

Fear Over Freedom

The Challenging Campaign against France's State of Emergency between
November 2015 and May 2017 in Paris



Interdiction • Perquisition • Assignation

ÉTAT D'URGENCE FRANÇAIS

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Cover image: created by Béryl Walther and distributed in activists' networks. One of my respondents shared the image with me. The text portrays the three most contested measures of the state of emergency: the prohibition to protest (*interdiction*), the house searches (*perquisition*) and the house arrests (*assignation*).

ABSTRACT

Despite the profound impact of France's state of emergency on human rights and civil liberties, the social movement campaign against the state of emergency did not succeed in mobilising the population, convincing politicians and obtaining its main goal: the end of the state of emergency. This research is focused on the campaign against France's state of emergency and how activists explain its limited success between November 2015 and May 2017 in Paris. Building upon twenty-five in-depth interviews with French activists, the way in which they motivate and legitimate their campaign is analysed through the concept of collective action frames. Whereas all activists opposed the state of emergency, they prioritised different problematic aspects, pursued different end goals through divergent strategies and did not construct a collective identity for the opposition movement. In the narratives of failure activists use to make sense of the limited success of their campaign, they include external explanations, focusing on the constraining effects of political opportunity structures and issues of frame resonance, as well as internal explanations, focused on the lack of resources, common priorities and a collective identity. Activists point to the lack of a collective identity and the existence of multiple splits within the campaign as one of the most important factors impacting its success. These splits include a division between universalist and communitarianist organisations, big associations and organisations working "on the ground" and the two groups that have been mainly targeted by the state of emergency: the Muslim community and political activists of the extreme-left milieu. The state of emergency has highlighted the differences between these groups while at the same time providing opportunities for new alliances.

Key words: social movement campaign, collective action frames, campaign failure, narratives of failure, episode of contention, Paris activism, state of emergency France.

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
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| ADM | <i>Action Droits des Musulmans</i> |
| CCIF | <i>Collectif Contre l'islamophobie en France</i> |
| CFCM | <i>Conseil Français du Culte Musulman</i> |
| CFDT | <i>Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail</i> |
| CGT | <i>Confédération Générale du Travail</i> |
| CNCDH | <i>Commission Nationale Consultative des Droits de l'Homme</i> |
| COP21 | Conference of Parties 21 |
| CRI | <i>Coordination contre le Racisme et l'Islamophobie</i> |
| CUC | <i>Conseil d'Urgence Citoyenne</i> |
| FO | <i>Force Ouvrière</i> |
| FN | <i>Front National</i> |
| HRW | Human Rights Watch |
| IS | Islamic State |
| LDH | <i>Ligue des Droits de l'Homme</i> |
| LQDN | <i>La Quadrature Du Net</i> |
| NGO | Non-governmental organisation |
| UN | United Nations |

INTRODUCTION

The campaign against France's state of emergency

“... the word terrorist, it's magic that opens all the doors, right. When you talk about terrorism in your discourse, you can pass anything. No one will come to say, you should, I don't know, I don't know, it's something absolutely... I have the impression that... You could really pass anything by putting 'terrorism,' 'Daesh' and 'Bataclan' in the same sentence. It's a reality, it's an impressive reality.”¹

On the 13th of November 2015, right after the terrorist attacks at the Bataclan theatre, multiple cafés in Paris and the *Stade the France* in Saint-Denis, President Hollande declared a state of emergency. This state of emergency grants the government exceptional powers that are legitimised by the “immediate” and “exceptional” nature of the perceived terrorist threat on the French territory (Cassia, 2016:23). Initially, the government declared the state of emergency for twelve days. However, the government has prolonged the state of emergency five times already and it will shortly be celebrating its second birthday.²

Soon after its declaration, the state of emergency became subject to criticism for deteriorating human rights and posing a danger to civil liberties, as it lifts the judicial control of measures such as the authority to place people under house arrest (*assignation à résidence*), to search people's houses (*perquisition*) and to limit people's freedom of movement (*interdiction de séjour*) (Cassia, 2016; Bourdon, 2017). In a 2016 report, Amnesty International argues that measures taken under the state of emergency have had a disproportionately negative impact on human rights, as they are “vaguely formulated providing scope for overbroad application,” “may discriminate against specific groups” on the ground of their religion and could be used for “purposes other than those which were the basis of the declared state of emergency” (Amnesty International, 2016:32-33). As the state of emergency has been in force for almost two years, critics additionally voice concerns about its normalisation (Cassia, 2016; Bourdon, 2017). In a follow-up report, Amnesty International (2017:7) identifies the “effort by states to make it easier to invoke and prolong a state of emergency” as one of the most alarming developments across Europe. Specifically in France the continuous extensions of the state of emergency, which have gone beyond the period of uncertainty following the Paris attacks, have contributed to “the normalising of the notion that a general threat of terrorist attacks threatens the very life of the nation” (Amnesty International, 2017:8). The normalisation of the special security measures is dangerous as it limits public debate and citizen engagement, and leaves little room for dissident

¹ Author's interview with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris. “Daesh” is the dominant way in France to refer to the terrorist group Islamic State (IS).

All quotes extracted from interviews, except those from Pierre Lalu (06-03-17, Paris) and Arié Alimi (27-03-17, Paris), are translated from French to English by the author.

² At the time of writing, the newly elected President Macron has proposed to prolong the state of emergency for a sixth time until the 1st of November 2017. He has declared his intentions to end the state of emergency after this prolongation, but has stated that he needs this time to propose a new counterterrorism law that is supposed to enhance France's security outside of the state of emergency (Jacquin, 2017a).

views and consideration of the impact on human rights (Amnesty International, 2017:11). These and similar critiques united a diverse group of people and organisations, participating in a campaign to demand the end of the state of emergency in France.

