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As a manuscript

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**The Long-term Effects of Repression on Street Protest Activity in Foreign
Countries**

SUMMARY OF THE DISSERTATION
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Research Design

Statement of Research Problem

Repression is frequently used by the authorities of states with diverse political regimes to suppress, deter and regulate political activity that is undesirable for them, including street protests. Political scientists have studied the link between the use of state coercive measures and protest activity for a long time. And research demonstrates that repression does not always decrease street protest activity. Various forms of link between repressive measures and street protests were found: from negative¹ or positive² to parabolic³.

Surprisingly, existing studies of protests focus on situations in which the negative effects of repression are least expected. The problem is an emphasis on the repression effect on already unfolding protest campaigns⁴. It is in this short-term perspective that immediate emotional reactions caused by repression⁵ work and the cascade of preference falsification destruction modeled by T.Kuran occurs (people stop hiding their negative attitude towards the leadership of the state)⁶. However, there is a deficit of attention to the ability of repression to prevent protests or decrease the number of their participants in the more distant future, beyond the campaigns developing at the time of their use (i.e. in the long term). To fully understand the impact of repression, it is necessary to

1 Tanneberg D. *The Politics of Repression Under Authoritarian Rule: How Steadfast Is the Iron Throne?* Cham: Springer. 2020. 176 p.

2 Carey S. The dynamic relationship between protest and repression // *Political Research Quarterly*. 2006. Vol. 59. No. 1. P. 1-11. Bell S., Murdie A. The apparatus for violence: Repression, violent protest, and civil war in a cross-national framework // *Conflict management and peace science*. 2018. Vol. 35. No. 4. P. 336-354.; Ayanian A., Tausch N. How risk perception shapes collective action intentions in repressive contexts: A study of Egyptian activists during the 2013 post-coup uprising // *British journal of social psychology*. 2016. Vol. 55. No. 4. P. 700-721.

3 Muller E. (1985) «Income Inequality, Regime Repressiveness, and Political Violence» // *American Sociological Review*, vol.50, no.1: 47-61.

4 Carey S. The dynamic relationship between protest and repression // *Political Research Quarterly*. 2006. Vol. 59. No. 1. P. 1-11; Ayanian A., Tausch N. How risk perception shapes collective action intentions in repressive contexts: A study of Egyptian activists during the 2013 post-coup uprising // *British journal of social psychology*. 2016. Vol. 55. No. 4. P. 700-721.

5 Ayanian A., Tausch N. How risk perception shapes collective action intentions in repressive contexts: A study of Egyptian activists during the 2013 post-coup uprising // *British journal of social psychology*. 2016. Vol. 55. No. 4. P. 700-721.

6 Kuran T. Sparks and prairie fires: A theory of unanticipated political revolution // *Public Choice*. - 1989. - No. 61. - P. 41-74.

understand how it affects street protests beyond the typical duration of a protest campaign (for example, in the NAVCO 1.2 database for nonviolent campaigns, the median duration is 354.5 days (i.e., about a year))⁷.

In the fight against street protest activity, repression can be used for two purposes: suppressing protest campaigns that have already started (so-called reactive repression, also known as responsive repression) and preventing the occurrence of protests in the future⁸ (preventive repression)⁹. Examples of classic reactive repression include the dispersal of street protest events and the detention of their participants (reactive repression, by definition, is a response to protest events)¹⁰. Examples of preventive repression include the arrests of leaders¹¹ and activists of pro-opposition civil society organizations, the introduction of penalties for activities aimed at disseminating information motivating participation in protests, etc. Preventive repression, as C. Conrad and E. Ritter write, is used not as a response to protests that have started, but with the goal of preventing them in the future by influencing the capacity of potential protesters to organize a street protest events (by limiting resources and communication channels) and on their willingness (by deterrence due to fear of punishment) to engage in protest activity¹².

At the same time, scientists do not pay sufficient attention to studying the impact of preventive repression on protests. The severity of preventive repression in empirical studies is used only as a moderator variable when assessing the impact of reactive repression on protests¹³, or as a parameter in game-theoretic models of the relationship

7 Chenoweth E., M. Stephan (2011) *Why civil resistance works: The strategic logic of nonviolent conflict*. Columbia University Press.

8 Or at least decreasing the number of protest event participants in the future.

9 Dragu T., Lupu Y. Digital Authoritarianism and the Future of Human Rights // *International Organization* – 2021. - Vol.75. - No.4. - P.991-1017; Conrad C., Ritter E.H. Preventing and Responding to Dissent: The Observational Challenges of Explaining Strategic Repression // *American Political Science Review*. - 2016. - Vol.110. - No.1. - P. 85-99.

10 Conrad C., Ritter E.H. Preventing and Responding to Dissent: The Observational Challenges of Explaining Strategic Repression // *American Political Science Review*. - 2016. - Vol.110. - No.1. - P. 85-99.

11 Ibidem

12 Ibidem

13 Conrad C., Ritter E.H. Preventing and Responding to Dissent: The Observational Challenges of Explaining Strategic Repression // *American Political Science Review*. - 2016. - Vol.110. - No.1. - P. 85-99.

between protesters, authorities and organizations engaged in preventive repression¹⁴. Despite the lack of knowledge about the real functional form of the preventive repression effect on protest activity, studies directly assume a negative linear (the stronger the repression, the weaker the protests) influence of preventive repression as a ground truth. The goals of people who use repression are equated with their real result, which cannot be considered to be a correct approach. The fact that repression prevents protest activity (that is, has a preventive function) should be confirmed or refuted in empirical research.

In addition, in existing studies of preventive and reactive repression, they are exemplified by different actions (dispersal of protest as a reactive form of repression, imprisonment of leaders and activists of civil society organizations - as a form of preventive repression¹⁵). But in reality, the same forms of repression can be used simultaneously for both the first and second purposes. For example, a decision to disperse a rally and prosecute its participants can be used both in order to stop a protest event, and in order to prevent future rallies by demonstrating the authorities' readiness to disperse rallies and prosecute their participants, which should create stable expectations regarding the high risks and costs of participation in street protest events. On the contrary, the imprisonment of leaders and activists of pro-opposition civil society organizations may be both a response to the street protest campaign led by that organization and an action to deprive these activists of the opportunity to organize protests in the future as well as to deter other people and organizations from mobilizing protests .

In practice, it is difficult to reveal the true intentions of those who make decisions about the use of repression want to achieve in each specific situation. Moreover, even if

14 Dragu T., Lupu Y. Digital Authoritarianism and the Future of Human Rights // International Organization – 2021. - Vol.75. - No.4. - P.991-1017; Dragu T., Przeworski A. Preventive Repression: Two Types of Moral Hazard // American Political Science – 2018. -Vol.113.No.1. - P. 77-87.

15 Conrad C., Ritter E.H. Preventing and Responding to Dissent: The Observational Challenges of Explaining Strategic Repression // American Political Science Review. - 2016. - Vol.110. - No.1. - P. 85-99.

repression is used to suppress protests that have already occurred, their impact may not be limited to that wave of protest. For example, a developed “reputation of repressiveness” may deter other people and organizations from participating in and/or attempting to organize protests. In addition to directly affecting repressed groups of protesters, repression can have a general impact on the political system as a whole through the formation of public signals about the level of possible costs of participation in protest actions. For these reasons, in the course of empirical research it is reasonable to talk not about reactive or preventive repression, but about the *reactive* and *preventive functions* of repression. The purpose of the study, in this case, is to learn whether repression has a preventive function.

The preventive function of repression can be revealed by measuring the impact of repression on protest activity beyond the campaigns which were ongoing at the time of its use (i.e., in the long term). The difference between the short-term and long-term perspectives of the impact of repression is determined by the time passed after its application, during which protest activity is measured. If the researcher is interested in the fact of suppression or development of a protest campaign that already existed at the time of repression use (the reactive function of repression), then the perspective of the impact of repression is short-term. If the object of study is the growth or reduction in the likelihood of occurrence and/or the number of participants in protest actions in the future, regardless of the protest campaigns occurring at the time of repression (beyond the typical duration of a protest campaign), then the perspective of the impact of repression is long-term. Focus on the long term allows us to exclude from consideration the impact of repression on the campaigns against which it is directed and concentrate on studying its ability to have a preventive impact.

