Part 2
The Forces of Order
Diyarbakır, Turkey, 15 February 2009. The tenth anniversary of the capture of the PKK leader Abduallah Öcalan. Early hours in the morning, silent and empty streets left by many shopkeepers who did not open their stores contrast to snowballing crowds on several other streets where hundreds of people are fevering for the demonstration. MPs from the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) and the municipal authorities of the same party are rushing to the police to convince them to permit a peaceful march with promises of no public order disruptions. Mayor Osman Baydemir talks to the chief officers:

OB: We definitely do not want anything like disorder.
Officer: Neither do we.
OB: I wish to share the same feelings with you.
Officer: Of course.
OB: Thus we need to behave with a shared mind... I believe that if all the people could express themselves through dialogue, no problems would occur. My suggestion is this: we will use one line of the avenue. As we did before, we will walk on this line to the front of the Fatih High School. From there on, we'd like to make our press declaration in front of the Human Rights Statue. Then we will disperse quietly.
Officer: I want to ask you this: Who is making this event? What is this event?
OB: This is an event by our provincial organization. It is not an illegal event. The vehicle of our party is here, our provincial party chief is here, and our mayor [himself] is here.
Officer: OK, but now explain to me: Do human rights in Diyarbakır only belong to the 1,500 people gathered here? What about the human rights of the one million and fifty thousand people remaining?
OB: Even if there are five people, we should let them express themselves so that they will say, “They are showing respect to us.”
Officer: You could have made an application, we would have provided the security...
OB: The country will not collapse with slogans, my dear... Without any problems people will go back to their homes. Thus, with utmost
sincerity, with utmost effort, we will do our best together with our MPs, our provincial chief, our mayors.

Officer (talking on the radio to another officer): There is another group on the Sakarya Avenue, right? OK, do what’s necessary.¹

This is a typical anecdote about protest policing as an arena. The police as one player of the state negotiate with another player on the street before forcefully dispersing the crowd that supposedly gathered illegally. The short scene presented above is familiar to any political activist who may have run into a similar encounter with the police elsewhere in the world. That day, Diyarbakır turned into a city of urban warfare given the clashes with the police. It could have been different if both players, the police and the protesters, had employed different strategies toward each other. Or perhaps it would not. Actually, it all depended on how those different strategies interacted with each other.

When we talk about protest policing, we tend to understand the police as a single player. Yet, they are not. The police, in fact, are made up of a multiplicity of players who have their own agency, norms and purposes, who interact with each other and with external players within the state and society. The outcomes of these interactions reflect the policing arena as a constellation of strategies that vary across time and space. What remains constant is the political embeddedness of the police, which is revealed through their continuous encounters with contentious players.

In this chapter, we conceptualize the police as players and protest policing as an arena. We find such a conceptualization useful in grasping the relationship between the state and social movements with respect to the centrality of the police as one of the main actors of the state. Although we keep the discussion primarily on an abstract level, we make use of some empirical illustrations. Along these lines, the chapter has five parts. First, it opens with a brief debate on the goals, means, and constraints that the police face in controlling protest. It continues with an emphasis on the multi-agency nature of the organization where we address the internal dynamics of decision making by the police. Then, the chapter touches upon one of the central themes, policing strategies, distinguishing between conflictual and consensual interactions with protesters, which need not be

¹ Taken from “Diyarbakır’da Demokratik Bir Hak Talebi Nasıl Sonuçlanır? [How does a demand for a democratic right result in Diyarbakır?]” posted by the official social media channel of the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) on YouTube at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Is4kQC7w78&feature=plcp, accessed on 4 September 2012.
considered as mutually exclusive. This section is followed by a discussion of police cognitive schemes about protesting groups. Finally, we mention the presence of other players that the police interact with while handling protest events.

**Police Functions: Goals, Means, and Constraints**

At the moment we are drafting the chapter, protests are occurring in hundreds of cities all over the world. Chanting slogans, marching or dancing on the streets, carrying banners, and maybe performing theatrical scenes, the demonstrators around the globe are being patrolled by the police in (mainly) blue uniforms. Some of them perhaps covered in riot gear, the constables of town X may soon end up in a forceful dispersion of the crowd, taking a few activists under custody, and leaving curious journalists behind in their attempt to collect photographic evidence for the news to be published tomorrow.