Great consequences, limited success: the research puzzle

One conversation I had with a respondent and another activist that coincidentally came into the room to collect some paperwork during the interview, is exemplary for the general mood with which activists look back on their campaign against the state of emergency in France. My respondent introduced me to his colleague. “She is a Dutch student, who is doing research on the state of emergency and how the mobilisation against the state of emergency has worked since 2015.”³ “Well,” said his colleague, with a look on his face as if he was about to save me some time, “it hasn’t worked, really.” They laughed and my respondent confirmed: “That’s it.”⁴

I had not initially planned to focus on topics of decline and failure of social movement campaigns but it was exactly this story that began to evolve before my eyes as I entered the field and met with activists. Whereas I spoke with activists from different backgrounds, affiliations and organisations, they all agreed on two main points. One, the state of emergency has a profound impact on civil liberties and human rights in France, constituting a highly problematic situation and two, the campaign against the state of emergency has not succeeded in mobilising the French population or convincing French politicians to end the state of emergency. This complication is at the heart of this research project, leading to the following research question:

In the light of the profound impact of France’s state of emergency on civil liberties and human rights, what campaign did French activists develop in opposition to the state of emergency between November 2015 and May 2017 in Paris and how do they explain the campaign’s limited success?

This research looks at the campaign against the state of emergency through a lens of framing, hereby affirming the idea that social movement activities are a “particularly conducive site to privilege meaning-making, because their activities foreground resistance to the dominant norms and institutions of society” (Kurzman, 2008:6). A frame is “an interpretative schemata that simplifies and condenses the ‘world out there’ by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of actions within one’s present or past environment” (Snow & Benford, 1992:137). As speaks from the opening quote of this thesis in which the activist interprets the word “terrorist” as a

³ Author’s interview with Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris.

⁴ Author’s interviews with Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris; Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris.

“magic that opens all doors,”⁵ the specific way in which the French government has presented the state of emergency is a framing effort in itself. The government has framed the state of emergency as a necessary instrument to protect the French population from the terrorist threat (Cassia, 2016; Bourdon, 2017). Consequently, participants of the campaign and government actors are both understood as actors deeply involved in “the politics of signification” (Hall, 1982).

The story about the campaign against the state of emergency is a story about difficulties and obstacles, sometimes even about frustration and desperation. It is a story about activists that have invested their time, energy and resources in the struggle against the state of emergency but have been disappointed time and time again. Some of them have quit, others have continued. One of my respondents told me that at least, she considered it a small victory that the opposition has been able to exist and produce a counter voice, to show that the state of emergency is not unanimously considered a good thing in France.⁶ This thesis aims to tell the story of these activists, how they tried to challenge the state of emergency, the difficulties they faced and ultimately how they interpret the limited success of their campaign.

In this thesis, I will position the campaign against the state of emergency within the broader episode of contention, a concept that refers to all interactions on the topic of the state of emergency (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015:39). In doing so, this research adds to the literature that aims to understand entire episodes of contention, including the decline of a social movement campaign, which remains a largely understudied phenomenon today (Voss, 1998; Owens, 2009:13). Following Owens (2008;2009), I will be looking at how activists themselves talk about decline and failure. This means acknowledging that activists are not just actors, but also activism theorists: producing and applying “activist wisdom” (Maddison & Scalmer, 2006). Whereas researchers can choose whether or not they want to study decline, activists have little choice as they are the ones that unquestionably have to deal with the phenomenon in their everyday lives (Owens, 2009:18). The studying of decline and failure presents an opportunity to adopt an integrative approach, merging structural, resource mobilisation and framing perspectives of collective action into one comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon (Kamenitsa, 1998).

Finally, the thesis adds to the study of contentious politics focused on democratic regimes in which “citizens fail to bark” (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015:233). As suggested by Tilly and Tarrow the study of why citizens of democratic regimes “often sit on their hands when they have the right to resist” forms the next stage in the study of contentious politics (2015:233). This complication is relevant for

⁵ Author’s interview with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris.

⁶ Author’s interview with Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris.

the case of the campaign against France's state of emergency, as the opposition movement consisted of a small minority and did not succeed in mobilising the French population.

Empirically, by focusing on the campaign against France's state of emergency, I address a recent, ongoing case that has not been studied yet. The fact that international human rights organisations such as Amnesty International (2017) regard the normalisation of special security measures as one of the major threats in Europe confirms the social significance of studying how activist groups are mobilising to challenge these developments and the difficulties they face along the way. The case of the limited success of the campaign against France's state of emergency is exemplary for the current political climate in Europe, a time in which adequately responding to terrorism is regarded as one of the major challenges facing modern democracies (Bourdon, 2017:15). The limited success of the campaign to accomplish a significant mobilisation on the topic, in the country that is usually so fond of defending its *libertés* (Vassallo, 2010; Tilly & Tarrow, 2015) is worrying. At the same time, it provides an interesting case of (the lack of) collective action in modern democracies in a period marked by a political discourse that is dominated by a perceived terrorist threat.

This thesis is structured as follows.

In *chapter 1*, I will discuss the analytic framework that I adopt throughout this thesis as well as the methodology and reflections on the research process.

In *chapter 2*, I will address the following sub-questions: how did the episode of contention evolve? What were the main events that were organised within the campaign? And which actors were mobilised in the campaign? I will map out the campaign as a whole, including a timeline with important events and an actor map depicting the mobilised actors.

In *chapter 3*, I will focus on the content of the campaign by describing the collective action frames that actors adopted to identify the problematic situation, possible actions and solutions and a collective identity for the protest movement. The sub-questions I will address in this chapter are: what collective action frames did activists use? And how were they constructed?

Chapter 4 is focused on the limited success of the campaign against France's state of emergency, addressing the following sub-questions: how do activists interpret and explain the limited success of their campaign? What external and internal explanations do they give?

In *chapter 5*, I will delve further into one of the most important narratives of failure that focuses on the lack of cohesion between groups within the campaign that traditionally do not work together. The sub-questions that I address include: what splits existed within the campaign? How do the activists explain these splits? How did these splits impact the campaign? And finally, what was done to overcome them?

