Nonviolent Tactics and Violent State Repression, 
1989-2010:
Insights from a global dataset.

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Abstract

The recent events of the Arab Spring have re-focused the world’s attention on the power of nonviolent action, demonstrating in a dramatic fashion that unified people power movements can overthrow seemingly-entrenched dictators in a very short period of time. A sizeable body of research on nonviolent action seeks to understand how, why and where it can be effective in altering structures of oppression, inequality and marginalisation. Detailed case study analysis has been made of most of the major campaigns of nonviolent action in the twentieth century, showing that it can be a powerful method of collective political action. There is also a small but growing interest in using quantitative methods to research nonviolent action, exemplified by Karatnycky and Ackerman’s (2005) study of its role in democratic transitions and Chenoweth and Stephan’s (2011) comparison of the success rates of violent and nonviolent conflicts. However, much of the research on nonviolent action to date has been affected by selection biases in favour of large, well-publicised campaigns. There has been little attempt beyond this to define the empirical boundaries of unarmed conflict. The consequence of this is that what we know about nonviolent action is limited to large campaigns; we know little about the “nonstarters,” the campaigns that are too small, peripheral or unsuccessful to draw attention (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011, 15). Knowledge is especially lacking on what impact extremely violent repression has on smaller opposition movements (Carter, 2009).

This thesis asks the question: How effective are nonviolent tactics in the face of severe repression? In order to answer this I adopt a novel approach to studying nonviolent action, by shifting the analytical focus from campaigns to tactics. By making the contentious tactical interaction between civilians and the state the focus of enquiry, data can be gathered from news sources, NGO reports and academic accounts in a systematic way, using theoretically-grounded definitions
and without the selection biases affecting previous work. This has generated a new dataset on nonviolent tactics met with extreme government repression: the State Violence against Unarmed Protests 1989-2010 dataset. This includes 38 cases of severe government repression of civilians using nonviolent tactics, 18 of which have not been recorded in previous empirical work. Nonviolent tactics are shown to be capable of being successful even in the face of extreme violence, with 26.3% resulting in success for the civilian. The key factors associated with the outcomes of these cases are shown to be the aspirations of the opposition group, and whether the conflict is divided along ethnic lines. It is concluded that this analytical framework is an effective means of gathering empirical data on nonviolent action, and can complement existing research.
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### Acronyms

Names given using English translation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BDK</td>
<td>Kingdom of Kongo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COSIMO</td>
<td>Conflict Simulation Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COW</td>
<td>Correlates of War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of the Congo</td>
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<tr>
<td>EIU</td>
<td>Economist Intelligence Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARC</td>
<td>Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPI</td>
<td>Ivoiran Popular Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAM</td>
<td>Free Aceh Movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>GNVAD</td>
<td>Global Nonviolent Action Database</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIIK</td>
<td>Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>HRW</td>
<td>Human Rights Watch</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICG</td>
<td>International Crisis Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>JVP</td>
<td>People’s Liberation Front</td>
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<tr>
<td>LTTE</td>
<td>Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAR</td>
<td>Minorities at Risk dataset</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDC</td>
<td>Movement for Democratic Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAVCO</td>
<td>Nonviolent And Violent Conflict Outcomes dataset</td>
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<tr>
<td>NLD</td>
<td>National League for Democracy</td>
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<td>PKI</td>
<td>Communist Party of Indonesia</td>
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<tr>
<td>RDR</td>
<td>Rally of the Republicans</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIPRI</td>
<td>Stockholm International Peace Research Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>---------</td>
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<tr>
<td>SVUP</td>
<td>State Violence against Unarmed Protests dataset</td>
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<tr>
<td>UCDP</td>
<td>Uppsala Conflict Data Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>UCDP-OSV</td>
<td>Uppsala Conflict Data Program One-sided Violence dataset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UFC</td>
<td>Union of Forces for Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNSC</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>UP</td>
<td>Patriotic Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZANU-PF</td>
<td>Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front</td>
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1. Introduction

“It costs me less in every sense to incur the penalty of disobedience to the state than it would to obey.”

1.1 Overview

On 17 December, 2010 in Tunisia, a young man named Mohammed Bouazizi set himself alight in a desperate act of protest against the Tunisian police and authorities. Although his act was highly personal, it nevertheless struck a chord with people throughout the country and inspired rapidly-increasing demonstrations in the following days (UCDP, n.d.). In only a few short weeks, and in the face of lethal violence by the Tunisian security forces, unarmed civilians forced President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, ruler for 23 years, to step down and flee to Saudi Arabia. Although the reform process is far from complete, Tunisia has been a model of a people power revolution, leading from dictatorship to a broad-based democratic process (ICG, 2011a). This revolution inspired a similar movement in Egypt, as well as other countries throughout the Arab world – what has become known as the Arab Spring. Like Tunisia, the popular protests in Tahrir Square, Cairo, were met with harsh repression leading to civilian deaths. Also like Tunisia, within a few weeks long-time ruler Hosni Mubarak was forced to step down. However in this case the reforms have been limited, and the situation in Egypt has remained highly volatile, with continued clashes between protestors and the military and an increasingly polarised political scene (ICG, 2012). An even greater contrast can be seen with the initially-unarmed uprising that began in Syria a month after Mubarak stepped down. There, peaceful protests were met with extremely brutal repression, with dozens of civilians killed in the first few weeks alone, and opposition towns bombarded with artillery and heavy armour (UCDP, n.d.). The radicalisation of both the opposition and the regime’s support base has eclipsed peaceful protest, and the conflicts has now taken on the appearance of civil war with no end in sight.

If it is true, as Mao Tse Tung ([1966] 2000, 24) wrote, that “political power grows out of the barrel of a gun,” then we are at a loss to explain the different outcomes of these three conflicts. In each, a powerful government backed by the
military has used violent force against the civilian opposition, but each case has had a very different outcome: from democratic revolution, to limited backlash against a figurehead, to repression of the nonviolent movement and the rise of an armed insurgency. This thesis is an attempt to explain some of the variation in conflicts like these, where civilians using nonviolent tactics are met with extremely violent government repression. While much has been said in the later years of the twentieth century about the effects of repression on the use of nonviolent tactics by civilians, there has yet to be a systematic, empirical analysis of where these conflicts occur, how frequent they are and what the outcomes are for the civilian opposition. This research therefore aims to fill this gap in the literature, and by studying cases where the outcomes are known, contribute towards our understanding of the events still unfolding in North Africa and the Middle East.
1.2 Research question

The research question which this thesis sets out to examine is: How effective is the use of nonviolent tactics by civilians in the face of extremely violent government repression? In answering this I will identify the prevalence and distribution of nonviolent tactics met with violent government repression, examine the structural conditions and features of both parties to these conflicts, and draw conclusions about how these conditions and features affect their outcomes.¹

¹ After consultation, I have decided to adopt the first-person voice when referring to the original aspects of this research, as the convention of referring to the author in third person would in this case make for unwieldy expression and difficult reading.
1.3 Context and motivation

The study of nonviolent action is still very much an emerging field. Gene Sharp’s definitive work *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, in which he defined pragmatic nonviolent action and listed 198 methods of its use, was published in 1973. Although it has been heavily criticised for its voluntaristic and individualistic assumptions (e.g., Lipsitz & Kritzer, 1975; Martin, 1989; Schock, 2005), Sharp’s work has formed the basis for most research on the subject ever since then. Most scholarly work has been devoted to exploring the dynamics by which people power movements have implemented nonviolent tactics in various conflicts during the 20th and 21st centuries. Much of this research has used comparative case studies to examine these dynamics; some of the main works using this method include Zunes, Kurtz and Asher (1999), Ackerman and DuVall (2000), Boudreau (2004), Schock (2005), Stephan (2006, 2009), Clark (2009) Roberts and Garton Ash (2011), and Nepstad (2011).

Recently scholars have begun to take more of an interest in studying these movements using quantitative methods. Quantitative research is important because, when it is done well, it can “question our general perceptions and interpretation of ever-changing global conflict patterns with sober statistics based on empirical evidence” (Fetch & Rohloff, 2000, 380). There is a significant field of large-n research on violent conflict. These include data on wars and militarized disputes (Sarkees & Wayman, 2010; Themnér & Wallensteen, 2011), ethnic conflicts (MAR, 2009a), one-sided violence against civilians (Eck & Hultman, 2007), political crises and protracted conflicts (International Crisis Behaviour Project, 2010) and coups d’état (Powell & Thyne, 2011). However there has been little specifically on the subject of collective nonviolent political action, and how this fits into the wider field of conflict research. There are two

2 The Correlates of War and Uppsala Conflict Data Program projects are two of the largest and most comprehensive on interstate and intrastate warfare. See Eck (2005) and Wallensteen (2012) for overviews of other significant projects.
**Selection bias** is defined here as: “A systematic distortion of an expected statistical result due to a factor not allowed for in its derivation; also, a tendency to produce such distortion” (*Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “bias”, accessed June 15, 2012, [http://www.oed.com](http://www.oed.com)).

Despite its important role in challenging traditional theories of power and violence from the political science and international relations fields, previous research on nonviolent action has been characterised by some pervasive selection biases.\(^3\) Firstly, the focus on campaigns is ubiquitous. Examples of significant works that have campaigns as the subject of enquiry include Zunes, Kurtz and Asher (1999), Ackerman and DuVall (2000), Karatnycky and Ackerman (2005), Stephan & Chenoweth (2008), Stephan (2009), Roberts and Garton Ash (2009) and Chenoweth and Stephan (2011). This focus is often not discussed or problematised, and it is taken for granted that only the systematic use of nonviolent tactics, rather than isolated protest events, is worth studying, even though a link can be seen between spontaneous protests and larger uprisings (Mitchell, 2012; UCDP, n.d.). Secondly there is usually a certain

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\(^3\) “Selection bias” is defined here as: “A systematic distortion of an expected statistical result due to a factor not allowed for in its derivation; also, a tendency to produce such distortion” (*Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “bias”, accessed June 15, 2012, [http://www.oed.com](http://www.oed.com)).
threshold of size. “Nonstarters” (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011, 15) or limited social movements (Carter, 2012) are usually dismissed from analysis, as are cases where nonviolent action does not ‘mature’ or is quickly repressed by government actions. This also includes cases that for one reason or another have not gained much public attention, particularly among Western audiences (Martin, Varney & Vickers, 2001). The result of using these selection criteria is that an academic consensus of the cases that should be researched has emerged, sideling the study those cases that do not fit the standard model well (McCarthy & Kruegler, 1993; Martin, Varney & Vickers, 2001). The case study literature in particular sees frequent repetition of certain stand-out cases, such as the Philippine People Power movement or the Colour Revolutions in Eastern Europe. The consequence of this is that what we know about nonviolent tactics is mostly limited to large, public, successful campaigns against the state that are entirely or ‘mostly’ nonviolent. There has been little attempt to define the empirical boundaries of unarmed conflict (McAdam, Tarrow & Tilly, 2001), leaving the field without concrete evidence of the actual prevalence and distribution of nonviolent action. There is little to no analysis of cases where armed movements use nonviolent action, where nonviolent action is overshadowed by or difficult to separate from armed conflicts, or cases where unarmed conflict has been initiated but quickly defeated by the government. Analyses have also tended to downplay or ignore features of unarmed conflicts such as peripheral protestor violence that do not fit the ‘nonviolence’ label well (Martin, Varney & Vickers, 2001). This thesis is a novel attempt to solve these problems by adopting a new analytical approach. Instead of focusing on campaigns, I make the use of nonviolent tactics the focus of enquiry. The focus on tactics has the potential to deal with the selection biases present in previous research by expanding and helping to define the empirical boundaries of unarmed conflict. By examining borderline cases in a systematic and theoretically grounded way we can gain a more in-depth understanding of the way contentious interactions between civilians and government play out.
1.4 Results

This study has generated new data on nonviolent tactics met with severe government repression from 1989-2010, which I call the “State Violence against Unarmed Protests 1989-2010 (SVUP)” dataset. Using strict criteria for inclusion, this dataset has a comprehensive, global coverage of this empirical phenomenon, covering cases where strictly nonviolent civilians have been targeted by government security forces resulting in 25 or more deaths during one calendar year. I have identified 38 actor-years during this period that meet these criteria, using a systematic search method focused on the tactical interactions between civilians and state, and drawn from the UCDP One-Sided Violence v.1.3, 1989-2010 (2011) dataset. 18 of the cases recorded here have not been covered in previous empirical research. These cases problematise the standard picture of nonviolent action, as they are shown to involve nominally institutional actors, to use nonviolent tactics in support of armed insurgencies, or to be ‘nonstarter’ campaigns that have been quickly repressed.

26.3% of these cases resulted in a successful outcome for the civilian side, defined as the achievement of one or more of their core objectives. 5.3% were labelled as a partial success, where there was either more than one conflict in that year with mixed results, or where the civilian side achieved only secondary goals. 68.4% of the conflicts were failures, meaning that the civilian side was repressed by the government. This shows that nonviolent tactics can be effective in the face of extreme repression, although only a minority of cases have resulted in full success for the civilian side. The results also imply that violent repression is a highly risky tactic for governments to use. 63% of cases in the SVUP dataset resulted in backfire, where the repressive government incurs severe penalties either domestically or internationally as a consequence of using violence against unarmed civilians. Nonviolent tactics met with extremely violent repression are shown to be a very uncommon form of conflict, representing only 1.8% of the
total number of conflict years recorded in the UCDP armed, non-state and one-
sided conflict datasets. They are geographically concentrated in Sub-Saharan
Africa and Asia, accounting for 50% and 26% of the recorded cases respectively.

The aspirations and features of the civilian opposition are shown to be strongly
related to the outcomes of unarmed conflicts. The research findings presented
here support the hypothesis that challenges to horizontal legitimacy,
characterised by conflicts along ethnic lines or those pursuing territorial aims,
are less likely to be successful than challenges to vertical legitimacy, conflicts
over the legitimacy of the government as a whole. 56% of conflicts over
government resulted in the resignation of a political leader or a change in the
structure of government, while only 14% of territorial conflicts and 6% of
conflicts along ethnic lines were successful. Furthermore only 8% of conflicts
over reform or government policy were successful, countering previous
arguments that these are likely to be more successful than radical conflicts over
government or territory (Shaykhutdinov, 2010; Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011).
1.5 Contributions

This thesis contributes to our understanding of the outcomes of nonviolent tactics when they are met with extremely violent repression. Carter (2009, 39) observes that “one key question about civil resistance is still how far it can succeed against extreme repression.” Although most nonviolent action campaigns are met with some form of repression (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011), the dynamics of repression in its most extreme form are still not well understood. The research presented here illustrates some of these dynamics, showing that nonviolent tactics can be successful even in the face of extreme repression.

Furthermore it contributes a novel approach to researching and understanding nonviolent action, by studying nonviolent tactics rather than campaigns. The research findings show that previous work has been affected by selection biases in favour of large, public campaigns that are ‘mostly’ nonviolent, and have neglected the boundary cases where nonviolence is hidden in the shadow of violent conflict, where it has escaped public or scholarly attention or where civilian resistance has been quickly extinguished by extreme government responses. By studying tactics we are able to account for nonviolent action as a general feature of conflict, rather than a separate form of conflict that is subject to generalisations and simplification.

A secondary contribution is the expansion and nuancing of the information presented in the UCDP One-Sided Violence v.1.3 1989-2010 (2011) dataset, on which the SVUP dataset is based. By treating the civilians in this dataset as active political actors rather than passive recipients of violence we are able to gain additional insight into the use of one-sided violence against civilians. This research demonstrates that when one-sided violence is used against an
organised civilian opposition it is indeterminate and risky for the government involved.
1.6 Exclusions

Due to the limitations of time, space and resources in a Master's project detailed case study analysis of the conflicts that have been identified cannot be provided, although many of them are used as exemplars throughout the text. Nor is this project intended to provide guidance to activists, for which extensive online resources exist.\textsuperscript{4} Although there has been a focus in this particular field on demonstrating that nonviolent action in general can be an effective political tool, this fact has been well established and so I do not dwell on it further (McCarthy & Kruegler, 1993; Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011).

The nonviolent tactics that are recorded in this research all occur in the context of violent government repression. Nonviolent action is an extremely broad and diverse form of conflict, and the conclusions that are presented here only represent a small sub-set of it. Therefore I do not make any claims about cases where the government does not respond with violent repression; all arguments or conclusions should be understood to have this condition attached.

\textsuperscript{4} For example, the Albert Einstein Institution (n.d., http://www.aeinstein.org) and the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict (2009, http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org) contain extensive resources designed to be used by nonviolent action activists.
1.7 Outline of the thesis

The rest of the thesis is structured as follows. Chapter 2: Theory of Nonviolent Action traces the development of research on nonviolent action through the twentieth century. It discusses Gene Sharp's influential consent theory of power and the contributions that he has made to understanding nonviolent action. The existing research on nonviolent action is then problematised, showing the selection biases that affect the conclusions that can be drawn from this work.

Chapter 3: Research Design explains and justifies the research paradigm of using news sources to gather quantitative data, explains the definitions used in the State Violence against Unarmed Protests 1989-2010 (SVUP) dataset, and how these have been operationalised.

Chapter 4: Results presents the data gathered in the State Violence against Unarmed Protests 1989-2010 dataset. This shows the outcomes of extreme repression against nonviolent tactics, the prevalence and distribution of these conflicts, and how some of the explanatory variables influence the outcomes.

Chapter 5: Discussion draws out some of the possible explanations for the research findings presented in Chapter 4. It also evaluates the approach that has been used for this thesis and suggests avenues for future research before concluding.
2. Theory of Nonviolent Action

“Civil resistance is not about melting hearts but about developing power, and about the artful adaptation of strategy to the complex linkages with other forms and dimensions of power.”

2.1 Developing the theory of nonviolence: from Gandhi to Sharp

In order to situate this research in the context of nonviolent action theory I will trace the development of thinking on the subject since the beginning of the twentieth century. The two most important thinkers in the field are Mohandas Gandhi and Gene Sharp; as Weber (2003, 251) states, they “tower above the rest[...] there is simply no getting around these two.” This section will give a brief review of the shift in thought from Gandhi’s idealistic ‘principled’ nonviolence to Sharp’s hard-bitten ‘pragmatic’ nonviolent action, and the consequences this has had for the study of nonviolence. Following this we turn to a discussion of how Sharp’s theory has been adopted and problematised by researchers in the field since then, before explaining why the current research adopts a tactical approach to studying nonviolent action.

The study of nonviolent action in relation to theories of politics and power is rooted in the work of its most famous proponent, Mohandas Gandhi. Gandhi was certainly not the first person to develop a theory of nonviolence, nor were his ideas completely original: Herman (1969) argues that Gandhi’s thinking was an amalgamation of the philosophies of Henry Thoreau and Leo Tolstoy, and that in particular the tactical techniques of non-cooperation that Gandhi espoused came from Thoreau’s essay *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience* ([1849] 2004). His influence instead came from his ‘experiments with truth,’ the practical examples of nonviolence in action led by him in South Africa during the 1906-1914 satyagraha campaign and in India during the independence movement in the 1930s (Carter, 2009; GNVAD, 2011). Gandhi articulated what has come to be known as principled nonviolence: a highly moral approach to conflict that rejects violence on principled grounds, and emphasises human harmony and understanding over coercion and struggle (Weber, 2003). He introduced the term *satyagraha*, or ‘adherence to truth,’ for his idea that the power of nonviolence lay in the moral force of “nonviolent courage and self-suffering”
(Majmudar, 2005, 138). *Satyagraha* is based on three principles, taken here from Majmudar’s (2005) biography of Gandhi. The first is complete personal commitment to the higher ideal of ‘Truth,’ which Gandhi saw as equivalent to God. This commitment enabled the *satyagraha* (follower of *satyagraha*) to bear violence without hatred or retaliation. The second is a total commitment to nonviolence. Gandhi thought that one could not obtain peaceful (or ‘truthful’) ends without using nonviolent means to get there. Nonviolence to Gandhi was not a passive acceptance of violence but an “unconditional, universal, compassionate love” (Majmudar, 2005, 140). The final principle is the voluntary acceptance of violence from others, which based on the prior principles would both affirm the *satyagrahi*’s higher moral position and convert the opponent to the *satyagrahi*’s point of view. This conversion of the opponent was intended to resolve conflict rather than pursue it to its final conclusion; Gandhi always preferred that one’s opponent be converted rather than beaten, to ensure a peaceful outcome. However if this is not possible, *satyagraha* provides a way of pursuing the conflict in such a way that the chance of conversion is not excluded (Weber, 2003).

The theme of accepting suffering to convert the opponent is also present in Martin Luther King Jr.’s meditation on civil disobedience, *Letter from Birmingham Jail* ([1963] 2000). King argues, in line with Thoreau’s ([1894] 2004) conception of civil disobedience, that the acceptance of punishment for the breaking of a law that one feels is unjust will “arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice,” on the condition that a commitment to a “higher moral law” is expressed by this action (King, [1963] 2000, 6). However King's theory of nonviolence represents something of a departure from Gandhi, including some elements in common with Gene Sharp's later theory of nonviolent action. While Gandhi preferred that conflict be transformed into harmonious relationships, King argues that “constructive, nonviolent tension...is necessary for growth” ([1963] 2000, 3). Nonviolent direct action, of which civil disobedience is one tactic, deliberately creates social crisis in order to expose the underlying injustices that had remained hidden. King ([1963] 2000, 2), like Gandhi, thought that a commitment to justice would lead to justice and love, and

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that those pursuing this course required “self purification.” However his focus on nonviolent direct action as primarily conflictual is a bridge between Gandhi’s entirely persuasive and moral view of nonviolence and Sharp’s view of nonviolent action as combative and coercive.

In the 1960s while King was active in the civil rights movement, Gene Sharp was developing his own theory of nonviolent action (Weber, 2003). Sharp began as an ardent student of Ghandi’s ideas, believing in the power of love and personal moral standing to alter systems of exploitation and repression. As his political thought matured he steadily moved away from the principles of satyagraha and developed a theory that was much more his own (ibid.). Sharp’s innovation was to separate the study of nonviolent action as a political tool from the philosophical and religious principles of nonviolence that had informed previous thought. This enabled him to study the methods of nonviolent action as empirical phenomena, opening up a much wider field than had been available to scholars limited to examining Gandhi-like approaches to nonviolence (McCarthy & Kruegler, 1993). This is seen clearly in his main theoretical work, The Politics of Nonviolent Action (1973). In this book Sharp describes a model of nonviolent action that does not rest on a principled stance, nor relies on the convervive or persuasive power of suffering. He explains the success and potential of nonviolent action as a result of a consent theory of power: that people can be governed only if they co-operate with the government. Nonviolent action then consists of the complete withdrawal of this consent. Most of the work is devoted to identifying the different ways this is possible; only the first chapter explains this theory of power and a scant twelve pages of The Politics of Nonviolent Action are given to defining what nonviolent action actually is. Nevertheless this has almost universally been used as the basis for research on nonviolent action since then.
2.2 Pragmatic nonviolence and Sharp’s theory of nonviolent action

Sharp’s theory of the power of nonviolent action, as stated above, relies on a highly practical view of the utility of nonviolence. From this he has developed a picture of nonviolent action that is purely descriptive of the actions involved, and does not require reading into the motivations or beliefs of those carrying them out. This has been adopted as the standard explanation of nonviolent action and has guided research on the subject ever since. There have not been any major challenges to Sharp’s definition of nonviolent action from within the field, although there have been some challenges to the theory of power upon which it is based, discussed below. Most of the literature has instead focused on analysing case studies to illustrate the dynamics and processes involved in successful civilian resistance to state power. I will discuss the essential features of this model in more depth, before turning to a review and critique of existing research. Explanations of what nonviolent action is are found frequently in the literature; for ease of reading and reference I cite only the most relevant or illustrative sources.

According to Sharp (1973, 64), nonviolent action is:

“A generic term covering dozens of specific methods of protest, noncooperation and intervention, in all of which the activists conduct the conflict by doing – or refusing to do – certain things without using physical violence[...]It is action that is nonviolent.”

Schock (2003) provides a particularly clear conception of what nonviolent action is and is not. As is implicit in the name, nonviolent action is not inaction. In fact Sharp (1973) is careful to distinguish between passivity or surrender and nonviolent action: nonviolent action always involves some kind of conscious, active deviation from expected modes of behaviour, even if that includes a refusal to do something. Schock (2003, 705) argues that active conflict involves a “direct means of prosecuting conflicts with opponents and an explicit rejection of inaction, submission and passivity.” This is not a complete break from principled
nonviolence: Gandhi did not believe that suffering alone would cause the conversion of an opponent without some kind of active component that upset the status quo, such as a Dharasana salt raids where it was the satyagrahi’s deliberate action of approaching fences that invited retaliation. Even Gregg’s (1935, 44) interpretation of satyagraha, the epitome of principled nonviolence, still states that the satyagrahi “not only lets the attacker come, but, as it were, pulls him forward.” However it is a clear rejection of any idea that nonviolence is equivalent with passive resistance. Nonviolent action in Sharp’s theory has more in common with the tactics used by a military campaign than tactics of compromise, negotiation, or conciliation, except that it pursues its goals without the use of arms or direct threats to the physical integrity of the opponent. Sharp has argued that nonviolent action is a form of armed conflict, except that the arms are psychological, social, economic and political (Arrow, 2011). In keeping with a militant style, nonviolent action is not just limited to reformist or moderate goals but can be used to pursue radical goals, such as changing the type of government or pursuing secession (Schock, 2003). The fact that campaigns of nonviolent action have in fact been used to pursue these aims, and successfully so, is by now well documented (Ackerman & DuVall, 2000; Schock, 2005; Karatnycky & Ackerman, 2005; Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011).

Following from the pragmatic nature of nonviolent action as defined here, there is no requirement that activists use nonviolence out of any kind of principled stance or belief. Schock (2003, 705), citing George Lakey, argues that the majority of activists who use nonviolent action are “rarely pacifists.” In fact pacifists may actually prefer to avoid nonviolent action because of its coercive, confrontational nature (Sharp, 1973, 68). Nor is there any requirement that those using nonviolent action recognise it as such. Schock (2005) argues that relying on self-description to identify unarmed conflicts is problematic because the groups involved may not make the conscious association between their actions and nonviolence, given the heavily value-laden usage of the term. He notes that anti-Apartheid activists in South Africa in 1986 were found not only to fail to recognise their movement as nonviolent but to actively resist the term, as they believed it had connotations of passivity and surrender (Schock, 2005, 11).
Robert Helvey, a former U.S. Army colonel turned nonviolent action researcher and activist, once taught a lesson on nonviolent action to ethnic insurgent groups in Myanmar; the insurgents refused to listen until he renamed it a lesson on “political defiance.” Nonviolent action is identified by the actual tactics that are used, not how the organisations name themselves; the focus on tactics is a key point, and we will return to it repeatedly later.