Just as protest is a regular mundane practice, albeit for some, so is its policing. Indeed, the police are the primary interlocutors for social movements’ conflictual yet generally routinized relationship with the state. Thus, and especially under authoritarian settings, the police serve as a core, if not the only, player to control and suppress multiple manifestations of social opposition and dissent. In that respect, the interactive patterns the police engage with contentious actors in the society are emblematic for the police organization being “inherently and inescapably political because it is at the heart of the state’s functioning” (Neocleous, 2000: 117).

Nowadays, the operational terrain that was traditionally monopolized by the public police has been turning into a gateway for a variety of private actors under the label of security and social control (Bayley and Shearing, 1996; Garland, 2001). Although this police-transformation thesis is constantly being challenged (Jones and Newburn, 2002; White and Gill, 2012), some prominent criminologists go as far as to argue that the police “are marginal to the control of crime and the maintenance of order, and always have been” (Reiner, 2010: 19). Underlying this claim is not merely the proliferation of diverse agents within the expanding security sector, but also the broader picture that “[p]ublic peace and security are primarily a function of deeper processes in political economy and culture” (Reiner, 2010: 22). Yet, once we think of the police beyond an amalgamation of men (and women, though to a significantly lesser extent) in blue uniforms, and contemplate it as an institution, it is hard to consider its functions marginal.
Marxist theorists such as Neocleous, for instance, point to a continuum in policing tasks over centuries, which are – more than the preservation and reproduction – the “fabrication” of social order (Neocleous, 2000). In this perspective, the essential role of the police is not the prevention of crime as such; rather it is concerned with potential threats to the existing social order, particularly materialized in the class-based society. Neocleous also opposes the equation of law enforcement with justice-seeking supposedly carried out by the police since, he maintains, it is not necessarily justice, but order that the police seek to achieve.

These theoretical considerations are useful for imagining the arena in which the police encounter the protesters. What is referred to by both academic circles and the police departments themselves as public “order” policing thus rightfully catches the fundamental task of the police rooted in its modern historical foundations. Far from being a neutral term, securing order implies the state’s “interest in suppressing mass dissent that threatens insurrection” which is carried out “under the guise of neutrally enforcing the law and keeping the peace” (Waddington, 1999: 65).

For that matter, the police may resort to a variety of instruments in discharging their duty of handling public protests. Arguably, the first thing that comes to mind is the means of coercion over which the “state” enjoys a monopoly. Thanks to the technological advancements in the arms industry and governments’ generosity in allocating resources for security, the depositories of police departments today have turned into a rich arsenal of supposedly less-than-lethal weapons, gas bombs, and pepper sprays which at times cause serious injuries and even deaths, just to remember Carlo Giuliani in Genoa 2001, Alexandros Grigoropoulos in Athens 2008, Ian Tomlison in London 2009, Metin Lokumcu in Hopa (Turkey) 2011, and numerous others.

Nevertheless, coercive means of violence are just one piece in the large repertory with which the police try to control dissident activity. Perhaps they are even marginal. For instance, police departments increasingly utilize surveillance methods as an effective strategy of social control. Closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras have existed for decades, yet contemporary forms of video surveillance are not confined to stationary devices. The introduction of mobile footage in the hands of policemen or deployed on their vans, drones, and what are called “Sensocopters” markedly enhanced the police’s capacity to monitor demonstrations. In Foucauldian terms, surveillance through videotaping is “a situational disciplinary strategy” that is “not only based on the asymmetry of visibility, but also comprises extensive classification, identification as well as
the occasional direct disciplining of individuals” (Ullrich and Wollinger, 2011: 27).

A technique which is even less transparent and less open to public scrutiny is intelligence. Students of political repression may easily recall the infamous COINTELPRO launched to spot and disrupt “subversive” political activity in the post-World War II United States (Cunningham, 2003). In retrospect, scholars may trace such practices of state infiltration to the political contingencies of the Cold War era. Yet, novel versions of intelligence spread even in the most allegedly democratic and liberal countries of today. Usually, the intelligence branches of the police collaborate with other intelligence agencies of the state, whereby information from different sources is collated, and “categories of suspicion” are created. These categories enshrine “vague characteristics of supposed criminality presented in intelligence reports and officer training, which are then represented as evidence and grounds for detention” (Monaghan and Walby, 2012: 12). Especially under the pervasive climate of the War on Terror, “the centralization of intelligence has resulted in a new framework for anti-terror policing where subversive and simply suspicious conduct is lumped under the categories of terrorism and extremism” (Monaghan and Walby, 2011: 146). From a different angle, the intelligence practices can be framed within the broader scheme of counterinsurgency; that is to say, of governments’ effort to reclaim legitimacy jeopardized by deepening social opposition (Williams, 2011).