The question of the timing of the impact of repression is not technical, but substantive. Focus on the long term and preventive function of repression implies a different theoretical framework for the study. First, the dissertation examines the effect

of repression at the country level, rather than at the group and individual level. The preventive function only works if there as a result is no protest activity at the macro level or if the number of protesters is smaller than it would have been without previous repression. Secondly, the mechanism of long-term repression effect is expected to be associated to a greater extent not with the awakening of instantaneous emotional reactions, but with the influence on more stable factors (the expected level of costs of participation in protests, group identity, social connections, resource availability of civil society organizations and etc). The list of factors affecting street protest participation was taken from M.Van Zomeren's social identity model of collective action (SIMCA; feeling of injustice, efficacy belief, group identity)¹⁶ and value expectancy model of B.Klandermans (social motive, reward motive). Moreover, the dissertation draws on the ideas from rationalist deterrence theory^{17 18}, resource mobilization theory¹⁹ and social identity theory²⁰.

Thus, the research problem is the lack of collective (shared by the scientific community) scientific knowledge about the capacity of repression to have an effect on the probability of street protests and the number of their participants in the long term.

Charles Tilly, one of the main resource mobilization theory authors, identified two types of repression by purpose: repression targeted directly against collective action, and repression aimed at reducing the mobilization capabilities of social groups²¹. The first

16 Van Zomeren M., Postmes T., Spears R. Toward an integrative social identity model of collective action: A quantitative research synthesis of three socio-psychological perspectives//Psychological bulletin. - 2008. - Vol.134. No.4. P.504–535.

17Шеллинг Т. Стратегия конфликта/ пер с англ. Т.Даниловой под.ред. Ю.Кузнецова, К.Сонины. - ИРИСЭН, 2007. К.Сонин внесён Министерством юстиции Российской Федерации в реестр иностранных агентов.

18Pierskalla J. Protest, Deterrence and Escalation: The Strategic Calculus of Government Repression // Journal of Conflict Resolution. - 2010. - Vol.54. - No.1. - P.117-145.

19 Тилли Ч. От мобилизации к революции/пер.с англ. Д.Карасева;под.науч.ред. С.Моисеева - Изд.дом “Высшей школы экономики”, 2019 (1978).

20 Tajfel H. Social Identity and Intergroup Behaviour // Social Science Information. - 1974. - Vol.13. - No.2. - P. 65-93; Klandermans B.,Sabucedo J., Rodriguez M., De Weerd M. Identity Processes in Collective Action Participation: Farmers' Identity and Farmers' Protest in the Netherlands and Spain // Political Psychology. - 2002. - Vol. 23. - No. 2. - P. 235—251. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0162-895X.00280>

21 Тилли Ч. От мобилизации к революции/пер.с англ. Д.Карасева;под.науч.ред. С.Моисеева; Нац.исслед.ун-т “Высшая школа экономики”. - Нац.исслед.ун-т “Высшая школа экономики”. - М.: Изд.дом “Высшей школы экономики”, 2019 (1978). - 432 с.

type involves punishing protesters directly for participating in a protest event (during a protest event including). Consequently, the object of the first repression type is individuals, the individual motivation to participate or not participate in a protest event of whom the authorities try to directly influence. The second type of repression involves many types of objects. It is concerned with influencing individuals and organizations that can mobilize potential protesters with varying degrees of effectiveness. Given the importance of civil society organizations²² (hereinafter referred to as CSO) for the formation of group identity²³, accumulation of collective action experience²⁴, selective incentives for participation²⁵, and field campaigns in favor of protest, when studying the second type of repression, it is necessary to pay attention to repression against these organizations. Thus, the dissertation examines the relationship between the severity of repression of two types (against protest event participants²⁶ and against civil society organizations) on subsequent protest activity.

Key concepts

Street protest is defined as public collective action in the form of people assembly (rally, demonstration, picket, march, blocking streets, etc.) with the expression of claims²⁷ towards the authorities, which occurs outside the buildings and which is directed against the current top leadership of the country and/or its political course (i.e. with anti-government character). Street protests do not include the cases of systematic

22 Civil society organization is a group of people who «pursue their collective («political and civic») interests and ideals»—that «enjoys autonomy from the state». Coppedge M., Gerring J., Knutsen C., Lindberg S., Teorell J., Altman D., Bernhard M., Cornell A., Fish S., Gastaldi L., Gjerløw H., Glynn A., Hicken A., Lührmann A., Maerz S., Marquardt K., McMann K., Mechkova V., Paxton P., Pemstein D., von Römer J., Seim B., Sigman R., Skaaning S.-E., Staton J., Sundtröm A., Tzelgov E., Uberti L., Wang Y., Wig T., Ziblatt D. (2021b). V-Dem Codebook v11. Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project. P. 53.

23 Civil society organization is a group which can be a referent object for identity of its members.

24 Putnam R. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992. 264 p.

25 Olson M. *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. - Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965.

26 The author of the dissertation focuses on the link between repression against protesters in time moment A and protest in the future in time moment B.

27 Tilly Ch., Tarrow S. (2015) *Contentious Politics*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

use of armed force against the state (for example, the actions of rebel groups during civil wars do not constitute street protest event)

In this paper, repression is understood as actions of state authorities or their agents aimed at causing harm (in the form of deprivation of life, deterioration of health, decrease in material well-being, deprivation of freedom) to specific, individually defined people or their groups due to their alleged participation in the actions, directed against the current authorities and/or their political course.

Repression severity is the amount of costs which repressed people bear because of government actions. Repression severity can be measured in different ways depending on the object of repression (individuals or organizations; rank-and-file protesters or civil society organization activists) and on the timing of repression (during protest events or in other times).

Ethical disclaimer

Research on protest and repression can raise ethical questions. In order to avoid possible ethical problems, dissertation text (introduction) contains ethical disclaimer.

Here is the summary. Firstly, in the dissertation the concepts of “repression”, “protest” and “street protest” do not have morally evaluative character. Secondly, the author of the dissertation does not make any moral or legal judgements concerning specific actions of protest participants and states, but he does not welcome human rights violations which can be associated with repression (in particular, strong repression). Thirdly, results of the dissertation should not be taken as advice to use repression. The fact that some repression types in some conditions are able to decrease street protest activity in the long term does not constitute a moral justification or justification of the necessity of repression use.

Repression should not be used not only for moral but also for instrumental reasons:
1) political career of leaders who use the harshest forms of repression 14 times more

often²⁸ ends poorly (with violent death, imprisonment or suicide) according to the calculation of the author of the dissertation based on V-Dem 13²⁹ and Archigos³⁰ data, it is important to notice that there is a strictly positive link between repression severity and the probability poor outcome of political career of country leader; 2) short-term costs of repression (including strong forms) use, which are beyond the focus of this dissertation, in terms of emergence and growth of street protest waves (backlash effect) as an immediate response can be prohibitively high; 3) violent repression requires strengthening of security forces which increases the risk of coup d'etat³¹; 4) scientific literature demonstrates that strong repression increases the risks of civil war initiation, leads to the increase in battle intensity within existing armed conflicts and to the growth in anti-state armed rebel groups participants³².

Although some repression forms decrease street protest activity, repression strengthens more dangerous threats for political survival of country leaders and is associated with poorer outcomes of their political career.

Research question

What effect does the repression severity have on the street protest participant number in the long term?

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- 28 Calculations were made by the dissertation author with two contingency tables. The first contingency table contains categories of variable “CSO repression” from V-Dem 13 [Coppedge et al. 2023] and categories of variable “posttenurefate” from Archigos. The second table contains categories of variables “Freedom of peaceful assembly” from V-Dem 13 [Coppedge et al.2023] and categories of variable “posttenurefate” from Archigos. Cases when the post-tenure fate was not known due to various reasons except for natural death while in office or in the first six months after leaving office were excluded from consideration.
- 29 Coppedge M., Gerring J., Knutsen C., Lindberg S., Teorell J., Altman D., Bernhard M., Cornell A., Fish S., Gastaldi L., Gjerløw H., Glynn A., God A., Grahn S., Hicken A., Kinzelbach K., Krusell J., Marquardt K., McMann K., Mechkova V., Medzihorsky J., Natsika N., Neundorf A., Paxton P., Pemstein D., Pernes J., Rydén O., von Römer J., Seim B., Sigman R., Skaaning S., Staton J., Sundström A., Tzelgov E., Wang Y., Wig T., Wilson S., Ziblatt D. 2023. “V-Dem [Country-Year/Country-Date] Dataset v13” Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project. - [Электронный ресурс] - URL: <https://www.v-dem.net/data/the-v-dem-dataset/country-year-v-dem-fullothers-v13/> (accessed 14.08.2024)
- 30 General description of the database: Goemans H., Gleditsch K., Chiozza G. Introducing Archigos: A Dataset of Political Leaders // Journal of Peace Research. - 2009. - Vol.46. - No.2. - P.269-283. Its actual version which covers the period up to 2015: <https://www.rochester.edu/college/faculty/hgoemans/data.htm> (accessed 14.08.2024)
- 31 Svobik M. The Politics of Authoritarian Rule. - Cambridge University Press, 2012. Tanneberg D. The Politics of Repression Under Authoritarian Rule: How Steadfast Is the Iron Throne? - Springer, 2020.
- 32 Hultquist Ph. Is collective repression an effective counterinsurgency technique? Unpacking the cyclical relationship between repression and civil conflict // Conflict Management and Peace Science. - 2017. - Vol. 34. - No.5. - P.507–525.