In the *conclusion*, I will reflect on the findings presented in *chapter 2-5*, formulate an answer to the research question and present suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 1

Methodology and Analytical Framework: Through the Activists' Eyes

1.1 Analytic Framework

I will discuss the concepts that constitute the analytic framework of this research in depth throughout the thesis. The aim of this section is to briefly introduce these concepts, define them and argue how they relate to each other.

The overarching concept in the analytic framework is *episode of contention*, defined by Tilly and Tarrow as “bounded sequences of continuous interaction, usually produced by an investigator’s chopping up longer streams of contention into segments for purposes of systematic observation, comparison, and explanation” (2015:39). An episode of contention includes all the interaction between all the actors involved within a defined timeframe on a specific topic, in this case: France’s state of emergency between November 2015 and May 2017. As an episode of contention is by definition interactive it is not an isolated event but can also interact with the broader context and thus other contentious episodes (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015:45).

Within an episode of contention, there can be multiple *campaigns*. I adopt Tilly and Tarrow’s definition of a campaign as “a sustained organised public effort making collective claims on targeted authorities” (2015:153). A campaign therefore, is an act of conscious claim making. It is possible to have multiple campaigns within one episode of contention. Hypothetically, there could be a first campaign focused on the end of the state of emergency, a second campaign with the aim to change only part of the law on the state of emergency and a third campaign that demands a reinforcement of the state of emergency. These different campaigns can interact and influence each other, within the broader episode of contention.

Following Tilly and Tarrow’s (2015:153) definition, a campaign consists of a public effort (the actors that participate in the campaign and the actions they undertake), collective claims (the claims the campaign makes), and targeted authorities (the ones to whom the campaign is directed). After giving an overview of the contentious episode and the campaign as a whole in *chapter 2*, I will delve further into the meaning making aspect of the campaign in *chapter 3*, through the concept of *collective action frames*.

Collective action frames are “action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that *inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns* of a social movement organization” (Benford & Snow, 2000:614, my emphasis). In order to describe the collective action frames activists used in their campaign, I combine the frameworks of Gamson (1992) and Benford and Snow (2000). Gamson identifies three basic components of collective action frames: injustice, agency and identity (1992:7). Benford and Snow indicate three tasks collective action frames aim to fulfil: diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing (2000:615). Collective action frames are not solid entities; rather, they are “the outcome of negotiated shared meaning” (Gamson, 1992:111). The interactions through which

activists construct collective action frames again fall into the overarching framework of the contentious episode.

The concept map below visualises the relations between the different concepts as introduced above.

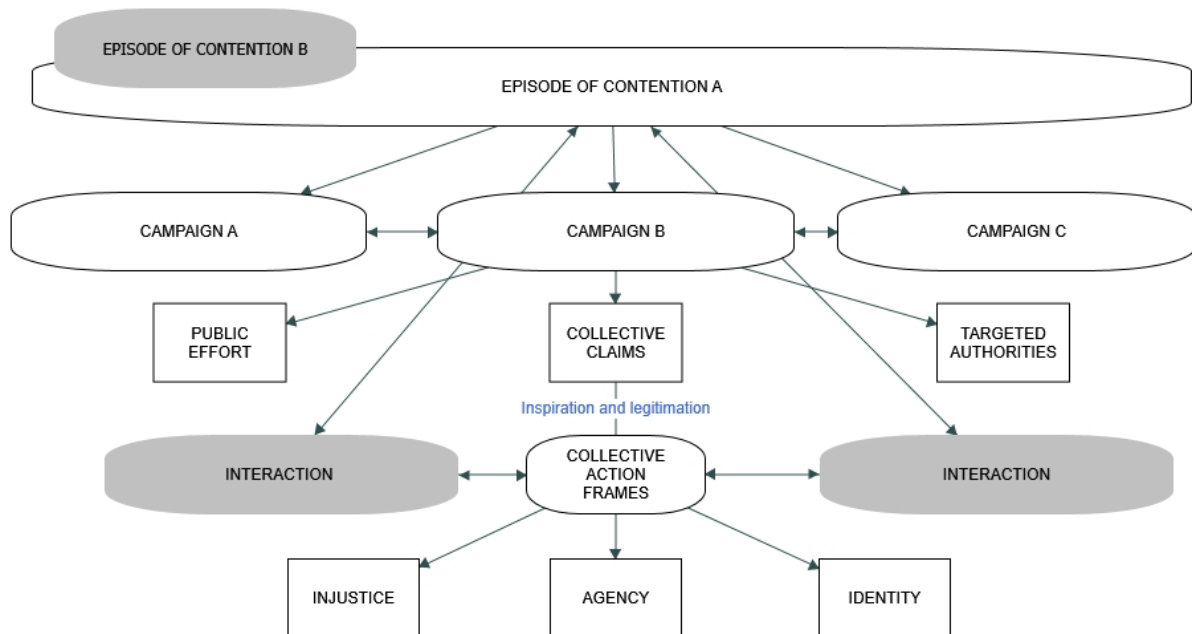


Figure 1: Analytic framework, source: created by author based on Tilly and Tarrow (2015) and Gamson (1992).

Social research is a dialogue between ideas and evidence (Ragin, 1994:55). It is not surprising that the realities I faced in the field do not overlap with the analytic framework above. I have inductively added some concepts to the analytic framework because they fit well with the evidence coming from the field. I will introduce these concepts below.

Most importantly, a reoccurring theme in the interviews I conducted was how the campaign against France's state of emergency had not worked out. Limited success, or failure of the campaign between November 2015 and May 2017 thus became an important aspect of my research. To lift this evidence to a more abstract level, I will use the concept *narratives of decline* as developed by Owens (2009). Narratives of decline are the stories activists tell to make sense of the decline of their social movement (Owens, 2009:241). I will tweak the concept slightly from its original purpose, by applying it to a campaign rather than a social movement and to limited success rather than decline, turning the concept into *narratives of failure*. Just as collective action frames, activists contest and construct narratives of failure through interaction. Therefore, they fall within the analytic framework of the episode of contention.