The arena of policing protests is not limited to a solely repressive logic of containing social movement actors and contentious groups. Both the conduct of the police and the right to protest are constrained by a number of rules and regulations. Albeit conflictual in nature, the exercise of public demonstration and assembly also entails a certain degree of cooperation between the police and the organizers of a protest. It is one of the central tasks of the police to communicate, negotiate, and establish dialogue with protest groups before, during, and after the events. As street-level bureaucrats, on a wider scale, they also attempt “to deal with people whose support appears to the police to be weak or non-existent” (Gordon, 1984: 39). This interactive endeavor is commonly referred as “community policing,” which is by and large undertaken by “liaison officers.” At any rate, the scope and effectiveness of the communication depends on a series of interrelated factors. The prevalent policing “philosophy” in a particular country which may prioritize or else disfavor dialogue with citizens, the history of past conflict with particular groups as well as their willingness to cooperate with the police determine what kind of negotiation, if any, is played out (della Porta, 1998; Winter, 1998).
In this chapter, we do not make an exhaustive claim that the police do not use any other means in combating social dissent. Whatever additional instruments they utilize, the police enjoy a certain level of discretion on the street. Yet, police behavior is also constrained by a large spectrum of written and unwritten codes of conduct that differ from one country to another. On a legislative level, these are prescribed by laws that regulate police competences and responsibilities on local, regional and state levels, as well as other legal documents such as public order and terrorism acts that encapsulate a wider range of law enforcement agencies including the judiciary. Two things are worth mentioning. First, the police do not always feel obliged to abide by the law; on many occasions they step into the grey zones of the legal sphere. Second, in several old and new democracies there is a recent trend toward empowering the police with greater authority while introducing more stringent regulations on the right to protest.

Besides legal considerations, the police also face troubles emanating from the very performance of their activities on the street. For one thing, these can thwart the police’s public legitimacy, yet for another they may risk investigations against their own personnel. What P.A.J. Waddington (1994) labeled as “on-the-job trouble” thus refers to the potential dangers for the lives of protest participants, constables, and bystanders as well as potential damage to property in the course of the event. “In-the-job trouble,” on the other hand, can emerge as a consequence of a heavy-handed policing together with allegations of over-enforcement of the law. This may result in judicial and administrative proceedings which are obviously not the most desirable outcome for the policemen. The police are inclined to avoid such troubles, yet in real-life occasions situational and psychological factors may override their conflict-averse inclinations.

**Protest Policing as Arenas: Internal Dynamics and Decision Making**

The police are not a single agency, but a multiplicity of players, both horizontally and vertically distributed along the professional axes of the institution. In horizontal terms, police officers specialize in different subjects (homicide, narcotics, organized crime, traffic, public order, etc.) and usually do not interrupt each others’ area of specialization. Still, the boundaries between police branches are permeable, and depending on the nature of criminal investigation they frequently exchange expertise and information, sometimes delegating criminal files to a neighboring
office. Vertically, distinctions between rank-and-file versus senior officers as well as between “gold,” “silver,” and “bronze” commanders under more paramilitary settings suggests the differentiation of tasks, responsibilities, and professional views within the organization.

Police departments in different nations vary on all these dimensions, from the division of labor between several branches, to the level of autonomy in relation with the competent ministry and provincial authorities, to the centralization versus decentralization of decision-making structures, and to the extent of militarization of the departments. The domain of protest policing is also a blueprint of this organizational diversity (della Porta and Reiter, 1998). For instance, the policing record of the LAPD may differ considerably from that of the NYPD, the same for the contrasts between police departments of, say, Quebec and Toronto, Zurich and Geneva, let alone across countries.

Yet the police share common features in different geographies that reflect the multi-agency of the dynamics of decision making. Imagine a sizeable group of university students in country Y willing to demonstrate against an increase in educational fees. Prior to the event, they may want to avoid notifying public authorities and the police concerning the spatial and temporal details of the planned protest. Once they start gathering in the urban center, they will most probably come across physically equipped police squads cordoned and prepared for a forceful dispersion. What may escape media and public attention in the meanwhile is a handful of public order officers, most likely in plainclothes, trying to convince group leaders of protesters to disperse by themselves, reminding them of legal provisions and criminal offenses. Of course, this can take an authoritatively patronizing or even threatening fashion rather than being conducted through a facilitative language. Now, further imagine that the bargaining fails and violence erupts between riot squads or “special patrol groups,” however you call them, and the protesters.