Aims and objectives

The aim of the research is to reveal the form and the direction of the link between repression severity and protest participant number parameters in the countries of the world. It will allow us to reveal whether the probability of street protest event occurrence and their participant number decreases or not depending on the various levels of repression severity in comparison with situations when repression is not used.

In order to achieve this aim, it is necessary to set several research objectives:

1) To conceptualize and to operationalize key concepts of this dissertation research (repression, repression severity and street protest), using information about approaches existing in scientific literature.

2) Based on scientific literature, formulate a theoretical model of factors affecting decisions to participate in street protest events, as well as present ideas about the possible impact of repression on these factors. Based on this model, develop propositions about overall impact of repression severity on street protest participation.

3) To present arguments in favor of transition from the study of protest participation at the individual level to the study of street protest activity parameters (protest occurrence, protest participants number) at the country level. To formulate hypotheses about the direction and shape of link between repression severity and street protest participants parameters.

4) To develop approaches to observation selection for hypotheses tests. To select observations using these approaches, to find sources of data on them and to collect dataset.

5) To test hypotheses about the link between repression severity and street protest participants number parameters using regression models, estimating their parameters on previously formed dataset.

6) To test results for their robustness.

7) To learn from obtained results whether repression has a long-term effect on street protest activity and how repression severity determines the nature (preventive or stimulating) of this effect.

Literature review

It is possible to infer ideas concerning probable mechanisms and direction of long-term repression impact on street protest activity scale using a large corpus of theoretical research on protest mobilization. Although there is a deficit of empirical research on long-term repression effect, the existence of several theoretically proposed mechanisms has been at least indirectly confirmed empirically.

The idea about negative repression effect on protest activity follows from *deterrence theory*³³. The history of repression use in response to participation in protest, to anti-government activity of CSO should create reputation of repressive authorities which makes ordinary people and CSO activists to estimate the risk of being repressed as high. It makes people to refrain from effort to organize protests or to participate in them. Game-theoretic modeling of anti-government protests and repression, knowledge about readiness and capacity of the authorities to use repression in response to protests makes potential protesters refuse to participate in protest events which conforms³⁴ to general deterrence theories³⁵ and to the results of empirical studies on the effects of measures similar to repression (international sanctions³⁶ and fighting with separatist movements³⁷).

33 Шеллинг Т. Стратегия конфликта/ пер с англ. Т.Даниловой под.ред. Ю.Кузнецова, К.Сонина. - М.: ИРИСЭН, 2007. 366 с.

34 Pierskalla J. Protest, Deterrence and Escalation: The Strategic Calculus of Government Repression // Journal of Conflict Resolution. 2010.Vol.54.No.1.P.117-145.

35 Шеллинг Т. Стратегия конфликта/ пер с англ. Т.Даниловой под.ред. Ю.Кузнецова, К.Сонина. М.: ИРИСЭН. 2007. 366 с.; Mazarr M. Understanding Deterrence. RAND Corporation. 2018. [Электронный ресурс] - URL: <https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PE295.html> (accessed 08.01.2021)

36 Miller N. The Secret Success of Nonproliferation Sanctions // International Organization.2014.Vol.68. No.4.P.913-944.

37 Walter B. Building Reputation: Why Governments Fight Some Separatists but Not Others// American Journal of Political Science. 2006.Vol.50.No.2. P. 313-330.

Repression against CSO also involve specific mechanism of impact which follow from *resource mobilization theory*. Fines decrease the amount of resources available for mobilization of protesters³⁸. Physical isolation of activists weakens social connections within organization thus decreasing the impact of local social environment³⁹ and restricts their opportunities to issue and distribute calls for protest participation. Total violent destruction of autonomous CSO implies combination of these effects.

At the same time there exists a large set of theoretical arguments in favor of the idea that repression contributes to growth of protest emergence probability and of protest participant numbers even in long-term perspective. For instance, repression demonstrates low quality of authorities policy⁴⁰ and delegitimizes them. If repression increases the share of people dissatisfied with authorities within the population, then it increases the share of potential protesters⁴¹. Probable positive impact of repression during protest events is related also to the increase of social status for repressed people in their groups of reference (*micromobilization theory*)⁴². Moreover, the risk of being repressed the level of people identification with protest movement⁴³. Arguments in favor of positive effect of CSO repression also exist. Firstly, repression is a threat for organizations interests realization, the elimination of which is a motivation for street

38 Тилли Ч. От мобилизации к революции/пер.с англ. Д.Карасева;под.науч.ред. С.Моисеева; Нац.исслед.ун-т “Высшая школа экономики”. - Нац.исслед.ун-т “Высшая школа экономики”. - М.: Изд.дом “Высшей школы экономики”, 2019 (1978). - 432 с.

39 Klandermans B. Mobilization and participation: Social-psychological expansions of resource mobilization theory // American Sociological Review. 1984. No.49. P. 583–600.

40 Lohmann S. The Dynamics of Informational Cascades: The Monday Demonstrations in Leipzig, East Germany, 1989-91 // World Politics. 1994. Vol. 47. No. 1. P. 42-101.

41 Bautista M., Gonzalez F., Martinez L., Munos P., Prem M. The Geography of Repression and Opposition to Autocracy // American Journal of Political Science – 2021. URL: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/ajps.12614> (accessed 27.05.2022)

42 Opp K., Roehl W. Repression, micromobilization, and political protest // Social Forces. 1990. Vol. 69. No. 2. P. 521-547.

43 Ayanian A., Tausch N. How risk perception shapes collective action intentions in repressive contexts: A study of Egyptian activists during the 2013 post-coup uprising // British journal of social psychology. 2016. Vol. 55. No. 4. P. 700-721.

protest events use⁴⁴. Secondly, the history of struggle against repression is able to strengthen group identity of their members⁴⁵.

The contradiction between arguments for negative and positive link between repression severity and protest activity parameters can be eliminated by abandoning the idea of monotonic form of the link. Some scientific research revealed non-monotonic n-form link⁴⁶. Such form of the link means that if repression is weak, then there is a high probability that positive effect will overcompensate negative one, while if repression is strong then vice versa. When protest participation leads to irreversible long-term harm for a person, then argument about increase of social status of repressed people (actual in other contexts) do not work⁴⁷. Violent CSO destruction does not allow them to mobilize protesters and does not let their members to keep identity. On the contrary, when CSO can work, negative effects of weak repression can be compensated.

Thus, this dissertation presents two groups of hypotheses about probable character of the link between repression severity and street protest activity: about non-monotonic n-shape (when negative effect of repression is overcompensated by positive one) and about negative link (when compensation is either absent or incomplete).

Empirical research on the consequences of repression use against protesters and civil society organizations are of special interest for my project. In the context of long-term effect study, it is important to note the attempt by D.Gupta, H. Singh and T.Sprague to estimate the effect of expected negative state sanction on the number of protest demonstration in a year for 24 countries. As a result, they revealed positive effect in

44 Тилли Ч. От мобилизации к революции/пер.с англ. Д.Карасева;под.науч.ред. С.Моисеева; Нац.исслед.ун-т “Высшая школа экономики”. - Нац.исслед.ун-т “Высшая школа экономики”. - М.: Изд.дом “Высшей школы экономики”, 2019 (1978). - 432 с.

45 Nugent E. The Psychology of Repression and Polarization // *World Politics*. - 2020. - Vol.72. - No.2. - P.291-334. doi:10.1017/S0043887120000015; В этом исследовании среди прочего говорится о том, что репрессии против конкретной группы способствуют укреплению идентификации с репрессироваемой группой у её членов.