Within their narratives of failure, activists use themes that correspond to academic concepts. I have linked these concepts inductively with activists' stories. First of all, there are events that activists interpret as constraining the campaign, which corresponds to the concept of *political opportunity structures*: “aspects of a regime that offer challengers both openings to advance their claims and threats and constraints that caution them against making these claims” (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015:49).

Secondly, there are difficulties with convincing the French population and French politicians of the cause, which can be explained through the concept of *frame resonance*, relevant to “the effectiveness or mobilizing potency of proffered framings, thereby attending to the question of why some framings seem to be effective or ‘resonate’ others do not” (Benford & Snow, 2000:619).

Thirdly, some narratives are focused on dynamics within the opposition movement such as debates about vision, and differences in priorities and goals. We can interpret these explanations through the concept of *frame disputes*: “intramovement disagreements regarding diagnoses and prognoses” (Benford & Snow, 2000:626). These concepts will guide the presentation of the findings in the following chapters. First, I will elaborate on the research's methodology.

1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 Research Design

As the aim of this research is to understand the campaign against the state of emergency from an insider's perspective, I adopt a qualitative research design focused on gathering a large amount of data on a (relatively) small number of cases. I position myself within the constructivist school, adopting the ontological focus on meaning-making and the interpretivist epistemological stance that meanings are not objectively observable from the outside, but are subjective: their content depends on who you ask. Consequently, this research project focuses on how activists themselves explain their goals, identities, actions and the development of their campaign.

Although I use meaning-making as my overarching ontological position, I argue that this does not mean that structural explanations cannot be considered important. Following amongst others Benford (1993; 1997), Benford and Snow (2000) and Giddens (1984), I argue that interpretivist and structural explanations should be seen as “complementary rather than contradictory” (Benford, 1993:209; cf. Musolf, 1992). An analysis of activists' narratives of failure provides an opportunity to contribute to the synthesising of structural, agency and interpretational factors. External events (structures) do not objectively hinder or facilitate mobilisation but are open to debate and interpretation (Benford & Snow, 2000:631). The way in which activists frame an external event as an opportunity or as an obstacle, determines their response to it (Jackson & Dutton, 1988). Therefore, I will adopt a synthesised ontological approach in which meaning-making functions as a mediator between structures and agency.

The research project is focused on the campaign against France's state of emergency between November 2015 and May 2017 in Paris. I have chosen this time frame because it encompasses the

whole episode of contention from the declaration of the state of emergency up to the present. Furthermore, I have chosen the city of Paris as a setting, because it is the hotspot of French activism (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015:97) and the actors involved in the campaign that I identified in my preparatory research were mostly situated in Paris.

1.2.2 Stages of data gathering and interpretation

During the months of March and April 2017 I have conducted field research in Paris. The adopted research method consists of six steps. *Step one* was focused on enlarging my network in Paris and getting to know the field. I tried to get in touch with activists that were active in the campaign against France's state of emergency between November 2015 and the present. Furthermore, I explored the possibilities for conducting ethnographic research as a participant observer by closely following the social media accounts of activist groups and asking my contacts about such possibilities.

Step two was aimed at contextualising the research puzzle by mapping out the contentious episode. During this stage I used document research and retrospective in-depth interviews to identify the key actors and important events that had taken place so far. I also continued enlarging my network.

In *step three* I conducted in-depth interviews and document research to examine the content of the collective action frames used by French activists. In this stage, I also included the topic campaign failure, since this theme emerged from the evidence I had thus far collected in the previous steps.

After identifying the content of the collective action frames and narratives of failure, I focused on the process of negotiating shared meaning and interactions in *step four*. I used in-depth interviews to research the meaning-making process and enhanced these findings by using participant observation during a meeting of the network *Réseau état d'urgence – antiterroriste*. This allowed me to observe meaning-making processes in real time, instead of in retrospect.

Step five was aimed at identifying patterns and analysing the collected evidence. This included re-listening and transcribing the conducted interviews and triangulating the findings from the interviews with those from document research and the participant observation. Furthermore, I have organised the collected data by identifying patterns and key themes that activists commonly used to talk about the injustice, agency and identity components of collective action frames and about the limited success of their campaign.

1.2.3 Data collection instruments

I have conducted twenty-five in-depth interviews with people coming from different organisations and activist milieus. I will reference to these interviews in footnotes, using "Authors interview with" followed by the name of the respondent, the date and the location. A complete list of respondents and their respective organisations is added in Appendix 1. I have engaged in email correspondence with one respondent as I had some further questions after transcribing the interview, this correspondence will be referred to as "Author's personal correspondence" followed by the name of the respondent and the date. Except for two interviews, I conducted all of the interviews in French. I never proposed to

conduct an interview in English myself, as I wanted people to be able to express themselves in the most comfortable way possible. Apart from the two English interviews,⁷ I have translated all the quotes included in this thesis from French to English. Although I have tried to translate the quotes in the most appropriate way, it should be kept in mind that these are not the original words respondents used, but a product of my translation of their words. When people emphasised certain words within a quote, I have placed those words in italics.

In addition to the interviews, I have attended one meeting of the activist network *Réseau état d'urgence - antiterroriste*, which is still active in the campaign against the state of emergency and I went to three demonstrations as a participant observer (Appendix 2). These demonstrations were not about the state of emergency explicitly, but were good examples of how episodes of contention on different topics merge and interact. I made field notes to catalogue my observations during participant observation, as well as after conducting interviews. I will refer to this data in footnotes as “Author’s fieldnotes” followed by the date and location.

Finally, I collected and reviewed documentation about the different organisations and individuals I interviewed and the actions they have undertaken. This documentation includes the announcements for public gatherings and demonstrations, texts from activist groups’ websites, social media pages, newspaper articles, published interviews with activists, press releases in which organisations express their views on the state of emergency, and reports that have been produced about its effects.