As usual, the footage of the event is analyzed by video surveillance experts at the central bureau. Suppose they detect a number of individual demonstrators with covered faces throwing missiles at the police. According to legislation in many countries, such acts fall in the cluster of offenses foreseen in anti-terrorism laws. From then onward, the criminal proceedings may engage the terrorism branch within the police department to carry out the investigation. Later on, the arena will shift toward external players such as public prosecutors whereby the control of protest is handed to the workings of the judicial arena.

Of course, this is just a caricaturized illustration of what is at stake in the arena of protest policing where the police interact with the protesters.
Throughout the whole process, information and orders flow constantly between superior and inferior officers. The next question is; what sort of references do these multiple players have in making decisions in the protest policing arena? Citing Jefferson and Grimshaw (1984), David Waddington (2007: 18) talks about three types of audiences with respect to which chief constables plan on particular policies to be implemented. These are “legal audiences (the courts, police authorities and the Home Secretary); democratic audiences (politicians and the community at large); and occupational audiences (their immediate colleagues of all ranks and the wider police community).” These different audiences may turn into formidable sources of pressure which can hardly be avoided. For example, sometimes the police feel political pressure to “die in a ditch,” i.e., show off tough and intolerant policing styles especially when events or persons of symbolic value are protested (Waddington, 1993). After the planning phase, such pressures from the audiences of reference to which the police feel accountable help explain the “on-the-spot decisions made by commanding officers caught up in the heat of public order events” (Waddington, 2007: 20).

From the lowest rank-and-file to the chief constable, individual officers exercise discretion in their decisions. Interestingly, “the police department has the special property ... that within it discretion increases as one moves down the hierarchy” (James Q. Wilson, 1968, quoted in Reiner, 1982: 165). For Reiner, this relative autonomy of the lower ranks “derives from the necessarily dispersed, low visibility natures of his task rather than any failures of organizational control” (Reiner, 1982: 165). In the arena of protest policing the business is, by definition, visible at times wrapping into an urban warfare, and concentrated rather than dispersed. The aforementioned troubles in and on the job also pose negative incentives for lower-rank policemen to rely heavily on their own discretion. Still, the warfare analogy entails a lot of discretion to be given to lower ones in the hierarchy: this was the traditional difference between strategy (of commanders, taken before the battle) and tactics, of those lower down who implemented the strategy during the battle. Particularly in the contexts where public accountability and transparency of police conduct is low, namely where official channels of review and interrogation are not efficient; these negative incentives will surely be not so strong. It is also remarkable that the social science literature has talked of “police riots” to indicate moments in which rank-and-file policemen disregard orders, and engage in violent interactions with protestors (Peterson, 2006).
Interaction with Protest Groups: Cooperation, Conflicts and Dilemmas

So far, we have provided an overview of the means that the police use in dealing with protest mobilization, and a brief account of the multi-agency of internal decision-making dynamics. The outcome of these two parameters is mirrored in the patterns of interaction with protest groups, which “reflect some more general characteristics of state power” (della Porta, forthcoming). The means available to the police, the constraints on them, and particular decisions implemented accordingly, are all influenced by the political regime.

More than a decade ago, della Porta and Reiter (1998) suggested a framework of protest policing styles which summarized the types of police interaction with protesters along several dimensions (Table 5.1). Arguably, it is possible to open up additional dimensions to further detail the styles of policing in the course of protest events, although the ones presented here still retain their analytical purchase.

Table 5.1  Styles of Policing, or “Interaction”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension of Interaction</th>
<th>Policing Style</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree of force</td>
<td>Brutal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of prohibited behaviors</td>
<td>Repressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of repressed groups</td>
<td>Diffuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect for law</td>
<td>Illegal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timing of intervention</td>
<td>Reactive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Confrontational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability</td>
<td>Rigid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules of the game</td>
<td>Informal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>Artisanal</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: della Porta and Reiter (1998)

The specific styles of policing add up to policing strategies. More or less until the beginning of the 2000s, the two dominant paradigms in describing policing strategies were “escalated force” and “negotiated management.” The former designates a strategy that does not tolerate citizens’ right to protest and often displays immediate recourse to the excessive use of force, giving precedence to brutal and repressive tactics. The latter, by contrast, is characterized by “a more tolerant approach to community disruption, closer cooperation and communication with the public, a reduced tendency
to make arrests (particularly as a tactic of first resort), and application of only the minimum force” (Waddington, 2007: 10). The basic argument was that in Western democracies, the dominant paradigm throughout 1960s and 1970s was escalated force, which gradually began to be replaced by a general acceptance of negotiated management in the 1980s and 1990s.