46 Muller E. (1985) «Income Inequality, Regime Repressiveness, and Political Violence» // *American Sociological Review*, vol.50, no.1: 47-61.

47 Opp K., Roehl W. Repression, micromobilization, and political protest // *Social Forces*. 1990.Vol. 69. No. 2. P. 521-547.

democracies and null effect in nondemocratic regimes⁴⁸. A.Lawrence demonstrated that repression in Morocco created groups of robustly oppositional people who were ready to initiate protest against authorities even decades after repression use⁴⁹. I. Rudolfsen whoc conducted a large-N cross-national empirical research (on African countries since 1990 up to 2014), revealed that at extremely high CSO repression severity the probability of street protest emergence in cities in cases of food price increase was significantly lower than without any repression and the same price increase. However, results also say that at moderate levels of CSO repression severity the effect of the same price increase on protest emergence is positive⁵⁰. Taken together, the results of I.Rudolfsen work indicate n-shape link. Finally, D.Tanneberg learned that the combination of high level of violence and high level of restrictions on civil liberties in autocratic regimes leads to the decrease in long protest (with more than 1000 participants) probability⁵¹. At the same time violence at the low levels of civil liberties restrictions do not lead to to the growth of their emergence risk⁵². Each of mentioned works has substantive shortcomings (mixing violence and censorship in the paper by D.Gupta, H.Singh, T.Sprague⁵³; focus only in protest participants in research by A.Lawrence⁵⁴; concentration on short-term (in one month) effect in the work by I.Rudolfsen⁵⁵; the refusal to study impact of repression on protest participants number as a general drawback).

48 Gupta D., Singh H., Sprague T. Government Coercion of Dissidents: Deterrence or Provocation? // *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.1993.Vol.37.No.2. .301-339.

49 Lawrence A. Repression and Activism among the Arab Spring's First Movers: Evidence from Morocco's February 20th Movement // *British Journal of Political Science*. 2017.Vol.47.No.3.P.699-718.

50 Rudolfsen I.Food Price Increase and Urban Unrest: The Role of Societal Organizations // *Journal of Peace Research*. 2021.Vol. 58. No. 2. P. 215—230.

51 Tanneberg D. *The Politics of Repression Under Authoritarian Rule: How Steadfast Is the Iron Throne?* Cham: Springer. 2020.176 p.

52 Ibidem

53 Gupta D., Singh H., Sprague T. Government Coercion of Dissidents: Deterrence or Provocation? // *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.1993.Vol.37.No.2. .301-339.

54 Lawrence A. Repression and Activism among the Arab Spring's First Movers: Evidence from Morocco's February 20th Movement // *British Journal of Political Science*. 2017.Vol.47.No.3.P.699-718.

55 Rudolfsen I.Food Price Increase and Urban Unrest: The Role of Societal Organizations // *Journal of Peace Research*. 2021.Vol. 58. No. 2. P. 215—230.

Scientific literature review shows that, although much attention has been paid to the relationship between repression and protests in empirical research, there is a shortage of works that would study precisely the preventive function of repression. At the same time, there is a large body of theoretical and empirical work, the results of which allow us to derive a number of competing hypotheses about the long-term impact of repression.

Selection of empirical data

In the study two approaches for empirical observation selection were used: trigger approach and universal approach. *Trigger approach* implies the collection of data on homogenous event which may serve as a trigger for protest in order to compare the scale of protest activity in situations with the same kind of protest trigger and with high probability of protest emergence, but with varying previous repression severity. In order to meet these goals we selected protests in situations when international election observation organizations expressed their doubts in election fairness. This allowed me to estimate the effect of repression during all time since the chief executive came to power *until* suspicious elections on the number of participants in protests against elections results and higher authorities which occurred in the state capital during the first week *after* the voting. *Universal approach* means the collection of cross-national data on protest events and repression for all available years without any reference to any protest triggers⁵⁶ in order to estimate the effect of repression in a country in a year t on street protest activity parameters in years $t+k$ ($k \geq 2$) (under the condition that the chief executive remained the same).

In this dissertation, chief executive is defined as a person who, in fact, according to the compilers of the REIGN database, manages all executive bodies responsible for domestic policy issues, regardless of the formal assignment of his or her position to the

⁵⁶ Year $t+2$ is used to estimate the scale of protest activity so that more than one full year can elapse after repression use.

executive power branch and who is not ruled by any other person while exercising his or her powers⁵⁷.

Trigger and universal approaches are methods of dataset collection. In this context the notion “approach” is not a theoretical construct which would suggest explanation of the studied phenomena, processes and actions. Trigger and universal approaches are sets of technical procedures. Trigger approach enables control of the protest trigger effect and estimation of repression impact on the probability of protest event occurrence in homogenous situations. Universal approaches allows us to collect a dataset with which it is possible to make generalizable conclusions.

Trigger approach to the study of long-term repression effect on street protest activity parameters has two advantages over universal one: 1) the higher probability of protest emergence which increases the variability of dependent variable; 2) the opportunity to control the impact of protest trigger without any necessity to create and to include all diverse protest triggers in regression models. But trigger approach has several substantive drawbacks in comparison to universal one: 1) a substantive decrease in observations quantity for data analysis; 2) the absence of opportunity to generalize results obtained on one protest trigger to the other protest triggers. However, the conformity between results of trigger and universal approaches to observation selection increases our confidence in their validity.

The use of unfair elections for observation selection has a set of advantages: 1) the certainty of event date which lets to reveal the time of protest trigger emergence; 2) the presence of previous history of chief executive rule (unlike, for instance, coup d'etat), which allows us to talk about the impact of repression before trigger event on protests after trigger event (due to the constant oppositional character of repressed people and groups); 3) ant-government nature of post-election protests, which increases the risk of

57 Bell C. The Rulers, Elections, and Irregular Governance Dataset (REIGN). - OEF Research, 2016. - [Электронный ресурс] - URL:https://www.oefresearch.org/sites/default/files/REIGN_descriptions.pdf (Проверено: 29.08.2022).

repression and the expected severity of repression⁵⁸, which makes information about maximum severity of previously used repression relevant for potential protesters).

The list of results which caused concerns about potential electoral fraud was determined via the NELDA 5.0 database (National Elections in Democracies and Autocracies 5.0)⁵⁹.

In universal approach all country-years from Mass Mobilization Project Database 3.0 (MMPD 3.0)⁶⁰ were used as an observation. This dataset has the highest country coverage among all datasets with information about street protests at the particular event level. Then we used data from REIGN dataset on acting chiefs of executive branch of power for each month of each year for which there is data in MMPD 3.0⁶¹. REIGN dataset allowed me to reveal the observations when during the period from year t until year $t+2$ the chief executive remained the same (where t is a treatment year). For all cases where chief executive did not change, data on repression, control variables and subsequent protests was collected. For all cases when he or she changed («censored» observations) only data about repression and control variables was collected.

Data on protesters numbers and protesters demands were taken from MMPD dataset (MMPD 3.0. - in universal approach, MMPD 5.0. - in trigger approach)⁶² and Mass Mobilization in Autocracies 3.0⁶³ (MMAD 3.0). In trigger approach the maximum number of participants in protests against unfair elections was determined as a maximum in MMPD 5.0 and MMAD 3.0 (event-based version) from protest events with the

58 Ayoub P. 2010. Repressing Protest: Threat and Weakness in the European Context, 1975-1989. – Mobilization: An International Quarterly. Vol. 15. No. 4. P. 465-488.

59 Hyde S., Marinov N. Which Elections Can Be Lost?// Political Analysis. 2012. Vol.20. P.191-210.

60 Clark D., Regan P. Mass Mobilization Protest Data. – Harvard Dataverse. Version 3.2016. - [Электронный ресурс]. URL: <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/HTTWYL&version=3.0> (accessed 04.03.2023)

61 Bell C. (2016) *The Rulers, Elections, and Irregular Governance Dataset (REIGN)*. Broomfield (CO): OEF Research. URL:https://www.oefresearch.org/sites/default/files/REIGN_descriptions.pdf (accessed on 29.08.2022).

62 Clark D., Regan P. Mass Mobilization Protest Data. – Harvard Dataverse. Version 5.2016. - [Электронный ресурс]. URL: <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/HTTWYL&version=5.0> (accessed 14.05.2023)

63 Weidmann N., Rød E. Chapter 4: Coding Protest Events in Autocracies. – The Internet and Political Protest in Autocracies. New York: Oxford University Press. 2019. P. 35-60.

demand to review elections results or to remove the higher authorities of the country. In universal approach to case selection the number of protesters was determined as a maximum in MMPD 5.0 dataset for the year $t+2$ (or the period of the year $t+2$ when there was the same head of the government as in the year t). Data on maximum number of protesters were then presented in three forms: 1) binary variable indicating the fact of protest emergence with any number of participants; 2) ordered indicator of maximum protester number; 3) binary variable indicating the fact of large protest emergence (large protest is a protest with 1000 or more participants).