Nonviolent actions are carried out more-or-less openly and in public. Private acts of defiance and resistance by civilians against a government, including collective acts, are common in repressive contexts and generally precede public action. The existence of what Scott (1990) calls hidden transcripts of resistance helps to explain the often extremely rapid mobilisation that can occur during an unarmed uprising. However until these acts take on a public form they can only have limited impact on patterns of domination and subjugation, and cannot foster the kind of widespread tension that leads to social change (King, [1963] 2000). It is the public manifestation of this resistance that has a direct effect on power relationships and renegotiation, and so this is what is studied as nonviolent action. As well as taking place publicly, nonviolent actions are transgressive. Sharp (1973) defines ‘transgressive‘ as action that involves omission, where people actively refuse to behave in a way that is expected of them by custom or law, commission, where people behave in ways that they are expected not to, or some combination of the two. It is generally accepted that transgressive actions operate outside the bounds of institutional politics, although McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001, 7) include acts by “newly-formed political actors” as well as forbidden tactics. These types of acts are obviously very context-specific; a protest march in a liberal democracy might hardly draw attention, whereas the same march under a repressive military junta might attract heavy repression. Nonviolent action is non-institutional because the institutional measures a government puts in place for conflict resolution are generally not capable of major disruption of the status quo; as Thoreau writes: “As for adopting the ways of the State has provided [sic] for remedying the evil, I know not of such ways.

5 Erica Chenoweth, “Nonviolent action” (lecture [video conference], University of Otago, Dunedin, NZ, March 19, 2012).
They take too much time, and a man's life will be gone” ([1849] 2004, 7). Like passive resistance, institutionalised processes like lobbying or court appeals may be a part of an unarmed conflict, but do not constitute nonviolent action per se (Sharp, 1973, 67). Likewise verbal or written expressions of dissent are not normally considered to be nonviolent action, although in a sufficiently repressive context a public expression of dissent can carry a high level of risk and be extremely disruptive (Sharp, 1973, 119; Scott, 1990).

Sharp’s definition of nonviolent action has been adopted more or less as is in the academic literature on nonviolence. Nonviolent action is theorised as a dynamic interaction between two opposing sides: the government, and civilians who are resisting its rule. Although Garcia-Duran (2009) is an exception with his analysis of nonviolent action against guerrillas and paramilitaries in Colombia, in Sharp’s theory and most of the nonviolent action literature it is presumed that action is carried out against a sovereign power.6 Civilians do not challenge the government directly. Instead nonviolent action is targeted at what Sharp calls the government’s pillars of support or its “necessary sources of political power” (Sharp, 2010, 18). These pillars of support are the government’s sources of power in society, and the way that power is expressed onto its civilian subjects. Sharp identifies six sources of power: authority, human resources, skills and knowledge, so-called intangibles, material resources, and sanctioning power. Authority is the way the government claims legitimacy, whether through divine right, electoral mandate or otherwise. It is the basic claim to the right to govern (Helvey, 2004). It is closely related to the intangible factors, which Sharp (1973) theorises as the individual or group psychological factors that predispose people to obey, although this definition is not developed much further. Human resources are the actual people who support the regime, whether for the sake of power, economic incentives, allegiance and identity with the ruler or otherwise. Skills and knowledge are the technical aspects of governance, present in areas like the

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bureaucracy, that enables the country to function on a day-to-day basis. Economic factors are the government’s influence over economic policy, and ability to bestow or withdraw economic benefits to individuals or groups in society. States that are more centralised or have more economic power are better able to impose their will on their subjects than those that are very poor or dependent on scarce resources. Finally the state’s sanctioning power is its ability to inflict violence or other forms of coercion on its subjects or other states. This includes direct coercion such as executions or imprisonment, or more subtle forms of structural violence such as marginalising various groups from education or employment (Helvey, 2004). The identification and targeting of key pillars of support is the primary purpose of nonviolent action (Sharp, 1973). The more essential the pillar is to the government’s power, the more effective a successful nonviolent action targeting it can potentially be. For example, stay-away strikes by oil workers during the Iranian revolution were a major blow to that regime’s revenue streams, and may have been the deciding factor in that conflict (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011, 104).

The fundamental principle of Sharp’s theory of power is that all of these pillars ultimately rely on consent and cooperation. Someone has to actively cooperate with their superior’s orders to fire on demonstrators. People whose jobs provide the financial backing for a dictator have to actually go to work. The principle dynamic by which the civilian opposition attacks the pillars of support is by just as actively withdrawing that support. When the government can no longer have its will enforced by its agents, says Sharp (1973; 2010), it can no longer govern effectively, and the balance of power has been radically shifted to the civilian opposition. This can be seen most clearly in the form of security force defections. When the instruments of the state’s coercive power refuse to carry out their orders a major pillar of support is removed, a process which has been seen in several successful campaigns (Nepstad, 2011). Effective nonviolent action therefore targets these pillars, rather than the government itself. This is the dynamic of a successful nonviolent campaign.
Sharp (1973) and Schock (2003) identify four specific ways through which this success happens: conversion, accommodation, coercion and disintegration. Conversion is closest to the Gandhian model of nonviolence, when the conflict is resolved by the government being persuaded of the value of the opposition’s cause (Sharp, 1973). This is only one of the methods by which nonviolent action can work, and Schock (2003) argues that it is the least likely to be effective, especially when isolated from political and economic pressure. Accommodation entails a negotiated solution, although the views of either party may not have changed. This is the outcome that Martin Luther King Jr. ([1963] 2000) thought was the correct goal of nonviolent direct action, one that could not be achieved without creating social tension. Gurr (2000) argues that this is the most likely outcome for nonviolent ethnic movements as it requires the fewest concessions from policy makers. Nonviolent coercion is more forceful because it entails gaining concessions from the opponent against their will, such as when a dictator is forced to step down by popular pressure and the withdrawal of support of key allies. The final dynamic is disintegration, which is equivalent to a total revolution and dissolution of the previous state structure achieved by nonviolent means. This happens when a dictator’s sources of power “have been so undercut by nonviolent means that he no longer has control” (Sharp, 1973, 69). In this case the resignation of a political leader is meaningless, because there is no longer a functional position of power from which to resign (Schock, 2003; Arrow, 2011).

Nonviolent action itself is separated into three categories: protest and persuasion, non-cooperation and nonviolent intervention. Protest and persuasion consists of the various tactics such as demonstrations, open letters and petitions that express group dissent in a public fashion. The central purpose of these types of action is communicative, as suggested by the fact that tactics of protest and persuasion are mainly symbolic rather than direct. They express passion or show that the opposition is organised and willing to act (Martin & Varney, 2003), or they attempt to influence or persuade internal and external actors (Sharp, 1973). Martin and Varney (2003) argue that protest tactics are a form of dialogue between government and opposition. Tactics of non-
cooperation are characterised by strikes, stay-always and boycotts where people withdraw their support from the government. These attempt to influence the government more directly than symbolic acts, by disrupting normal patterns of behaviour and social relationships. They demonstrate the withdrawal of consent that is central to Sharp’s theory of power. Sharp (1973) further divides these into social non-cooperation, such as protest emigration, where people refuse to take part in normal social relations; economic non-cooperation such as strikes or boycotts which have the potential to impose costs on the opponents but are also communicative; and political non-cooperation, where people refuse to accept the legitimacy and authority of the government with actions like boycotting elections or refusing to accept officials’ orders. Most of these acts are acts of omission, the refusal to act in ways that are normally expected. Nonviolent intervention on the other hand more often involves acts of commission. It is a creative process where people initiate challenges to specific pillars of support for the government which tend to be more coercive than other nonviolent acts (Martin & Varney, 2003). Examples of nonviolent intervention include sit-ins, hunger strikes, and the creation of alternative institutions (Sharp, 1973). These acts of resistance move beyond simply demonstrating opposition or refusing cooperation to instigating direct action against a government’s authority.

The type of government is not an essential feature of nonviolent action – it can be effective against nondemocratic regimes just as it can be ineffective against the most open polities (Schock, 2003). Several works restrict their analyses to unarmed conflicts against authoritarian regimes (Zunes, 1994; Schock, 2005; Karatnycky & Ackerman, 2005; Nepstad, 2011; Svensson & Lindgren, 2011a). Certainly these cases are more interesting than those in democracies given the apparently much more oppressive governments involved, and they continue to be surprising; to cite a recent example, U.S. intelligence analysts failed to predict the Tunisian and Egyptian uprisings during the Arab Spring (Chenoweth & Lewis, 2012). Nor does the civilian opposition have to be democratic in its organisation or its aspirations, although Clark (2009) is an exception in requiring a commitment to liberal values of democracy, justice and human rights to be called ‘people power.’ Although unarmed conflicts tend to be oriented towards
democratic structures and principles due to their widespread popular participation (Karatnycky & Ackerman, 2005; Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011), the same analysis could be applied to a nonviolent communist or anti-democratic movement. Sharp (1973, 71) notes that “there is nothing in nonviolent action to prevent it from being used for both ‘good’ and ‘bad’ causes, although the social consequences of its use may differ considerably from the consequences of violence used for the same cause.” Indeed Schelling (1968) develops the notion of civilian offence, arguing that foreign governments could instigate domestic nonviolent action campaigns as an alternative to waging conventional offensive warfare. It follows from the multiple uses of nonviolent action that democracy or its absence is better viewed as an independent variable than a selection criterion.

The civilian opposition itself is theorised as a more or less broad-based group. While Kishtainy (2001) argues that an individual can pursue ‘civilian jihad,’ and civil disobedience as a type of nonviolent action can be an individual act (Thoreau, [1849] 2004), the scholarly consensus is that nonviolent action as it is defined here involves a collective or mass movement, with the exact size depending on the context. Although they do not generally have the vertical hierarchies or the demand for unquestioning obedience that characterises violent movements, a viable opposition is military-like in its organisation and the way it executes its tactics (Sharp 1973; Kishtainy, 2001). This is not always apparent, because opposition movements also benefit from a flexible, decentralised command structure. Schock (2005) gives the example of the United Democratic Front in South Africa which was able to avoid repression by co-ordinating the activities of as many as 700 local affiliates. On a superficial examination of nonviolent actions they might appear spontaneous, but in reality most unarmed conflicts involve extensive planning, possibly years of it, before they are initiated publicly.

Another feature of unarmed conflict that is not an essential part of the model is the government’s reaction to nonviolent action. Nonviolent action is always part of a dynamic interaction, but its existence or absence does not depend on the
government refraining from using violent repression. Government responses range from ignoring the opposition or downplaying their influence, which is an active tactic in itself (Martin, 2007), to making symbolic gestures or attempting to co-opt movement leaders (Schock, 2005), to trying to reach an accommodation, right through to heavily armed repression, as can be seen in Syria at the time of writing. Given that we can readily observe a wide variation of these tactics during unarmed conflicts, their selection does not appear to depend on the existence of an unarmed conflict. In other words there is nothing implicit in Sharp's (1973) definition of nonviolent action that requires a violent or a nonviolent government response. It also does not exclude the possibility of violent conflict taking place concurrently, or even as part of the same campaign. Schock (2005) argues that if we only examine conflicts in which no violence has occurred at all we would miss the majority of cases; this means that violence from either direction does not exclude a case from analysis.

There have been some critiques of Sharp's work, the most important of which is the 'structuralist' challenge. This argues that Sharp's model fails to take into account the way that power is established and maintained in society through social, cultural and economic structures. For example, Martin (1989, 213) in a "sympathetic" criticism argues that Sharp construes power relations between civilians and state as a direct relationship, without taking into account the complex forms that relationship takes. He claims that capitalism, patriarchy and bureaucracy, among other social structures, do not fit into the ruler-subject dichotomy well, but that each has a profound effect on the patterns of power and dissent within society. McGuinness (1993) picks up the critique that nonviolent action is not well equipped to challenge patriarchal structures, arguing that the way gendered identities are constructed and that women experience power and consent are too different from Sharp's theory to make it an effective way of analysing these power relationships. Zunes, Kurtz and Asher (1999, 306-308) also call for a nuanced model of nonviolent action, arguing that structural conditions influence the functional ability of civilian actors to challenge the

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7 Atack (2006) provides an overview of the critiques of the consent theory of power, of which Sharp is the most well-known proponent.
government's pillars of support, and that these need to be brought into the picture to explain variations in success. Schock (2005) has addressed some of these issues by bringing in insights from social movement theory. Svensson and Lindgren (2011a) also develop this critique, arguing that structural factors such as the cohesion of the state can have a significant effect on the opposition's chances of success. None of these criticisms should be seen as crippling to Sharp's theory of nonviolent action. Instead they show the areas in which it can and should be developed further to allow for more insightful analysis.
2.3 Repression and backfire

“The opponent’s initial problem,” writes Sharp (1973, 528), “arises from the fact that the nonviolent action disrupts the status quo and requires of him some type of response.” This response can take a variety of forms, as there is variation in how tolerant regimes are of open challenges to their power. Democratic polities are expected to be more open to challenges of this kind than nondemocracies (Schock, 2003), although they are not immune to reactionary responses, as seen during the anti-Vietnam war movement in the United States. At best, a government will acknowledge the legitimacy of nonviolent activists’ concerns and work towards a solution, although in practice if nonviolent action is required this is unlikely. If a challenge is minor or peripheral enough states may simply ignore it. However if the challenge is seen as damaging to the government’s authority, prestige or interests, the government is likely to impose coercive sanctions of some kind (Earl, 2003). Very disruptive resistance campaigns appear to be prone to more severe forms of repression: 88% of campaigns in the NAVCO dataset, both violent and nonviolent, were met with violent repression, including “almost all” major nonviolent campaigns (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011, 51). Sharp (1973) lists eight sanctions that may be used, with or without warning or threats of action. They are:

1. Control of communication, in the form of censorship, propaganda, or interfering with the opposition’s communication channels.
2. Psychological pressures, including smear campaigns, and threats of varying severity.
3. Confiscation of property.
4. Economic sanctions, commonly seen in labour disputes, such as lock-outs or blacklisting.
5. Bans and prohibitions on organisation or assembly, which appear to be particularly common in one-party states.
6. Arrests and imprisonment.
7. Exceptional restrictions such as the imposition of martial law.
8. Direct physical violence, which is the most open and flagrant form of repression, ranging from torture and ‘disappearances’ in custody, to the assassination of key leaders. To firing on protestors. These can be conceptualised as a “repression continuum,” as McPhail and McCarthy (2005, 4) call it, moving from less severe to more severe; the use of direct violence against the opposition obviously marks the most severe end of the continuum. Sharp (1973) argues that the severity of repression tends to increase as the conflict goes on. This kind of direct public action is very risky though (Francisco, 2005) and governments may try to co-opt or dissuade the opposition before such measures become necessary.

Francisco (2005) argues that there are three possible outcomes for the opposition as a results of oppression: doing nothing (i.e., successfully repressed), increased mobilisation, or a shift in tactics with a delayed reaction. Scholars examining the effects of repression on opposition movements have reached varying conclusions as to which of these is more likely (Davenport, 2005). For example, Lichbach (1987) and Moore (1998) argue that an increase in repression will result in a shift of tactics from nonviolent to violent; Francisco (2005) finds that repression generally increases protest mobilisation; while Bob and Nepstad (2007) argue that the outcome depends on how well the opposition is able to construct the meaning of violent repression in a mobilising direction. Chenoweth and Stephan (2011, 68) find that violent repression decreases the likelihood of success (rather than just mobilisation) for nonviolent campaigns by nearly 35%. They conclude that it is the nonviolent character of the opposition that is a major determinant of violent repression’s effect. Nepstad (2011) and Mitchell (2012) reach similar conclusions through case study analysis.

Violent repression also has potentially damaging effects on the government itself. Voluntary suffering, as mentioned above, was one of the core principles of Gandhi’s satyagraha, and includes both self-initiated suffering such as hunger strikes and the opponent-inflicted suffering of violent repression. For example, the Dharasana salt raids, where unresisting protestors were beaten and some
killed by Indian policemen, provoked a public outcry when the story was released in Britain and resulted in a loss of legitimacy for the British rulers of India (Martin, 2007). Gregg (1935, 43) offers one of the first explanations for how inflicting violence on nonviolent protestors can have repercussions for the government with his discussion of “moral jiu-jitsu.” He uses the jiu-jitsu martial art, which focuses on re-directing the opponent’s energy to harm themself, as a metaphor for the so-called loss of moral balance that a repressive opponent experiences when he uses violence against a disciplined satyagrahi. The opponent’s feelings of anger and scorn supposedly are replaced by “curiosity and wonder” and he “loses his poise and self-confidence” (Gregg, 1935, 44). This dramatically weakens the opponent’s position, and opens them to the moral conversion that Gandhi advocated. Gregg’s focus on the psychology of the repressor fails to account for the role of the audience as an independent actor: “If there are onlookers, the assailant soon loses still more poise [...] he realizes the contrast between his own conduct and that of the victim” (Gregg, 1935, 45; italics added). Moral jiu-jitsu has also been criticised on the grounds that empirical evidence counters Gregg’s claims (Martin, 2007).

Sharp (1973) has to reinterpret moral jiu-jitsu because his pragmatic approach attempts to explain the dynamics of nonviolence without relying on moral principle. He instead proposes that repression against nonviolent action can result in “political jiu-jitsu,” which functions when “the violence of the opponent’s repression [is] exposed in the worst possible light” (Sharp, 1973, 657). This stark revelation of the iron fist beneath the velvet glove leads to dissension within the government’s ranks, increased support for the nonviolent resistance amongst the general population, shifts in opinion in the regime’s support base and the potential conversion of uncommitted third parties to the opposition’s cause (Sharp, 2010). This does not rely on the opposition being committed to principled nonviolence, merely a view amongst third parties that brutal violence against unarmed civilians is “distasteful,” “nasty” or “dangerous” (Sharp, 1973, 665). Political jiu-jitsu may happen on its own, but it can also be actively pursued by the opposition by publicising acts of violent repression and
capitalising on shifts in public sentiment to promote the cause; it is more likely to occur when this happens (Martin, 2007).

Work on political jiu-jitsu from Sharp onwards views it as a contest between the opposition and the government over the meaning and legitimacy of repressive violence. It has been repeatedly argued that strict nonviolence by the opposition is important not for its psychological effects on the repressor, but because opposition violence provides such a valuable propaganda tool for the government (Zunes, 1994; Martin, Varney & Vickers, 2001; Martin & Varney, 2003; Martin, 2007; Ackerman & Rodal, 2008; Goldman, 2009; Nepstad, 2011; Mitchell, 2012). Repressive violence is much more easily justified to domestic and international audiences as a tool for restoring law and order than the suppression of legitimate popular grievances. Zunes (1994) argues that this explains the use of agents provocateurs, so that governments can make credible claims of opposition violence. Martin (2007, 2) moves away from the jiu-jitsu metaphor with an examination of “backfire,” where the use of repression by a government results in an “outcome that is not just worse than anticipated – it is negative, namely, worse than having done nothing.” This work focuses on how the government and the opposition contest the ability of the other to present repressive violence in a way that is favourable to their interests. Backfire is expanded from the focus on nonviolent action to include things like police beatings and illegal corporate or government activities.
2.4 Ethnicity and nonviolent challenges to horizontal legitimacy

The relationship between nonviolent action and the territorial goals of autonomy or secession has received limited attention in previous research. Schock (2005) argues that Sharp's theory of nonviolent action is primarily oriented towards overthrowing regimes or governments that are dependent on the support of those choosing to rebel. When outside support is available nonviolent action may not be able to target the pillars of support. For example, Lipsitz and Kritzer (1975) argue that if an occupying power has sufficient numbers it could run a conquered country without the support of the local population, making it difficult for nonviolent action to succeed. At the very least this situation influences the opposition’s choices in favour of more disruptive and less communicative tactics (Stephan, 2006). Civilians who rebel against a government that relies on pillars of support that are not easily accessible or are actively hostile towards the opposition will have a much harder time undermining those pillars (Schock, 2005).

Ethnic minority groups making territorial claims face a similar situation, as the government can draw support from either another minority with which it has strong ties, or from the majority in the rest of the country. Svensson and Lindgren (2011a) propose that these kinds of aspirations are qualitatively different to broad-based challenges against the state. They argue that territorial claims involve challenges to horizontal legitimacy, the authority of the state over some parts of the country’s population but not others. Sharp’s (1973) theory and most previous work on how nonviolent action can be effective, on the other hand, is argued to be oriented towards challenges to vertical legitimacy, the moral and instrumental right of the government to rule at all. Chenoweth & Stephan (2011, 73) find support for the idea that movements with secessionist goals are not subject to the same dynamics as other nonviolent campaigns,
showing that both violent and nonviolent campaigns are very unlikely to succeed in achieving territorial aims.

There are two possible explanations for why challenges to horizontal legitimacy might be less successful than challenges to vertical legitimacy. Movements challenging horizontal legitimacy are more limited in their choice of tactics and their possible outcomes than those challenging vertical legitimacy. Because they have limited access to the state’s pillars of support, they have to use more disruptive tactics based on nonviolent intervention to be effective (Schock, 2005). There is some ambiguity over this. Gurr (2000) and Shaykhutdinov (2010) claim that it is sufficient for groups making territorial claims to show their commitment and numbers through nonviolent demonstrations, although they both focus on the use of nonviolent action as a means to leverage negotiations, rather than undermine government support as Sharp (1973) does.\(^8\) Stephan (2006) on the other hand argues that when territories are ruled without the consent of the population, opposition movements need to dramatically raise the economic, political and military costs of maintaining control in the region in order to be successful. This entails a move towards more disruptive tactics, particularly the creation of alternative institutions. The movements also have to give more attention to winning over third parties that have some influence on the central state; this is Galtung’s “great chain of nonviolence,” whereby groups that do not have direct access to the state’s pillars of support can influence the government by winning over parties that do (cited in Schock, 2005, 54). This is a problem because it limits the total repertoire of actions available to the opposition, narrowing the range of alternative strategies that can be adopted to avoid repression, and limiting the ability of the movement to combine multiple strategies to increase leverage on the state (Sharp, 1973, 501). For example, a movement challenging the vertical legitimacy of the state can appeal to third parties to put pressure on the regime while at the same time undermining the effectiveness of the state security apparatus, which in combination is more likely to be successful than either tactic used in isolation (ibid.). Movements

\(^8\) The Minorities at Risk coding scheme they base their arguments on also includes riots and verbal opposition as ‘nonviolent tactics,’ which is a departure from the nonviolent action literature.
challenging the horizontal legitimacy on the other hand may only be able to appeal to third parties because they do not have access to most of the state’s pillars of support; therefore they lose the advantage of being able to combine multiple strategies for better effect.

An alternative (but not necessarily competing) explanation is that ethnic or territorial conflicts challenging horizontal legitimacy tend to increase social polarisation, because by their very nature they challenge the existence of society as a cohesive political community (Svensson & Lindgren, 2011a). Defining unarmed conflict along group identities creates an “us” versus “them” antagonism. For example, McAdam (2009) shows how the beginning of the civil rights movement in the United States prompted large-scale mobilisation of whites in the southern states in reaction to the perceived threat to their status. Nepstad (2011) suggests that ethnic divisions make security force defections less likely as they have less in common with the nonviolent opposition, thereby decreasing the oppositions chances of success. This polarisation restricts the size of the pool from which the opposition can draw recruits, as the increased salience of group boundaries tends to strengthen in-group cohesion and increases the costs for people leaving the group (Pruitt & Kim, 2004). One of the great strengths of nonviolent action against a single target (government or dictator) is that it brings the civilian population together as a politically active unit in pursuit of a common goal, which can be extremely influential (Karatnycky & Ackerman, 2005; Carter, 2009). Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) argue that the central reason nonviolent campaigns are more successful than violent campaigns is that they have fewer obstacles to participation, and that mass participation is a key determinant of campaign success. Movements that challenge horizontal legitimacy therefore face an additional obstacle to those challenging vertical legitimacy, because by promoting socially division they increase barriers to entry and thus have a smaller total number of people that they can potentially mobilise (Svensson & Lindgren, 2011a, 98). A further consequence of social polarisation is that as group divisions become more defined, support for harsher measures to be used against the opposing group increases (Pruitt & Kim, 2004). Social polarisation can then be used by the government to justify the use of more
severe repression than it would be able to otherwise, and decrease the risk of that repression backfiring afterwards by rationalising it as a necessary defence against the opposition group (Martin, 2007). Therefore unarmed conflicts that challenge horizontal legitimacy are not only less able to access the government’s pillars of support, they have a smaller total pool of supporters which they can potentially mobilise, and they are also more likely to provoke a hostile reaction from other groups in society by highlighting group boundaries. This then explains why we would expect conflicts that are either defined along ethnic lines or a pursuing territorial aims to be less successful than conflicts challenging the government’s vertical legitimacy.
2.5 Nonviolent action in previous research

Sharp’s (1973) model of nonviolent action has been widely accepted in the academic literature on nonviolent action, although the terminology used has varied. Nonviolent action in Sharp’s formulation refers to the actual tactics that civilians use to contest power, all of which involve the withdrawal of their consent from the state (1973, 63). It is implied in Sharp’s theory that these tactics are part of a campaign involving mass participation, but he does not devote much space to describing the nature of the opposition organisation (1973). Others have been more specific in their focus on campaigns: terms frequently used in the literature include ‘mass political defiance’ (Sharp, 2010, quoting Robert Helvey, uncited), ‘unarmed insurrection’ (Zunes, 1994; Schock, 2005; Svensson & Lindgren, 2011a), ‘unarmed resistance’ (Clark, 2009), ‘unarmed uprising’ (Svensson & Lindgren, 2011b), ‘nonviolent social movement’ (Zunes, Kurtz & Asher, 1999; Ackerman & DuVall, 2000), ‘civil resistance’ (Roberts & Garton Ash, 2009; Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011), ‘civil disobedience’ (King, [1963] 2000), ‘civilian jihad’ (Kishtainy, 2001), ‘nonviolent resistance’ (Stephan, 2009), ‘people power’ (Ackerman & DuVall, 2006; Carter, Clark & Randle 2006) and ‘nonviolent revolution’ (Lakey, in Young, 2010).

While these terms mostly refer to the same phenomenon, there are some variations in the way they are used. The distinction is sometimes made between ‘nonviolent’ and ‘unarmed’. Zunes (1994), Schock (2005) and Clark (2009) all use ‘unarmed’ when defining their subjects of research, while the more common usage is ‘nonviolent’. Clark (2009) argues that ‘unarmed’ is the better term because it does not carry the connotations of passivity and surrender that authors using ‘nonviolent’ have to address.9 ‘Civil resistance’ can be used to refer to either reform campaigns (Roberts & Garton Ash, 2009) or radical campaigns (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011). Likewise ‘nonviolent social movements’ include

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9 For problems with this in Arab countries, see Kishtainy, 2001.
movements with restricted social goals (Zunes, Kurtz & Asher, 1999). However most of these terms refer to nonviolent action campaigns with maximalist goals, as suggested by the terms ‘unarmed insurrection’ or ‘nonviolent revolution.’ Zunes (1994) and Schock (2005) limit their analysis to nonviolent action in nondemocratic polities, although their definition of ‘unarmed insurrection’ does not in itself exclude challenges to the legitimacy of democratic government. This is common to much of the nonviolent action literature; definitions generally do not exclude action in democracies, but cases are in the majority focused on uprisings in repressive nondemocracies. Democratic goals are sometimes addressed: ‘civil disobedience’ requires nonviolent movements to uphold democratic principles (King, [1963] 2000), and Clark (2009) requires a commitment to liberal values of democracy, justice and human rights. Most other definitions do not requires this; in these cases we could apply the same label to a socialist revolution carried out by nonviolent means to replace a capitalist democracy as to a democratisation movement under a socialist regime. A minor difference is in the size of movements and their degree of organisation. Stephan (2009) and Roberts and Garton Ash (2009) define them as ‘widespread’, Zunes (1994) and Schock (2005) use ‘organised popular challenge’, while Carter, Lakey (both in Young, 2010) and Sharp (1973) refer to ‘mass’ movements. On the other hand Kishtainy (2001) allows for an individual ‘civilian jihad’, and civil disobedience can be a completely individual action (King, [1963] 2000). For the most part the various terms listed here are used interchangeably, although ‘civil disobedience’ has largely fallen out of favour.
2.5.1 Empirical nonviolent action research.