1.2.4 Sampling

The sampling method I have used to purposefully select participants for interviews is non-probability sampling. As the research aim is not to establish a general law or causal explanation, but rather to provide a qualitative understanding of a phenomenon from the insider’s point of view, non-probability sampling is an appropriate sampling technique (Boeije, 2010:35).

I have selected respondents for the interviews by establishing a network of relevant activist groups and individuals. I started by approaching people and organisations that I had identified as playing a role in the campaign, because they were visible in the online media that I had studied in preparation of my fieldwork. From here, I continued through snowball sampling: asking participants if they knew more people who would be willing and suitable to participate in the research project. Similarly, I have selected documents for analysis using non-probability sampling. The possibilities for participant observation were fully depended on the actions of the activists during the fieldwork period, therefore these moments and locations could not be randomly sampled but have also been selected through non-probability sampling.

⁷ Author’s interviews with Pierre Lalu, 06-03-17, Paris; Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris.

As the contentious episode on the state of emergency attracted a wide range of actors, I found the decisions about sampling challenging at times: who to include and how to justify these choices? There was no clear-cut way to categorise respondents, as some people were involved in multiple groups and others were simply acting individually. I had to find a way to make sure different organisations, individuals and segments of the society were represented in the sample.

In the end I tackled this issue by trying to make an equal distribution of respondents on three dimensions. Firstly, I tried to meet with people coming from different kinds of organisations: classic human rights organisations, specialised small organisations, labour unions and organisations working from within the Muslim community. Secondly, I made a categorisation in terms of collectives (organised cooperation between organisations). Thirdly, I focused on the activist background of the respondents, as I wanted to include both political activists from the extreme-left milieu⁸ and activists working from within the Muslim community. In other words, I combined mapping of the organisations involved in the campaign with the selection of respondents, in order to maximise the representation of the variety of subgroups in the campaign.

⁸ With the phrase “political activists from the extreme-left milieu” I mean activists that are active within the anarchistic, anti-capitalist and ecological movement in France. Hereafter, I will refer to these activists simply as “left activists” for readability.

CHAPTER 2

Mapping the episode of contention: who, what and when?

I will start this chapter with a historical contextualisation of oppositional protest movements in France, followed by a discussion of the development of France's counterterrorism laws before November 2015 and a brief history of the state of emergency to contextualise the contentious episode. In the second part of the chapter, I will map the episode of contention, visualising the important actors that were mobilised during the campaign and how the campaign evolved over time.

2.1 Campaigning in Paris: a “tradition of revolution”⁹

With a history marked by contentious interaction, from the French Revolution and the Paris commune to general strikes, demonstrations, frequent political discussions, riots and protest movements (Vassallo, 2010:2), many scholars perceive the city of Paris as “the heartland of contentious politics” (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015:97) stating that in any given year, Parisians protest over practically anything (Olivier Fillieule, 1997). Explanations accounting for France's political passion focus on its revolutionary past and on the idea that French citizens interpret their role as politically active citizens as the essence of a democratic system (Vassallo, 2010:3). In French protests, the street demonstration (*la manifestation*) is the favourite instrument (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015:97).

France has known several massive protest waves, the latest one being in 1995 when general strikes against social reforms paralysed the country (Trat, 1996). This was the biggest protest movement since the major civil unrest, revolutionary mood and protests throughout Europe of May 1986 (Trat, 1996). Although there are demonstrations in Paris almost every week, they have not been as big as the ones in 1986 and 1995. One respondent accounts for this development by pointing to the discouragement of mass mobilisations since the presidency of Nicolas Sarkozy, who has never given in to the demands of the civil society and therefore exhausted the protest movement.¹⁰

2.2 The state of emergency as “the cherry on top”¹¹: the development of France's counterterrorism laws before November 2015

The declaration of the state of emergency in November 2015 is not an isolated event but part of a broader development of securitising politics and extending counterterrorism laws in France that was already ongoing, as was activism against these laws. For some activists, the state of emergency was simply “the cherry on top”¹² of all the preceding counterterrorism legislation. This is relevant since the choice to become involved in the struggle against the state of emergency was for some organisations a logical consequence of their previous mobilisation against counterterrorism legislation.¹³ Furthermore,

⁹ Hewlett. *The French Exception*, 2005:8.

¹⁰ Author's interview with Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris.

¹¹ Author's interview with Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés.

¹² Author's interview with Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés.

¹³ Author's interviews with Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

in terms of campaign goals, it explains why for most activists a simple lift of the state of emergency would not solve the problem. Rather, the whole existing body of antiterrorism legislation needs to be revised.¹⁴

France has a long history of diverse political motivated violence, ranging from anarchistic violence committed by the extreme left, attacks by the extreme right, anti-colonial violence and regional separatist groups seeking greater autonomy in the Basque country, Brittany and Corsica and from the 1980's onward the threat of modern transnational terrorism (Gregory, 2003). Consequently, after the coordinated attacks on 9/11 shocked the world and boosted the international attention for counterterrorist policies (De Graaf, 2010), France already “had in place perhaps the most developed counterterrorism machinery” in Europe (Human Rights Watch, 2008:7). Today, critics say, the French counterterrorism machinery has grown into the most repressive one in Europe (Bourdon, 2017:12).

A pre-emptive approach and predictive logic characterise France's counterterrorism law system: “no specific terrorist act need be planned, much less executed” to constitute an offense (Human Rights Watch, 2008:1). This underlying principle on which France's counterterrorism laws are based, has been contested a long time before the state of emergency of November 2015. For instance, in a 2008 report, Human Rights Watch (HRW) argues that the French crime of “criminal association in relation to a terrorist undertaking” is ill defined and allows for circumstantial evidence, possibly violating the right to a fair trial for those facing charges (2008:1-2).

