "Arab Spring: The Role of the Peripheries", *Mediterranean Politics*, 20(2): 127–141.

Iraki, A. (2020), *Des élites de proximité au Maroc. Renouvellement ou hybridation de l'élite locale*. L'Harmattan.

Jasper, J. (2004), "A strategic approach to collective action: Looking for agency in social-movement choices", *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, 9(1): 1–16.

Jasper, J. M. (1997), *The art of moral protest: Culture, biography, and creativity in social movements*, University of Chicago Press.

Jebnoun, N. (2019), "Public space security and contentious politics of Morocco's Rif protests", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 56(1): 48–63.

Kurzman, C. (2004), *The unthinkable revolution in Iran*. Harvard University Press.

Kurzman, Charles (2003), "Une déploration pour Mustafa: Les bases quotidiennes de l'activisme politique" in M. Bennani-Chraïbi, O. Fillieule (eds.), *Résistances et protestation dans les sociétés musulmanes*. Presses de Sciences Po, pp. 177–196.

Lambelet, A. (2010), "Analyser les rassemblements au moyen de photographies ou de films. Pistes et enjeux", *Ethnographiques.org*, 21: 1–20.

Larson, J. A. (2013), "Social movements and tactical choice", *Sociology Compass*, 7(10): 866–879.

Lim, M. (2012), "Clicks, Cabs, and Coffee Houses: Social Media and Oppositional Movements in Egypt, 2004–2011", *Journal of Communication,* 62(2): 231–248.

Masbah M. (2017), "A New Generation of Protests in Morocco? How Hirak al-Rif Endures", *Arab reform initiative*.

Mathieu, L. (2019), "The space of social movements", *Social Movement Studies*, 20(2): 193-207.

McAdam, D. (1982), *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*, *1930-1970*. University of Chicago Press.

McAdam, D. (1983), "Tactical innovation and the pace of insurgency", *American Sociological Review*, 48(6): 735–754.

McAdam, D. (1988), *Freedom Summer*, Oxford University Press.

McAdam, D., Tarrow, S. and Tilly, C. (2001), *Dynamics of contention*, Cambridge University Press.

McCammon, H. J. (2003), "'Out of the Parlors and into the Streets': The Changing Tactical Repertoire of the US Women'Suffrage Movements", *Social Forces*, 81(3): 787–818.

Morris, A. D. (1984), *The origins of the civil rights movement*, The Free Press.

Offerlé, M. (2008), "Retour critique sur les répertoires de l'action collective (XVIIIe - XXIe siècles)", *Politix*. De Boeck Supérieur, 81(1): 181–202.

Péchu, C. (*2006), Droit au logement: genèse et sociologie d'une mobilisation*, Dalloz Paris.

Philipps, A. (2012), "Visual protest material as empirical data", *Visual Communication*, 11(1): 3–21.

Piven, F. F. and Cloward, R. A. (1977), *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail,* Pantheon Books.

Pohl N. (2020), "How strikes can arise: sequences of interaction in the genesis of a total strike in Madrid Underground", *Social Movement Studies*, 19(4): 482-500.

Polletta, F. (2002), *Freedom Is an Endless Meeting: Democracy in American Social Movements*, University of Chicago Press.

Routledge, P. (1997), "A spatiality of resistances: theory and practice in Nepal's revolution of 1990", in M. Keith, S. Pile (eds.), *Geographies of resistance*, Routledge, pp. 68–86.

Shukan, T. (2008), "Le flash-mob : forme d'action privilégiée des jeunes contestataires en Biélorussie", *Raisons politiques*, 29(1) : 9–21.

Smithey, L.A. (2009), "Social movement strategy, tactics, and collective identity", *Sociology Compass*, 3(4): 658–671.

Soule, S.A. (1997), "The Student Divestment Movement in the United States and Tactical Diffusion: The Shantytown Protest", *Social Forces*, 75(3): 855–882.

Soule, S.A. (1999), "The Diffusion of an Unsuccessful Innovation", *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 566(1): 120–131.

Staggenborg, S. (1989), "Stability and innovation in the women's movement: A comparison of two movement organizations", *Social Problems*, 36(1): 75–92.

Suárez-Collado, Á. (2018), "Centre–periphery relations and the reconfiguration of the state's patronage networks in the Rif", in L. Ruiz de Elvira, C. Schwarz, I. Weipert-Fenner (eds.), *Clientelism and Patronage in the Middle East and North Africa*, Routledge, pp. 168–191.

Tackett, T. (1996), *Becoming a Revolutionary: The Deputies of the French National Assembly and the Emergence of a Revolutionary Culture (1789-1790)*, Princeton University Press.

Tarrow, S. (1995), "Cycles of collective action: between moments of madness and the repertoire of contention", in M. Traugott (ed.), *Repertoires and cycles of collective action*, Duke University Press, pp. 89–115.

Tarrow, S. G. (2011), *Power in movement: Social movements and contentious politics*, Cambridge University Press.

Taylor, V. and Van Dyke, N. (2004), "'Get up, stand up': Tactical repertoires of social movements", in D. Snow, S. Soule, H. Kriesi (eds.), *The Blackwell companion to social movements*, Wiley, pp. 262–293.

Tilly, C. (1978), *From Mobilization to Revolution*, Longman Higher Education.

Tilly, C. (2000), "Spaces of Contention", *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, 5(2): 135–159.

Tilly, C. (2008), *Contentious performances*, Cambridge University Press.

Traugott, M. (1993), "Barricades as repertoire: Continuities and discontinuities in the history of French contention", *Social Science History*, 17(2): 309–323.

Tufekci, Z., Wilson, C. (2012), "Social media and the decision to participate in political protest: Observations from Tahrir Square", *Journal of communication*, 62(2): 363–379.

Vairel, F. (2014), *Politique et mouvements sociaux au Maroc. La révolution désamorcée* ? Presses de Sciences Po.

Volpi, F., Clark, J. A. (2019), "Activism in the Middle East and North Africa in times of upheaval: social networks' actions and interactions", *Social Movement Studies*, 18(1): 1–16.

Volpi, F., J. Jasper (2018), *Microfoundations of the Arab Uprisings. Mapping Interactions between Regimes and Protesters*, Amsterdam University Press.

Wang, D. J., Soule S.A. (2016), "Tactical Innovation in Social Movements: The Effects of Peripheral and Multi-Issue Protest", *American Sociological Review,* 81(3): 517–548.

Whittier, N. (1995), *Feminist generations: The persistence of the radical women's movement*, Temple University Press.

Wiktorowicz, Q. (2001), *The management of Islamic activism. Salafis, the Muslim Brotherhood, and state power in Jordan*, SUNY Press.

Wolf, A. (2019), "Morocco's Hirak movement and legacies of contention in the Rif", *The Journal of North African Studies*, 24(1): 1–6.

Author's Information:

Ahmed Chapi is a PhD candidate and teaching assistant at the Institute of Political Studies in the University of Lausanne and a member of the Research Centre on Political Action (CRAPUL). His main research interests include tactical innovation and the strategic uses of social media in protest movements.