This project is not the first to collect empirical data on unarmed conflicts. There are several databases that include information on unarmed conflicts, although only one, the Nonviolent and Violent Conflict Outcomes project (NAVCO), has nonviolent action as a specific focus of enquiry; other works are focused on democratic transitions (Karatnycky & Ackerman, 2005), ethnic minorities (MAR, 2009), or the relationship between repression and mobilisation (Francisco, 2005). The rest are either case-study based or are not directly focused on unarmed conflict. The other projects that we will describe here the COSIMO dataset, the Minorities at Risk (MAR) project, and the Global Nonviolent Action Database (GNVAD). These datasets are described here to situate the current work within the existing empirical research.

The NAVCO 1.1 dataset, published by Chenoweth and Stephan (2011), is designed to test the success rate of nonviolent campaigns of resistance against the state compared to violent insurgencies.\(^\text{10}\) It records 323 cases, of which 106 are coded as nonviolent, and covers the period 1900-2006. It includes campaigns that have pursued the radical goals of regime change, independence from foreign rule, or separatism, with a few campaigns pursuing major social change such as the South African anti-apartheid movement included as well. The authors have selected major campaigns with a name or discernible leadership, using nonviolent action as defined by Sharp (1973), and with an active membership of 1,000 people or more (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011, 12-14). Data is sourced from a survey of the nonviolent action literature, supported by scholarly consensus. Violent conflict data is collected from the Correlates of War dataset. The limitations of this approach are acknowledged but justified by emphasising the comparability of the data, rather than its comprehensive coverage of nonviolent action *per se*. The difficulty of separating the violent and nonviolent aspects of

\(^{10}\) Version 2.0 has been developed but at the time of writing has not been published.
campaigns and labelling them as one or the other is also acknowledged; campaigns are labelled as nonviolent if they are “primarily nonviolent...based on the primacy of resistance methods employed” (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011 [Web appendix], 4).

Chenoweth and Stephan’s (2011) work is a significant advance for the field, but it is not without problems. The NAVCO coding scheme is designed to facilitate comparison between violent and nonviolent campaigns, meaning that conclusions can only be drawn about the efficacy of nonviolent action in comparison to violent action. Gurr (2000) argues that leaders of social movements choose nonviolent strategies when they are more attractive than either violent insurrection or contentious but conventional group politics. Gurr (2000) further argues that groups do not have to try conventional politics before turning to nonviolent action, nor is it simply an alternative that can be pursued instead of violence, but one of a range of options that social movements can pursue. He shows, based on MAR data, that conventional politics has resulted in peacefully negotiated solutions for minority group rights and autonomy, albeit mostly in Western liberal democracies and sometimes leveraged by nonviolent action (Gurr, 2000, 159). The NAVCO dataset therefore can tell us about nonviolent action compared to violent insurgency, but it cannot demonstrate the relative effectiveness of the full range of options available to an organised opposition, nor can it show how movements fare pursuing a combination of strategies compared to just one course of action.

Svensson and Lindgren have used the NAVCO data to add to our understanding of how the aspirations of the civilian opposition affect the outcomes of unarmed conflicts (2011a), and how the rise of unarmed conflicts relates to the East Asian peace (2011b). The latter research shows that while armed conflict in East Asia has been steadily decreasing over the last 30 years, unarmed conflict has been on the increase. They argue that these unarmed conflicts are unrelated to the previous armed conflicts, being more often concerned with incompatibilities over government than the previous armed secessionist campaigns. The increase in unarmed conflicts is a parallel but unrelated process to the decline of armed
conflicts, involving different actors as well as incompatibilities (Svensson & Lindgren, 2011b, 231). Their earlier research has been discussed in §2.4. While these works contribute to the growing interest in quantitative research on unarmed conflict, they are affected by the same selection biases as Chenoweth and Stephan's work (2011) because of the use of the NAVCO data; these are discussed in detail below.

Karatnycky and Ackerman (2005) is a well-known and publicised study of the democratic outcomes of violent versus nonviolent transitions during the period 1972-2005, based on Freedom House data. The authors do not explicitly define nonviolent action, but follow the general trend in including campaigns that are ‘mostly’ nonviolent. The main conclusion from the study is that the way transitions are effected has a powerful influence on the democratic outcomes after a new government is established. Unarmed organisations using nonviolent tactics are found to be the most likely to bring about enduring democratic reform due to the strength of the civic coalitions formed during these campaigns (Karatnycky & Ackerman, 2005, 7). Their data have been re-evaluated using Freedom House data by Shin and Tusalem (2007) and using EIU and Polity IV data by Johnstad (2010), and found to be robust to statistical tests. The difference from the current project is that the dependant variable is political transition from autocracy to democracy (Karatnycky & Ackerman, 2005, 6). The use of violent or nonviolent tactics is included as an independent variable to explain the durability of these transitions. Thus while it is a significant study of the effects of unarmed conflicts on post-conflict democracy, it is limited to successful conflicts only. It is probably the most nuanced of the quantitative works on nonviolent action in that the authors recognise the role of nonviolent civic coalitions in affecting the outcomes of both armed and unarmed conflicts, acknowledging some of the complex interaction between violence and nonviolence in resistance against the state.

The Minorities at Risk (MAR) project is a database of politically active ethnic or communal groups. Groups are included if they reside in countries with a population greater than 500,000, and have a membership of more than 100,000
people or constitute more than 1% of the country’s population. The groups must also be politically mobilised in some way, and suffer or benefit from systematic discrimination within that society (MAR, 2009b). The quantitative datasets cover the period 1945-2006. Groups are coded using open-source information but the methodology is not specified beyond that. Furthermore the MAR team “make no claims regarding the comprehensiveness of the dataset,” acknowledging that there are political groups that meet the criteria for inclusion but are not in the dataset (MAR, 2009b, 2). They do not differentiate between violent and nonviolent conflicts, as the focus of enquiry is the ethnic group rather than particular types of political interaction. What MAR does instead is code the different tactics that are used during each year by those groups in pursuit of their aims. MAR’s tactical approach has informed the design of the current research, as it enables a nuanced and detailed analysis of sub-state conflict involving nonviolent action.

The Konflikt-Simulations-Modell (COSIMO) 1.3 dataset from the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research records quantitative data on conflicts from 1945-1999 (Pfetsch & Rohloff, 2000).11 Conflicts are defined as:

Clashes of interest (differences of position) concerning national values (territory, secession, decolonization, autonomy, system/ideology, national power, regional predominance, international power, resources, other). These clashes are of a certain duration and scope, involving at least two parties (organized groups, states, groups of states, organizations of states) determined to pursue their interests and win their cases (HIIK, 2011).

Although the dataset includes what it labels as ‘nonviolent’ conflicts, its definition of nonviolence diverges from the rest of the field. “Manifest” nonviolent conflicts are defined as those that have gone beyond verbal opposition and involve “measures located in the preliminary stage to violent force” (HIIK, 2011; italics added). Pfetsch and Rohloff (2000) under-theorise their definition by labelling any conflicts that occur in a context of positive or negative peace as ‘nonviolent,’ while most scholars define nonviolent conflicts as overt, active conflicts that differ from armed conflicts more in their specific

11 Version 2.0 has been developed but the dataset is not publicly available at the time of writing.
tactics than their level of escalation. The nonviolent conflicts recorded in COSIMO resemble more the political crises captured by the International Crisis Behavior Project,\textsuperscript{12} in that they involve hostile political interactions that are not yet violent, rather than nonviolent conflict as a distinct category of collective action. The dataset has also been criticised on the grounds that its definition of conflict is overly subjective and as such not well suited to empirical analysis (Eck, 2005; Sundberg & Harbom, 2011).

The Global Nonviolent Action Database (GNVAD, 2011), run from Swarthmore College by George Lakey, is a large database of case studies regarding all kinds of nonviolent civilian action\textsuperscript{13}. Its coverage is very broad with a wide geographic scope, including social and labour movements as well as politically radical uprisings, and conflicts from the ancient world up to the present. While it is based on descriptive case studies it also includes coding criteria for indicators of success, the campaign’s dynamics over time, the occurrence of violence, methods used, and aspirations. It only covers completed campaigns with specific, limited goals that are pursued through the use of public nonviolent conflict. Data is sourced from academic works, newspaper accounts and general secondary sources. There are no specific guidelines for case selection published on the database’s website (GNVAD, 2011). The project is based on students’ research at Swarthmore and is intended to cover as many cases as possible. The GNVAD uses Sharp’s (1973) definition of nonviolent action as “a technique of struggle that goes beyond institutionalized conflict procedures [including] protest, noncooperation, and intervention that typically heighten a conflict[...]without the threat or use of injurious force to others” (GNVAD, 2011).

Francisco’s (2005) study of mobilisation in the wake of government massacres is similar to the current research. Based on analysis of ten cases he concludes that repression almost always backfires, and is never a reliable strategy for use by dictators. The selection of cases is based on the event being a well-known, one-


\textsuperscript{13} The International Centre on Nonviolent Conflict (2009, http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org) also maintains a similar database of case studies, although it is much smaller in scope and was not utilised for this study.
off massacre of civilians engaged in public resistance against a dictatorship. Francisco (2005, 59) does not give an explicit definition of nonviolence, but the definition of “harsh repression” as “one-sided and overwhelming use of state force” implies that the civilian challengers at least are not well-armed enough to offer a credible violent response. This is similar to the selection criteria used for the SVUP dataset, as discussed in §3.1. However Francisco’s data was not utilised for this study because of the very small sample size. There is also the fact that nine of the ten cases resulted in a short-term public backlash, and that several Western cases with very few deaths are compared with much larger massacres in Asia and Africa. There are other instances of incidents known afterwards as massacres that would contradict Francisco’s (2005) claims, suggesting that the sample is subject to a possible selection bias. For example, Francisco does not include the Santa Cruz massacre in East Timor, 1991, that had long-term negative consequences for the Indonesian regime but resulted in the successful short-term repression of protests in Dili. Nor does he include the Gawakadal Bridge massacre that resulted in increased mobilisation for the Tahrik in Kashmir, 1990, which failed to achieve its secessionist aims (Schofield, 2000). Therefore the question of how movements fare against very heavy government repression still remains open.

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14 In addition Romania, 1989, Togo, 1991, and Iraq, 1995 (which are all recorded in the SVUP dataset) involved government repression and were known afterwards as a ‘massacre’ but are not included in Francisco (2005). Only one of these, Romania, resulted in the overthrow of a dictator.
2.5.2 Limitations of previous research

Previous research has typically examined nonviolent action based on Sharp’s (1973) analytical framework.\textsuperscript{15} The way that this has been implemented in the literature follows a particular pattern which has become the standard approach in the field. It involves the study of campaigns of nonviolent action meeting certain agreed-upon criteria, which has led to the construction of an academic consensus of the total universe of cases. This has been the format for the majority of previous case studies, and also guides quantitative work as seen in Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) and Svensson and Lindgren (2011a, 2011b). This approach has generated significant insights about nonviolent action, and Chenoweth and Stephan’s (2011) NAVCO dataset in particular has been a major step forward in providing empirical evidence to back claims of nonviolent action’s effectiveness. However, because previous research has almost exclusively used this approach there are limitations to what we know about nonviolence in other contexts, such as conflicts that for one reason or another do not match the normal picture of nonviolent action or have flown below the scholarly radar. This section discusses this approach, how it has been implemented in the case study and quantitative research, and some of its potential limitations.

The focus on campaigns is ubiquitous. Some of the more prominent examples are Zunes, Kurtz and Asher (1999), Ackerman and DuVall (2000), Karatnycky and Ackerman (2005), Stephan and Chenoweth, (2008), Stephan (2009), Roberts and Garton Ash (2009), and Chenoweth and Stephan (2011), all of whom use the campaign as the subject of enquiry. Chenoweth and Stephan (2011, 14) define campaign as:

\textsuperscript{15} Schock (2005), for example, uses social movements theory to analyse nonviolent action campaigns, but his definition of nonviolent action itself is taken mostly from Sharp (1973).
“A series of observable, continual tactics in pursuit of a political objective...[that] have discernible leadership and often have names, distinguishing them from random riots or spontaneous mass acts.”

Generally the terms ‘campaign’ and ‘movement’ are used interchangeably. The terms are often not defined, but the idea that nonviolent action involves an iterative interaction between an organised mass group of civilians and the government is a central feature of previous research. The idea that campaigns are the only type of nonviolent action that should be studied comes from the fact that it is sustained tension that is required to alter power relationships (Sharp, 2010). The argument appears to be that since the only successful nonviolent action is sustained nonviolent action, that is therefore the type that should be studied (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011, 14). One would have to look outside the sub-field of nonviolent action research to find information on isolated nonviolent protest events (e.g., Taylor & Jodice, 1983; Urda, 2008).

As well as the general focus on campaigns, most case studies are selected on the same criteria: mostly or entirely nonviolent, non-institutional, direct action by a broad-based opposition group against the government of a state, relying on a pragmatic approach to nonviolence. Martin, Varney and Vickers (2001) argue that students and scholars of nonviolent action tend to research cases that most closely fit the ‘standard model’ of nonviolent action because they provide the clearest examples of the dynamics at work. The upshot of this is that cases that do not fit the model well or challenge existing theories of power and consent are overlooked, and aspects of individual cases that do not fit well may be ignored or sidelined (ibid.). For example, studies of the Tiananmen Square protests in China, 1989, often focus exclusively on the nonviolent occupation of the square and the

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16 The Global Nonviolent Action Database (GNVAD, 2011) distinguishes between campaigns and movements, only including the public, clearly defined nonviolent actions as campaigns. This distinction is not usually made by other scholars (e.g., Roberts & Garton Ash, 2009; Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011).

17 Chenoweth & Stephan (2011:14) dismiss “random riots or spontaneous mass acts” from their analysis. They also justify the focus on campaigns on methodological grounds, arguing that events data on minor interactions is too difficult to gather and presents a limited view of the background to nonviolent action (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011:14n.15).

18 The Cross-National Time-Series Data Archive contains global events data on nonviolent anti-government demonstrations up to the present day, but the subscription cost was prohibitive for use in the current research (Banks, Arthur, Cross-National Time-Series Data Archive, 2011, http://www.databanksinternational.com).
student hunger strikes (e.g., Goldman, 2009; GNVAD, 2011), despite the presence and significance of peripheral protester violence (Nepstad, 2011). The cases that do not fit the model well include smaller conflicts, failed movements, and especially movements that are ambiguous in their use of nonviolent action.

As a consequence of the focus on campaigns that meet certain criteria there has emerged a scholarly consensus of the universe of cases of nonviolent action. This defines which cases may be examined as good examples of the dynamics of nonviolent action, and which cases are to be excluded because no-one else pays them any attention. McCarthy and Kruegler (1993, 22) and Martin, Varney and Vickers (2001, 144) argue that there is a repetition in the case study literature of certain campaigns that are held to be exemplary or important, because they fit the model very well or serve the ‘inspirational value’ in showing that nonviolent action is possible. This repetition becomes a problem because it limits analysis to the same few cases, and does not contribute to our understanding of the actual empirical reach of nonviolent action. For example, Ackerman and DuVall (2000) cover major historical cases in their very widely-read A Force More Powerful; Schock (2005) compares six well-known cases; and Roberts and Garton Ash (2009) specifically state that their work covers most of the ‘leading cases.’ Some of the most often repeated cases include:\textsuperscript{19}

- The first Palestinian Intifada, 1987-1990 (Zunes, 1994; Zunes, Kurtz & Asher, 1999; Ackerman & DuVall, 2000; Stephan, 2006; Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011)
- The Tiananmen Square movement, China, 1989 (Zunes, 1994; Ackerman & DuVall, 2000; Schock, 2005; Roberts & Garton Ash, 2009; Mitchell, 2012)

\textsuperscript{19} This is a representative, rather than comprehensive, list of both commonly-cited campaigns and authors who examine them.
• The anti-Apartheid campaign in South Africa, 1984-1994 (Zunes, 1994; Zunes, Kurtz & Asher, 1999; Ackerman & DuVall, 2000; Schock, 2005; Karatnycky & Ackerman, 2005; Roberts & Garton Ash, 2009)
• Democracy movements in Eastern Europe, 1989-1991 (Zunes, Kurtz & Asher, 1999; Ackerman & DuVall, 2000; Karatnycky & Ackerman, 2005; Roberts & Garton Ash, 2009; Carter, 2012)

Martin, Varney and Vickers (2001) is an exception to this, examining two cases in Indonesia which are almost entirely absent from the rest of the literature: the massive purges of the communist party (PKI) and its supporters from 1965-1966, and the resistance to the Indonesian annexation of East Timor in 1975. They argue that in both cases activists used what we would recognise as nonviolent action to oppose the Indonesian government. Because these were never as public or as developed as the typical major cases, they have been largely neglected in the literature. Stephan (2009, 2) is another exception, showing that nonviolent action has been common in the Middle East, a region “not typically imagined as a place where civil resistance could take root, let alone succeed.” However almost every work on nonviolent action at least mentions the major cases, and the majority have some of them as the focus of enquiry.

There are three main limitations to this approach: the focus on large, public campaigns is problematic because these features are associated with success; having to generalise campaigns as ‘mostly’ nonviolent downplays the potential importance of small levels of violence; and we know little about nonstarter campaigns. First, the focus on large, visible campaigns biases analysis in favour of movements that are successfully able to mobilise large numbers of people and publicise their nonviolent character. Carter (2012, 11) argues that smaller nonviolent movements are generally concerned with specific social goals whereas ‘people power’ movements, the focus of her study, are only those that are widespread and involve large sections of the population; she acknowledges that limited movements can become nationwide campaigns, but until they reach an (unspecified) critical mass they are not ‘people power’ movements. Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) also focus exclusively on major campaigns. They argue that this is acceptable because of the limits of the data available, and
because the bias inherent in this approach is consistent with violent campaigns. This means that their data on nonviolent and violent campaigns are comparable, and that they can draw valid conclusions about their relative chances of success. However their conclusion that mass participation is a strong predictor of success means that the NAVCO data are not well suited to examining the absolute success rates of nonviolent action, as case selection is based on criteria of size and maturity that are also used to explain the outcome (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011, 14).

Second, large campaigns of nonviolent action frequently contain marginal or peripheral elements of opposition violence. Instead of relying on absolute values of violence or nonviolence, campaigns are labelled “mostly” violent or nonviolent based on the primacy of the methods involved. Zunes (1994) argues that this approach is legitimate because it focuses on the primary or most political significant part of the conflict. For example, Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) examine the Iranian revolution of 1977-1979 as an unarmed conflict despite the existence of a small unarmed insurgency, because of the guerrillas’ marginal influence on the course of events. On the other hand the conflict in Aceh between the Indonesian government and the armed insurgent group GAM (Free Aceh Movement) is usually the focus of enquiry, despite the presence of significant civilian mobilisation for nonviolent action (ICG, 2001). This generalisation is problematic for two reasons: research overlooks nonviolent tactics used by armed groups, and tend to gloss over the complex dynamics resulting from the use of ‘limited’ or peripheral violence in nonviolent movements. For example, insurgents in Kashmir have made extensive use of civilian strikes and mass anti-Indian demonstrations as well as armed attacks (ICG, 2002b); the first Intifada in the Occupied Territories involved significant levels of violence even before the turn away from nonviolent tactics (Sharp, 1989); and nonviolent action often precedes armed mobilisation in support of minority group rights (Gurr, 2000). These subjects are usually not addressed in the nonviolent action literature, although the use of nonviolent action by armed movements, and the interaction between the two types of action, has recently begun to gain more scholarly attention (Chenoweth & Lawrence, 2010).
The dynamics of protestor violence have received more attention but are still underdeveloped. As explained above, it has been generally accepted that strict nonviolence is more likely to lead to a political jiu-jitsu outcome, although some scholars argue that there is a “positive radical flank effect” that comes from limited violence increasing the opposition’s bargaining power (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011, 43). It is not clear that these “small doses of deniable violence,” as Gurr (2000, 156) puts it, should be brushed aside so quickly. In Sharp’s (1989) study of the first Intifada during the late 1980s some of the apparently disproportionate consequences of limited violence become apparent:

But while it is true that compared to shootings and beatings, the limited action of stone throwing is very mild, it is necessary to state that stones are not merely symbolic as most Palestinians intend – or explain – them to be; rocks of significant size are also thrown, and petrol bombs have been used against – and have killed – Israelis[...]

*The Israelis can almost never see a stone thrown at them as a relatively nonviolent expression of rage and a cry for justice...* In Israeli minds, because of the stones, petrol bombs and killings, the intifadah [sic] becomes yet another attempt to kill Jews...These perceptions block the message that Palestinians want the Israelis to hear, help arouse support among Israelis for harsh repression, and promote greater willingness among the soldiers to carry out (or exceed) order to beat or shoot (Sharp, 1989, 7; italics added).

Compare this to Nepstad’s (2011) account of nonviolent action against the government of the German Democratic Republic in 1989:

Despite the palpable tension and fear, the peace prayer demonstrators remained nonviolent. Protestors also spoke with the troops, calling ‘Brothers, join us!’ and ‘We don’t want violence.’ The crowd’s peaceful demeanour meant that the security forces had no grounds for using force. (Nepstad, 2011, 48-49).

German troops refused to fire on protestors because they were clearly not the anarchic subsversives they were claimed to be by the government, nor were they posing a direct threat to the safety of the troops themselves (Nepstad, 2011). Although Sharp (1989) attributes the over-reaction of Israeli soldiers to irrational emotional outbursts based on a persecution complex rather than generalisable traits of security forces, and regardless of how valid this assessment is, these examples show a real qualitative difference between completely peaceful actions and protests that involve a certain element of hostility and limited violence. Srdja
Popović, one of the leaders of the “Otpor!” movement in Serbia, has said that a major part of the leadership's job during that campaign was trying to prevent small outbursts of violence, including stone-throwing, because this would undermine their attempts to win the loyalty of security forces guarding the demonstrations (Arrow, 2011). This shows a weakness of analysis that relies on generalisations of the nature of resistance, and suggests that Zunes’ (1994) dismissal of the violent aspects of nonviolent campaigns as politically insignificant risks ignoring the important dynamics involved.

Third, so-called spontaneous protests, those without evidence of organisation or continued action, are almost never studied in the nonviolent action literature except when they take place in the context of a wider campaign (e.g., Schock, 2005). Chenoweth and Stephan (2011, 15) call the limited movements that never gain widespread momentum “nonstarters,” and dismiss these from their analysis. However there is evidence that spontaneous protests can develop very quickly into organised resistance: Mitchell (2012) argues that although the Gwangju uprising in South Korea, 1980, may have begun as a spontaneous reaction to government violence, it very quickly became organised by drawing on existing social networks to mobilise further action. A more recent example is mentioned in the introduction: the dramatic escalation of the unarmed uprising in Tunisia from the self-immolation of Mohammad Bouazizi to a nation-wide movement that toppled a seemingly entrenched dictator within the space of a month without any obvious evidence of prior organisation as such (UCDP, n.d.). However despite this link between spontaneous protest and larger unarmed uprisings we do not understand the relationship, because there is an unknown number of spontaneous protests that have not escalated that are not captured by this approach.

From this we can see some of the problems with previous research. The selection bias in favour of large, public movements is problematic because these features

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20 This conflict is included in NAVCO 1.1 as a nonviolent conflict (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011).
21 The UCDP has not coded the Tunisian uprising because of the lack of a unified opposition organisation; however it is mentioned here because of its inclusion in Carter (2012) as a people power movement.
are strongly linked to the outcomes of these campaigns (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011). This affects confidence in arguments about how effective nonviolent tactics can be, because we have relatively more data available on those that are likely to be successful while those that for whatever reason are predisposed to failure or were quickly repressed are left out of analysis. Chenoweth and Stephan (2011, 51) have already demonstrated that violent repression decreases the likelihood of success for major nonviolent campaigns; however we cannot gain a complete understanding of the effectiveness of nonviolent tactics against regime violence with this information alone. The exclusive focus on campaigns by both case studies and empirical research means that we can only draw conclusions about campaigns, whereas in reality nonviolent tactics are much more widely used. McCarthy and Krugler (1993) argue that the field at that time had no justifiable idea of how prevalent nonviolent action had been as a feature of general conflict. While research since then has given us a good idea of the prevalence of nonviolent action as a specific, separate form of conflict, we still have very little idea about the occurrence or outcome of nonviolent tactics outside the scope of these campaigns. The consequences of these limitations are that we do not know very much about how nonviolent action emerges and what trajectories it can follow (ibid.), nor do we know much about cases that do not find the standard picture (Martin, Varney & Vickers, 2001).
2.5.3 Contribution: the study of nonviolent tactics in the context of severe repression.

To deal with these limitations, this project shifts the analytical focus from nonviolent campaigns to the use of nonviolent tactics. The cases that I have recorded here are defined first and foremost by the existence of political nonviolence, before any other characteristics of the conflict. The study of nonviolent action at the tactical level is consistent with Sharp's theory (1973). He argues that dichotomising political action into 'violent' or 'nonviolent' is too simple for detailed analysis, and instead roughly categorises it into tactics of persuasion, peaceful institutional action, material destruction, violence against persons, and nonviolent action; he further argues that we can study nonviolent action wherever it is found regardless of the other tactics used by the opposition organisation precisely because nonviolence is a separate category of action (Sharp, 1973, 65). With this approach organisational structures, conflict maturity, size, peripheral violence, aspirations, and so on are treated as independent variables rather than criteria for inclusion. I also include cases where nonviolent tactics are not the primary or most politically significant form of action, but are overshadowed by violence. Specifically I look at cases where nonviolent tactics are part of a dyadic interaction involving the use of contentious tactics by both sides, instead of focusing on the actions of civilians alone. This is because the question that this research seeks to answer is how effective the use of nonviolent tactics against extreme repression is; as discussed above, this cannot be answered using existing research on nonviolent action because of the serious selection bias that affects it. Instead, by examining nonviolence at a tactical level quantitative methods can be used to systematically generate original data.

As Svensson and Lindgren (2011a) state, the systematic empirical study of nonviolent action is still in its infancy. Of the data projects outlined above in
§2.5.1, only the NAVCO project has nonviolent action as its specific focus of enquiry. The motivations for using quantitative methods to study nonviolent action are much the same as those for using it to study armed conflict: Pfetsch and Rohloff (2000, 380) argue that quantitative research is important because it can “question our general perceptions and interpretation of ever-changing global conflict patterns with sober statistics based on empirical evidence.” Eck (2012) argues that qualitative studies can investigate causal mechanisms behind patterns of conflict, but the patterns themselves would be difficult to observe without large-\(n\) data. Quantitative data also provides additional evidence for or against the insights and theories that can be developed from case studies, especially from careful comparative case study analysis (McCarthy & Kruegler, 1993). However quantitative work relies on the abstraction of real-world context and detail into comparable, reliable data, and as such can result in misguided conclusions when used in isolation.\(^{22}\) It is then best seen as complementary to case study-based works, as a way of both testing the theories derived from these and generating new hypotheses to guide further case study research. This project therefore adopts a quantitative approach to studying nonviolent action as a way to complement existing case study research by providing empirical evidence about the scale, distribution and trends of nonviolent tactics against repressive governments.