More recently and building up to the declaration of the state of emergency, France suffered two attacks in January 2015, one in the offices of the French satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo and one in the Hyper Casher supermarket (BBC, 2016). In August 2015, a mass shooting was avoided in the Thalys train travelling from Amsterdam to Paris when passengers overpowered a gunman (BBC, 2016). In response to these attacks, the French government proposed a new surveillance law in July 2015 (Gouvernement, 2017). This law, as its predecessor the Military Programming Law, was subject of major criticism from the civil society as it permits the state to use mass surveillance tools without any judicial authorisation (Amnesty International, 2017:31). The small and specialised human rights group that is focused on rights in the electronic space, *La Quadrature Du Net* (LQDN), was very active in the struggle against the two surveillance laws and states this as the reason why they naturally became involved in the campaign against the state of emergency as well.¹⁵

Historically, the jurisdiction of French public law is divided in two main categories: the judicial courts that focus on disputes between private individuals and the state within the domain of criminal law, and administrative courts, which resolve disputes between the state and individuals, or between different public bodies (Vie Publique, 2013). Critics have denounced this duality, and especially the

¹⁴ Author's interview with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

¹⁵ Author's interview with Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris.

administrative courts, for a long time. Most severely, some believe the institution is not independent, as the administrative judges are civil servants and not magistrates and are therefore assumed to have a strong link with the administration (Vie Publique, 2013). Overall, the expansion of France's counterterrorism legislation reflects a development of authorities that are moved from the judicial domain towards the administrative domain and a movement from judicial authorisation beforehand to control a posteriori by the administrative court (Bourdon, 2017:21). This is also the case with the measures of the state of emergency, which fall under the jurisdiction of the administrative court.

2.3 A brief history of the state of emergency

Similar to the body of French counterterrorism legislation, the state of emergency has its own country-specific history. The French state of emergency is based on a law that was adopted in 1955 to counter the "disorder in Algeria" during the Algerian war, which lasted eight years and ultimately resulted in the Algerian independence in 1962 (Cassia, 2016:15-16). Thus, the law of the state of emergency originates from a controversial time in which France wished to suppress the struggle for independence of the Algerian people in a war that was characterised by widespread violence against Algerian civilians and the prevalent use of torture by the French forces (Human Rights Watch, 2008:6). The origins of a law are important to take into account, as it reflects the zeitgeist of the period in which the law was created.¹⁶ Despite attempts to include the state of emergency in the constitution, the possibility to declare the state of emergency is still based on the law of 1955 that the cabinet can activate by decree for a maximum of twelve days and that it can prolong with approval of the parliament and the senate (Cassia, 2016:21).

In addition to the controversial use of the state of emergency during the Algerian War, the French state declared the state of emergency three times in 1985 in New Caledonia, for twelve hours in 1986 on the South Pacific islands Wallis and Futuna and for twelve days in 1987 on the Windward Islands in Polynesia (Cassia, 2016:18). More recently, then President Jacques Chirac declared the state of emergency in 2005 for the metropolitan area due to riots between the police and youth in the French suburbs – *the banlieues* following the death of two young boys that were hiding from the police in an electricity substation (Cassia, 2016:19; Fassin, 2013). The government extended the state of emergency for three months, lasting in total from 9 November 2005 till 4 January 2006 (Cassia, 2016:19).

Civil society groups already critiqued these previous instances of the state of emergency. For example, the oldest human rights organisation in France, *Ligue des Droits de l'Homme* (LDH) has been very involved in questions about the Algerian War (LDH Gironde, 2013), and the labour union for magistrates *Syndicat de la Magistrature* suggests that it was not difficult to position themselves

¹⁶ Author's interview with Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris.

vis-à-vis the state of emergency in November 2015, as they had already argued against the legality of the state of emergency in 2005.¹⁷

2.4 The opposition movement: diverse and diffused

The state of emergency united a very diverse collection of opponents, coming from different organisational, work and social backgrounds including international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), traditional human rights organisations within France, small and specialised associations, individual lawyers and academics, organisations focused on racism and Islamophobia and victims of the exceptional measures that have become activists themselves. These actors worked individually, in ad hoc groups or in larger collectives with sometimes overlapping memberships.

In the initial stage of the mobilisation against the state of emergency the work of journalists who were tracking and documenting eventual abuses of measures of the state of emergency has been important. The prime example of this work is the *Observatoire de l'État d'Urgence* created and maintained by the French journalist Laurent Borredon on the website of the French newspaper *Le Monde*.¹⁸

On the mobilisation front, the campaign was mostly focused around the creation of two separate collectives in the beginning of December 2015. First of all, *Nous ne céderons pas*,¹⁹ a collective that united 128 organisations and nineteen labour unions and was created and led by the LDH, and secondly, a collective called *Stop état d'urgence* that united organisations, labour unions and political parties. A lot of organisations were members of both of the collectives and they organised several events together.

At the same time, a new organisation was founded outside existing social movement structures in response to the declaration of the state of emergency: *Conseil d'Urgence Citoyenne* (CUC). This group consisted of academics, lawyers and other individuals engaged with questions about how the state of emergency threatens France's democracy (Bordenet, 2016). Although they were very present in the media, they did not succeed in mobilising the population and they diminished gradually due to internal debates about identity and strategies.²⁰

Simultaneously, around the end of November 2015 another collective of academics, lawyers and students united in *Collectif Associatif et Universitaire* started the writing of a juridical analysis of the state of emergency and its effects (*L'Urgence d'en Sortir*, 2016). The group ceased to be active after the writing of the report, but a lot of the same people created a new group in January 2017. This network, *Réseau état d'urgence – antiterroriste*, is right now uniting organisations and individuals that

¹⁷ Author's interview with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

¹⁸ Available at <http://delinquance.blog.lemonde.fr/>.

¹⁹ The name *Nous ne céderons pas* means "we will not give in" and refers to the refusal of the participating groups to give in to fear, to give in to terrorism but also to give in to the securitising and restrictive counterterrorism policies of the state.