Repression severity is operationalized with indicators of repression severity against civil society organizations and against protest event participants. The data sources are the variables «CSO repression» and «Freedom of peaceful assembly» from V-Dem 11.1. dataset⁶⁴. The values of these variables were multiplied by «-1» to make high values correspond to more severe repression.

In universal approach we used the values of various repression types severity for each treatment year t as independent variables. In trigger approach the final independent variables are the maximum level of repression severity during the period from the first full calendar year after chief executive came to power until the last full calendar year before the year when trigger event happened (repression against protesters refer to protest events which occurred before trigger event used in research and which do not have relations to this trigger event).

64 Coppedge M., Gerring J., Knutsen C., Lindberg S., Teorell J., Altman D., Bernhard M., Cornell A., Fish S., Gastaldi L., Gjerløw H., Glynn A., Hicken A., Lührmann A., Maerz S., Marquardt K., McMann K., Mechkova V., Paxton P., Pemstein D., von Römer J., Seim B., Sigman R., Skaaning S.-E., Staton J., Sundtröm A., Tzelgov E., Uberti L., Wang Y., Wig T., Ziblatt D. V-Dem Codebook v11.1. Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project. 2021.

Theoretical frame (methodology) and hypotheses

Theoretical frame of this research consists of several theories and theoretical models. The model of individual decision making about participation in street protest is an integration of M. Van Zomeren SIMCA⁶⁵ and B. Klandermans value expectancy model⁶⁶. Readiness for protest participation is determined by these factors: feeling of injustice/discontent, efficacy belief, group identity, social motive and reward motive.

Repression against protest events participants has both direct and indirect effect on the readiness to participate in street protests⁶⁷. Direct effect is related to the idea that repression is a cost which decreases the value of reward motive⁶⁸. Thus, direct effect is negative. Indirect impact is related to repression effect on other motives to protest participation (feeling of injustice/discontent, efficacy belief, group identity⁶⁹, social motive⁷⁰). The overall character of the link depends on the probability of compensation of direct negative effect by indirect positive one at various levels of repression severity.

The higher repression severity, the less likely compensation of direct negative effect is. The reason is that increase in repression severity during protest event dispersal implies the growth of the risk of irreversible harm for the victim, which outweighs probable goods from the elimination of injustice. Moreover, in such circumstances social motive becomes negative as relatives and friends are more likely to discourage protest participation if it involves high risks⁷¹. Finally, when severity of repression against

65 Van Zomeren M., Postmes T., Spears R. Toward an integrative social identity model of collective action: A quantitative research synthesis of three socio-psychological perspectives // Psychological bulletin. - 2008. - Vol.134. No.4. P.504–535.

66 Klandermans B. Mobilization and participation: Social-psychological expansions of resource mobilization theory // American Sociological Review. - 1984. - No.49. - P. 583–600

67 Opp K., Roehl W. Repression, micromobilization, and political protest // Social Forces. - 1990. - Vol. 69. - No. 2. - P. 521-547. Opp K. Repression and Revolutionary Action: East Germany in 1989 // Rationality and Society. - Vol.6. - No.1. - P. 101-138.

68 Klandermans B. Mobilization and participation: Social-psychological expansions of resource mobilization theory // American Sociological Review. - 1984. - No.49. - P. 583–600

69 Van Zomeren M., Postmes T., Spears R. Toward an integrative social identity model of collective action: A quantitative research synthesis of three socio-psychological perspectives // Psychological bulletin. - 2008. - Vol.134. No.4. P.504–535.

70 Klandermans B. Mobilization and participation: Social-psychological expansions of resource mobilization theory // American Sociological Review. - 1984. - No.49. - P. 583–600

71 Opp K. Repression and Revolutionary Action: East Germany in 1989 // Rationality and Society. - Vol.6. - No.1. - P. 101-138.

protesters rises up to lethal levels, the costs of participation in street protests and in armed anti-state groups become comparable which can lead to further decrease in motivation to choose street protest as a form of anti-government activity and to the flow of the most radicalized people to anti-state violent groups (rebels, terrorists, etc)^{72 73}

In other words, two functional forms of the link between repression against street protest participants and the readiness to participate in protests are the most probable from theoretical point of view: n-shape (a function similar to a parabola ends down; if there is an overcompensation of direct negative effect at low levels of repression severity) and negative, monotonically decreasing form (if there is no overcompensation).

These conclusions can be transferred correctly from individual to country level. It is correct to substantiate hypotheses about the same forms of link about the impact of repression on protest event occurrence probability and the number of protest event participants. The argument is that result at the country level in terms of protest occurrence and participants number is determined by individual decisions of residents of the country which depend on the expected repression severity which is calculated from previous history of state reactions to street protests.

Repression against civil society organizations affect protests because CSOs play a n important role in street protest mobilization which is claimed in resource mobilization theory⁷⁴. They are able to activate and inactivate the components of individual motivation to protest participation (via formation and politicization of identities⁷⁵, social motive action facilitation, selective stimuli provision⁷⁶, strengthening of efficacy belief

72 The author of the dissertation condemns terrorism and anti-state violence from ethical point of view.

73 Hultquist Ph. Is collective repression an effective counterinsurgency technique? Unpacking the cyclical relationship between repression and civil conflict // *Conflict Management and Peace Science*. - 2017. - Vol. 34. - No.5. - P.507–525.

74 Тилли Ч. От мобилизации к революции/пер.с англ. Д.Карасева;под.науч.ред. С.Моисеева - Изд.дом “Высшей школы экономики”, 2019 (1978); Almeida P. Opportunity Organizations and Threat-Induced Contention: Protest Waves in Authoritarian Settings // *American Journal of Sociology*. - 2003. - Vol.109. - No.2. - P.345-400.

75 Van Zomeren M., Postmes T., Spears R. Toward an integrative social identity model of collective action: A quantitative research synthesis of three socio-psychological perspectives//*Psychological bulletin*. - 2008. - Vol.134. No.4. P.504–535.

76 Olson M. *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. - Harvard University Press, 1965.

due to collective action experience accumulation⁷⁷, provocation of injustice feeling by creation and dissemination of collective action frames⁷⁸).

Reaction of CSOs to repression was explained by the combination of arguments from resource mobilization theory⁷⁹ and deterrence theory⁸⁰. According to resource mobilization theory, repression is simultaneously an instrument aimed at weakening their mobilization capabilities and a threat to organization security and to their advocated interests. Repression limits CSOs access to resources and infrastructure necessary for potential protesters mobilization⁸¹, which should weaken their capabilities to mobilize protest activity. At the same time repression use means that authorities are ready to conduct policy aimed at weakening autonomous organizations which makes them regard actions of authorities as a threat. In order to eliminate this threat organizations will be more inclined to whatever activity aimed at protection of their interests including street protests⁸². Positive effect of threat perception is likely to overcompensate negative effect of resource depletion when repression severity is not high, i.e. when repression does not destroy organizational structure. Deterrence theory deals with repression effect on those who have not suffered directly from it. Repression is a signal of authorities readiness to punish people and organizations for anti-government activity (including protest mobilization and participation). According to this argument, increase in repression severity makes all CSOs to abstain from protest activity mobilization. At the same time, negative deterrence effect can be compensated via threat

77 Putnam R. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. - Princeton University Press, 1992.

78 Benford R., Snow D. Framing processes and social movements: An overview and assessment // *Annual Review of Sociology*. - 2000. - Vol.26. - No.1. - P.611–639.

79 Тилли Ч. От мобилизации к революции/пер.с англ. Д.Карасева;под.науч.ред. С.Моисеева - Изд.дом “Высшей школы экономики”, 2019 (1978); Almeida P. Opportunity Organizations and Threat-Induced Contention: Protest Waves in Authoritarian Settings // *American Journal of Sociology*. - 2003. - Vol.109. - No.2. - P.345-400.

80 Pierskalla J. Protest, Deterrence and Escalation: The Strategic Calculus of Government Repression // *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. - 2010. - Vol.54. - No.1. - P.117-145.