By adopting an empirical method focused on nonviolent tactics this research gains several advantages. First, it moves the study of nonviolent action away from the exclusive focus on campaigns, and the problems that go with this as outlined above. By only looking for the use of nonviolent tactics we can examine peripheral or minor cases. We can also include the complex or mixed cases, where the use of nonviolent action does not fit the standard picture or there are significant levels of violence; we can even examine the use of nonviolent action in support of armed insurgencies, which until now has been mostly neglected. Using this analytical approach nonviolence can be studied in a systematic manner, meaning that there is no need to rely on an academic consensus of cases that has not been subject to much critical debate. Chenoweth and Stephan (2011,

\(^{22}\) See, for example, Cramer’s (2002) critique of the influential ‘greed’ theory of civil war.
15) state that improved data gathering methods to avoid these selection problems is a key next step for the field. The shift in analytical focus from campaigns to tactics in order to make the study of nonviolent action more systematic is therefore one of the main contributions of this research.
3. Research design

“In keeping with the dictum that one cannot account for a given range of phenomena until one has recognized and described them, our first task was to ascertain the amount of international war which [had] occurred”

– David J. Singer (1972, 255) on the development of the Correlates of War project.
3.1 The State Violence against Unarmed Protests 1989-2010 dataset (SVUP)

Now that we have settled on an approach and specific subject of enquiry we will discuss the design of the main project itself: the State Violence against Unarmed Protests 1989-2010 Dataset (SVUP). This is based on data from the UCDP One-Sided Violence v.1.3 1989-2010 (2011) dataset (UCDP-OSV), news sources, NGO accounts and academic literature, and includes information on the use of nonviolent tactics by civilians which are met with severe violent repression by the government. This section will explain why the dataset has been based on the UCDP-OSV data, the definitions I have used and how they have been operationalised, and the search method.

The UCDP project collects empirical data on the instance, distribution and severity of armed conflicts around the world. It records four main types of conflict: interstate armed conflict, intrastate civil war, non-state or communal conflict and one-sided violence against civilians. The source that defines the total sample from which the SVUP dataset is drawn is the UCDP-OSV dataset: as part of the larger UCDP project it includes data on “the intentional and direct killing of civilians” by organised groups, whether government or non-state armed actors (Eck & Hultman, 2007, 233). It uses event-based data and includes estimates of the actual number of civilians killed during each calendar year to track intensity over time as well as frequency. One of its major contributions to the field has been in providing information on the strategies and tactics pursued by governments and insurgents outside the realm of direct conventional warfare. (Sundberg, 2009, 2). The dataset continues to be updated and now covers the period 1989-2010. The definition of one-sided violence is:

The use of armed force by the government of a state or by a formally organised group against civilians which results in at least 25 deaths in a year (UCDP, 2010).

In this research the UCDP-OSV dataset is the point of departure for several reasons. First, the UCDP uses rigorous and transparent coding strategies. UCDP
datasets are provided with codebooks and replication data, and the methods by which the data have been gathered are well documented (Sundberg & Harbom, 2011). The UCDP’s definitions have been designed so that they record conflicts in a way that is comparable over time and space due to the focus on the conflicts themselves rather than the actors involved (Wallensteen, 2011). This is important because if datasets are context specific they risk introducing systematic error into the data (Sundberg & Harbom, 2011). Because the definitions are mutually exclusive of each other they are internally comparable as well, so that one-sided violence cannot also be coded as an armed conflict or a non-state conflict. This means that we can draw conclusions not only about conflict trends over time and space, but also the relation between different types of conflict. For example, Sundberg (2009) finds that while armed conflict has been trending downwards over the last twenty years, one-sided violence has occurred at a stable rate, albeit with more variation around the mean. He also finds a strong link between the occurrence of armed conflict and one-sided violence: 98.6% of all one-sided fatalities take place in countries that are also experiencing an armed conflict (Sundberg, 2009, 15). Without mutually-exclusive definitions these kinds of conclusions could not be drawn. Finally the UCDP-OSV dataset is useful because provides a clear lower-limit threshold for inclusion: 25 or more deaths as a result of one-sided violence per year. This has practical advantages, as repression involving this many deaths is more likely to be reported by the news media than more isolated instances of violence (Wallensteen, 2011), and we can therefore be confident that the UCDP-OSV dataset is a complete sample. By drawing on a complete, well-defined universe of cases we can both gain an understanding of the scope and prevalence of extreme repression against nonviolent action backed up by solid evidence, and draw conclusions about it that are not subject to the main selection biases that have characterised previous work. There is also a theoretical advantage to basing this work on the UCDP-OSV dataset, as cases where governments have killed 25 or more civilians engaged in nonviolent action per year represent the most extreme type of repressive response available. Thus it provides clearly-defined empirical boundary for the subject of enquiry, something that has often been lacking in the past (McCarthy & Kruegler, 1993).
3.1.1 Definitions

This section explains the definitions used in the SVUP dataset and shows how they have been operationalised, as well as describing some of the key variables. The definition of nonviolent tactics met with severe repression is:

A contested incompatibility concerning government, territory or policy, pursued by civilians using nonviolent tactics against the government of a state which responds with armed force, resulting in at least 25 deaths per year.

This definition focuses on the interaction between the state and civilians actively resisting its rule. Incompatibilities, the reason that opposing sides give as to why they are in conflict, are in line with the UCDP’s definitions (UCDP, 2010). Incompatibilities over government concern the type, structure or composition of government, while incompatibilities over territory concern secession or autonomy. I also include incompatibilities over policy to include cases that do not concern radical goals but are met with violent repression anyway; in this case, policy means any protests that are over specific economic, political or social change, or protests against the government’s policies or actions, that do not directly challenge the type or composition of government or the state’s territorial integrity. This includes demands for reform that would have radical consequences. For example, the Tiananmen Square protests in China, 1989, were exclusively reformist and included demands for greater political accountability, freedom of the press, and more open participation in the political protest (Nepstad, 2011). These demands represented a serious challenge to the existing power arrangements of Chinese politics; however because no demands were made regarding the actual structure of the government, this conflict was coded as reformist. Reform conflicts also includes protests over very limited issues. During 2004 in Nigeria over 25 people were killed by security forces in separate protests over, amongst other things, the replacement of a college principal, fuel prices and oil extraction in the Niger Delta. Finally reform demands can occur in conjunction with more radical demands. Although most conflicts over
government or territory include some reform-type goals, conflicts such as the Lhasa protests in China (Tibet), 2008, are coded as both reformist and radical where distinct demands are articulated for each. In that case, most demands were for religious freedoms in Tibet, with a minority of protestors also calling for independence from China.

State violence is included when it is directed against civilians using nonviolent tactics of resistance. Because the data are events based there is no need to discriminate between the actions of organised groups and so-called spontaneous uprisings; in fact during the data-gathering phase it was very difficult if not impossible to distinguish between the two. This is compounded by the fact that organising nonviolent action can take a very long time and be entirely hidden from public view, making a carefully planned campaign appear spontaneous to outside observers. Thus we have no requirement for the opposition to be organised in a formal (or highly structured but informal) sense, merely that they are not armed actors.

Nonviolent tactics are defined as public, transgressive, conflictual acts that challenge the government or its agents without the use of physical force. This is in keeping with the pragmatic approach to defining nonviolence outlined above. They includes acts of commission, omission or both, meaning that violence against people involved in strikes or stay-aways is included as well as violence against demonstrators. This violence is coded as either ‘direct’ or ‘indirect.’ Conflicts coded as direct are those where at least 25 people were killed while actively taking part in a nonviolent action. These are the most obvious, public examples of government repression against an unarmed opposition, riot police or armed soldiers firing on unarmed protestors. An example of this took place in Awassa, Ethiopia in 2002, where interviews with protestors and government officials involved revealed that:

The riot, which was really more of a massacre, lasted only a matter of minutes...There had been widely publicized plans for a long time for people to come demonstrate the change in status of Awassa town, and nobody discouraged them. Then on the set day, people started marching into town, and the government just shot them down with machine guns. That’s really all there was to it” (HRW, 2003, 29).
Indirect cases on the other hand are those where the number of deaths exceeded 25 as a result of covert action against the opposition. This is the killing of civilians who are involved in an unarmed conflict against the government but are not actively engaged in a nonviolent action at the time. These killings are typically less public and not well documented, and frequently involve the use of irregular or paramilitary groups with which the government can deny association (Martin, 2007). In line with the UCDP-OSV’s coding scheme extrajudicial killings in government custody are excluded (Eck & Hultman, 2007; Sundberg, 2009). The attack on the opposition National League for Democracy motorcade in Mandalay, Myanmar in 2003 is an example of the exclusive use of covert violence against opposition civilians. Government-backed local militia were responsible for the attack which killed approximately 70 people, and government propaganda made it difficult to get any detail for some time afterwards (UCDP, 2010).

The SVUP dataset includes two variables recording the occurrence of backfire: internal backfire and external backfire. Internal backfire is recorded in the event of any of the following: there is a clear increase in civilian resistance following the use of violence, the government gives in to the unarmed opposition’s demands, or the government suffers a clear and immediate domestic negative outcome such as military defections or a major splits within its ranks. This means that the opposition’s success in achieving its goals is recorded twice, in this variable and in the success variable (explained below), so statistical inferences cannot be made about the relationship between the two. However it is necessary to include opposition success in the internal backfire because if backfire consists of negative outcomes for the government, then the opposition’s success must count. If the opposition achieving its goals didn’t impose heavy costs on the government there would have been no conflict in the first place. Although these are fairly non-specific criteria, in practice there were few if any judgement calls required to code the results, making it a reliable measure. External backfire is defined as the government suffering sanctions from major external actors as a result of the use of violence. It is more specific than the
internal backfire, and is recorded in the event of any of the following: a UNSC resolution condemning the government’s actions, economic sanctions being imposed by world or regional powers, or arms embargoes being put in place. Economic sanctions are recorded in Hufbauer, Schott, Elliot and Oegg (2008) until 2006, with cases after that found in Koga (2011) and researched by the author. Arms embargoes are recorded in the SIPRI Arms Embargoes Database (2012). Internal and external backfire can occur separately or together. Internal backfire occurs on its own when the event is kept mostly hidden from the outside world at the time or is not seen as sufficiently important on its own, such as the assassination of Ayatollah Mohammad Sadeq al-Sadr in Iraq 1999 which prompted extensive protest within the Shi’ite dominated areas of Iraq but gained little international attention (ICG, 2002a). External backfire occurs on its own when the international community places sanctions on a government but the government itself is able to manage the domestic situation effectively, such as the fallout from the Santa Cruz massacre in East Timor, Indonesia in 1991. This case prompted the division of the backfire variable as it is held up as a prime example of backfire, due to the negative publicity it generated for the Indonesian government (Martin, 2007). However the vast majority of this happened internationally; within Indonesia itself the government actually suffered very little from the shooting, at least in the short term. Only a few cases exist of both internal and external backfire occurring together, such the repression of the Saffron Revolution in Myanmar, 2007, which dealt a strong blow to the junta’s moral legitimacy within the country and was also met by widespread international sanctions (ICG, 2008a).

I define success as cases where nonviolent opposition movements have achieved one or more of their central demands, although others may not be achieved and secondary demands may also go unmet. This is in contrast to Chenoweth & Stephan (2011, 14) who define ‘success’ as the achievement of all the movement’s stated goals. Gurr (2000) argues that success for a nonviolent movement, as in violent conflicts, consists in the reaching of an accommodation

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23 NAVCO 1.1 uses a ‘Success’, ‘Limited Success’ and ‘Failure’ coding scheme, although statistical analysis was run using only the full ‘Success’ category as the success indicator (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2008).
between the opposition and the government, and that under ideal conditions this results in a transformation of power relationships resulting in a ‘win-win’ for both sides. In this situation pressing to achieve everything exactly as demanded may actually be counter-productive. So, for example, the Togolese campaign against President Eyadéma in 1991 is coded as a success even though the demand for Eyadéma’s resignation was not met, because the movement did achieve the formation of a National Conference which was its other central goal. The latter was far more likely to be reached via public pressure and negotiation than the former. These cases are coded as ‘full success.’ Where protestors have gained concrete concessions from the government but not achieved any of their central goals they are coded as ‘partial success.’ Only two cases were coded as partial success: Côte d’Ivoire, 2000, which is discussed more fully in §4.3 below, and the case of the RDR party in Zimbabwe, 2008, where the opposition was able to gain unprecedented access to power but fell short of achieving its aims of a full change of government (ICG, 2008b).

Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) have found that the success rates of nonviolent campaigns are related to the size of the movement. While reliable information is often not available on the size of opposition organisations, for the dataset they were classified as minor, medium or major by the number of people that were observed to be actively participating in public nonviolent action. Minor organisations were those with under 1,000 active participants; medium, those with 1,000-10,000 participants; and major organisations those with more than 10,000 participants. This is not intended to be an exact scale, but a rough way of ordering the conflicts, and is based on the most people observed to be participating at any particular point in time across the country. It does not include non-public supporters, active or not. These populations are hidden from researchers outside the country and therefore cannot be counted. Estimates that clearly come from government or opposition sources only are excluded, given the incentives of each side to respectively understate or exaggerate the size of the opposition. For several of the cases this variable was not coded because size estimates were not available in either news reports or secondary accounts, decreasing its utility somewhat.
The ‘ethnic’ variable records whether the conflict is in any way defined along ethnic lines, or if ethnicity is not a factor. This is not based on any specific indicators, but is primarily based on the stated incompatibility and the nature of the civilian opposition. For example, the Awassa protests in Ethiopia, 2002, are coded as ‘ethnic’ because they were over plans to move political power from the local Sidama ethnic group to the regional government (HRW, 2003). Likewise the East Timor independence movement recorded in Indonesia, 1999, is coded as ‘ethnic’ even though most of the killings were carried out by East Timorese, because the goals of the movement were independence for the East Timorese ethnic group. On the other hand the Tiananmen Square protests in China, 1989, are not coded as ‘ethnic’ even though there was an ethnic split between the protestors and the security forces responsible for the violence, because the incompatibility was over democratic reforms for all Chinese (Nepstad, 2011).

The research question is dependent on strict nonviolence from the civilian side during the use of nonviolent tactics. However nonviolent action campaigns are rarely completely nonviolent (Schock, 2005), so the SVUP dataset also records information on the occurrence of limited opposition violence, when that violence takes place in the same context as the unarmed conflict. This is when civilians protesting over the same incompatibility have used tactics like stone-throwing, petrol bombs or rioting during the year, separate from any recorded armed conflicts. It does not include the use of violence in relation to other incompatibilities. This is included because the data are event based rather than campaign based, and rely on particular actions being characterised as nonviolent rather than whole movements. This variable balances this focus by expanding the data to include the context in which nonviolent tactics are used. Some of the conflicts that are recorded in the SVUP dataset involve significant levels of civilian violence, such as the Lhasa protests in China, 2008, where the shops and homes of Han Chinese were burnt resulting in several deaths (HRW, 2008; Beck, 2008).

Other descriptive variables are recorded in the dataset; details of these are in the codebook in Appendix 2.
3.2 Data sources

Like the UCDP-OSV dataset, this project is based on events data. Because it focuses on the dyadic interaction between civilians and government at the tactical level it requires data that breaks down conflicts into the basic interactions between parties (Eck, 2012, 126). Event data is flexible enough to capture a variety of civilian actors involved in nonviolent action because it is not dependent on pre-defined actors and targets (Bond et al., 2003). For example, the recently-released UCDP Georeferenced Events Dataset defines a ‘conflict event’ as an incident involving the use of armed force by an organised group against another group or civilians resulting in at least one death (Sundberg, Eck & Kreutz, 2010; Melander & Sundberg, 2011). Note that this is centred on the interaction of two parties rather than the parties themselves. In this project the focus is on an interaction between civilians and government in which the civilian side uses nonviolent tactics and the government responds with violent repression. This may be an immediate response, as in soldiers firing on a protest demonstration, or it may be delayed, such as in Umuechem, Nigeria in 1990 when soldiers returned several days after a protest event to kill those involved (Frynas, 2000). This is consistent with the UCDP’s coding of an event as taking place over a variable time range (Eck, 2012). Events are recorded first, and later aggregated into actor-years. This is necessary because tactical nonviolent action is the focus of enquiry: since we have moved away from relying on campaigns and consensus to identify cases, searching for individual events is the only way to record the use of nonviolent action.

There are a variety of strategies by which data on tactical nonviolent action can be collected. These include using news sources, written narratives, field research, or surveys (Höglund & Öberg, 2011). Each of these has its own advantages and disadvantages. This project uses news sources as the primary source of data, supplemented by written narratives; the rest of this section
Field research forms the basis of the NGO reports that have been used to gather contextual information for the dataset, as discussed below. Proximity can be misleading when reporting on subjects that normally require a certain level of detachment, such as aggregate death counts.

The only possible options then are news sources and written narratives. Written narratives have advantages over news sources in that they are much better at contextualising events, identifying underlying trends and patterns and viewing the conflict as a whole, rather than a series of isolated events. These are the same motivations for the predominant use of case studies in the literature on unarmed conflict and nonviolent action. Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) have used this approach for generating the NAVCO dataset by their use of an extensive literature review to identify cases (see §2.5.2). However I am trying to find a way around the selection biases inherent in this approach, and so cannot rely on written narratives alone. Instead the dataset is based on records that are close in time and space to the depicted event, in this case, news reports. These most frequently fulfil the proximity criterion, that in general the closer information is to an event the more reliable it is (Dulic, 2011). News wires especially are a good source of 'hard facts', reliable information about what happened, where, when, and who was involved. As much as possible we want most of the information that is gathered from news sources to be these hard facts because they do not have the extra layer of interpretation that accounts further removed from the events have. News reports are used by the UCDP project as the basis of data collection as they are the most comprehensive source of data for armed conflicts since 1989 (Oberg & Sollenberg, 2011). They should be similarly useful for gathering data on nonviolent action. Of all the methods of gathering data on

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24 Field research forms the basis of the NGO reports that have been used to gather contextual information for the dataset, as discussed below.
25 Proximity can be misleading when reporting on subjects that normally require a certain level of detachment, such as aggregate death counts.
conflicts, news reports are the most comprehensive due to their geographic coverage and the enormous volume of information that can be analysed.

News sources are weaker on so-called soft issues, the why and how of events, because these require a certain amount of interpretation by the reporter (Möller, 2011). Size limitations on stories also mean that news reports are often lacking in historical context, and how the events that are being reported fit into the bigger picture. This is why Öberg & Sollenberg (2011) recommend becoming familiar with conflicts through reading case studies and scholarly literature before beginning empirical research. This background understanding is important to establish how the reported events related to each other, especially in peripheral areas or under-reported areas. Where this context cannot be gathered from the news reports themselves the next point of reference is in-depth NGO reports, mostly from Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and the International Crisis Group. These organisations are known for the high quality of their reporting, and are not subject to overly distorting political biases (Sundberg & Harbom, 2011). Academic sources can also be used for some conflicts that have received very little coverage elsewhere, such as the repression of the Union Patriótica (UP) party in Colombia, or for cases like Kashmir in the early 1990s where the nonviolent aspects of the conflict were generally overlooked because of the violent insurgency.

The combination of news reports for comprehensiveness and written narratives for background detail has the advantage of minimising some of the more serious selection biases that come from relying mainly on academic literature as the source material, while not sacrificing the benefits that can be obtained from detailed, in-depth case work. Of course this approach is not without problems of its own. The studies of communal violence in Indonesia by Varshney, Tadjeddin and Panggabean (2008) and Barron and Sharpe (2008) highlight the limits of relying on out-of-country newspaper archives and the effects of these on the conclusions that are drawn. However given the limits of a Master’s thesis without the resources for significant field or archival work, the advantages of using news sources outweigh the disadvantages.
3.3 Search method

In this project Factiva is the most important source of information. The sources have to be as close as possible to the source data used for the UCDP One-Sided Violence dataset. Since the UCDP team gathered their data from a comprehensive search of news reports, supplemented by secondary sources, this means following the same search method. Despite the problems outlined above with relying too heavily on news sources they remain the most consistent and systematic way to search for event data. I have looked for positive confirmation that violence was directed against an unarmed opposition movement of some kind. This is easier than trying to prove the negative, that no violence was directed against an unarmed opposition and therefore that actor-year can be excluded. The first point of call is the UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia (UCDP, 2010), which has yearly descriptions for most cases in the UCDP-OSV dataset that are often quite detailed. Where they mention specific instances of violence against unarmed protests or opposition organisations it is straightforward to then turn to the newspaper and secondary sources for more information. In several countries though there is little or no detailed information available in the database, so a general search string is constructed in Factiva to identify all of the relevant cases.26 This search is also run for the actor-years with cases already identified in the UCDP encyclopedia to check for smaller events and gather background news information. In cases where the use of arms is uncertain it was sometimes necessary to apply deductive reasoning to work out whether the news reports the Factiva search identified were likely to have been included by the UCDP team. This was done by comparing the death counts given in the news report with those recorded in the UCDP-OSV dataset, and searching for other events that might have explained that result. If these could not be found then it

26 After some experimentation this search string was used:
(kill* or death* or shot or shoot* or died or execut*) and
(demonstrat* or protest* or crowd or activist* or opposition* or opponent* or dissident*)
was assumed that the first reports had been the source of the data. For example, there was significant unrest in Ramadi, Iraq, during 1995. The accounts of this were highly contested, with the government calling it violent rioting and the Iraqi opposition calling it nonviolent protest, and no external confirmation either way. Since the death counts in the One-Sided Violence dataset matched those given in the opposition reports these were then treated as the source of the data and coded into the SVUP dataset.

Once the key events are identified secondary sources are used to provide background detail and confirm that the characterisation of opposition groups as armed or unarmed is correct. The most important sources are Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Amnesty International. These sources are used by the UCDP project and provide high-quality and very detailed information on conflict situations around the world (Sundberg & Harbom, 2011). Reports by the International Crisis Group (ICG) are also useful, although their focus on armed conflicts means that their coverage is generally limited to nonviolent action that takes place in the context of armed insurgencies. These NGO reports are especially useful for looking at countries like Myanmar where there is very little Western media coverage and information from elsewhere is not available. In a few cases like India, 1990, China, 1989 and Nigeria, 1990, it was necessary to turn to academic works because news and NGO sources were either not detailed enough or contained conflicting information. This was more common for cases around the end of the Cold War and the early 1990s for which Factiva has less coverage. After completing the newspaper searches the cases are checked against the Amnesty International country database. Amnesty has good coverage of extrajudicial executions and the covert targeting of opposition activists. The negative cases from the UCDP-OSV dataset were checked to see if there were any that would be pushed over the 25 death threshold by Amnesty’s records, and the positive cases checked against them to see if the results would change.
3.4 Limitations

The main limitation of the project is that any arguments or observations are dependent on the government's use of severe repressive violence, as this is an essential part of the research question. We cannot draw any conclusions about nonviolent action as a whole because this is only a sample of the total population of these conflicts. Likewise we are unable to make any reliable inferences about why or under what conditions governments choose to use severe repressive violence. Drawing inferences about government decisions would be committing the statistical error of 'sampling on the dependent variable' because there is no variation in that decision (Shively, 2005).

The sources are limited to free, open-source information, just as for the UCDP projects (Sundberg, 2009). Any events that are not reported in these sources cannot be recorded in the data. This places some limits on confidence in the 'indirect' cases due to the covert nature of these killings, and the government's strong interests in keeping them hidden (Martin, 2007). It also limits the coverage of extremely repressive countries where information may simply not be available. In these cases even the extent of ignorance is unknown.

The dataset also does not include death counts from government repression. Actor-years are only coded where I am confident that at least 25 people died as a result of government repression; beyond that there is no specification. This is a limitation because there is no way to distinguish between 'less' and 'more' extreme violence based on the number of people killed. Eck (2012, 126) argues that "it is conceptually problematic for many theories of civil war when no distinction is made in the intensity and nature of violence," and this criticism could also apply to the current project. These numbers were not recorded because of the reliance on news reports as the main source of information. As mentioned earlier, news reports are not good sources of death estimates because
they are often close in time and space to the recorded events (Dulic, 2011). There can be significant confusion about the actual number of people dead for a long time afterwards because of government and opposition competition to interpret the use of repression. For example, after the attack on the NLD’s motorcade in Myanmar, 2003, government sources were quoted in news reports listing around four deaths for some time afterwards (ICG, 2004). It was later established that at least 70 people died during this event (UCDP, 2010). Death count estimates are not included in the dataset because some of the cases do not have these kind of retrospective analyses from NGO’s or academic sources establishing a consensus figure of deaths and information is only available from news sources.
4. Results

“The mere existence of a challenge in the face of repression demonstrates that the regime is not unassailable.”

4.1 The outcome of nonviolent tactics against severe repression

The core purpose of this research is to examine the outcomes of severe repression against civilians using nonviolent tactics. In order to do this I have identified the occurrence and prevalence of this phenomenon, and investigated some of the conditions and features of the conflict that may influence these outcomes. Accordingly, this section presents the data from the SVUP dataset.

Figure 1: Outcomes of nonviolent tactics against government repression.

The primary finding of the dataset is that only a minority (26.3%) of cases of nonviolent tactics met with severe repression during the period 1989-2010 resulted in success for the civilian side. Over two-thirds (68.4%) are recorded as failures for the civilian side. The remaining 5.3% are coded as partial or mixed successes. The ten cases that are recorded as full successes include the well-known democracy movements in Thailand, 1992, and Mali, 1991, and the East Timor independence movement in Indonesia, 1999, all of which are recorded in NAVCO 1.1. The cases coded as partial successes are Côte d'Ivoire, 2000, and
Zimbabwe, 2008, both of which are described below in §4.3. The Côte d’Ivoire case is coded as a partial success because during the year there were two closely related but separate unarmed campaigns, one a success and one a failure. The second partial success was the 2008 Zimbabwe case where the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) gained a share of parliament for the first time, but was forced to negotiate a power-sharing agreement and faced continued persecution (ICG, 2008b). For the purpose of analysis both of these cases are coded as failures, as they do not constitute a clear success for the opposition. The remaining 26 cases were failures for the opposition, i.e., cases where government repression successfully deterred further nonviolent action. These include cases like the DRC, 1997, and Nigeria, 2004, where the 25 deaths were made up of several small, isolated protests, none of which were successful; they also include very large, public cases like the Tiananmen Square movement in China, 1989, and the Saffron Revolution in Myanmar, 2007.

Figure 2: Outcomes of nonviolent tactics over time.