²⁰ Author's interviews with Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris; Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés. A small part of the collective is still active in the south of France, but they have shifted their focus from the state of emergency to reforming the French constitution.

are still active in the campaign, including institutional actors that attend informally as observers.²¹

Moreover, organisations working from within the Muslim community are important actors in the campaign against the state of emergency, notably because the large majority of people that are directly targeted by the state of emergency are Muslims or people that are assumed to be Muslim.²² Important organisations are the *Collectif Contre l'Islamophobie en France* (CCIF), the organisation *Action Droits des Musulmans* (ADM) and the *Coordination contre le Racisme et l'Islamophobie* (CRI). In terms of action, the focus of these organisations is more on supporting victims than mobilising the population. Nonetheless, the organisations have also participated in *Nous ne céderons pas* and ADM belongs to the organisations that are still active within *Réseau état d'urgence – antiterroriste*.

On the institutional level, the *Commission nationale consultative des droits de l'homme* (CNCDDH) and the *Défenseur des Droits* are important actors. The French Parliament²³ has called upon these exterior institutions to assure vigilance on the state of emergency. The *Défenseur des Droits* is the French ombudsman and has followed and critiqued the developments around the state of emergency.²⁴ The government created the CNCDDH and the commission acts as an independent watchdog. The CNCDDH consists of thirty civil society associations and thirty qualified persons, and adopts declarations and advices regarding human rights issues in France (CNCDDH, 2016a; 2016b; 2017). In their first advice on the topic in February 2016, they clearly position themselves against the state of emergency (CNCDDH, 2016a). Besides the CNCDDH and *Le Défenseur de Droits* that both have an institutionalised relationship with the state, the state also consults larger Muslim federations, such as the *Conseil français du culte musulman* (CFCM).²⁵

Individual lawyers also play a major role in the episode of contention. In addition to helping people that have unjustly been targeted by the state of emergency, lawyers aim to attack certain aspects of the law in order to have them declared contradictory to the constitution.²⁶ Sometimes, human rights organisations, especially the LDH, cooperate with lawyers in this judicial battle. They have succeeded in censuring some aspects of the law, which are interpreted as small victories of the campaign (Conseil Constitutionnel, 2016b; 2017).

Finally, victims of the state of emergency's exceptional measures have sometimes mobilised and become important actors within the episode of contention themselves. For instance, Halim Abdelmalek, who the state has unjustly placed under house arrest, became the first person to win a

²¹ Author's interview with Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris.

²² This is an important distinction that several respondents emphasised, as not only real Muslims but also people "presumed" to be Muslim because of their appearance are targeted. For readability, I will not make this explicitly make distinction in the remaining of this thesis, but will simply refer to "Muslims."

²³ Through its parliamentary commission: *Commission des Lois de l'Assemblée Nationale*.

²⁴ See for instance its annual report of 2016: <https://www.defenseurdesdroits.fr/sites/default/files/atoms/files/raa-2016-en.pdf>.

²⁵ Author's interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

²⁶ Author's interviews with Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris.

case against the state on the topic of house arrests under the state of emergency.²⁷ He used the media attention that his victory provided to encourage all people in the same situation to take their cases to court, presenting himself as “the living proof that it can be done.”²⁸ Ever since, he has been helping individual victims with psychological support and legal advice to challenge the injustice done to them.²⁹

The actor map³⁰ below (p.24) depicts the different groups of actors that were mobilised in the campaign against France’s state of emergency, the collectives in which they participated and how they were connected to each other. To visualise the connections between different actors, I have made a distinction between formal cooperation within collectives and informal cooperation outside of collectives. For clarity, I have chosen to only include general categories of actors on this map, instead of names of particular people or organisations. A list with specific organisations is enclosed in Appendix 3.

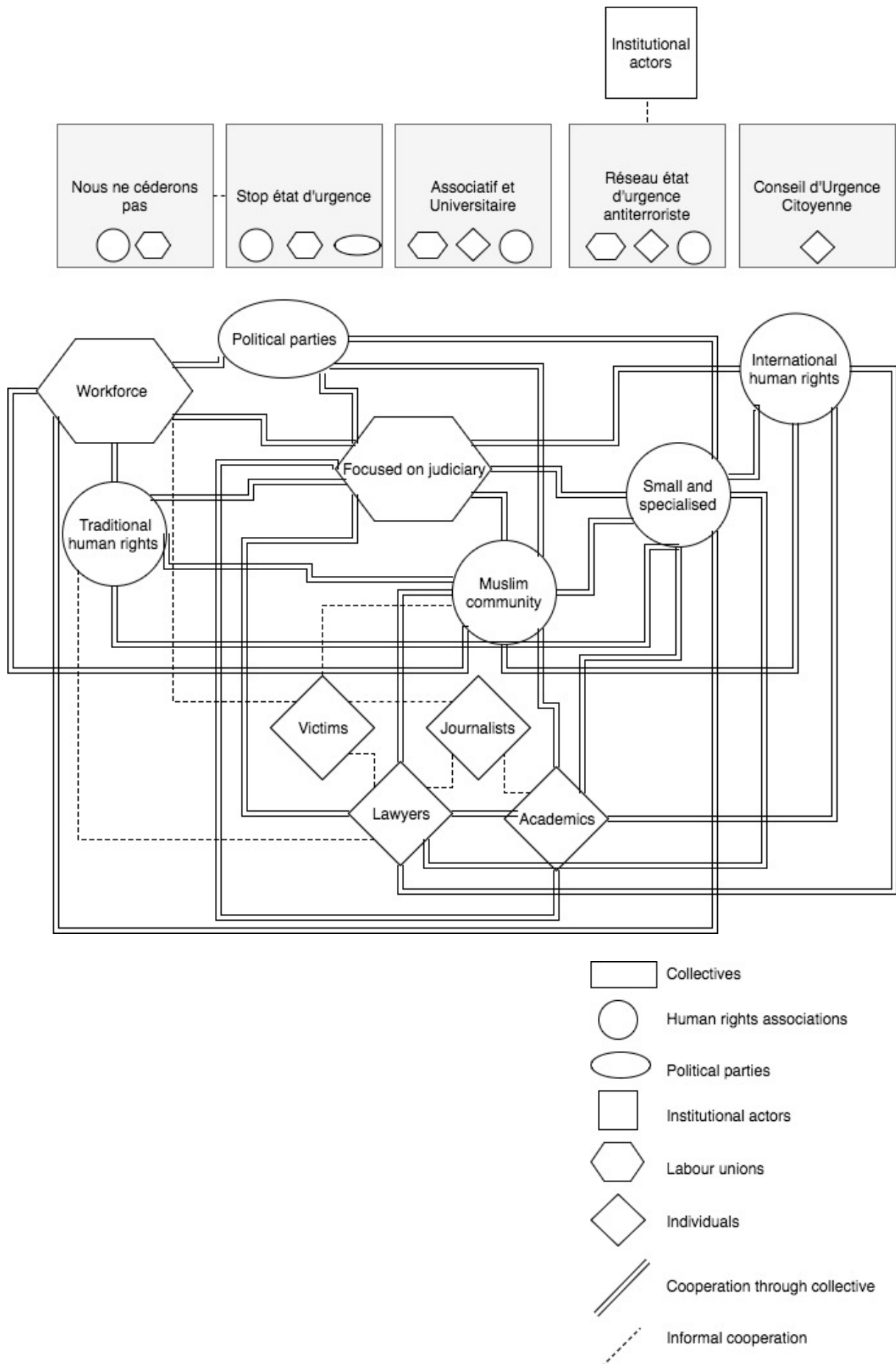
²⁷ Author’s interview with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