81 Тилли Ч. От мобилизации к революции/пер.с англ. Д.Карасева;под.науч.ред. С.Моисеева - Изд.дом “Высшей школы экономики”, 2019 (1978); McCarthy J., Zald M. Resource mobilization and social movements: A partial theory // *American Journal of Sociology*. - 1977. - Vol.82. - No.6. - P.1212–1241; Tilly Ch., Tarrow S. *Contentious Politics*. - Oxford University Press, 2015.

82 Тилли Ч. От мобилизации к революции/пер.с англ. Д.Карасева;под.науч.ред. С.Моисеева - Изд.дом “Высшей школы экономики”, 2019 (1978).

perception effect as civil society organizations can mobilize protests not only to protect themselves but also to protect their partners. This compensation is expected to be more probable when repression does not reach high levels of severity.

In other words, two functional forms of the link between repression against CSOs and the protest participants number are possible: *n*-shape (a function similar to a parabola ends down; if there is an overcompensation of direct negative effect at low levels of repression severity) and negative, monotonically decreasing form (if there is no overcompensation).

During data analysis we tested hypotheses about non-monotonic *n*-shape link and about negative link. Each group consists of two hypotheses, one for trigger, another for universal approach to case/observation selection. Readers can find arguments in favor of each direction of link in the «Literature review» section or in dissertation text itself.

Hypothesis 1.1 (non-monotonic *n*-shape link, trigger approach). The link between severity of each type of repression during the period from the beginning of the reign of the country's chief executive to the elections that aroused suspicion among international observers and the probability of protests occurring and the maximum number of participants in a street protest against him or her and/or his or her policies in the country's capital during the first week after voting in this election has a non-monotonic *n*-shape (quadratic *n*-shape means a link which can be schematically depicted as parabola “ends down”: at low levels of repression severity its further growth boosts protest activity, while at high levels – it decreases protest activity).

Hypothesis 1.2 (non-monotonic *n*-shape link, universal approach). The link between severity of each repression type is in the year t and probability of protests occurring and the maximum number of participants in a street protest event in the same country under the same chief executive in the years $t+k$ ($k \geq 2$) has a non-monotonic *n*-shape.

Hypothesis 1.1 (negative link, trigger approach). The higher the maximum⁸³ severity of each type of repression during the period from the beginning of the reign of the country's chief executive to the elections that aroused suspicion among international observers, the lower the probability of protests occurring and the maximum number of participants in a street protest against him or her and/or his or her policies in the country's capital during the first week after voting in this election.

Hypothesis 1.2 (negative link, universal approach). The higher severity of each repression type is in the year t , the lower probability of protests occurring and the maximum number of participants in a street protest event in the same country under the same chief executive in the years $t+k$ ($k \geq 2$).

Maximum severity in trigger approach is used in order to account for all used repression. For instance, repression could have destroyed autonomous CSO many years before elections, but the consequences of such destruction in terms of absence of organizations can remain. The focus on the period of rule by the leader acting at the election time in trigger approach and on the continuity of rule by the same person in the universal approach is explained by the fact the change of country ruler means change of expectations regarding readiness of authorities to use repression and in some cases a change in the set of autonomous civil society organizations.

Data analysis confirmed hypotheses 1.1 and 1.2 (the link between repression severity and protest participants number parameters has a non-monotonic n-shape).

Scope and limitations of research

Spatial and temporal boundaries of research are determined by the access to event data on protests, repression and election quality (in trigger approach). Dissertation uses two secondary sources which are based on mass media news coding: Mass Mobilization

⁸³Maximum severity demonstrates the kind of repression, the authorities are ready to use as a last resort.

Project Database (MMPD 3.0⁸⁴. и MMPD 5.0⁸⁵) and Mass Mobilization in Autocracies Database (MMAD⁸⁶).

MMPD dataset covers 162 countries of the world from 1990 to 2018. The global coverage of states with various political regimes guarantees variability of the dependent variable, thus decreasing the risk of selection bias. However, in this dataset there is a lack of division of multi-day events into days. Moreover, MMPD does not include pre-election rallies. These facts do not allow me to use MMPD as the only data source⁸⁷.

MMAD dataset contains information on protests and repression from 2003 to 2018 in an event-day format for all street protest events with more than 25 participants. This dataset has a global coverage of countries with authoritarian regime⁸⁸.

Data on severity of repression against civil society organizations and against street protest event participants were taken from V-Dem 11.1 dataset. The temporal and spatial coverage is the same as in protest event datasets for all repression severity indicators⁸⁹.

Data on election quality were taken from National Elections Across Democracy and Autocracy 5.0 (NELDA 5.0). It covers elections from 1945 to 2015⁹⁰. The coverage of states is global.

84 Clark D., Regan P. Mass Mobilization Protest Data. – Harvard Dataverse. Version 3. - 2016. - [Электронный ресурс]. - URL: <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/HTTWYL&version=3.0> (Проверено: 04.03.2023).

85 Clark D., Regan P. Mass Mobilization Protest Data. – Harvard Dataverse. Version 5. - 2016. - [Электронный ресурс]. - URL: <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/HTTWYL&version=5.0> (Проверено: 14.05.2023)

86 Weidmann N., Rød E. The Internet and Political Protest in Autocracies. - Oxford University Press, 2019. - P. 35-60.

87 Clark D., Regan P. MM_users_manual_0515.pdf (Mass Mobilization Protest Data). - Harvard Dataverse. V3. - 2016. - P. 2. - [Электронный ресурс] – URL: <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/file.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/HTTWYL/TJJZNG&version=3.0> (Проверено: 26.07.2021)

88 Keremoğlu E., Hellmeier S., Weidmann N. Coding Instructions for the Mass Mobilization in Autocracies, version 3.0, 2020. - [Электронный ресурс] - URL: <https://mmadatabase.org/about/documentation/> (Проверено: 09.01.2021)

89 Coppedge M., Gerring J., Knutsen C., Lindberg S., Teorell J., Altman D., Bernhard M., Cornell A., Fish S., Gastaldi L., Gjerløw H., Glynn A., Hicken A., Lührmann A., Maerz S., Marquardt K., McMann K., Mechkova V., Paxton P., Pemstein D., von Römer J., Seim B., Sigman R., Skaaning S.-E., Staton J., Sundtröm A., Tzelgov E., Uberti L., Wang Y., Wig T., Ziblatt D. V-Dem Codebook v11. Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project. - 2021. – [Электронный ресурс]. - URL: <https://www.v-dem.net/data/dataset-archive/country-year-v-dem-fullothers-v11/> (Проверено: 11.01.2024)

90 Hyde S., Marinov N. Which Elections Can Be Lost?// Political Analysis. - 2012. - Vol.20. - P.191-210.

In trigger approach to observation selection we used data on 167 cases of allegedly fraudulent elections from 1990 to 2015 in the whole world (their number was reduced to 142 due to the deficit of information on control variables).

In universal approach we studied 162 countries of the world from 1990 to 2018 which is determined by MMPD 3.0 dataset capabilities⁹¹.

It is important to give several examples of typical cases for the relationship between repression severity and the number of protesters (using the example of repression against civil society organizations in the universal approach). Examples of the absence of repression are Brazil under President F.Cardoso (1995-2003) and the Czech Republic under Prime Minister B.Sobotka (2014-2017); examples of weak repression (mainly financial sanctions) are the Union of Comoros under President S.Johar (1989-1995) and North Macedonia (at that time the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) under Prime Minister B.Crvenkovski (1992-1998); examples of moderate repression (detentions and short-term arrests of leaders and activists of civil society organizations) are Kazakhstan under President N.Nazarbayev (1991-2019) and Myanmar under President T.Sein (2011-2016); examples of substantive repression (imprisonment of leaders and activists of civil society organizations, use of violence against them) include Cuba under Prime Minister F.Castro (1959-2008, assessment of repression severity covers time period since 1990s) and Turkmenistan under President G.Berdimuhamedov (2007-2022); examples of maximum repression severity (complete violent destruction of autonomous civil society organizations) include DPRK under Kim Jong Il (1994-2011) and Malawi under President H.Banda (1966-1994; assessment of the level of repression severity covers 1990s). The presented estimates of repression severity in various specific countries under various chief executives are based on the values of the variable “CSO

91 Clark D., Regan P. Mass Mobilization Protest Data. – Harvard Dataverse. Version 3. - 2016. - [Электронный ресурс]. - URL: <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/HTTWYL&version=3.0> (Проверено: 04.03.2023).

repression” from the V-Dem database⁹². Estimates of the repression severity level in these or other countries in specific cases may not coincide with the personal opinion of the author of the dissertation. Specific countries and executive names are presented to illustrate the estimates of V-Dem database compliers. But in general, the variables from this database, according to the author of the dissertation correctly reflect the level of repression severity.