Outcomes of SVUP cases, 1989-2010

I do not find any clear changes in the effectiveness of nonviolent tactics over time, presented here in Figure 2. The number of successful cases follows roughly
the same pattern as the frequency of cases overall, with a decline in frequency in the early 1990s, followed by a relatively low but consistent number of cases until 2007. There are two lulls from 1993-1996 and 2001-2006 with no opposition successes at all. Only one year, 2009, has a 100% success rate, with the opposition organisations in Madagascar and Guinea both achieving their goals. Overall I find that there is a moderately strong correlation (0.65) between frequency and success of nonviolent tactics met with severe repression, and no obvious trend in either the positive or negative direction. This suggests that the ratio of success to failure of nonviolent tactics against severe repression is consistent over time.

Figure 3. Outcomes of nonviolent tactics by incompatibility.

A striking variation appears when we compare the rates of success by the type of incompatibility, presented in Figure 3.\textsuperscript{27} There is a significantly higher number of successes for the civilian side in conflicts over government than in conflicts over territory or reform. 56% of conflicts over government resulted in successes for the civilian side, representing 80% of all the successful cases. The success rate

\textsuperscript{27} In three cases both reformist goals and radical goals were pursued. These have been counted only once, for the more radical goal (territory or government).
for territorial conflicts is 14%, while for reform conflicts it is a very poor 8%. The only successful conflict with reform goals was the campaign against the presence of Indian troops in Sri Lanka, 1989. This is an unexpected finding, given that conflicts over government are typically seen as more radical and more disruptive of the political order and would therefore seem to be less likely to achieve success. This challenges the received wisdom that reform campaigns are the most likely to be successful because they do not challenge entrenched power structures in the same disruptive way that radical campaigns do; this is discussed further in Chapter 5.

*Figure 4: Conflict outcomes and ethnic divisions.*

The data also show an interesting variation in the rate of success when we take the ethnic character of the conflict into account. Figure 4 shows that only one of the successful cases involved an ethnic division between the government and the civilian opposition, while sixteen conflicts involving ethnic divisions resulted in failure for the civilian side. The only conflict featuring ethnic divisions where the civilian side achieved success was the East Timor independence movement.
recorded in Indonesia, 1999. The cases that did not feature ethnic divisions are evenly distributed between success and failure. While the correlation between the presence of ethnic divisions and the outcome is not strong (-0.41), these data show that where ethnic divisions exist between civilians and government, nonviolent tactics more likely to fail than they are to succeed. The data also confirm that conflicts along ethnic division lines tend to be challenges to horizontal legitimacy, as only three out of the seventeen ethnic conflicts are also recorded as incompatibilities concerning government. This further supports the argument outlined in §2.4 that movements challenging the horizontal legitimacy of the state are less likely to succeed than those challenging vertical legitimacy.

Figure 5: Opposition violence and outcomes

While the way I have defined nonviolent tactics in the immediate sense means that all of the cases recorded in the SVUP dataset are strictly nonviolent, I have also recorded data on the occurrence of limited opposition violence in the same context as these protests. The results in Figure 5 show that there is a clear variation in outcome between movements where opposition violence has been present and those where it has not. Of the ten successful cases, nine took place in
the context of limited opposition violence, while only one was a strictly nonviolent movement. This is an unexpected finding, given that nonviolent discipline, or the ability to prevent the use of violence by peripheral actors during nonviolent actions, is typically linked to successful outcomes as argued earlier. This finding is explored further in §5.5.

*Figure 6: Backfire as a result of severe repression.*

The SVUP also records information on the occurrence of backfire as a result of violent repression. In total, 63% of the cases resulted in some form of backfire, either external or internal, as shown in Figure 6. Ten cases experienced only internal backfire; that is, the government suffered negative consequences from the use of violence domestically, but did not provoke an international reaction. Most of these cases successfully achieved their aims in a short timeframe, such as the pro-democracy movements in Mali, 1991, and Thailand, 1992, which explains the lack of external sanctions as these would have little time to be established or take effect. Another ten only provoked an international reaction, while the government was able to control the fallout domestically. The example discussed in §3.1.1 of the Santa Cruz massacre in Indonesia, 1991, falls under this category. Four cases resulted in internal and external backfire, including the militia
violence in East Timor during 1999 and the violence against protests led by Buddhist monks in Myanmar, 2007. The remaining fourteen cases did not result in any backfire, and constitute the successful repression of nonviolent anti-government. These cases tend to be those where the government involved was able to suppress most information on the conflict. For example, information was only available on the repression of protests in Umuechem, Nigeria during 1990 after the release of a report of inquiry in 1992 (Frynas, 2000), and the systematic extrajudicial execution of members of the UP party in Colombia, which had almost completely eliminated the party by 1991, passed mostly without notice (Chomsky, 2002). An exception was China, 2008, when the government’s repression of independence protests in Lhasa was well-known but prompted no concrete international sanctions, possibly due to China’s power within the world system.
4.2 Empirical features of the data

In the course of collecting data on the effectiveness of nonviolent tactics against severe repression, I have also collected data on other empirical features of this type of conflict. In total, the SVUP dataset identifies 38 cases during the period 1989-2010 that match the criteria for government violence against an unarmed opposition exceeding 25 deaths per year. A further 40 cases involved some violence against civilian protestors, but fell below the threshold for inclusion. This means that over the period covered by the dataset there were an average of 1.7 cases of extreme government repression per year. In comparison, the UCDP One-Sided Violence dataset (v.4-2011) has a total of 231 actor-years where the perpetrator of violence was a government, an average of eleven active governments per year. Figure 7 (p. 80) disaggregates the UCDP-OSV data based on the information that has been collected in the SVUP dataset. When we compare these results we can see that the majority of cases of government one-sided violence, approximately two thirds of the total, did not involve violence against unarmed civilians engaged in nonviolent action. The remaining third involved some government repression, but only a small minority of cases, 16.5% of the total, meet the 25 deaths per year threshold for inclusion as severe repression. We can also see that the direct, open use of violence against protesting civilians represents an even smaller proportion of the total: 27 cases involved the direct use of violence against nonviolent tactics resulting in more than 25 deaths, or 11.7% of the total number of cases recorded in the UCDP-OSV dataset, with the remainder being indirect cases.
Figure 7: Breakdown of UCDP One-Sided Violence (v.1.3-2011) data

Breakdown of UCDP-OSV data, 1989-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of One-Sided Violence</th>
<th>Percentage of UCDP-OSV dataset</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No violence against nonviolent protests</td>
<td>69.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer than 25 deaths/year</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 direct deaths/year</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 indirect deaths/year</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8. Regional location of cases.

Geographic distribution of the SVUP dataset, 1989-2010

- Europe: 50%
- Middle East: 13%
- Asia: 26%
- Africa: 8%
- Americas: 3%

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%
Table 1: Frequency of severe repression and number of active states.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Active states</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americas</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of cases took place in Sub-Saharan Africa, with 50% of the recorded instances of severe repression occurring in this region; no cases were recorded in North Africa, as the Arab Spring is not covered by this dataset. Asia followed with 26% of the cases, with the rest taking place in the Middle East, Americas and Europe, as shown in Figure 8 (p. 80). The Asian cases were concentrated in South, South-East and East Asia. Beyond being limited to the Sub-Saharan region there were no clear patterns of distribution in the African cases. The remaining regions had too few observations to identify any patterns of distribution. Europe stands out as the region with the least amount of severe repression, with only one case in the dataset occurring in 1989. These findings are consistent with the geographic findings of the UCDP-OSV dataset, which shows 52.4% of cases taking place in Africa, 24.2% in Asia and the rest distributed between the remaining regions. This similarity was not necessarily expected, as the UCDP-OSV dataset also includes violence by non-state actors. The Middle East shows the most variation between the datasets, with 9.1% of the UCDP-OSV cases but 13% of those in the SVUP. As some states have used extreme repression more than others, Table 1 shows the global distribution of states that have used severe repression between 1989 and 2010. There is not a major variation between the results of this and Figure 8; the change in percentage represented by the Middle East is explained by the frequent use of repressive violence by the Ba’ath regime in Iraq.
Severe repression is an uncommon tactic for individual governments to use, as can be deduced from Table 1 (p. 81). 14 out of 24, or 58% of the total number of states that have used severe repression did so only once in the 1989-2010 period. Seven states used severe repression twice, while only three states are recorded as active in three or more years. Indonesia and Côte d’Ivoire were active in three years each; Indonesia used severe repression against the East Timorese independence movement in 1991 and 1999, and against the Acehnese independence movement in 2000, while the Ivoirian government used violence against supporters of political opposition groups in 2000, 2002 and 2004. The worst offender by frequency of extreme repression is Iraq, which was active in four years: 1990, 1995, 1996 and 1999, all separate conflicts.28

Figure 9.1: Severe repression in the context of state-based armed conflict.

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28 Note that this is only a record of frequency, not a judgement of severity or scale.
The UCDP Non-State Conflict Dataset (v.2.3–2011) had not been published at the time of Sundberg’s (2009) article.

Sundberg (2009, 14) has found a strong relationship between the presence of armed conflict in a country and the use of one-sided violence against civilians, with 87.7% of the recorded cases in the UCDP-OSV dataset occurring in countries experiencing armed conflict. Figure 9.1 (p. 82) shows that the same relationship is not present between severe government repression of nonviolent protest and a background of armed conflict. 60% of the cases occurred in countries that were also experiencing a state-based armed conflict. Notably in Africa the majority of cases (57%) occurred in countries that were not experiencing an armed conflict at the time. However if we include data on non-state conflicts the relationship reappears, albeit not as strongly (fig. 9.2). 29 71% of the cases recorded in the SVUP dataset occurred against a background of some kind of armed mobilisation. This shows that violence against unarmed opposition groups occurs most commonly in countries that are also experiencing violent unrest. This is a weaker link than for one-sided violence in general though, and a sizeable minority of the recorded cases occurred in countries that were otherwise ‘peaceful’ (in the negative sense of the word.)

29 The UCDP Non-State Conflict Dataset (v.2.3-2011) had not been published at the time of Sundberg’s (2009) article.
Because it is based on UCDP-OSV data the SVUP data is comparable with the rest of the UCDP’s conflict data. Figure 10 (p. 85) shows a comparison in the rate of unarmed conflict met with severe repression, one-sided violence more generally, non-state conflict and armed conflict over the 1989-2010 period.\textsuperscript{30} Descriptive statistics are provided in Table 2.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\caption{Descriptive statistics for Figure 10.}
\begin{tabular}{lcccc}
\textbf{} & \textbf{Armed conflict} & \textbf{Non-state conflict} & \textbf{One-sided conflict} & \textbf{SVUP} \\
\textbf{n} & 859 & 601 & 642 & 38 \\
\textbf{Mean} & 39.0 & 27.3 & 29.2 & 1.7 \\
\textbf{Std. deviation} & 6.8 & 7.0 & 7.0 & 1.4 \\
\textbf{Range} & 23 & 27 & 27 & 5 \\
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{30} The UCDP-OSV time series excludes cases recorded in the SVUP dataset.
Figure 10: Conflict trends over time, 1989-2010.
The immediate observation is that government violence against protesting civilians is very unusual compared to other forms of conflict. Four years show no recorded activity. There is a spike in the early 1990s, peaking at 5 recorded cases in 1991, but otherwise severe repression has remained at a very low level. It might be thought that this peak is associated with the end of the Cold War and the surge of democracy movements in Europe, but only one of these is actually recorded in the dataset (Romania, 1989). Armed conflict also saw a spike in the early 1990s, with a maximum of 53 active conflicts in 1992. However there has been a moderate downward trend since then which is not reflected in the SVUP data. The non-state, one-sided and severe repression categories all show no clear trend in any direction over the whole time period, although smaller trends up or down can be seen within that and both non-state and one-sided conflicts show significant variation around the mean.

*Figure 11: Polity IV scores.*

The data show that there is little systematic variation in outcome for the recorded cases between autocracies, anocracies and democracies as defined by the Polity IV database. These are presented in Figure 11. While there is a spike in cases at the low end of the scale, there is only a very weak correlation (-0.22) between levels of institutional democracy and severe repression. The fact that

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31 Excluding countries with no effective government (coded -77) and those undergoing transition (-88). Scores are lagged one year to avoid endogeneity; scores for the year recorded are sensitive to the outcomes of unarmed conflicts (Marshall, Gurr & Jaggers 2010).
16% of the cases took place in countries with Polity scores of +6 or higher suggests that including the institutionalised democratic nature of the country as an independent variable is more systematic than looking only at autocracies.32

32 Using the aggregated democracy/autocracy score from the Polity database is problematic because it is not designed to be used as an indicator of how democratic a country is (Marshall, Gurr & Jaggers 2010:16-17). However it is used here for comparative purposes because it is the indicator used in the NAVCO 1.1 dataset (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011).
4.3 Comparison with previous empirical work

The dataset covers several particularly well-known cases from previous research, presented here in Table 3 (p. 89). The earliest is the Tiananmen Square movement in China, 1989. After several weeks of escalating protests the Chinese military moved into the Square, forcefully dispersing student demonstrators and causing between several hundred and perhaps 3,000 casualties. Although this account is overly simplified, and there was at least some, possibly significant, protestors violence, a large proportion of the casualties were unarmed protestors (Nepstad, 2011). Two years later Indonesian security forces opened fire on a funeral procession that had turned into an independence protest in Santa Cruz, East Timor. Although other massacres, some of them much larger, had taken place during under Indonesian rule they had remained hidden, and this was the first to receive widespread attention (Martin, 2007). An undercover journalist filmed the shooting and smuggled the tape out of Indonesia leading to widespread international condemnation and sanctions. Other well-known cases include the suppression of the Saffron Revolution in Myanmar, 2007; the Thai democracy movement, 1992; and the Palestinian Intifada in the Occupied Territories, 1989.33

33 For an explanation of why the intifada is included in studies of nonviolence despite the violent aspects of the campaign from 1988 onward, see Tedla, A, (2010).
### Table 3: High profile cases in the SVUP dataset.\[^{34}\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campaign</th>
<th>NAVCO</th>
<th>COSIMO</th>
<th>GNVAD</th>
<th>MAR</th>
<th>Francisco, 2005</th>
<th>Karatnycky &amp; Ackerman, 2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tiananmen Square, China 1989</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lhasa protests, China 2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Timor independence, Indonesia 1991, 1999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First intifada, Israel 1989</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malian democracy movement, 1991</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thai democracy movement, 1992</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogoni movement, Nigeria 1990</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Apartheid movement, South Africa 1990</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

\[^{34}\] Shaded cells indicate coverage by that dataset. Campaigns listed are those covered by two or more previous empirical studies.
Besides these there are also a number of cases that are original to the SVUP dataset. These have either received very little attention or not appeared at all in previous research. While it is only speculative, they appear to have been missed for one of three reasons. First, there are several cases where violence has been used against opposition political parties, which have been passed over because they are using what might superficially be called “peaceful institutional procedures” that do not count as nonviolent action (Sharp, 1973, 65). Second, there are cases where the violent aspects of the conflict are difficult to separate from or overshadow the nonviolent aspects, and have likely been overlooked either because they have been characterised as campaigns that are mostly violent or because the nonviolent aspects have not received much publicity. Third, there are some cases that appear to have been overlooked because they are what Chenoweth & Stephan (2011, 15) call “nonstarters,” that is, they are too small, too peripheral or too unsuccessful to be included in larger analyses.

Cases where violence has been directed against an organised opposition party have generally been excluded from analysis of nonviolent action because they do not match Sharp’s (1973) theory of nonviolent action, in that they are at least superficially institutional challenges to state power. Seven of the original cases in the SVUP dataset are of this type. The first, Colombia 1991, was the culmination of a systematic and purposive campaign targeting members of the Patriotic Union (UP) opposition party through the 1980s and early 1990s; by 1991 the party had been almost completely wiped out (Molano, 2000). Since La Violencia, the communal conflict that took place from 1948 to 1958 and cost at least 100,000 lives, Colombian politics had been completely dominated by a two-party system called the National Front. This system excluded all other parties from politics and contributed to the growth of the guerrilla FARC movement (Gray, 2008). After peace negotiations culminating in a peace agreement in 1984, leftist groups associated with the guerrillas and the Communist party established the UP. Paramilitaries and private mercenaries of right-wing drug cartels murdered thousands of UP members in the following years; although the Colombian government distanced itself from the killings it is generally accepted that state agents played a role actively supporting these groups (Mendez, 1992; ICG,
2011b; UCDP, 2010). This case has most likely been discounted so far because the UP was technically a legitimate political party. Sharp (1973) states that nonviolent action is not the use of peaceful institutional procedures. However this case has been included because the UP’s institutional actions and political organising against the backdrop of Colombia’s strongly entrenched power system and history of violently anti-communist politics constituted a radical challenge to the existing order. Despite de jure safeguards of political activists, operating outside the bounds of the two-party National Front system carried the element of risk that Sharp (1973) and Schock (2005) argue to be an essential feature of nonviolent action, as can be seen by the response from reactionary groups within the government. While institutional procedures may be peaceful, low-risk activities in the liberal democracies in which most nonviolence theorists write, this was certainly not the case in the Colombian context (Mendez, 1992).

Similar dynamics are present in the other cases like this. The Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) party in Zimbabwe, which suffered persecution reaching the level of severe repression in 2008, is the first political party to seriously challenge Robert Mugabe’s ZANU-PF party since the country achieved independence in 1980 (ICG, 2008b). Despite holding nominally democratic elections the existing government in fact proved unwilling to relinquish power, regardless of whether the MDC followed the correct institutional procedures. Carter (2012) calls these kinds of nonviolent campaigns ‘electoral revolutions’ and argues that it is a legitimate technique of nonviolent action, albeit one with a mixed history of success. She cites the example of Togo, 2005, where after the death of long-time dictator Gnassingbé Eyadéma, several opposition parties including the Union of Forces for Change (UFC) agreed to take part in general elections (Carter, 2012). Despite their institutional challenge they still faced severe violent repression (Amnesty International, 2005). Tanzania, 2001, likewise saw the violent repression of peaceful demonstrations against electoral fraud led by the opposition Civic United Front party, despite it being a legitimate and widely-supported opposition party (HRW, 2002). In Myanmar the National League for Democracy (NLD) has been active since 1988, is an officially registered party, and actually won the general election in 1990. However it has
faced constant repression from the military regime, peaking with the attack on the NLD motorcade in 2003 which is recorded in the SVUP.

The Côte d’Ivoirian cases blur the boundaries between institutional politics and nonviolent action even further. Côte d’Ivoire is recorded in the SVUP dataset in 2000, 2002 and 2004 for the persecution of opposition parties, mainly the Ivoirian Popular Front (FPI) and the Rally of the Republicans (RDR). In the first recorded instance, during 2000, party members and their supporters were demonstrating because of electoral issues when they were fired on. Both parties used a combination of nonviolent action, ethnic mobilisation and institutional channels to try and achieve their aims. The FPI party successfully used these tactics to gain power and then used institutional channels combined with violent repression to manipulate the RDR out of the political process. An extremely controversial Supreme Court decision in October 2000 declared that several opposition candidates could not stand for the presidency on ethnic grounds, in a move “transparently designed” to exclude RDR leader Alassane Outtara from the race while RDR supporters were targeted with intimidation and violence (HRW, 2001, 3). Given the complete failure of Ivoirian institutional politics to ensure the democratic process and the violent ethnicization of political identity during this period, the RDR’s and other opposition groups’ political activities hardly match the picture of peaceful institutional action that Sharp (1973) discusses. Yet perhaps because of their nominally institutional nature they have been largely neglected in the nonviolent action literature.

Other cases have been neglected because they occur in the context of armed conflict or have been overshadowed by other events in the country at the same time. An example of this is the conflict between Muslim Kashmiris and the Indian central government, which is recorded in the SVUP dataset for the year 1990. The Muslim majority population of the Kashmir state has been excluded from political life since the creation of Jammu & Kashmir in 1846 (Rai, 2004). A violent insurgency began in 1987 in response to the manipulation of state elections by the New Delhi government and rapidly escalated, fuelled by a large number of disenfranchised young men within Kashmir and a steady stream of Islamic
militants arriving from Pakistan (ICG, 2002b). Simultaneously a general uprising took place, comprised of civilian demonstrations and extensive strikes throughout Kashmir, often enforced by the militants. The relationship between the armed insurgency and the popular movement was complex: while the 1990 Gawakadal Bridge massacre, the event recorded in the SVUP, prompted a surge in militant activities, general support for the militants quickly waned due to their abuse of civilians, and with it the number of popular protests decreased (Schofield, 2000). With lower levels of militant activity in recent years there has been a corresponding increase in nonviolent action, especially since 2007 (Chowdhary, 2010). However despite these interesting dynamics the nonviolent aspects of the Kashmiri independence campaign are generally overlooked in the nonviolent action literature. Information on the nonviolent aspects of the conflict is only available in the works of area specialists and detailed conflict histories, and even the armed insurgency itself is covered relatively infrequently in the academic literature compared to the much larger and more publicised India-Pakistan conflicts over the region. Although this is only speculative, the unarmed conflict in Kashmir has likely been neglected because it is simply overshadowed by the larger armed conflicts over the region; the UCDP records both an interstate war and an intrastate armed conflict regarding Kashmir in 1990 alone.35

A very similar situation occurred in Sri Lanka in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The UCDP records two armed conflicts (one reaching the level of ‘war,’ i.e., 1,000 battle-deaths), two non-state conflicts and 3 actors using one-sided violence against civilians during 1989, the year coded in the SVUP dataset for government repression of civilians engaged in nonviolent action (UCDP, 2010). After the intervention of an Indian peacekeeping force in the country’s domestic conflict with the Tamil Tigers (LTTE), the Sinhalese leftist People’s Liberation Front (JVP) initiated a bloody guerrilla campaign in 1989 against the Sri Lankan government. Thousands of civilians also demonstrated against the presence of

35 Admittedly the unarmed uprising in Kashmir is recorded by the MAR dataset as an active protest by an ethnic group, which shows the utility of using rigorous definitions and quantitative methodology to systematically approach the subject of nonviolent action. However because of the MAR coding scheme it cannot distinguish between civilian rioting and completely nonviolent tactics.
the Indian troops in a co-ordinated nationwide protest campaign which was met with severe violent repression (Samath, 1989). However later accounts generally mention this only as an aside to the main conflicts against the JVP and the LTTE (e.g., ICG, 2006; Bandarage, 2008).

Other conflicts in the dataset also took place in this kind of context. It is difficult to separate the use of violent and nonviolent tactics by the political/religious group Kingdom of Kongo (BDK) in its conflict with the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). During 2007 the BDK used a combination of violent and nonviolent tactics to pursue its electoral and territorial claims; in 2008 the conflict escalated to the level of armed insurgency (UCDP, 2010). However the conflict has occurred in the context of much more serious violence in the DRC, particularly in the Kivus in the east, and was seen at the time as relatively unimportant (ICG, 2007). Nonviolent resistance to the genocide in Rwanda during the 1994 is likewise overshadowed by the sheer scale of the killing, and information is only available in the most detailed accounts, particularly Des Forges’ (1999) work Leave None to Tell the Story. To give a concrete example from this case, Prefect Jean-Baptiste Habyalimana had been organising resistance to the killings in Butare for the first two weeks or so of the genocide using information networks and encouraging non-cooperation with the government forces, but was removed from his post and summarily executed along with his family by government soldiers (Des Forges, 1999).

Some of the other cases in the SVUP dataset that have not been covered before involve only small protests limited to provincial areas: the shooting of protesting civilians in South Kivu, DRC, during 1997; the use of machine guns on civilians in Awassa, Ethiopia, during 2002; or the multiple small protests in Nigeria during 2004 that were put down with live fire. These are the nonstarters, campaigns that never gain significant size and momentum. The only reason these small-scale protests have been picked up here is because of the use of violent government repression as a criterion of inclusion. Other cases took place in the context of widespread rioting or civilian violence, such as resistance to the military coup in Haiti, recorded here for 1991 and 1994, and an uprising in
Ramadi, Iraq during 1995 which was credibly labelled by the Iraqi government as violent rioting.\textsuperscript{36}

These conflicts show the value of adopting a tactical approach to studying nonviolent action. None of the cases mentioned above involved what would typically be viewed as an unarmed opposition organisation, because the opposition either does not fit the ideal model that has been studied by previous research or because the campaign as such could not be characterised as ‘mostly’ nonviolent. However all involved significant use of nonviolent tactics, often involving thousands of unarmed civilians, that were met by violent government repression.

\textsuperscript{36} For an example of the public relations tactics used by the Iraqi government on foreign journalists at the time, see Barkho (1995, June 21). Inclusion in the dataset was based on the UCDP’s coding of events.
5. Discussion

“And the little screaming fact that sounds through all history: repression works only to strengthen and knit the repressed.”

5.1 The effectiveness of nonviolent tactics

This research set out to investigate the effectiveness of nonviolent action in the face of extreme government repression. In order to do this in a way that is not subject to the selection biases affecting previous research I have adopted a tactical approach to studying nonviolent action, making the actual interaction between civilians and government the subject of enquiry. The results demonstrate the value of this approach. The SVUP dataset shows that only a minority of cases where civilian use nonviolent tactics are successful in the face of extreme government repression, with 26.3% of cases resulting in success for the civilian side between 1989 and 2010. This success rate is significantly lower than the 53% success rate that Chenoweth and Stephan (2011, 9) found for major nonviolent action campaigns. It also challenges their finding that nonviolent campaigns, even when controlling for violent repression, are more likely to succeed than violent campaigns (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011, 51). In fact, I find in this situation that the success rates of these two forms of conflict are almost identical, with a success rate for violent campaigns of 26% (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011, 9). This research also challenges the finding from the NAVCO dataset that the effectiveness of nonviolence is increasing over time. Chenoweth and Stephan (2011, 8) show a general upward trend in the ratio of successful to unsuccessful nonviolent campaigns from the 1940s onwards, with a sharp spike in effectiveness between 1990 and 2006. I do not find any similar trends in the SVUP data; instead, the ratio of success to failure seems to be relatively consistent over time.

While Sharp (1973) and Nepstad (2011) emphasise the potential of government repression to mobilize the opposition through provoking a political jiu-jitsu effect, I show that violent repression actually is a significant obstacle to the success of nonviolent tactics. However it is far from a safe strategy for governments faced with civilians nonviolently challenging their authority.
Although the SVUP data do not show the same high success rate for nonviolent resistance that Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) do, they do show that even in the face of the most extreme form of coercive repression available to the state, a not insignificant minority of cases are successful in forcing the government to give in to their demands. Previous research on political jiu-jitsu has shown that this success can come about because of state violence, rather than in spite of it (Sharp, 1973; Martin, Varney & Vickers, 2001; Martin, 2007; Nepstad, 2011). The SVUP data show that extreme repression does in fact have variable and indeterminate outcomes, with 63% of cases backfiring on the government involved in some way. While a major contribution of this research is the finding that nonviolent tactics only succeed against extreme repression in a minority of cases, the high rate of backfire also shows that the use of severe repression is a highly risky choice for the government involved.