Albeit marked by a more dialogical approach by the police, negotiated management embodies a different version of a statist mentality, especially seen from the activists’ side. Jarret S. Lovell reminds us of the marginalizing role of the public order management systems (POMS) for groups “working for radical change.” The manner in which protest is regulated through negotiation, he claims, is reminiscent of a Foucauldian disciplinary mechanism aimed at pacifying dissent. “For example, the requirement that protesters obtain a permit specifying the time, manner, and location of protest embodies precisely the disciplinary devices of observation, enclosure, and timetables, ... thus providing the State with leverage over protest groups to enact limitations and restrictions on certain forms of political speech” (Lovell, 2009: 114). Protest policing is also selectively applied to different social and political groups: in Italy in the 1980s, while protest by workers tended to be tolerated, the young squatters centers were more often repressed (della Porta, 1998).

The transition to negotiated management has not been a linear process, nor was the experience identical in each and every country. In the UK, for instance, the inner-city riots in the early 1980s and the miners’ strike of 1984-1985 signaled a backlash of tough law-and-order police tactics under the reign of the Thatcher government. The stringent provisions of the 1986 Public Order Act followed suit (McCabe et al., 1988).

But the real challenge came from the policing of the newly emerging social movements, particularly oriented toward the transnational space. Among others, the well-studied global justice movement(s) gave birth to innovative contentious strategies. Social movement scholars unanimously refer to the WTO events in Seattle in 1999 as the milestone for a new era of transnational activism. The strategy of countersummit, in the first place, brought together activists from various nationalities with militant but carnivalesque, disruptive but not necessarily violent tactics that surprised police authorities. For them, the heterogeneous and unpredictable background of the protesters posed a resilient threat in securing public order during these events (della Porta, Peterson, and Reiter, 2006).

As protesters developed new strategies and expanded their action repertoires, national police departments felt obliged to revise their techniques
of policing. In other words, the police “adapted their strategies to each move by the demonstrators” in an interactive process of diffusion whereby those new strategies are “promoted,” “assessed,” and “theorized” (della Porta and Tarrow, 2012: 138-142). To be more precise, each encounter with protesters provides the police with firsthand material that contributes to the innovation of new tactics promoted through manuals, trainings, and conferences at national and international levels. Episodes of failure characterized by the police’s inability to contain demonstrators peacefully, as was the case in Seattle in 1999 or Gothenburg in 2001 (Wahlström, 2007), are critically assessed for future policing practices. Furthermore, theoretical approaches to policing such as community policing, intelligence-led policing, preemptive policing, and so forth, are also adjusted to the new challenges posed by the changing dynamics of protest. The same holds true for the protesters, too. Concerning countersummits, for instance, activists facing mass deployment of highly equipped anti-riot squads develop tactics such as “social disobedience” (e.g., White Overalls in Italy) whereby they refuse engagement in violence but “wear masks and other instruments – to protect themselves from police weapons – but do not carry any offensive arms” (della Porta and Tarrow, 2012: 134). Such innovations also entail prior meetings and assemblies illustrated by social forums and Internet exchanges, where previous experiences with the police are assessed and new tactics are promoted.

In this regard, ongoing research reveals the resurgence of coercive policing during several episodes of mass demonstrations, transnational protest events in particular. The notorious political rhetoric of the global War on Terror contributed to this more exclusive turn. Scholars started to pinpoint the distinctive properties of police control of transnational mobilization. John A. Noakes and his colleagues (2005) singled out these properties in the following order:

- the establishment of extensive no protest zones, often by installing large concrete and metal fence barriers; the disruption of safe spaces, such as convergence centers where protesters would congregate to sleep, eat and acquire information; the use of less-lethal weapons to temporarily incapacitate protesters so police could retake control of spaces of contention; the use of electronic surveillance technology to increase the transparency of spaces of contention and provide real-time information on demonstrators activities to police; pre-emptive arrests to reorganize leaders and large numbers of protesters. (Noakes et al., 2005: 241)
What they call “strategic incapacitation,” in a nutshell, comprises an incremental resort to “surveillance and information sharing, proactive policing, and the elaborate control of space” (Gillham and Noakes, 2007: 350). In fact, strategic incapacitation is not a rupture from previous policing strategies, nor does it mean that they are completely dropped in particular situations. Rather, it selectively aims at “transgressive” demonstrators who are not willing to comply with the police. Nevertheless, the common problem is that despite its selective logic, incapacitation affects not only the targeted participants but all participant, and often the surrounding population as well. Indeed, this translates into the primordial dilemma of protest policing, “how to control members of those crowds who intend to act illegally without alienating members of those that have legitimate aims” (Reicher et al., 2004: 562). On many occasions,

the police respond to early signs of conflict from the crowd – either the presence of certain groups or else actual acts of violence by some crowd members – by clamping down on the crowd as a whole... Hence undifferentiated police constraint can cause groups that were not originally intent to conflict to become more willing to countenance confrontation, to become closer to other more conflictual groupings in the crowd and to become more hostile to the police. (Reicher et al., 2004: 563)

Table 5.2  Protest Policing Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Escalated Force</th>
<th>Negotiated Management</th>
<th>Selective Incapacitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toleration of disruption</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Selective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Selective &amp; one-way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of arrests</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Last resort</td>
<td>Selective &amp; proactive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of force</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Last resort</td>
<td>Selective &amp; less lethal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveillance</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Extensive &amp; real time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information sharing</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Extensive, cross-agencies, and media-conscious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling space</td>
<td>Localized &amp; reactive</td>
<td>Localized &amp; proactive</td>
<td>Selective, extensive, and proactive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gillham (2011)

Note: The original version designates the strategies in the United States. Thus, the dimension on the First Amendment Rights is dropped here.

Actually, as it is also true for escalated force and negotiated management, strategic incapacitation involves measures that usually extend the scope of
authority of the police and entail the engagement of additional players from the government and public administration. These measures range from stricter border controls (such as declining activists’ entry to the country, temporary lifting of Schengen provisions) to extra-legal regulations or city ordinances that are superimposed on the existing police-driven methods. These recent trends in controlling demonstrations are not confined to the realm of transnational protest. On the contrary, the police employ strategic incapacitation during many domestically rooted outbursts of mobilization which may have received less scholarly attention. Subsequent research should provide more stories on native repercussions of the recent policing trends to enrich our comparativist agenda.

Police Cognitive Schemas about Protesters

The ways in which police interact with protesting groups are also influenced by their cognitive schemas, which are discernibly cultivated within the police (occupational) culture and subculture. Classical accounts drew attention to overriding features such as propensity to violence, search for action, conservatism, and lack of tolerance embedded in police behavior. As early as 1960s, Jerome Skolnick singled out the “working personality” of policemen as “shaped by constant exposure to danger and the need to use force and authority to reduce and control threatening situations” (Dempsey and Forst, 2009: 154). As a consequence, it is widely accepted, policemen tend to nurture a “suspicious” attitude toward their environment. That is also why their socialization processes are largely insulated from the rest of society. Later qualitative studies confirmed the propensity among the police to locate themselves at the right of the political spectrum (Baker, 1985).

The predominantly negative portrayal of police cultural traits was challenged on a number of grounds. Critiques, for instance, highlighted the loose usage of the term culture within the literature because it is “rarely embedded in any sort of definition or notion of culture” while “the broader notion of culture is unaddressed or taken for granted” (Crank, 2004: 14).

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2 Our usage of the terms police culture and subculture derives separately from their distinction put forward by Crank (2004). Citing a previous work he co-authored with Roy R. Roberg and Jack L. Kuykendall (2000), Crank refers to police culture as a universe of “occupational beliefs and values” adhered by police officers, whereas by police subculture he means the system of values adopted from the society they are part of (2004: 30).
Others point out that cultural analyses of the police fail to recognize “the interpretive and creative aspects of culture” which have to do with “the interaction between the socio-political context of police work and various dimensions of police organizational knowledge” (Chan, 1996). Others indicate the role of “normative orders” such as bureaucratic and legal frames in shaping those attributes (Herbert, 1998). Still others problematize the monolithic descriptions of the police personalities as if they were a homogeneous entity, and underscore sources of variation such as “organizations, rank, and individual officer styles” (Paoline, 2003: 204). The plausibility of these criticisms notwithstanding, most recent statements confirm the endurance of conventional representations of police cultural traits despite transformative attempts in the organization (Loftus, 2010; Skolnick, 2008).