Methods

Hypotheses were tested with the following types of regression models: 1) logistic regression of the emergence of any street protest (binary variable) on repression severity parameters; 2) logistic regression of the emergence (binary variable) of large protest (protest with 1000 and more participants) on repression severity parameters; 3) ordered logistic regression of maximum ordered⁹³ participants number on repression severity parameters. All models included the square of repression severity, which allowed me to test hypotheses on quadratic shape of the link. Each of the model included the set of control variables. Coefficient estimates were obtained via maximum likelihood method.

Analysis of the data collected with universal approach has several special features. The analysis was conducted separately to examine the impact of repression on street protests in years $t+2$, $t+3$, $t+4$, and $t+5$, where t is the year of intervention (the year for which the repression severity was measured). There is no information on protesters number k (from two to five) years after treatment for some observations. The reason is that chief executive who was in power in year t lost his position before the start of year

92 Coppedge M., Gerring J., Knutsen C., Lindberg S., Teorell J., Altman D., Bernhard M., Cornell A., Fish S., Gastaldi L., Gjerløw H., Glynn A., Hicken A., Lührmann A., Maerz S., Marquardt K., McMann K., Mechkova V., Paxton P., Pemstein D., von Römer J., Seim B., Sigman R., Skaaning S.-E., Staton J., Sundtröm A., Tzelgov E., Uberti L., Wang Y., Wig T., Ziblatt D. V-Dem Codebook v11. Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project. - 2021. – [Электронный ресурс]. - URL: <https://www.v-dem.net/data/dataset-archive/country-year-v-dem-fullothers-v111/> (Проверено: 11.01.2024)

93 Ordered participants number is calculated as the whole part of the logarithm of participants number (plus 1) with base 10.

$t+k$ (I call such observations «censored»). In order to account for attrition of observations, in universal approach I calculated coefficient estimates with weighted maximum likelihood method, where weights were the inverse probability of observation dropout (for «censored» observations) or the inverse probability of observation preservation (for «non-censored» observations). I used cluster-robust standard errors with grouping on the person of state chief executive in the treatment year.

Data analysis aimed at revealing how repression severity is in general related to street protest activity. In order to solve this task I used a set of regression models, each of which included severity of only one repression type. After estimation of regression coefficients, I validated the functional form of the link between repression severity parameters and protest activity. Validation consisted of multiple partition of the dataset into train and test samples (k-fold cross-validation) with subsequent estimation of out-of-sample prediction quality parameters (ROC-AUC, accuracy) of the models with various functional forms on test samples.

Contribution to the discussion of the problem in existing literature

The dissertation research made it possible to draw a number of conclusions that are meaningfully important for the development of the research field. Firstly, repression can have an impact both on already unfolding protests and on protest activity in the long term, regardless of the intentions of the actors making decisions to use repression and the content of repressive actions. Thus, it is reasonable to study the preventive and reactive *functions* of repression rather than the preventive and reactive types of repression. To identify the capacity of repression to have a preventive impact on protest activity, its effect should be studied in the long term, which allows us to concentrate on the impact of repression on preventing future protests, rather than on suppressing those that have already unfolded. Secondly, results of data analysis demonstrate that repression is *able* to affect protest activity in the long term, though this effect is manifested not in all contexts (for example, preventive decreasing effect is not observed

for post-electoral protests). Thirdly, only strong repression is able to have a preventive effect; weaker repression, on the contrary, is associated with an increase in protest activity compared to the situation when there is no repression. Non-monotonic *n*-shape is a dominant form of long term repression impact on street protest activity. Therefore, in the long term as well as in the short one, mechanisms of both positive and negative repression effect work. And positive effects of repression are stronger than negative ones, if repression severity is not high.

Obtained knowledge on long-term repression effect is critical for understanding how state policy repressiveness affect the choice of street protests as the form of political activity. This knowledge will help scientific community to get closer to better understanding of the conditions for political regime stability, precisely of repression capacity to decrease or increase the risk of unarmed noninstitutional challenges from below in the form of street protests. While previous studies worked with data on regime transformations, my work focused on the estimation of the repression effect on one of the intermediate factors in the repression impact on these transformations – street protest activity⁹⁴.

Scientific contribution of my dissertation is not limited to results and their interpretation. Experience of trigger approach use in the study of long-term repression effect is also very important. Its use allowed me to better understand the long-term impact direction and to test robustness of the results obtained on data about any other protest type. My thesis is a unique example of allegedly unfair elections use as a trigger event in research (previously as I know only food price increase⁹⁵ was used, but this trigger event does not have several useful properties for my research).

94 Escriba-Folch A. Repression, political threats, and survival under autocracy // *International Political Science Review*. - 2013. - Vol.34. - No.5. - P.543-560.; Svolik M. *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. - Cambridge University Press, 2012.

95 Rudolfson I. Food Price Increase and Urban Unrest: The Role of Societal Organizations // *Journal of Peace Research*. - 2021. - Vol. 58. - No. 2. - P. 215—230.

Finally, research with trigger approach enriched scientific knowledge about conditions when electoral fraud can cause street protests⁹⁶. They should be expected primarily in countries where authorities use repression, but this repression does not reach high severity levels. It is in countries where repression I used, but repression severity is not high, large street protests threatening political regime stability are the most likely.

Statements to be defended

1) The same repressive actions can influence both protest campaigns that have already unfolded and protest activity in the long term, regardless of the intentions of the actors making decisions about the use of repression. Thus, it is correct to study not the reactive and preventive types of repression, but the *reactive* and *preventive functions* of repression. To assess the ability of repression to have a preventive impact on protest activity, its impact should be studied in the long term.

2) Repression is able to affect protest activity in the long term. Their effect extends to long periods of time exceeding one year.

3) The dominant form of long-term repression impact on street protest activity is a quadratic n-shape. Only strong repression that physically block the activities of organizations, activists and protesters can have a preventive effect. The maximum number of protesters is achieved not in the absence of repression, but when weak repression is used, which indicates its long-term stimulating effect on protest activity.

4) Repression classified in modern scientific literature as reactive (repression against participants in protests) has the same long-term impact on protest activity as repression considered preventive. A preventive reducing effect is caused by any strong repression, regardless of preventive or reactive goals of their use.

5) Protests against unfair elections are more likely, all other things being equal, to occur in states where, before these elections, repression that did not reach a high level of

96 Tucker J. Enough! Electoral Fraud, Collective Action Problems, and Post-Communist Colored Revolutions // Perspectives on Politics. - 2007. - Vol.5. - No.3. - P.535-551.

severity was used. In situations of absence of repression and strong repression, the probability of post-election protests is close to zero, all other things being equal.

Analysis of data and findings

Analysis of data and findings

Empirical data analysis aimed at testing three groups of hypotheses about the link between repression severity in general and the number of street protest participants. In order to achieve this goal I used a set of regression models with the severity of only one repression type included in each of them.

Regression results occupy a large space. Thus, I moved them to Appendix 1 to the dissertation text. The results are summarized in the form of tables of effects. The rows of these tables correspond to dependent variables, the columns – independent ones. Cells demonstrate revealed direction of repression effect: + (positive); - (negative); +,- (non-monotonic n-shape); -,+ (non-monotonic u-shape); 0 (no link, coefficient estimates are statistically indistinguishable from zero).

Tables 1 and 2 present summary of regression model results for trigger and universal approaches.

Table 1. The table of the forms of link between repression severity and parameters of post-electoral protest activity. Trigger approach

	cso_rep_max (severity of repression against civil society organizations)	assembly_rep_max (severity of repression against street protest participants)
campaign (any protest emergence)	+,-	+,-
osize (ordered protesters number)	+,-	+,-

large_protest (large protest emergence)	+, -	+, -
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Table 2. The table of the forms of link between repression severity and parameters of protest activity. Universal approach.

	cso_repression (severity of repression against civil society organizations)	assembly_repression (severity of repression against street protest participants)
campaign (any protest emergence)	+, -	+, -
osize (ordered protesters number)	+, -	+, -
large_protest (large protest emergence)	+, -	+, -

As tables 1 and 2 demonstrate, repression has a non-monotonic *n*-shape link with protest activity parameters. Taken together, results let me claim that hypotheses 1.1 and 1.2 (about quadratic *n*-shape link) are confirmed on the data on protests against unfair elections and on the data on all accessible countries and years.