A second contribution that I make is to show that studying nonviolent action at a tactical level can generate original and interesting data. The results show that it is possible to systematically identify and quantify nonviolent tactics without relying on problematic criteria of campaigns or academic consensus that have characterised previous research. In fact this consensus neglects many interesting cases of nonviolent action. Of the 38 cases identified here, twenty are also recorded in at least one of the previous studies, but the remaining eighteen cases are original to this project. As mentioned above, all of them have been neglected because one way or another they do not match up well to the standard model of nonviolent action (Martin, Varney & Vickers, 2001). They are identified here by focusing on the dynamic interaction of nonviolent tactics and repression rather than the parties to the conflict. The SVUP dataset includes nonstarters, the conflicts that are too small, too peripheral or over too quickly to be called campaigns, and represent the cases of nonviolent action that has followed a different trajectory. By including the failed movements we are able to get a better understanding of the absolute success rate of nonviolent tactics, whereas the NAVCO data is limited to making claims about the success of nonviolence relative to violence. It also includes the cases that have been hidden in the ‘mostly’ part of ‘mostly violent.’ These are cases where nonviolent tactics have
been used in support of armed insurgencies (such as Sri Lanka, 1989, India, 1990 and Indonesia, 2000) which have until now been almost completely absent from the literature. These problematise the normative study and advocacy of nonviolent action as a better alternative to armed conflict, although even Sharp (1973, 71) acknowledges that there is nothing to prevent nonviolent action being used for “bad” causes. Finally it includes cases that have typically been neglected because they involve institutional parties, but in reality represent radical challenges to existing power structures. The systematic and brutal persecution of the UP party in Colombia and the RDR party in Côte d’Ivoire seems to stretch the definition of institutional action as “peaceful” (Sharp, 1973, 65) and “low risk” (Schock, 2003, 705) to breaking point. This point in particular needs further attention; although recent work has started to look at the links between violence and nonviolent action (Chenoweth & Lawrence, 2010), there has been little that also includes the role played by institutional action in this relationship, and this is a subject for further research.37

The implications of this are that the study of nonviolent action has so far been too restrictive in its approach, and has missed out important cases that, although they do not fit the standard model, offer insights into the dynamics and processes involved in civilian challenges and government repression. This has potentially exaggerated the ability of nonviolent tactics to succeed in repressive contexts, when in fact some movements, especially those challenging the horizontal legitimacy of the state, are prone to failure when faced with violent responses. It also shows that, although major campaigns may be quite successful, there are significant obstacles to these emerging when violent repression is used at the early stages of the conflict. Finally it shows that the interplay between violence and nonviolence is more complex than has generally been acknowledged to date, and that disaggregating ‘mostly’ nonviolent and ‘mostly’ violent conflicts into the different tactics used can generate new and interesting lines of enquiry.

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37 As noted earlier, Gurr (2000) is an exception by including all three types of contentious political action in his study of minority groups’ pursuit of autonomy arrangements.
5.2 Civilian agency and one-sided violence

As well as testing a new analytical approach to studying unarmed conflict, this research contributes to the UCDP project by nuancing the data available in the UCDP-OSV dataset. Quantitative research on one-sided violence is an emerging field in conflict studies. Eck & Hultman (2007) is the first empirical study that focuses on one-sided violence other than genocide or mass killings, covering the full range of attacks on civilians by armed actors. Their work is the first to provide global coverage of non-state violence towards civilians as well as state violence, and contributes time-series analysis and death counts to this growing field of study. Sundberg (2009) has updated and further analysed the UCDP-OSV data, comparing it with the other violent conflicts measured by the UCDP and finding that one-sided violence is a steadily recurring phenomenon, strongly related to the incidence of armed conflict. Further work on the subject includes Downes (2007), Downes and Cochran (2010), Wood (2010) and Hultman (2012).

These works have tended to treat civilians as passive recipients of violence by armed actors. For example, one-sided violence is defined by the UCDP-OSV dataset as the use of force by a government or non-state armed actor against civilians, resulting in at least 25 deaths; note that civilians here are defined as any person who is not a member of the government or part of a non-state armed group (Sundberg, 2009, 3-4). This places the focus squarely on armed actors using one-sided violence, moving away from the UCDP’s innovative approach of making the interaction the focus of enquiry, as it does not include the many and varied actions that civilians take to avoid and respond to violence. Kalyvas (2006, 390) argues that “individuals are simply absent from current theories of civil wars...there is a tendency to see violence as being externally imposed on unsuspecting and, therefore, innocent civilians.” He argues instead that civilians interact with armed actors in such a way as to minimise their exposure to
Downes and Cochran (2010) are an exception to this, by testing whether the intended outcomes of civilian victimization actually occur more regularly than not.

violence while at the same time frequently co-opting and “privatizing” political violence for their own ends (Kalyvas, 2006, 389). Weinstein (2006) observes that civilians are central players in insurgencies, creating power-sharing arrangements with rebel groups or governments, or engaging in low-level, everyday forms of resistance. This shows that civilians are actively involved during armed conflicts rather than passive victims of violence. The SVUP dataset contributes to this research by expanding these insights to include one-sided violence outside the context of civil war. It shows that some cases of one-sided violence are direct against an organised opposition group using contentious but nonviolent tactics, and that civilians under attack respond and adapt to this situation. Furthermore, unlike previous quantitative work it does not view violence against civilians in this context as a predictable means to an end, but as part of an ongoing, dynamic and highly contested interaction between state and opposition. The outcomes of this type of political violence are unstable, often dramatic and indeterminate, showing that severe repression as a tactic is risky for the government involved. There are many research questions that could be generated from treating civilians suffering one-sided violence as active actors, including group behaviours before and after violence occurs.

38 Downes and Cochran (2010) are an exception to this, by testing whether the intended outcomes of civilian victimization actually occur more regularly than not.
5.3 Evaluating the analytical approach.

Of course the analytical approach that has been developed here is not perfect, and there are several aspects of it that could be critiqued. First, the approach might be criticised because it focuses too much on methods of concentration where people gather together to engage in nonviolent action, and neglects the methods of dispersion. Methods of concentration are typified by protest marches, while methods of dispersion involve individual withdrawal of cooperation while avoiding public confrontation (Schock, 2005). Methods of concentration are the more public of the nonviolent actions, and it might be argued that the approach here is oriented too much towards these cases and neglects the more hidden violence that would be used against methods of dispersion. The SVUP does pick up cases of repressive violence outside the context of direct violence against protest marches, as the ‘indirect’ cases include violence against civilians that were not engaged in public nonviolent action at the time. However it is true that the majority of the cases in the dataset are of violence against demonstrations and protest marches. While this may show a selection bias in the operationalisation of repressive violence, it is also possible that this is a reflection of empirical patterns of repressive violence. Methods of concentration can draw repressive violence because they are public and challenging of the normal order. They are easier to identify, harder for the regime to downplay or ignore and, when shooting does occur are more likely to have a higher casualty rate because of the mass of people. Civilians engage in methods of dispersion precisely because it protects them from these kinds of risks (Schock, 2005, 52). When repression does target these tactics it may more often be in the form of beatings, arrests, “disappearances” (which cannot be recorded here) and targeted extrajudicial executions which, although violent, result in fewer overall deaths.
A second possible criticism, related to the first, is that this approach cannot
distinguish between planned nonviolent action and exactly the kinds of “random
riots or spontaneous mass acts” that should be excluded from the analysis of
unarmed conflict (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011, 14). This criticism is perhaps
justified, because some of the cases in the SVUP dataset are in fact quite small
demonstrations that do not have clear evidence of extensive prior planning or
“discernible leadership” (ibid.). However it may not as serious as it appears. First,
‘clear evidence’ is not defined and it is difficult to see how we would judge it
when gathering data from news reports. News organisations like to present
events as surprising or novel, and often include little background information in
reports (Öberg & Sollenberg, 2011). Furthermore journalists may not have
knowledge of or access to those organising opposition movements and so may
not be aware of the level of organisation that has preceded public action. In-
depth NGO reports are better at constructing the activities leading up to public
protests but, as discussed below, these are not always available. One-off
demonstrations should therefore not be assumed to be spontaneous, especially
when they are swiftly met with a harsh response that deters further protest.
Second, even if we accept that some nonviolent action is spontaneous, the
exclusion of these cases is a consequence of the campaign-centred approach
rather than an essential part of studying nonviolence. While Sharp (1973) states
that nonviolent action should be carefully planned in order to be effective, and
has later argued that the Tiananmen Square movement failed because it was
improvised (Arrow, 2011), there is nothing in his definition of nonviolent action
that excludes spontaneous acts. The confusion arises because Sharp (1973) is
both studying nonviolent action and advocating its use. While spontaneous acts
are likely to do badly, they represent the nonstarters that we are trying to
capture; I have already discussed in §2.5.2 how apparently random small acts of
public defiance can lead to rapid mobilisation and quickly become large
campaigns, but the data also need to include the cases which have not. While this
may appear to be a weakness of the current approach, in reality it is just a part of
moving the focus away from campaigns and towards tactics.
A final point is that governments are treated in this research as unified, purposive actors that deliberately choose to use repressive violence. In reality of course any government is made up of a multitude of individuals and groups, all vying for power and position; this is an essential part of Sharp’s (1973) theory, because if the government were a unified actor an opposition could not steal its agents away. It is possible then that the events that are recorded in the SVUP dataset are not all alike in being deliberately planned repression, chosen for its perceived utility in stopping the opposition. Alternative explanations might be that severe repression is really crowd control that gets out of hand (or inadequate non-lethal crowd control measures being available), “rogue elements” within the security forces, or lower-level decisions being made to put down peaceful protests with violence without the knowledge or permission of the central government. Indeed there are some cases that appear to match this picture. For example, in Guinea, 2009, the Conakry Stadium massacre resulted in major divisions within the military because other units did not want to be associated with the killings, and the officer who ordered the attack was later shot by one of his own men (HRW, 2009; ICG, 2010). Human Rights Watch also reports that security forces in Ethiopia were being given bullets instead of tear gas during 2002 responses to student protests (HRW, 2003). Where the military operates somewhat independently of the central executive the dynamics of responses to unarmed conflict may be different from what we would expect. As far as this critique goes it appears that no other works on nonviolent action address the subject either and the concept of government is rarely defined or problematised. Unfortunately due to limits of time and space this line of enquiry cannot be developed further, and more research is required.
5.4 Evaluating the research design

The research design for this project is based on events data collected in the first place from news sources, and then from NGO reports and academic accounts as required. The universe of cases from which the sample is drawn is determined by the UCDP-OSV dataset. The advantages of this approach are that it is based on theoretically-grounded definitions, it captures the empirical referent using a reliable and valid method, and it has generated data that are comparable with the UCDP's work on armed conflict. The use of news reports as the main source of information means that the work here is based on information that is as close to the events in time and space as possible, fulfilling the proximity criterion for good quantitative data (Dulic, 2011). It also avoids the selection bias that has come from relying on past academic work to define the universe of cases, in that it can identify boundary cases of nonviolent action met with severe repression that do not fit the standard model well (Martin, Varney & Vickers, 2001). By using quantitative, events-based data I have been able to show that severe repression does not follow any clear trends over time, is very uncommon compared to other forms of conflict and is geographically concentrated in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Without this approach these findings would be either unreliable due to the selection biases of only examining large, public campaigns, or not possible at all if we only took a case study approach. However there are of course shortcomings to the research design used here, and as quantitative work on unarmed conflict is still in its infancy there will not doubt be major improvements on this in the future (Svensson & Lindgren, 2011a). Some of the more problematic aspects of this approach are the potential weaknesses of the source material, some of the definitions and the way they have been operationalised, and issues associated with the actual process of data collection.

The first problem for quantitative work is that it is only as good as its source material. One of the main issues during the data gathering phase was the
variable quantity and quality of the information available. In most cases news reports, which tend to have little background or contextual information, could be supplemented with secondary material, mostly NGO reports and academic sources. However in a few cases the coverage outside of news reports was extremely limited, especially in isolated or highly repressive regimes. In the data-gathering phase for the SVUP dataset it was particularly difficult to get information about repressive violent in Iraq under Saddam Hussein’s Ba’ath regime. In these cases the information in the SVUP dataset has come from only an handful of news reports plus whatever could be gleaned from the UCDP-OSV information. Using multiple independent sources, or the ‘triangulation’ of sources, is an important way of establishing the accuracy of information (Högglund & Öberg, 2011). In these cases confidence in the information that has been coded is limited.39

An additional problem that arises from limited coverage is that accounts of repression of nonviolent action are usually highly contested by the government and the opposition, each seeking to either control or provoke backfire by presenting their side in the best possible light and discrediting the other (Martin, 2007). Where government propaganda has been successful we will possible miss cases; for example, after the shootings in Awassa, Ethiopia during 2002 the government claimed that the policeman who died had been killed by protestors and that it had been an armed clash. If Human Rights Watch had not conducted in-depth interviews showing that the man had been killed by another policeman while trying to stop the firing, and the government’s story had been more convincing, this case would have been missed (HRW, 2003). The more limited the coverage of events the less likely we are to pick up distorted stories and propaganda. This therefore introduces a possible structural bias into the data, as more information is likely to be available in democracies and anocracies which allow the operation of journalists and NGOs than in very restrictive autocracies where they cannot operate freely. It is possible that the data are biased towards countries where reporting in English is more common, because I have only been

39 Where it is too hard to build an accurate picture of events the variables have been coded as ‘no basis for judgement.’
able to review English-language news reports. This is somewhat mitigated by the fact that BBC Monitoring reports, which are included in the Factiva database, include translations of foreign language news reports, but its coverage is not complete enough to rely on (Sundberg & Harbom, 2011). It is also possible that a milder form of the selection bias present in previous literature, the emphasis on particularly prominent or public cases, is present here. Stories in the Western world’s sphere of interest are likely to receive more coverage than those in peripheral areas (ibid.); in this project that would mean unarmed conflicts in areas like Tibet or Israel/Palestine are likely to receive more attention and therefore have better coverage than conflicts in areas like Central or West Africa.

Aside from the issues of data coverage there are some limitations to the SVUP dataset that come from using the UCDP-OSV dataset to define the universe of available cases. One area that is open to criticism is the use of the 25-death threshold for inclusion as severe repressive violence, on both normative and empirical grounds. First, although the use of death limits is always somewhat arbitrary, there is the question of whether 25 is a good, valid lower limit for capturing severe repression. Cases where only a few people are killed can exhibit the same dynamics as those in the dataset; Francisco (2005) shows that even so-called massacres where only a few people are killed can result in increased mobilisation and backlash against the government involved. In the UCDP-OSV dataset itself there is the example of the shootings at Trisakti University in Indonesia, 1998. Military snipers fired on a crowd of protesting students, killing four (Borsuk, Solomon & Linebaugh, 1998). The response to this was a massive increase in mobilisation against the Suharto regime, extensive rioting throughout Indonesia and the resignation of Suharto a few weeks later. However because this was the only incident where lethal force was clearly used against peaceful, unarmed protestors this case has not been included in the SVUP dataset. It could well be that this is the kind of incident that we should be capturing when studying the use and outcomes of repressive violence against civilians using nonviolent tactics. Second, it may be argued that there is a normative judgement implicit in labelling one instance of repression 'severe' or 'extreme' and another not, although this is certainly not intended. While it is not
the purpose of the dataset to label any cases as being more or less severe than any of the others, which is why there is no severity variable, some might find it morally suspect to exclude the shooting of peaceful, unarmed civilians on the grounds that an insufficient number had been killed.

These are important critiques, to which there are two responses. From a methodological point of view the 25-death limit in the SVUP dataset is required in order to ensure that we have a complete sample, even if that means sacrificing some empirical breadth. The UCDP-OSV dataset only includes cases where the total number of deaths in one year is 25 or more. I could not include cases of violent repression below that threshold because it would then be impossible to say with any degree of certainty that there are not other cases that are similar, but were not included in the UCDP-OSV dataset because there was no additional violence to make up the 25-death total. This would expose the data here to the stronger critique that it does not represent a complete sample of the empirical referent. By including only cases where 25 or more deaths are attributable to government repression against nonviolent action we can be sure that they would have been included in the UCDP-OSV dataset regardless of any additional one-sided violence during that year.

The better response is to simply bite the bullet and acknowledge that this is a problem with the current data. It does not invalidate the findings or the research design because all of our conclusions are conditional on the 25 death limit being reached. However if the data were to be expanded to cover less deadly instances of repression, the search method should work just as well with a lower limit of, say, one death as a result of government repression. Obviously this would result in a lot more information to sort through, but with the resources available to a larger data project the current approach could easily be used without having to change any other aspects of the definition or operationalisation. It would also avoid the value judgement of labelling on the larger cases of violent repression as severe; if required, the definition could even be expanded to include repression in the form of beatings or arrests as well, if deaths are seen as too restrictive. Further research of this type may call into question the conclusions
that have been reached from the SVUP dataset and is a logical next step for collecting data on nonviolent action.
5.5 Other empirical findings from the SVUP dataset.

Extreme repression against nonviolent tactics has been shown, based on systematic data gathering and analysis, to be a particularly uncommon form of conflict. Out of 2102 conflict-years recorded by the UCDP for armed, non-state and one-sided conflicts between 1989 and 2010 there are only 38 years where extreme repressive violence against civilians using nonviolent tactics is recorded, 1.8% of the total.\footnote{Excluding the SVUP actor-years from the UCDP-OSV dataset count.} Yet when we examine one-sided violence against civilians generally, including those cases where the civilians are not organised and pursuing political goals, we can see that it is comparable in frequency, if not scale, to other forms of political violence and appears to be a steady phenomenon, with no clear trends or deviations over the time. Part of the reason for the higher number of one-sided violence cases is that the UCDP-OSV dataset also includes killings by non-state actors, which make up the majority of cases: governments account for 231 of the recorded actor-years, while non-state actors account for 449 (UCDP-OSV, 2011). However severe repression still makes up a clear minority of the cases of government one-sided violence.

A possible explanation for this comes from Sundberg’s (2009) findings that one-sided violence is strongly correlated with the existence of one or more armed conflicts in the country at the same time. He shows that 87.7% of actor-years in the UCDP-OSV dataset at the time of writing were also recorded as having a state-based armed conflict in the same year; furthermore, these years accounted for 98.6% of the fatalities from one-sided violence, showing that violence against civilians in the context of armed conflict accounts for a disproportionate number of deaths (Sundberg, 2009, 14-15). Control of the civilian population is a central goal of both insurgents and governments during intrastate conflicts (Wood, 2010), and violence against civilians can be used as a strategy to achieve this (Kalyvas, 2006). This suggests that one-sided violence against civilians may be used more commonly to undermine insurgents’ support base and maintain
control over territory than to repress dissent. The dynamics of these two conflicts are likely to be very different; it is possible that governments choose to use violence against the alleged supporters of armed rebel groups more frequently than against protesting civilians who are clearly unarmed, because it is easier to justify and less likely to backfire (Martin, 2007). The hypothesis therefore would be that the use of one-sided violence is dependent on the cost/benefit analysis of the government, and that severe repression of civilians using nonviolent action is less common because of the perceived potential for backfire.

A more likely explanation is that the criteria used to define this dataset are very restrictive, reducing the empirical universe of cases much more so than the UCDP datasets. At the beginning of the project it was expected that cases of strictly nonviolent tactics, excluding even stone-throwing, met with a very high level of lethal one-sided violence would be a relatively unusual event. Relatively small variations in the strictness of the opposition’s nonviolence and the number of people that are killed in any particular instance would quickly exclude many other cases. Furthermore, in most cases we would only expect extreme repression to happen once. In the SVUP there are only three states that have used violent repression in the context of the same unarmed conflict on more than one occasion.41 Violent repression has the tendency to act as a crisis point or break in the conflict, rapidly altering its course and outcomes in an unpredictable manner; this is shown repeatedly in the case study literature surveyed in Chapter 2. The stark revelation of the iron fist beneath the velvet glove leads either leads to increased civilian mobilisation and losses for the government, the disruption and repression of the opposition, or it results in civilians taking up arms and using violent tactics to pursue the conflict. What we do not see is unarmed conflicts becoming ‘intractable,’ that is, repeated cycles of public protest and violent repression that would result in their being recorded in multiple years. In comparison, armed insurgencies or communal conflicts can go on for a very long time, reaching the battle-death thresholds in multiple years

41 The countries are Haiti, against supporters of opposition leader Jean-Bertrand Aristide; Indonesia, against the East Timor independence movement; and Cote d’Ivoire against the RDR.
without any resolution, resulting in a higher frequency of recorded conflicts. Therefore severe repression is uncommon because the situation in which it happens is uncommon, and when it does arise is unlikely to repeat itself.

The data offer support for the hypothesis that when an unarmed conflict challenges the horizontal legitimacy of the state it will have difficulty in achieving its objectives (Svensson & Lindgren, 2011a). These have been operationalised as conflicts that involve ethnic divisions or have territorial aspirations. As shown in Chapter 4, only one of the seventeen conflicts that involved ethnic divisions was successful in achieving its stated aims, and only one territorial conflict was successful. I have identified the potential difficulties that are faced by movements challenging the horizontal legitimacy of the state: the added problems accessing the state’s pillars of support, the social polarisation that results from defining group boundaries, and the resulting barriers to mobilisation and the effective use of nonviolent action. When these results are disaggregated we can see that this may not be reducible to one explanation: seven of the conflicts featuring ethnic divisions were over territory, seven were over reform and three were over government.\(^42\) This suggests that a combination of factors related to social polarisation, mobilisation problems and the extra difficulties faced by movements challenging the state's horizontal legitimacy may be the cause of their lack of success rather than any one particular cause.

Another feature of the data that stands out is the very poor success rate of nonviolent tactics used in pursuit of reform goals. It was expected that reform movements would be relatively successful, because they have limited aspirations that should be easier to accommodate. Supporting this hypothesis, Shaykhutdinov (2010) finds that territorial movements with less radical aims are more likely to achieve success, while Chenoweth and Stephan (2011, 9) find that approximately 75% of the reform movements in the NAVCO 1.1 dataset were successful. Yet in the SVUP dataset, by the ratio of success to failure, the conflicts with reformist aims are the least successful of all with only one out of

\(^42\) Counting conflicts with multiple aspirations only by the most radical (government or territory).
the thirteen cases, the anti-Indian campaign in Sri Lanka, 1989, achieving its stated aims. We already know that territorial conflicts are particularly difficult to solve, because of their limited support base and restricted range of tactics. Therefore the result that only one out of seven territorial conflicts has been successful is not surprising. Likewise it has been shown that conflicts over government can be very effective, both theoretically (Sharp, 1973) and empirically (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011). The SVUP data adds further support to the idea that nonviolent action can be an effective method of conflict when its purpose is to replace the government structure or change the type of government, finding agreement with the NAVCO data that conflicts over government regularly succeed in achieving their goals (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011, 9). However there does not appear to be any theories in the existing research explaining why reform campaigns would do so poorly against severe violent repression. Although some recent works include reform movements (Roberts & Garton Ash, 2009; Clark, 2009; GNVAD, 2011), a tendency can be seen for scholars to conflate ‘reformist’ with ‘moderate’ and assume that radical goals are always more contentious, therefore dismissing reform movements from study (e.g., Schock, 2003; Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011; Carter, 2012). The findings of the current research instead show the need to keep researching nonviolent action that is used in pursuit of reformist goals. In fact, given the extremely low rate of success of nonviolent tactics in these situations, there is justification for focusing more research on these conflicts.

One possible answer to this question might that nonviolent tactics used in pursuit of reform tend to be spontaneous, small or relatively disorganised, whereas the other types of unarmed conflict are more likely to be systematic and have a more resilient, strategic campaign structure. Repression is more likely to be effective against nonviolent action that is not carefully planned, and against organisations that are not sufficiently resilient to withstand it (Sharp, 1973). However on a surface reading of the data it is unlikely that reformist goals are correlated with spontaneity or random protest: at least eight or nine out of the

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43 Guinea, 2007 is also coded as a successful reform case but for the purposes of analysis only the more radical incompatibility over government is counted.
thirteen reform cases occurred in the context of what could arguably be called an organised campaign, such as the Tiananmen Square movement in China, 1989, or the BDK movement in the DRC, 2007. Instead there could be an explanation in the degree of organisation of the parties that are recorded as reformist conflicts. Sharp (1973, 637) argues that movements falter under repression when they do not understand how to use nonviolent action effectively and do not have a sufficiently robust strategy and organisation. There is some support for this in the empirical cases. The Tiananmen Square movement is alleged to have failed because the leadership had an inadequate grasp of nonviolent strategy and failed to organise effectively (Schock, 2005; Arrow, 2011). In Rwanda, 1994, the opposition to the genocide was unable to mount effective resistance because it was too scattered and overwhelmed by the organisation of the extremists and the pace of the massacres (Des Forges, 1999). Likewise the reform cases in Iraq, 1995 and 1999, did not apparently involve extensive organisation, although it is hard to tell based on the limited information available. While this is a possibility, descriptive variables identifying how well organised or resilient the opposition is are not included in this project. Therefore we cannot answer this question based on the data in the SVUP dataset alone. The question about why reform movements do very badly when met with severe government repression remains for future research to answer.

Information on backfire has not been collected in previous quantitative research on unarmed conflict. The SVUP dataset not only contributes to the existing research by providing empirical information on the phenomenon, but also by defining two distinct modes of backfire: internal and external. The data show that there is no correlation between the occurrence of internal backfire and external backfire as only a minority of cases (13%) have resulted in both internal and external backfire. While previous research has viewed backfire as one process targeting different parties (Sharp, 1973; Martin, Varney & Vickers, 2001; Martin, 2007), the variation and lack of correlation between internal and external backfire suggests that there may be different and distinct dynamics underlying each outcome. This shows the value of studying internal and external

\[ \text{The correlation between internal and external backfire is } -0.14. \]
backfire as separate processes. The high rate of backfire, with 63% of governments in the SVUP dataset experiencing some form, shows how risky violent repression is for governments. Although the SVUP data does not show it to be as strongly associated with negative consequences as Francisco (2005) does, the fact that almost two thirds of cases did backfire indicates that severe repression is not a safe option for the government to pursue, and that the results of it are indeterminate at the time the decision is made. The variable outcomes affirm Martin's (2007) argument that violence and backfire is highly contested, and that the control of information and the ability to frame it in a way to suit one's own interests is extremely important to each side. In fact many of the cases in the SVUP dataset where no backfire has occurred at all are those that have also not been covered by previous nonviolent action research, such as the Iraq cases in 1995/1996, the DRC, 1997, Nigeria in 2004 or Togo in 2005. These are small, peripheral or just generally off the scholarly radar, and therefore possibly represent cases where the government has been more effective at controlling the flow of information than the opposition.

Most scholars who discuss backfire accept the proposition that this is most likely to occur when the opposition is strictly nonviolent. Gandhi's independence movement, for example, use a principled commitment to nonviolence in the face of brutal beatings to try and provoke backfire against the British in Dharasana (Martin, 2007). Nepstad (2011) and Mitchell (2012) argue that 'nonviolent discipline', the ability to prevent fringe elements from engaging in violent action, is a necessary condition for success. Zunes (1994, 411) claims that repressive government ‘welcome’ opposition violence because it makes violent repression easier to justify to the domestic and international audience, and that this explains the use of agents provocateurs during large protest marches intended to remain peaceful. The data here should not be interpreted as supporting or opposing this view. The 'opviolence' variable indicates that there was protestor violence regarding the same incompatibility but separate from the specific instances of violent repression recorded in the dataset. Therefore all of the cases here are strictly nonviolent in the immediate sense. However the data do lend some support to the 'positive radical flank effect,' the hypothesis that nonviolent
movements can more easily gain concessions from the government when there is a credible threat that if their demands are not met violence will follow (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011, 43). Gurr (2000, 156), for example, argues that limited opposition violence that occurs outside the boundaries of the unarmed movement, or “small doses of deniable violence,” makes negotiating with the nonviolent movement a more desirable option than having to deal with militants. The much higher rate of success for movements where opposition violence is present, shown in Figure 5 (p. 76) suggests that this may be an effect that is present in these cases. Thinking on backfire is still in the early stages, and our understanding of the processes and dynamics involved is limited; therefore more research is needed.