Under these circumstances, it seems hard to imagine that the police strongly empathize with protesters who are particularly contentious, at times disruptive, and militant if radicalized. However, it is just as difficult to assume that the police share the same cognitive attributes regarding different protest groups due to the variation within the personnel across ranks, branches, and location. In that sense, police “knowledge” that refers to police’s perception of their own and the external reality, as della Porta and Reiter formulated, looks like a more elaborated conception which is “not limited to fleeting images, stereotypes, and prejudices, but extends to the core problems of protest policing” (della Porta and Reiter, 1998: 23). Beyond cultural dispositions, knowledge joins information and past experiences of the police who, in turn, hold different schemes with regard to protesters. Studies have found a juxtaposition of “good” versus “bad,” “genuine” versus “professional,” “contained” versus “transgressive” protesters in the eyes of the police. All these different articulations share in common a notion of the legitimacy of protest which becomes undermined as demonstrators lean toward non-compliance, radicalization, and illegal action in content and form. To be more precise, hooligans or groups like “black bloc” are typical examples of the problematic category, whereas more institutionalized activists such as labor unions are perceived less as “troublemakers.” On top of everything else, police knowledge tends to vary with the specific individual policeperson careers, training, age, gender, and so on. Police knowledge extends beyond the protesters, to include different actors who – such as the government or public opinion (often identified with the press) – are expected to react to police behaviors, successes, and failures.
Expanding the Arena: Bringing Other Players In

While interacting with protesters, the police never act alone. Above all, they are politically influenced by governmental authorities. They are in constant exchange and collaboration with the judiciary. Sometimes military actors step in. Relations with civil society and media also entail frequent communication. Under different regime settings the engagement of these additional players will vary considerably; the arena of protest policing always contains several players so that the police do not remain the only sovereign player in the arena.

To begin with, the control of protests is “calculated” according to a certain logic of political economy. What we observe during protest events, e.g. deployment of personnel, equipment and vehicles, construction of fences, cameras and so forth, requires serious budgetary allocations, especially when it comes to big transnational events:

Some of this money is spent on overtime salaries, extra personnel (including private police), city services such as transportation and waste management, and federal services, such as special deployments of military and border agencies. Some of the money is invested in new technologies, which are left behind with local police agencies long after the event. This arsenal of new technologies and weapons includes new surveillance technologies, ... “less-than-lethal” weapons, ... and the latest riot gear. (Starr, Fernandez, and Scholl, 2011: 49)

Here, what is at stake is a political question with the police at the very center of it. The expenditures allotted to the control of protest shed light on the contemporary orientations of governance that is very much marked by the fetish of security. To illustrate, for securing the G8 summit in Heiligendamm in 2007 from “dangerous” protesters, it has been noted that “[t]he money spent on renting buildings for the police operations amounted to €1,074,600” (Starr, Fernandez, and Scholl, 2011: 53). Likewise, the costs for the G8 and G20 meetings in Toronto in 2010 totaled $929 million, of which $507 million were spent by the Royal Canadian Military Police (RCMP). This money was spent to safeguard political leaders from the “threat” posed by the protesters. Actually, these examples suggest that the political economy of dissent control stipulates excessive policing strategies that are not decided upon merely by the police themselves. There is a political story, backed by political players.

A similar process of extra-police player involvement is seen in the spatial dynamics of protest policing. “Physical control of space,” Luis Fernandez
argues, “refers to ways in which police departments carefully select and map out the material environment before and during a protest” (Fernandez, 2008: 93). These may also include determining the marching routes and assembly places in the urban centers, or imposing stricter border controls as we have mentioned before. The point is that the police do not take decisions in isolation, but rely on a set of external actors during the planning of the events. A commanding officer in Washington, DC, aptly summarizes the point:

Every city agency has a part in it, whether it's the Department of Public Works for removal of things that could be used as projectiles, through the Department of Transportation to help us with the control of traffic in the outskirts of one of these things; through the fire department who may provide for medical services for protestors and police officers; all the way up to include the federal government, the FBI and all sorts of intelligence networks. (Fernandez, 2008: 96)