Nevertheless, there is substantive difference between results of trigger approach and results of universal approach. This difference is demonstrated with the example of effect of repression in year *t* on protests in year *t*+2. The graphs of predicted probability of any protest and of large protest emergence demonstrate the entire “parabola”⁹⁷ (at low and at high levels of repression severity probabilities are close to zero). In contrast, data

97 The predictive probability function is similar to a parabola, but it is not one, because it cannot take negative values even when its “braches” are directed downward (since quadratic relationship in a linear predictor is transformed due to the sigmoidal link function).

on all accessible countries and years produce “parabola” with “cropped form”. Probability of any protest emergence at the lowest CSO repression severity level is higher than 40%, while probability of large protest emergence is higher than 20%. At the same time an increase in repression severity first leads to further increase in protest activity parameter, and then to its decrease to zero. The higher protest emergence probability without repression in universal approach is explained than unconditional probability of protest occurrence during a year should be substantially higher than during a week (as in trigger approach).

Maximum values of protest activity parameters are achieved when repression is sufficiently severe to provoke discontent growth, but not sufficiently severe to deter organizations and potential protesters or to destroy opportunity to mobilize a protest. For example, for CSO repression maximum probability of protest emergence is achieved when financial sanctions are the most prevalent form of repression⁹⁸.

Regression results were confirmed during functional form cross-validation with multiple partitions to train and test samples (validation was conducted to estimate repression effect on protests in year $t+2$). Mean and median values of prediction quality metrics (ROC-AUC, accuracy) on test samples for models with a square of repression severity were not lower (in majority of cases they were higher) than for models without a square of repression severity. It additionally confirms validity of the argument that a link between repression severity and street protest participant number in the long term has a quadratic n-shape.

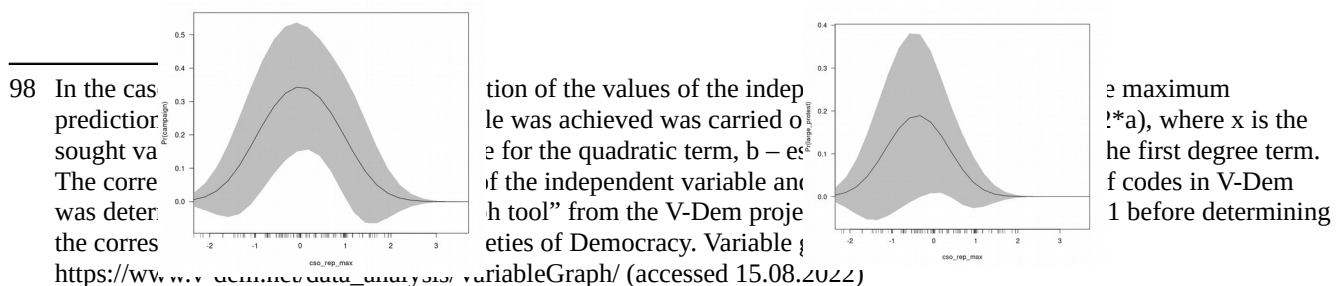


Figure 1. Predicted probability of a) the emergence of any protest campaign; 6) the emergence of protest campaign with 1000 and more participants after elections depending on the severity of repression against civil society organizations at mean values of other variables. Trigger approach.



Figure 2. Predicted probability of a) the emergence of any protest campaign; b) the emergence of protest campaign with 1000 and more participants depending on the severity of repression against civil society organizations at mean values of other variables. Universal approach.



Figure 3. Predicted probability of a) the emergence of any protest campaign; b) the emergence of protest campaign with 1000 and more participants after elections depending on the severity of repression against street protest participants in the past at mean values of other variables. Trigger approach.



Figure 4. Predicted probability of a) the emergence of any protest campaign; b) the emergence of protest campaign with 1000 and more participants depending on the severity of repression against street protest participants in the past at mean values of other variables. Universal approach.

Discussion

Obtained results let me draw reliable conclusions about the long-term repression effect on parameters of street protest event participants numbers.

Firstly, the level of repression severity in a state is able to have a long-term effect on street protest activity. This result confirm the idea that repression effect is not limited to protest campaigns which develop in the time of repression use. By using force against civil society organizations and protest participants, states really influence protest activity in a preventive mode.

Secondly, results of data analysis demonstrate that repression affect protest activity in general, regardless of which civil society organizations or of which protesters were repressed by state. In the course of dissertation, I used aggregated data about repression at the state level, which lets me claim that repression has an effect on the entire society and not only on organizations and social groups connected to repressed people.

Thirdly, the dominant direction of long-term repression effect on street protest activity is a quadratic n-shape in accordance to hypotheses from group 3. Maximum values of protesters numbers parameters are achieved at low repression severity, but not when repression is completely non-existent. That is why intermediate levels of repressions severity lead to realization of mechanisms which stimulate protest activity. They “irritate” people to a greater extent prompting them to intensify their protest

activity. Further intensification of repression leads to a decrease in the scale of protest activity. Severe repression deter potential protesters and constrain opportunities for use of street protests in political contest.

However, there are differences regarding the impact of severe repression in comparison to no repression. Research with universal approach demonstrates that without repression the scale of protest activity during a year is substantially higher than with severe repression. But research with trigger approach tells that in contexts without repression and with severe repression protest emergence probability and protest participants numbers are practically the same.

Finally, research with trigger approach enriched scientific knowledge about conditions when doubts in election fairness can provoke street protests. They should be expected in countries with medium repression severity. In general, without any obligatory relationship to elections, it is in countries where repression severity is medium, the risks of large street protest events emergence are the highest. This is a very important result because large protests are one of challenges “from below” to political regime stability⁹⁹. At the same time, this conclusion should be extended to the impact of repression on the stability of political regimes in general, since my study did not address the impact of repression on the risks of coups d’etat, armed conflicts and other forms of disruption of political regime stability for which scientific literature contains evidence of positive (stimulating) effect of repression. It is probable that severe repression leads to substitution of street protests by more violent forms of political activity and not to overall collapse of oppositional activity.

Presented dissertation study has several limitations. Firstly, results were produced in a correlational research. Experiment which would allow me to establish causality could not be held at the country level due to ethical reasons and due to difficulty of organizing an experiment with controlled variations in the severity of repression at the country

⁹⁹ Chenoweth E.,Stephan M. *Why civil resistance works: The strategic logic of nonviolent conflict.* - Columbia University Press, 2011.

level. Thus I used observational data and applied regressions with control variables to them. Although I tried to include in the model all variables which are related to repression severity and protester numbers, it is impossible to give an absolute guarantee that there is no omitted variables. Secondly, research is based not on “physical” indicators of repression severity and protester numbers, but on their estimates (expert judgments on repression severity and journalist assessments regarding protesters number). At the same time, I selected V-Dem as a source of repression severity estimates because they were calculated taking into account possible deviations and errors in expert opinions. As for correction of probable journalist mistakes, I used categorical protester number (not an interval one as it is given in the datasets): it allowed me not to trust seemingly exact numeric values, but to trust information about the order protest participant number.

Research approbation

Published articles:

1) Belenkov V. E. Do Internet Penetration and Online Censorship Levels Affect Long-Term Repression Success in Street Protest Prevention? // *Monitoring Obshchestvennogo Mneniya: Ekonomicheskie i Sotsial'nye Peremeny*. 2021. No. 6. P. 119-144.

2) Belenkov V.E. Long-term effect of online and offline repressions on post-electoral participants' number: Cross-National Empirical Study // *Polieia*. 2024. No.1. P.164-186.

3) Akhremenko A.S., Belenkov V.E., Petrov A.P. The Logic of Protest Campaigns: From Empirical Data to Dynamic Models (and Back). – *Polis. Political Studies*. 2021. No. 3. P. 147-165. (In Russ.) <https://doi.org/10.17976/jpps/2021.03.10>

4) Stukal D.K., Belenkov V.E., Philippov I.B. Data science methods in political science research: analyzing protest activity in social media. *Political science*

(RU).

2021, N 1, P. 46–75. DOI: <http://www.doi.org/10.31249/poln/2021.01.02>

Participation in conferences:

1) XXIII Yasin (April) International Academic Conference on Economic and Social Development, Moscow, April 2022. The title of the report: “Does Preventive Repression Work? Evidence from Cross-country Analysis”