All of these explanations are tentative and exploratory. The primary purpose of this research was to find out how effective nonviolent tactics are in the face of extreme repression. While I have been able to show empirical patterns of success and failure, the data in the SVUP dataset have less explanatory power for answering the question of why these tactics succeeded or failed. Causal explanations are difficult to derive from quantitative data using statistical methods, especially in the social sciences, which is why most of the information presented here is based on simple correlations and observations. Qualitative case studies are better able to draw out detailed explanations and understand the complex dynamics of unarmed conflict in particular contexts (Boudreau, 2004), while quantitative research that is disaggregated beyond the actor-year into individual conflicts, episodes or events can provide information on conflicts at the sub-national level and also separate causal effects that would be missed in more aggregated studies (Melander & Sundberg, 2011; Tollefsen, Strand & Buhaug, 2012). More research is needed to investigate why the use of nonviolent tactics succeeds or fails, particularly outside the context of major campaigns of nonviolent action.
5.6 Conclusion

The research question guiding this thesis has been: In a situation of unarmed conflict, how effective is the use of nonviolent tactics by civilians in the face of extremely violent government repression? In answering this I have identified how common these conflicts are, where they occur, what the outcomes have been, and some of the key features and conditions of the conflicts and the parties involved that may have an impact on those outcomes. I have shown that 26.3% of cases where civilians using nonviolent tactics have been severely repressed have resulted in full successes for the opposition. This is a much lower rate of success than found in previous empirical research (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011), indicating that extreme repression makes success less likely for civilians using nonviolent tactics. However, the data also show that 63% of cases resulted in some form of heavy costs for the government involved. When violent repression does backfire, it can do so spectacularly, toppling even apparently entrenched dictatorships. Furthermore the outcome appears to be indeterminate, thus making violent repression a very risky tactic for governments to use. The findings presented here also show that nonviolent tactics met with extreme repression are an unusual form of conflict, representing only 1.8% of the total number of conflict-years recorded by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program. They are geographically concentrated in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, with these regions accounting for 76% of the recorded cases. Some of the conditions and features of the cases that appear to affect their outcomes include the aspirations of the civilian side, whether the conflict is divided along ethnic lines, and the occurrence of limited opposition violence. I find support for the theory that when unarmed conflicts challenge the horizontal legitimacy of the state they are less likely to be successful (Svensson & Lindgren, 2011a). Instead, nonviolent tactics challenging the vertical legitimacy of the government are much more likely to be successful. The finding that limited opposition violence is associated with successful movements is a surprising one, and supports the
hypothesis of a ‘positive radical flank effect’ increasing the opposition’s bargaining power (Gurr, 2000).

Previous research has been affected by selection biases in favour of large, public, successful campaigns of nonviolent action. Therefore I have developed a novel approach to studying the subject: basing analysis on the tactical-level interaction between civilians and governments, using events data derived from news sources. This analytical shift from campaigns to tactics in the study of nonviolent action is one of the main contributions of this research. Because of the theoretically-driven, systematic and transparent method of gathering data that has been used, the SVUP dataset is shown to be a complete sample of the most extreme forms of government responses to nonviolent tactics. This gives a solid empirical foundation from which to answer the research question. It also reveals some of the bias in previous work. Twenty of the recorded cases are present in previous empirical work on nonviolent action, while eighteen are original to this project. These original cases are those that have been neglected because they do not fit the standard picture of nonviolent action well, because they occur in the context of armed conflict, or because they are small, peripheral or unsuccessful. The identification of these cases shows the value of adopting a tactical approach to studying nonviolent action. A further contribution is the treatment of civilians who suffer one-sided violence as active actors, showing that they are involved in complex and contentious interactions with the state rather than merely being passive recipients of violence, as has been assumed in previous research. The SVUP data show that when repressive violence is used against organised civilian actors it is indeterminate and risky for the government, frequently resulting in backfire.

By studying nonviolent tactics and government repression at a tactical level we have been able to build a systematic and justified picture of their occurrence and outcomes. This thesis is primarily an investigative study, testing the feasibility of this approach; more research is required in order to gain a more detailed understanding of the processes at work, and the investigate why these nonviolent tactics have been successful.
References


Melander, Erik, and Ralph Sundberg. 2011. “Climate Change, Environmental Stress, and Violent Conflict - Test Introducing the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset.” In Montreal, Canada.


Appendices

Appendix 1: State Violence Against Unarmed Protests, 1989-2010
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Appendix 2: Codebook

State Violence against Unarmed Protests, 1989-2010

Codebook

Basic information
Descriptions of the context in which the conflict takes place.

Conflict ID
Individual number for each recorded actor-year.

ActorID
Unique identifier code for the government involved.

Actor
Government name.

Location
Country name.

GWN o
Gleditsch & Ward country code.

Region
From the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset codebook.

Year
12 month calendar period in which the conflict took place.

Direct
Recorded as 1 if the conflict results in more than 25 direct deaths during the year of civilians who are actively protesting or otherwise engaged in public nonviolent resistance.

Indirect
Recorded as 1 if the conflict results in a total of more than 25 deaths during the year, but only if extrajudicial executions are included.

Aspirations
What the protestors or opposition movements hope to achieve. Where a statement is not available this is based on reporters' and academics' characterisation of the issues at stake.
Terr
The incompatibility concerns the political status of part of the state's territory.

Govt
The incompatibility concerns the type or composition of government.

Reform
Includes demands for specific economic, political, or social societal changes, or protest against government policy or actions, without directly challenging the type or composition of government or the state's territorial integrity. This includes demands that would have radical consequences (e.g., the anti-Apartheid movement) so long as the demands themselves are reformist.

Tname
Name of the disputed territory if the incompatibility is over territory.

Outcomes

Success
Result of the nonviolent protests
1. Failure. Protests are unsuccessful in achieving any goals or only achieve token concessions.
2. Partial success. Protests succeed in gaining concrete concessions from the government, but central demands are not met.
3. Success. Central demand/s met, although some secondary demands may be neglected.
-99. No basis for judgement.

Intbackfire
Records the instances of internal backfire from the use of violence against the opposition.
0. No instances of internal backfire recorded during the year
1. Internal backfire occurs during the year. Civilian resistance clearly increases after the use of violence OR the state gives in to protesters’ demands OR suffers a clear and immediate domestic negative outcome as a result of the use of violence (such as military defections, major splits in the govt etc).
-99. No basis for judgement (not enough available or reliable information).

Extbackfire
Dichotomous variable recording the instances of external backfire against the use of violence.
0. The government suffers no external sanctions related to the use of violence against an unarmed opposition movement.
1. The government suffers sanctions from external actors. Sanctions are either specifically about the recorded incident/s or understood to be directly related to the government actions re: unarmed opposition groups. Any of the following:
   • UN Security Council resolutions condemning the government’s actions in relation to the unarmed opposition organisation.
   • Economic sanctions by world or regional powers, recorded in Huffbauer, Schott, Elliot and Oegg (2008) covering 1914-2006, and author research for dates outside this range.
- • Arms embargoes, recorded in the SIPRI Arms Embargoes Database (2012).
  - 99. No basis for judgement.

**Descriptive variables**

**Polity**
Polity IV 'Polity' variable [not polity2] for the observation year.
- -66 foreign intervention.
- -77 anarchy OR interregnum.
- -88 ongoing transition

**Polity-1**
Polity IV 'Polity' variable [not polity2] for the year before the observation year.

**Ethnic**
Indicates whether the conflict is defined along ethnic lines (1) or ethnicity is unrelated to the conflict (0).

**GDP**

**Armed Conflict**
Indicates that the government was involved in one or more armed conflicts in the same year as the observation. Taken from UCDP/PRI0 Armed Conflict Dataset 1946-2011 (v.4-2011).

**Non-state conflict**
Indicates that non-state conflict occurred in the country in the same year. Taken from UCDP Non-State Conflict Dataset 1989-2010 (v.2.3-2011).

**OpViolence**
Indicates the presence of violent protest (armed, rock throwing, rioting etc) in the same context as the recorded nonviolent protests, i.e., regarding the same incompatibility. Does not include other unrelated riots, violent protests, armed attacks etc during the year.

**Police**
Indicates that the ordinary police force used lethal violence against civilians.

**Military**
Indicates that regular military forces used lethal violence against civilians.

**Paras**
Indicates that irregular military forces (civilian militias, death squads, paramilitaries etc) used lethal violence against civilians.

**Size**
Size of the movement or protest that is fired upon:
- 1. Minor. Demonstration size up to 1,000 people actively participating.
- 2. Medium. Demonstration size 1,000-10,000 people actively participating.
3. Major. Demonstration size 10,000+ people actively participating.

-99. No basis for judgement. Includes cases where only a government or an opposition estimate is available or no mention is made of crowd size. Also cases where no active protests are recorded.

Based on a conservative estimate where several competing claims are made. Word descriptions are rounded down, so ‘several hundred’ becomes 200, ‘thousands’ becomes 2000, etc. In years with multiple protests the largest is recorded.
Appendix 3: Database

Sources include key texts, not a comprehensive list. Exact citations for databases available in the reference list. Any references not used in the main body of the thesis are given in full here.

Not all variables are explained, but any that may be contentious or required a coding decision are listed. If there are any clashes between the variables recorded here and the dataset, the dataset is assumed to be correct.

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**Actor ID:** 1  
**Country:** China  
**Year:** 1989  
**Description:** Tiananmen Square movement. Pro-democracy students’ movement occupation of Tiananmen Square in Beijing dispersed forcefully resulting in between several hundred and 3000 casualties. Student leaders had a core set of demands that were exclusively reformist, including greater political accountability, more open participation in democratic process and a free press (Reform=1).  
**Internal backfire:** The use of violence ended the student movement (Intbackfire=0.)  
**External backfire:** With China’s SC veto no resolution was passed at the UN. However the US imposed economic sanctions, and the EC imposed an arms embargo (Extbackfire=1).  
**Success:** Unsuccessful on all counts (Success=1).  
**Ethnic polarisation:** Although the regime brought in security forces from other parts of China that were a different ethnicity & language to the students, the conflict itself was ideological rather than ethnicity based (Ethnic=0)  
**Opposition Violence:** Nepstad (2011) argues that protestor violence was a major factor leading to the failure of the Tiananmen movement, including use of Molotov’s against military vehicles (Opviolence=1)  
**Sources:** GNVAD, (2011). *Chinese Students Campaign for Democratic Reform, 1989*.  
UCDP Database entry for China, 1989.  

**Conflict ID:** 1  
**Actor ID:** 1  
**Country:** China  
**Year:** 2008  
**Description:** Firing on peaceful protesters in Lhasa, Tibet. Protests, some violent, had been against religious repression in Tibet, with some protesters calling for independence from China. UCDP estimates at least 50 deaths of unarmed protesters.
**Internal backfire**: Protests continued after the use of violence but were quickly repressed by Chinese security forces (Reuters, 30 March 2008, “Chinese security forces seal off Tibet capital”) so (Intbackfire=1).

**External backfire**: No known economic, military or diplomatic sanctions from major powers, (Extbackfire=0)

**Size**: GNAD report suggests that 'several hundred’ monks were involved in the protests. However HRW cites a source claiming that internal government documents suggest that upwards of 30,000 Tibetans took part in protests (Size=3).

**Ethnic polarisation**: The conflict was polarised along ethnic lines.

**Success**: Unsuccessful in achieving any of the stated demands (Outcome=1).

**Sources**: UCDP database entry for China, 2008.

Reuters. (14 March 2008). “WRAPUP Deaths reported in Tibet, China blames Dalai Lama.”


**Conflict ID**: 3
**Actor ID**: 12
**Country**: Colombia
**Year**: 1991

**Description**: Members of opposition leftist political party Union Patriotica killed by both right-wing death squads and police & military forces (Mendez, 1992). Total death toll unknown, but exceeded 50 members of UP or their families. The UP's incompatibility with the Colombian government is recorded as governmental. The UP was established as the political arm of FARC, which had the aim of replacing the Colombian government with a left-wing model.

**Internal backfire**: The persecution of UP by the end of the 1980s had essentially wiped out the party (Intbackfire=0).

**External backfire**: There were no major sanctions imposed on Colombia as a result of the persecution of UP members (Extbackfire=0).

**Success**: Same as for backfire (Success=1).


**Conflict ID**: 4
**Actor ID**: 17
**Country**: Côte d'Ivoire
**Year**: 2000

**Description**: 24 October in Abidjan government troops fired on peaceful demonstrators, with the bodies of 20 men and women, some with bullet wounds, subsequently recovered from the lagoon at Carena. Demonstrators were overwhelmingly FPI (Gbagbo’s party) supporters. While protestors were killed by security forces, later that day and during the night most of the military and the police defected from General Guei to support Gbagbo.

- After Laurent Gbagbo was installed as President following Guei's flight, the mostly Muslim northerners supporting Ouattara’s RDR party began widespread protests, which were in turn put down with violence by the military and police forces. In the largest incident 30-40 supporters of opposition leader Allassane Ouattara’s RDR party were massacred and dumped in a mass grave near Youpougon on 26 October.
• An unknown number of alleged RDR supporters were targeted and killed in relation to the same incident by security forces after the killing of one of their colleagues.

**Internal backfire:** Yes, backfire occurred when the military altered its support from General Guéi to Laurent Gbagbo after the initial protests (Intbackfire=1).

**External backfire:** No external sanctions were imposed. US economic sanctions were imposed the previous year, in relation to the coup (Extbackfire=0).

**Success:** FPI supporters were successful in their campaign, while the RDR supporters were not able to obtain concessions from the FPI government (Success=2).

**Ethnic polarisation:** Yes, RDR supporters were conflated with northern Ivoirians, Muslims and foreigners. HRW (2001) reports that protestors and civilians who were identified as being from southern areas or non-Dioula were not targeted while others were arrested, detained, beaten or killed (Ethnic=1).

**Sources:** Reuters. (28 October 2000). “UPDATE 1-Dozens of bodies litter Abidjan forest clearing.”


**Conflict ID:** 5

**Actor ID:** 17

**Country:** Côte d’Ivoire

**Year:** 2002

**Description:** Massacres of civilians in Daloa by government troops after its re-capture from rebel forces targeted at least some known RDR supporters, October 15-20. Violence against opposition supporters occurred in the context of an ongoing civil war in Côte d’Ivoire, with RDR supporters targeted especially after an attempted coup in September.

• The same pattern of targeting was seen during the brief government capture of Man, Nov 28-Dec 19. Although death tolls are not disaggregated, at least 42 civilians who were either rich businessmen or opposition supporters were killed in Daloa, and ‘dozens’ in Man.

**Internal backfire:** There was no apparent backfire, and the RDR movement was heavily repressed with many of its leaders going into hiding (Backfire=0).

**External backfire:** The UN Security Council condemned the “violations of human rights and international humanitarian law that have taken place in Côte d’Ivoire” in Resolution 1464 (2003) (Extbackfire=1).

**Success:** The RDR party was heavily repressed and unable to gain political concessions (Success=1).

**Ethnic polarisation:** Yes, the killings in the west involved ethnic targeting by government forces, both of suspected rebel supporters and opposition supporters (ICG, 2003).

**Source:** HRW. (August, 2003). *Trapped Between Two Wars: violence against civilians in Western Côte d’Ivoire.*

[http://www.hrw.org/reports/2003/08/05/trapped-between-two-wars](http://www.hrw.org/reports/2003/08/05/trapped-between-two-wars)

HRW. (October, 2004). *Côte d’Ivoire: accountability for serious human rights crimes key to resolving crisis.*


Conflict ID: 6
Actor ID: 17
Country: Côte d'Ivoire
Year: 2004
Description: Lethal force was used to prevent a planned demonstration on 25 March in Abidjan from taking place. Demonstrators were shot en route to the demonstration, and in areas known to be opposition strongholds. The demonstration was intended to be against the failure of the Ivorian government to implement the Linas-Marcoussis peace accord.

Although in some isolated cases demonstrators were armed, these were separate from other instances of attacks against unarmed civilians. Later reports also indicated that RDR members were subjected to targeted killing after 25 March but there is insufficient detail to include these.

UCDP's best estimate for deaths is 42, the majority of which occurred during repression of the March demonstration.

Internal backfire: The violence was successful in quelling anti-Gbagbo protests (Backfire=0).

External backfire: UN Sec Council Res 1572 (2004) imposed an arms embargo on Côte d'Ivoire. However this was directed at the resumption of hostilities following a failed ceasefire agreement and does not mention human rights violations or government violence against citizens in protest (Extbackfire=0).

Success: The protest march did not actually take place and so the organisers' demands could not be publicly announced or acted upon by the government (Success=1).

Ethnic polarisation: Marchers interviewed by HRW described being singled out because of their ethnicity, as well as nationality, language and religion (Ethnic=1).

Source: AFP, 29 March, "Ivory Coast opposition call for new anti-government demos ignored."


Conflict ID: 7
Actor ID: 22
Country: Democratic Republic of the Congo
Year: 1997
Description: ADFL troops (after their successful takeover of DRC) fired on a protest funeral procession, killing up to 40 people.

- ADFL troops shot dead ~3 people in Kinshasa, July 25, who were protesting against a ban on political activity.

- After the extrajudicial executions of 10 civilians in Uvira (South Kivu), a demonstration against the military was put down with live fire resulting in scores of deaths, June 26 (HRW, December 1997). The government acknowledged 38 dead, but military sources privately stated that many more corpses had been disposed of.

Internal backfire: President Kabila clamped down heavily on political expression after gaining power, with repression including the use of violence essentially silencing political opposition until at least 1999 (Intbackfire=0).

External backfire: None recorded. US-imposed economic sanctions on the DRC ceased in 1997 (Extbackfire=0).

Success: The ban remained in place and political opposition was not an effective force until 1999 (Success=1).
**Ethnic polarisation:** None of the recorded incidents were described as protests along ethnic lines.

**Source:** Reuters, 31 May, “Kabila’s troops kill marchers in east - aid workers.”
Reuters, 25 July, “Three demonstrators killed by troops in Kinshasa.”
HRW, (1 Feb, 1999). *Casualties of War: civilians, rule of law, and democratic freedoms.*

**Conflict ID:** 8
**Actor ID:** 22
**Country:** Democratic Republic of the Congo
**Year:** 2007

**Description:** Congolese soldiers put down protests by the ethno-religious BDK group in Bas Congo using automatic weapons and grenades during February. Protests were against alleged electoral corruption. Although there were several reported cases of BDK activists killing soldiers and some civilians, and destroying government properties, HRW reports 4 separate occasions where lethal force was used on peaceful protestors or (alleged) BDK members not directly involved in the protests. This resulted in at least 57 deaths of unarmed civilians and possibly up to 134 (MONUC figure, reported by ICG, 2007). Police were also involved in killing BDK members after the fact.

**Internal backfire:** The DRC government did not suffer losses from the use of violence against BDK separatists; BDK was active again the following year in an armed conflict with the government (Backfire=0).

**External backfire:** The UN Security Council issued resolution 1756 (2007) ‘deploiring again the violence and loss of lives which occurred in late January and early February 2007 in the province of Bas-Congo’ (Extbackfire=1).

**Success:** The protests did not lead to electoral reforms or reviews of the electoral process (Success=1).

**Ethnic polarisation:** Yes, BDK based its membership on ethnic identity in the Bas-Congo region (Ethnic=1).

**Source:** HRW, *Statement to the DRC Parliamentary Commission Investigating Events in Bas Congo,* (April 2007).

**Conflict ID:** 9
**Actor ID:** 26
**Country:** Ethiopia
**Year:** 2002

**Description:** Government forces fired on peaceful protestors in Awassa, 24 May. The protest was against government plans to upgrade Awassa to ‘city’ status, which was drawing local political opposition. Two policemen were killed, but witnesses said that this happened during a shoot-out with policemen opposed to the killings. Amnesty put the death toll at 25 or more peaceful protestors.

- There were several shootings of student protestors prior to the incident in Awassa, although the number of them that were unarmed and nonviolent is unclear (HRW, 2003).

**Internal backfire:** The shootings in Awassa generated negative publicity domestically and internationally but the Ethiopian regime successfully repressed open civilian resistance in the region (Intbackfire=0).

**External backfire:** No recorded sanctions (Extbackfire=0).

**Success:** As far as secondary sources or newspapers show, the protestors did not gain concessions from central government (Success=1).
Ethnic polarisation: The protests were against plans to remove power from the Sidama administration of Awassa and give it to the regional government (Reuters, 25 May). Sidama are an ethnic minority group in southern Ethiopia. (Ethnic=1)
Reuters, 25 May, "Ethiopian army fires at demo, kills 30 - radio."

Conflict ID: 10
Actor ID: 18
Country: Guinea
Year: 2007
Description: Anti-government protests in January across the country were met with lethal force. Demonstrations were held specifically against President Conte and against the general state of poor governance in the country.
  • Protests began again in mid-February, again resulting in the death of unarmed civilians.
UCDP puts the death toll of unarmed protesters at 45.
Internal backfire: Both episodes of protest and repression led to President Conte agreeing to some of the protesters’ demands, with a major concession in February ending the resistance (Intbackfire=1).
External backfire: None recorded (Extbackfire=0).
Success: The protests were successful in forcing Pres. Conte to appoint a Prime Minister that the public would accept, a key demand of the trade unions leading the strikes (Success=3).
Ethnic polarisation: The general strikes and protests were broad-based and mostly organised by trade unions without a particular ethnic character (ethnic=0).
Sources: AFP, 26 January, "Death toll in Monday's crackdown in Guinea shoots to 49."
AFP, 12 February, "Renewed strike calls in Guinea after 18 die in clashes."

Conflict ID: 11
Actor ID: 18
Country: Guinea
Year: 2009
Description: Opposition parties organised protests against the nomination of junta leader Moussa Dadis Camara for the presidency. The main incident occurred 28 September when security forces surrounded then opened fire on a large peaceful demonstration at a stadium in Conakry.
157 is the commonly accepted death toll.
Internal backfire: The killings generated very negative publicity. It also led to major divisions within the military, including the shooting of Dadis Camara and armed fighting between different factions. Camara was widely seen as responsible for the violence and went into effective exile in December, and military units that took part were dismantled (ICG 2010; Intbackfire=1).
External backfire: The EU, AU and ECOWAS all imposed an arms embargo on Guinea in October 2009 in response to the Conakry stadium massacre (SIPRI; Koga, 2011) (Extbackfire=1).
Success: Shortly after the events of September 28 and the subsequent shooting of Camara in December, Camara went into exile in Burkina Faso and was replaced by Sekouba Konate. The military junta then re-started the transition process, resulting in a democratic election in November 2010 (Success=3).
Ethnic polarisation: No, protestors at the stadium represented a wide range of opposition supporters, although HRW did note that ethnic insults were made particularly against members of the Peuhl ethnic group.
Reuters, 29 September, “Guinea death toll jumps to 157 - rights group.”

Conflict ID: 12
Actor ID: 9
Country: Haiti
Year: 1991
Description: Soldiers fired indiscriminately on civilians protesting against the military coup in September. Civilians resistance was organised around barricades erected to block military access to various neighbourhoods. UCDP best estimate puts the number of deaths at 42.
Internal backfire: Some resistance continued but at a reduced level due to heavy military presence and widespread arrests of opposition supporters (IntBackfire=0).
External backfire: The UN General Assembly (46/138) condemned the coup and subsequent human rights violations including repression of the unarmed resistance, and imposed economic sanctions on Haiti (Extbackfire=1).
Success: Opposition to the coup was unsuccessful and civilian rule was not restored until the UN intervention in 1994 (Success=1).
Ethnic polarisation: No.
Sources: Reuters, 3 October 1991, “OUSTED LEADER TELLS HAITIANS TO RESIST MILITARY JUNTA.”

Conflict ID: 13
Actor ID: 9
Country: Haiti
Year: 1994
Description: Troops fired on pro-Aristide supporters on the streets in Gonaives. This is the first confirmed incident of lethal force being used against a public nonviolent action in this year.
• 4 February, police raid a house and kill 20 pro-Aristide activists meeting there.
• U.N. personnel said that up to 70 pro-democracy activists had been murdered by March, confirmed by HRW report (1 April, 1994).
Internal backfire: The junta’s use of violence against opposition activists did not appear to have the effect of increasing opposition, and did not suffer costs from domestic sources (Intbackfire=0).

External backfire: The UNSC strongly condemned the ‘numerous instances of extra-judicial killings, arbitrary arrests, illegal detentions, abductions, rape and enforced disappearances, the continued denial of freedom of expression’ (Resolution 917, 1994). UNSC Resolution 940 authorising the US-led intervention was based at least in part on the military regime’s frequent and serious breaches of human rights and civil liberties (i.e. including freedoms of assembly & expression) (Extbackfire=1).

Government reaction: The initial police claim was that the operation was ‘anti-terrorist’ justified by a shooting attack on an army post (Reuters, 28 April 1994, U.S. confirms Haiti massacre, delivers protest.”). No acceptance of increased responsibility after this point – this justification was given for most assassinations etc, or just blanket denials.

Civilian reaction: Because of heavy government repression there was little protest before April, and isolated protests continued after the event ( CivReact:2) (Reuters, 30 June 1994, “Haitian leftists protest, exodus, murders continue.”).

Success: The removal of the military junta only came about as a result of UN efforts, so unsuccessful (Success=1).

Ethnic polarisation: No, opposition to the junta was not organised along ethnic lines.


Reuters, 4 February, 1994. “Massacre at activists’ house may have killed 20”

Reuters, 25 April 1994, “Up to 40 pro-Aristide Haitians reported killed.”; same date, “Kidnapped community leader released, U.N. says.”


Conflict ID: 14
Actor ID: 2
Country: India
Year: 1990
Description: Shooting of protesters during the Tahrir, specifically the Gawakadal Bridge massacre. Occurred simultaneously with an armed uprising, clashes with Pakistan and other insurgencies in India that year. News reports suggest at least 30 additional deaths during peaceful curfew-breaking.

Internal backfire: The Gawakadal killings resulted in the escalation of both armed & unarmed resistance during the Tahrir (Schofield, 2000:148) (Intbackfire=1).

External backfire: None recorded (Extbackfire=0).

Success: The Tahrir was unsuccessful in achieving independence from India or broader autonomy arrangements (Success=1).

Ethnic polarisation: Yes, the conflict was between ethnic Kashmiris and the Indian government (Ethnic=1).

Sources: Reuters, 10 January 1990 “SRINAGAR, India.”

Reuters, 21 January 1990, “INDIAN TROOPS KILL NEARLY 30 IN KASHMIR CURFEW CLASH.”


Conflict ID: 15
Actor ID: 8
Country: Indonesia  
Year: 1991  
**Description:** Santa Cruz massacre in Dili, 12 November 1991. Funeral procession was held in protest against Indonesian rule. UCDP’s estimate is unclear, but the generally accepted estimate is 180, plus or minus 50.