The police also develop tight relations with the military as a player. Presumably, in authoritarian contexts, or where the capabilities of the police are relatively weak due to a low level of professionalization, resource allocation, and so on, military assistance of the police should be a more widespread phenomenon. But the question is valid for democracies as well, where a non-military police developed. Previously, military aid to the police during tough public order incidents was more frequent and broadly accepted (Johansen, 2005; Palmer, 1988). The police in many established democracies have been investing in their own specially trained, highly equipped (para) military units such as special weapons and tactics (SWAT) teams in the United States. Some authors are alarmed by the explosion and overuse of such units, considered as disproportionate to the violent crime rates in comparison with the past (Fisher, 2010). Thus, the deployment of the military is generally considered as a last resort in worst-case scenarios, and “when it is done,” as Alice Hills (1995: 454) states about the UK, “as in the 1926 general strike, they operate at the request of the police, in support of the police, and under the general authority of the police.” Where the police are operationally subject to the authority of the military, by contrast, the relationship is the other way around.

In addition, the police may request the assistance of traditionally rooted military forces like the gendarmerie. Albeit military in structure, such as Guardia Civil in Spain or Gendarmerie Nationale in France, these forces undertake policing tasks in rural areas, and are supervised by both civilian
and military authorities. At times, the deployment of the gendarmerie may generate controversial situations that challenge common sense perceptions on the issue. Regarding the Argentinean state’s repression of the *piqueteros*, as recently documented, the gendarmerie, “respectful of protesters’ rights and reticent to use lethal force, clashed with the ‘popular image’ ... as fierce, unfeeling ‘Robocops,’ who enjoy violently ‘repressing’ the population and who are analogous in many ways to the dirty warriors” (Carlson, 2006: 183). At any rate, despite growing tendencies toward paramilitarization, the military’s entry into public disorder situations is definitely not an outdated question even in the well established democracies of the present.

While with the development of the nation-state came a process of nationalization of the police, globalization – and the transnational protests it brings about – has seen the development of complex arrangements, with often police from different countries intervening in the control of the same events. As Reiter and Fillieule (2006) observed, these developments were not followed by a transnational protection of the rights to protest that have been more and more often (and allegedly arbitrarily) restricted.

Finally, public police interact with private police with increasingly permeable borders between the two. Authoritarian regimes, in particular, rely on the additional support of militias and voluntary citizen forces to control public dissent. For instance, the party militia in the GDR were called in by the government to repress the 1989 civil right movement (but refused to go). In Mubarak’s Egypt, the regime used to hire groups of gangs known as *baltajiya* to suppress protesters, most recently during the mass meetings on Tahrir Square. A further example is the *basij* in Iran which has been active since their establishment by Khomeini’s order in 1979. Even in democracies, the semi-privatization of spaces (such as malls or airports) has increased the role of privately engaged police in the control of protest.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has aimed at understanding the police as players and protest policing as an arena. Without focusing on a particular case, we have discussed the topic at a relatively abstract level along several dimensions. The central idea was that the police are made up of multiple players who interact both among each other and with various players external to the police to shape the dynamics of protest policing. These dynamics are enshrined in the means used, the decisions taken, strategies adopted, as well as the cognitive
schemas developed, all of which are played out through interactions with the protesters.

Police departments today enjoy rich repositories of policing instruments that vary from supposedly less-than-lethal weapons to real-time surveillance and from several sources of intelligence to communicative skills. In making use of these means the police rely on a certain level of discretion, yet they are also constrained by a set of written and unwritten rules, potential troubles in and on the job, and the pressures from different audiences to whom they are (or feel they are) accountable. These multiple layers intermingle with the cultural dispositions of the police deriving from their occupational orientations. Traditionally, the police are associated with exposure to danger and a tendency to use force, producing a particularly suspicious attitude toward their environment. More specifically, however, it is their “knowledge” that they accumulate through education, training, and past experiences that shapes their different perceptions of protesters. Overall, protest policing strategies are filtered through these dimensions that vary across time and space. Many scholars observe a backlash of authoritarian methods that dominate those strategies in a neoliberal age. Still, the recent rise of strategic incapacitation does not preclude previous paradigms of escalated force and negotiated management as they are variably implemented on different national and transnational arenas of policing. The ultimate point is that whatever strategies are employed, the police never act alone in those arenas as they are backed as well as challenged by other political and bureaucratic players of the state.

We consider this is a useful conceptual framework for grasping broader processes of the relationship between the state and social movements. Indeed, the centrality of the police not only lies in its being one of the founding institutions of the state, but also in the fact that protest policing is a mundane practice just as protest is. The conceptualization of this phenomenon through players and arenas should yield a fertile analytical ground for empirical research on different cases of political geographies around the world.

References