**Internal backfire:** There were small protests in other parts of Indonesia after the shootings, but these were limited in size and quickly dispersed (Backfire=0).

**External backfire:** The US imposed economic sanctions on Indonesia as a result of the massacre (Exbackfire=1).

**Success:** Unsuccessful (Success=1).

**Ethnic polarisation:** Yes, the conflict was between East Timorese (largest ethnic group: Tetum) and the Indonesian government, and the shootings were carried out by government soldiers.

**Sources:** Reuters, 12 November 1991, “UP TO 20 REPORTED KILLED AS ARMY OPENS FIRE IN EAST TIMOR.”

Reuter, 12 November 1991, “Indonesian troops fire on mourners in East Timor”


**Conflict ID:** 16  
**Actor ID:** 8  
**Country:** Indonesia  
**Year:** 1999  
**Description:** Pro-independence civilians in East Timor were killed by both government-sponsored militias and security forces in the lead up to and, especially, immediately following the referendum in September.

**Internal backfire:** The backfire that occurred from the militia scorched earth campaign was only international, the violence did not provoke increased protest within Indonesia. However East Timor successfully gained its independence, severely embarrassing the Indonesian military and was seen as a major blow to the Indonesian government (Intbackfire=1).

**External backfire:** The systematic and widespread violence provoked an international backlash and led directly to the Australian-led INTERFET intervention in September. UNSC resolution 1264 (1999) stated that the Security Council was ‘appalled by the worsening humanitarian situation’ in East Timor. The US also imposed further economic sanctions on Indonesia (Exbackfire=1).

**Success:** East Timor successful obtained its independence through the referendum (Success=3).

**Ethnic polarisation:** The majority of the killings were carried out by militia made up of East Timorese members who favoured continued integration with Indonesia, and targeted against those East Timorese who favoured independence. However the goals of the opposition were independence for East Timor and therefore defined along ethnic lines (Ethnic=1).


Actor ID: 8
Country: Indonesia
Year: 2000
Description: Acehnese on their way to join a pro-referendum rally in Banda Aceh were fired upon on several occasions at security forces’ roadblocks. At least 30 people were killed this way.
Internal backfire: The use of violence did not stop the rally in Banda Aceh, but there was no clear escalation of civilian resistance either (Backfire=0).
Success: Unsuccessful. The conflict in Aceh & autonomy issues were not able to be resolved until after the 2004 tsunami crippled GAM (Success=1).
Ethnic polarisation: Yes, protesters were Acehnese and violence was committed by Indonesian troops (Ethnic=1).
Sources: Agence France-Presse, 11 November 2000, "Thousands of Acehnese demand referendum on self-determination".
Agence France-Presse, 13 November 2000, "Aceh rebels pull out of peace talks after rising police violence."
Reuters, 10 November 2000, "Indonesia's Wahid blames rogue troops over Aceh"

Conflict ID: 18
Actor ID: 13
Country: Iraq
Year: 1990
Description: Kurds who had taken part in anti-Government demonstrations were killed by soldiers after the fact in extrajudicial executions. Although the reports are difficult to confirm they have been included in the UCDP ISV dataset and so are included here. 23 were reported dead.
- Iraqi troops in Kuwait shot dead two women during an anti-occupation protest in Qaddisiya district, 9 August.
- A similar incident occurred in Kuwait City, 10 August.
- Another woman was shot dead on August 19 at an anti-Iraq demonstration.
Internal backfire: After the initial protests in the first month of the occupation there was little public nonviolent protests against Iraq (Intbackfire=0).
External backfire: The UNSC in resolutions 670 and 674 issued condemnations of the Iraqi forces’ treatment of Kuwaiti nationals. It established comprehensive sanctions including economic and an arms embargo (Extbackfire=1).
Success: Unsuccessful, Iraq was not expelled from Kuwait until the Gulf War (Success=1).
Ethnic polarisation: Yes, in both cases Sunni Iraqis used violence against different ethnic groups.
Sources: Reuters, 27 January 1990, "OPPOSITION GROUP ACCUSES IRAQ OF KILLING KURDS."
Reuters, 9 August, "FLEEING KUWAITIS SPEAK OF DESERT HARDSHIP."
Reuters, 10 August, "IRAQ DEFIES SANCTIONS, TELLS ARABS TO TACKLE U.S. AGGRESSION."
Reuters, 2 September, "IRAQIS HAVE ARRESTED MANY IN KUWAIT, SHOT PROTESTERS - REPORT."

Conflict ID: 19
Actor ID: 13
Country: Iraq
Year: 1995
**Description**: Protests in Ramadi against poor economic conditions were met with lethal force in May 1995. Reported by opposition radio. Reports are conflicting as to the nature of the demonstrations, but they are included by the UCDP 1SV dataset so are included here.

**Internal backfire**: Accounts of protests and unrest in Ramadi were highly contested and heavy media suppression in Iraq limits confidence. Depending on the account repression either inspired very much escalated resistance in the region or unrest was quickly crushed (Backfire=-99).

**External backfire**: None recorded specifically in regard to the Ramadi unrest (Extbackfire=0).

**Ethnic polarisation**: No, Ramadi is in an area of Iraq primarily populated by the minority Sunni ethnic group, the same group the Hussein government was made up of (Ethnic=0).

**Success**: If we assume that opposition accounts are correct then demonstrations in Ramadi were unable to obtain concessions from the Iraqi government; if the case is otherwise then the result is the same (Success=1).

**Sources**: BBC Monitoring, 31 May, “OPPOSITION RADIO SAYS 100 KILLED IN RAMADI PROTESTS.”

**Conflict ID**: 20  
**Actor ID**: 13  
**Country**: Iraq  
**Year**: 1996  
**Description**: Opposition members were summarily executed in Arbil after Baghdad’s intervention in a Kurdish militia internal conflict. At least 96 former soldiers who had defected to the opposition INC organisation were extrajudicially executed.

**Internal backfire**: The Iraqi government did not suffer backfire from this incident, although the INC remained active (Backfire=0).

**External backfire**: None recorded.

**Success**: The INC was unable to achieve any of its opposition goals against the government and later went into exile (Success=1).

**Ethnic polarisation**: No, security forces targeted non-Kurdish members of the INC.

**Sources**: Amnesty International, (1 Sept 1996). *Northern Iraq: reports of human rights violations could be start of purge of opposition groups by Iraqi government*. MDE 14/07/96.  
Reuters, 1 September, “Opposition says Iraqi forces execute defectors.”

**Conflict ID**: 21  
**Actor ID**: 13  
**Country**: Iraq  
**Year**: 1999  
**Description**: Demonstrations in Baghdad resulted in the deaths of protestors, after the assassination of a Shi’ite cleric (Reuters, 23 Feb, “Iraq denies reports of riots.”; Dow Jones, 24 Feb, “U.S. Believes Iraq Govt Killed 25 Protesting Cleric’s Death.”).

- Further deaths and protests were reported later in the year (Dow Jones, 4 August, “Defector Says Iraq Executed 400 Dissidents – Report.”).

UCDP’s best estimate only includes the deaths resulting from the earlier protests - at least 25 deaths are related to direct violence against protesters. The protests in Baghdad were against the government’s involvement in the assassination, and are recorded as reformist.

**Internal backfire**: The killing of Grand Ayatollah al-Sadr led to widespread rioting and protest in Baghdad and other Iraqi cities, and can be seen as a backfiring of the
assassination (which is generally believed to have been carried out by the Iraqi government) (Backfire=1).

**External backfire:** None recorded.

**Success:** The Iraqi government arrested and executed 8 people for the assassination and did not take responsibility or address protestors’ demands (Success=1).

**Ethnic polarisation:** Yes, violence targeted the majority Shia population (Ethnic=1).

**Sources:** Amnesty International, (February 1999). *Iraq: Amnesty International condemns the killing of Ayatollah Mohammad Sadeq al-Sadr and urges an independent investigation.* MDE 14/01/99.


**Conflict ID:** 22  
**Actor ID:** 14  
**Country:** Israel  
**Year:** 1989  
**Description:** Several reports claimed that disguised Israeli soldiers killed Palestinian activists while the activists were enforcing a ban on Israeli ID cards during the middle of the year. Death toll from direct violence against protestors is not clear, conservative estimate is that at least 25 deaths occurred in the context of nonviolent protest, based on UCDP description. The first Intifada, in which these killings took place, was a territorial campaign.

**Internal backfire:** While the shooting of Palestinian civilians – especially children – gave Israel negative media coverage and led to international criticism, the recorded events as such did not lead to an escalation. The use of violence by some Palestinian protestors and militants is given as a reason that the intifada did not lead to loyalty shifts or major political losses for the Israeli government by the GNVAD (Backfire=0).

**External backfire:** The only UN Security Council action was to criticise Israel for the deportation of Palestinian civilians (Extbackfire=0).

**Success:** The intifada was unsuccessful (Success=1)  
**Ethnic polarisation:** Yes, Israeli/Palestinian conflict.  
**Sources:** Reuters, 23 August, “ISRAELI TROOPS SHOOT DEAD PALESTINIAN ACTIVIST.”

**Conflict ID:** 23  
**Actor ID:** 29  
**Country:** Madagascar  
**Year:** 2009  
**Description:** Security forces opened fire on a peaceful anti-government march in the capital, Antananarivo, February 7. Reports agreed that the protestors were unarmed and the firing was unprovoked. Amnesty International & UCDP estimate that 31 deaths occurred during the protests.

**Internal backfire:** Popular protests resulted in the Malagasy government being dissolved and power handed over to Rajoelina, the opposition leader (Backfire=1).

**External backfire:** The AU and Southern African Development Community condemned Rajoelina’s seizure of power and implemented economic sanctions, but did not impose them as a result of the previous government’s violent repression (Extbackfire=0).

**Success:** The protests were successful in achieving a change in Prime Minister (success=3).  
**Ethnic polarisation:** No, opposition to Ravolomanana’s government was based on political grievances (Ethnic=0).  
AFP, 9 Feb, “Tension in Madagascar after 28 dead in protest”
Al Jazeera, 8 Feb, “Madagascar protesters shot dead.”

**Conflict ID:** 24  
**Actor ID:** 15  
**Country:** Mali  
**Year:** 1991  
**Description:** Pro-democracy protestors were shot and in one case burned alive by security forces during anti-Traore demonstrations in March, with at least over 100 killed. UCDP puts the death toll at 106+.
**Internal backfire:** The use of violence by Traore led to further civilian resistance, loss of support by the military and his ouster by a military coup (Backfire=1).
**External backfire:** None recorded.
**Ethnic polarisation:** The opposition to Traore was widespread and not restricted to a particular ethnic group.
**Success:** Civilian resistance and the loss of Traore’s legitimacy led to his ouster by a military coup (Success=3).
**Sources:** Reuters, 23 March, “SECURITY FORCES FIRE ON MALI PROTESTERS, DEATH TOLL RISES TO 30.”
Reuters, 24 March, “OVER 100 REPORTED DEAD AFTER THIRD DAY OF MALI VIOLENCE.”

**Conflict ID:** 25  
**Actor ID:** 4  
**Country:** Myanmar  
**Year:** 2003  
**Description:** Targeted killings: Government-backed militia and military units launched an attack on Aung San Suu Kyi’s motorcade, 30 May in Mandalay. UCDP concludes ~70 deaths as a result. Civilians killed were members of NLD, the National League for Democracy, which has been in conflict with the junta since 1988 over democratic reforms.
**Internal backfire:** The May 30 attack was part of a wider pre-planned and well co-ordinated crack-down that severely restricted NLD activities. International condemnation was widespread but actual sanctions were limited (ICG, 2004). The attack, although causing some concern amongst different government and military circles, did not backfire (Intbackfire=0).
**External backfire:** EU Council Decision 2003/461/CFSP renewed the existing arms embargo on Myanmar with specific reference to the arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi & continuing government repression. The United States also imposed economic sanctions with the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act 2003 (Extbackfire=1).
**Success:** The NLD was heavily repressed throughout 2003 and did not gain concessions from the Myanmar government (Success=1).
**Ethnic polarisation:** No, the NLD is not aligned with ethnic minority groups, although the military government accused them of conspiring with the armed ethnic insurgencies.
**Sources:** UCDP database description.
AP, 31 May, “Suu Kyi in ‘protective custody’ and party office closed after deadly clash in northern Myanmar.”
ICG (April 2004). *Burma/Myanmar: sanctions, engagement or another way forward?* Asia Report no. 78.

**Conflict ID:** 26  
**Actor ID:** 4  
**Country:** Myanmar  
**Year:** 2007  
**Description:** ~135 killed during anti-Government demonstrations in September involving Buddhist monks and pro-democracy activists. At its height involved an estimated 100,000 people in Yangon. Although there may have been some instances of bottle or stone throwing most of the killings were of unarmed and peaceful protesters. Reformist claims had escalated to demands that the government resign by the time the crack-down took place.  
**Internal backfire:** The military junta suffered a major loss of moral legitimacy by using violence against monks, and the crackdown led to worldwide condemnation. Although open resistance was effectively stamped out by intelligence and security forces after the protests the violence backfired by severely undermining domestic (and some elite) support for the junta (ICG, 2008; Backfire=1).  
**External backfire:** The US imposed further economic sanctions on Myanmar as a result of the violence against pro-democracy protesters, as did the EU. ASEAN representative Singapore gave an “unprecedented statement...expressing 'revulsion' over the violence” and the UNSC gave a presidential statement (consensus, but not a resolution) condemning the violence (Extbackfire=1).  
**Success:** Unsuccessful in achieving democratic reforms etc (Success=1).  
**Ethnic polarisation:** No, the protests involved Burman monk and civilians.  
**Sources:** Associated Press, 27 September 2007, "Myanmar Forces Open Fire on Protesters.”  
Reuters, 27 September 2007, “At least nine dead in Myanmar crackdown.”  

**Conflict ID:** 27  
**Actor ID:** 21  
**Country:** Nigeria  
**Year:** 1990  
**Description:** Armed police were sent to Umuechem, Rivers State, to control a peaceful protest against government policy concerning oil extraction in the region (especially re: Shell oil). 80 villagers were killed in their homes during and after the demonstrations. Information was not available until the results of an official inquiry were leaked in 1992, hence the lack of contemporary newspaper coverage.  
**Internal backfire:** Information on the use of violence was not publicly available until the release of a report of inquiry in 1992. The government did not suffer any backfire from the repression due to its effective cover-up (Backfire=0).  
**External backfire:** None recorded.  
**Success:** Protests were unsuccessful, and most nonviolent uprisings in the Delta have continued to be ineffective (Success=1).  
**Ethnic polarisation:** Yes, repression was targeted against the Ogoni minority group.  
**Conflict ID:** 28  
**Actor ID:** 21  
**Country:** Nigeria  
**Year:** 2004  
**Description:** Protesting student teachers were shot dead by police in Ikere-Ekiti. Protest over government actions.  
- One-sided violence by government-backed militias against opposition activists occurred around local elections, and is likely under-reported.  
- A 12-year-old was shot by police during protests against fuel price rises in Kaduna.  
- Unarmed protestors occupying an oil rig were shot and killed on November 20 in Ojobo. Protest against Shell & government actions.  
At least 25 deaths occurred during peaceful protests in 2004.  
**Internal backfire:** None of the reported incidents led to increased civilian resistance or political costs to the government (Backfire=0).  
**External backfire:** None recorded.  
**Government reaction:**  
**Civilian reaction:**  
**Success:** None of the protests during the year that expressed demands were successful (Success=1).  
**Ethnic polarisation:** The most obvious incidents of repression (Ikere-Ekiti and Ojobo) involved police violence against ethnic minority groups.  
**Sources:** HRW, (June 2004). *Nigeria's 2003 Elections: the unacknowledged violence.*  
AFP, 16 March, "Six students shot dead in clashes with police in southwest Nigeria."  
AFP, 13 October, "Nigerian labour leader warns strike may be prolonged beyond Thursday"  
AFP, 1 Dec, "Nigerian community claims seven killed at protest on Shell oil rig"  
Reuters, 22 June, "Poll feud kills another 14 in central Nigeria."

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**Conflict ID:** 29  
**Actor ID:** 10  
**Country:** Romania  
**Year:** 1989  
**Description:** Security forces used lethal force against protestors demonstrating against the Ceausescu government. Protests began in Timisoara and spread to Bucharest by the 21st of December. Soldiers and police who refused orders to fire on crowds were also summarily executed.  
**Internal backfire:** The use of violence to repress unarmed (as well as armed) protestors in Timisoara led to a massive demonstration in Bucharest, directly resulting in Ceausescu's ouster (Intbackfire=1).  
**External backfire:** As the Ceausescu government was quickly overthrown there were no sanctions imposed on Romania directly related to the repression in Timisoara (Extbbackfire=0).  
**Success:** Successful in achieving the ouster of Ceausescu, although there were other major contributing factors including the defection of the army (Success=3).  
**Ethnic polarisation:** No, protests were broad-based.  
**Sources:** Reuters, 18 December, "DOZENS BELIEVED KILLED AS ROMANIAN FORCES FIRE ON PROTESTERS"  
Reuters, 21 December 1989, multiple reports
Conflict ID: 30
Actor ID: 25
Country: Rwanda
Year: 1994
Description: During the Rwandan genocide 'Hutu moderates', Hutu politicians and activists opposed to the massacres, were targeted by government forces and militias. These cases are included because they were targeted for their political activities rather than their ethnic identities. Most of the targeted Hutus were political or civil society leaders opposed to the government (HRW, 1999). The total number of deaths in this circumstance is unknown, but recorded in the dataset as deaths in the context of nonviolent resistance rather than direct killing of protesters.

Internal backfire: Although the RPF invaded and subsequently toppled the Hutu regime in Rwanda the influence that the killing of Hutus had on this decision is debatable and probably minimal (Backfire=0).

External backfire: Although it was very much delayed, the UNSC did agree on a resolution stating that they were ‘appalled at the...large-scale violence in Rwanda’ (Res. 912 (1994)). UNSC Res 918 imposed an arms embargo in May 1994 (Exbackfire=1).

Success: Opposition activists were unable to halt the genocide (Success=1).

Ethnic polarisation: No, the recorded cases were violence against Hutu opponents on political grounds.


Conflict ID: 31
Actor ID: 19
Country: Sierra Leone
Year: 1997
Description: In late August 6 people who were suspected of broadcasting pro-Kabbah messages on the radio were executed by military personnel.

- At least 6 and possibly many more students were shot dead while attempting to demonstrate against the AFRC government in Freetown, 18 August.
- The father of ousted VP Albert Joe Demby was shot dead by AFRC troops in his home on June 28 as a supporter of Kabbah and the Kamajors. Unconfirmed report from the same source indicated that 25 people in the area were also killed although no details available.
- Soldiers are reported to have killed a girl for listening to an opposition radio broadcast (GNVAD)
- On 27 May troops opened fire on civilians protesting the coup in Bo, with at least one person reported to have died.
- On 27 June Sheku Kabbah who was prominent in the student opposition movement was killed by RUF troops in Moyamba, along with 10 other civilians.

Internal backfire: AFRC violence was unsuccessful in repressing civilian resistance, and protests escalated throughout 1997 and 1998 (Intbackfire=1).

External backfire: The UN Security Council condemned the coup and imposed sanctions but did not explicitly reference breaches of human rights or freedom of expression etc in their resolutions. The US imposed economic sanctions on the AFRC.
aimed at the restoration of democracy. The use of violence against nonviolent
demonstrators undermined the regime’s legitimacy and led to increased resistance & an
international intervention by ECOWAS in 1998 (Extbackfire=1).
Success: The protests delegitimized the Sierra Leonean government and led to the
ECOWAS intervention (Success=3).
Ethnic Polarisation: No, opposition to the coup was wide-spread across all sectors of
society, and the AFRIC government was made up of several different ethnic groups.
Amnesty International, (28 May 1997). Sierra Leone: new military rulers must respect
human rights. AFR 51/03/97.
HRW, Sowing Terror: atrocities against civilians in Sierra Leone, (July, 1998).
News.

Conflict ID: 32
Actor ID: 28
Country: South Africa
Year: 1990
Description: Up to 17 black demonstrators were killed in Sebokeng when police used
buckshot and rubber bullets to disperse protests, March 26.
- Police shot dead 4 demonstrators in Rammulotsi, April 19.
UCDP's best estimate for deaths is 32 in this context
Internal backfire: The March shootings briefly derailed peace talks between the SA
government and the ANC, but other than that there was no clear backfire (separate from
the rest of the violence in SA) against the government (Backfire=0).
External backfire: Although economic sanctions had been in place since the 1960s the
recorded cases did not lead to increased international pressure, and sanctions
programmes began to be dismantled during the year (Extbackfire=0).
Success: The protests did not result in concessions by the government (Success=1).
Ethnic polarisation: Yes, repressive violence targeted blacks (Ethinic=1).
Sources: Reuters, 27 March, "BLOODSHED JOLTS SOUTH AFRICA’S COURSE TOWARD
PEACE."
Reuters, 6 April, "MANDELA, DE KLERK PUT SOUTH AFRICA TALKS ON COURSE."
Reuters, 19 April, "SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE KILL BLACK YOUNGSTERS IN TOWNSHIP
PROTEST."
Reuters, 1 September, "SOUTH AFRICAN JUDGE FINDS POLICE SHOOTINGS
UNJUSTIFIED."

Conflict ID: 33
Actor ID: 5
Country: Sri Lanka
Year: 1989
Description: Demonstrations demanding the removal of Indian troops stationed on the
island to fight Tamil rebels were in several instances fired upon by police. While some
involved stone throwing or physical assaults on police, at least some were peaceful,
including one instance where troops opened fire from helicopters. The protests resulted
in the Indian troops being withdrawn from the island. These protests are included
because at the time India was in alliance with the Government of Sri Lanka, therefore
troops were taking part in the conflict as a part of government policy. Total death toll of
unarmed protestors is uncertain but at least 25.
Internal backfire: Violence was unsuccessful in halting the protests, which led to the removal of Indian troops (Backfire=1).
External backfire: None recorded.
Success: Indian troops were withdrawn from Sri Lanka in the face of protests and widespread unpopularity (Success=3).
Ethnic polarisation: No, protesters were Sinhalese.
Sources: Reuters, 29 July 1989, "PRESIDENT APPEALS FOR CALM AS 140 KILLED IN SRI LANKA."
Reuters, 30 July 1989, "SRI LANKA RELAXES CURFEW AS ANTI-INDIAN VIOLENCE EASES"

Conflict ID: 34
Actor ID: 24
Country: Tanzania
Year: 2001
Description: Security forces fired on demonstrators in the semi-autonomous island of Zanzibar. Although there was some protestor violence, resulting in the death of a policeman, UCDP (based on the HRW report) has judged that the majority of deaths were of peaceful, unarmed protestors. HRW, which is the source UCDP apparently used, estimates 37 deaths during the protests.
Internal backfire: The Tanzanian government did not suffer a political backfire, but instead praised the use of violence to restore order (Backfire=0).
External backfire: None recorded.
Success: Police actions were openly backed by the Tanzanian government, and the protests did not result in reforms (Success=1).
Ethnic polarisation: Yes, Zanzibaris constitute an ethnonationalist group according to Minorities at Risk, although often very fragmented. The opposition group organising the protests, the CUF, draws its support from areas that are predominantly Arab in origin.
Source: HRW, "The Bullets Were Raining": The January 2001 attack on peaceful demonstrators in Zanzibar (April, 2002). This is the source used by UCDP.
Minorities at Risk Database (2009).
Reuters, 29 January, "At least 37 people killed in Zanzibar riots."

Conflict ID: 35
Actor ID: 7
Country: Thailand
Year: 1992
Description: Protests in May against the military government. UCDP’s best estimate is 44 deaths.
Internal backfire: Demonstrations ceased after appeals from the royal family and the imposition of a city-wide curfew. After the King’s intervention Suchinda resigned from the post of Prime Minster (Backfire=1).
External backfire: None recorded.
Success: Protests were successful in forcing Pres. Suchinda to leave office (Success=3).
Ethnic fragmentation: No, the democracy movement was made up of Thais and was broad-based.
Sources: Reuters, 18 May 1992, “THAI TROOPS OPEN FIRE ON DEMONSTRATORS.”
Conflict ID: 36
Actor ID: 20
Country: Togo
Year: 1991
Description: Police used lethal force against student-led anti-government protests in April 1991. The majority of those killed were breaking curfew. Death toll from this incident was 28.
Internal backfire: President Eyadema was forced to bow to the wishes of protestors in setting up the National Conference, although he refused to step down or offer genuine democratic reforms (Backfire=1).
External backfire: None recorded.
Government reaction:
Civilian reaction:
Success: The Togolese democracy movement obtained some concession, primarily the creation of a national conference that was intended to lead to democratic reforms, but failed to oust Pres. Eyadema. However as the creation of the conference is identified as a core aim this is coded as Success=3.
Ethnic polarisation: The opposition movement was not based along any particular ethnic lines.
Sources: Reuters, 11 April, "DEATH TOLL RISES TO 26 IN TOGO, BODIES BROUGHT TO U.S. EMBASSY."

Conflict ID: 37
Actor ID: 20
Country: Togo
Year: 2005
Description: There are reports of security forces and pro-government civilian militias killing opposition members and presumed supporters both leading up to and immediately following the April 24 election. This included both targeted attacks on civilian not directly engaged in nonviolent resistance, and firing on crowds that had gathered to protest the result. Opposition violence was present but not in all cases.
UCDP records a best estimate of deaths related to this period of violence of 436, including people killed while actively demonstrating and massacres of alleged opposition members.
Internal backfire: The Togolese government did not suffer any political costs, and apparently was successful at repressing open civilian opposition to the government (Backfire=0).
External backfire: None recorded. ECOWAS and the AU imposed sanctions but only until the elections, after which they were withdrawn (Extbakfire=0).
Ethnic polarisation: No, opposition movement was political rather than ethnic based.
Success: Unsuccessful, the election results stood (Success=1).
**Conflict ID:** 38  
**Actor ID:** 27  
**Country:** Zimbabwe  
**Year:** 2008  
**Description:** After the ZANU-PF party received less-than-expected votes in the March 2008 elections, government officials and military personnel organised and incited anti-MDC violence, including the extra-judicial killing of known MDC activists. UCDF notes that over 100 opposition supporters were killed, although available sources are not detailed enough to disaggregate this figure.  
**Internal backfire:** The Mugabe government faced many domestic problems, but did not appear to suffer major political costs from the use of violence against MDC supporters (Intbackfire=0).  
**External backfire:** EU Council decision 2008/605/CFSP imposed economic sanctions on Zimbabwe as a result partly of violence against opposition movements (Extbackfire=1).  
**Government reaction:**  
**Civilian reaction:**  
**Success:** The opposition MDC party successfully gained a share of parliament, a major step in Zimbabwe, but had to negotiate a power-sharing agreement in February 2009 and still faced persecution after that.  
**Ethnic polarisation:** No, much of the violence was directed against those who had previously supported ZANU-PF but swung to voting for MDC in the election. Neither party draws its main support along ethnic lines.  
**Source:** HRW, "Bullets for Each of You": state-sponsored violence since Zimbabwe’s March 29 elections (June, 2008).  