²⁸ Author’s interview with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

²⁹ Author’s interview with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

³⁰ In the actor map I have made a distinction between labour unions that represent the general workforce, such as *Confédération Générale du Travail* (CGT), *Force Ouvrière* (FO) and *Confédération française démocratique du travail* (CFDT) and more specialised labour unions such as *Syndicat des Avocats de France* and *Syndicat de la Magistrature*, as they work on different levels. Whereas the first category mainly is involved because their members might become victim to the arbitrary use of the state of emergency, especially in the case of far-left labour union CGT, the last category is more involved on the substantial level, participated in more in-depth contestation of the state of emergency and was therefore part of more collectives than the general labour unions.

Figure 2: Actor map portraying the groups of actors involved in the campaign and how they are connected through organised forms of cooperation (collectives). Source: created by author based on interviews.



2.5 Nearly two years of contention: an overview

The state of emergency has been in force for nearly two years. This section will give a brief overview of the main developments within the episode of contention and the evolvement of the campaign. The discussion serves as an illustration of the more specific events depicted on the timeline below (p.28).³¹

The night after the terrorist attacks on the 13th of November 2015, President Hollande declared the state of emergency and defined the terrorist acts as “acts of war” directed against “France, its values and its way of living” (Élysée, 2015, my translation). The first period of the state of emergency is characterised by the enormous amount of house searches that are often conducted violently.³² Of the 3.594 house searches conducted between 14 November and 25 May, 95 per cent took place during the first four months of the state of emergency (Cassia, 2016:131-132). An illustrative event is the search of the restaurant Pepper Grill on 21 November 2015.³³ Forty heavily armed policemen broke the door, even though the owner of the restaurant said he was getting the keys, and conducted the search while guests had to sit still in the restaurant with their hands on the table (Barelli, Schittly & Borredon, 2015). The surveillance camera of the restaurant filmed this event and it was distributed online. This rendered the disproportionate and violent nature of the house searches visible to the public and resulted in media attention and condemnations from civil society organisations, hereby possibly making the concrete effects of the state of emergency more visible to the population.³⁴ Despite the fact that abuses were visible in the media, for example through the work of journalist Laurent Borredon, organisations argue that it was very hard to speak up against the state of emergency so soon after the terrorist attacks, as everyone was still in a state of shock and intense emotions.³⁵

A second phase of the episode of contention started after the government used the state of emergency in the context of the Climate Summit *Conference of Parties 21* (COP21) in Paris. The government used the state of emergency law to prohibit a long foreseen demonstration on the 29th of November 2015 and to put twenty-four left activists under house arrest for the duration of the Summit (Borredon & Pécout, 2015). This event sparked outrage from human rights organisations, as the people who were targeted had no links with terrorist organisations and believed they were targeted because of their political views. It is often put forward as an important mobiliser in the early stages of

³¹ It is important to note that the timeline is limited to events that activists included in their narratives of how the campaign evolved and can therefore not be expected to include all possible relevant events.

³² Author’s interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

³³ Author’s interviews with Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

³⁴ Author’s interviews with Lila Charef, 25-04-17.

³⁵ Author’s interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Pierre Lалу, 06-03-17, Paris; Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Alain Dru, 19-04-17, Montreuil; Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris; Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris.

the campaign against the state of emergency and as an example of the disproportionality of the state of emergency's measures (Amnesty International, 2016).³⁶

Another important development evolved around the proposals to include the possibility to declare the state of emergency in the French constitution and to give the state the authority to deprive binational citizens of their French nationality if they are suspected to be engaged in or related to terrorist activity (Vie Publique, 2015). President Hollande proposed these changes along with the first prolongation of the state of emergency in November 2015, and the constitutional reforms dominated the public debate until they were abandoned at the end of March 2016 (Bourdon, 2017:25-26). Hollande then cancelled the reforms partly due to the opposition movement, but mostly as a consequence of a political deadlock in the Senate (Bourdon, 2017:26; Le Monde, 2016a).

At the peak of the constitutional debates, the biggest protest during the campaign against the state of emergency took place on the 30th of January 2016, gathering 40.000 people in France on the streets of which 20.000 in Paris (Bordenet, 2016). On the 12th of March, a smaller public gathering took place (Nous ne céderons pas & Stop état d'urgence, 2016). Additionally, a small victory was won when the constitutional court censured part of the law on the state of emergency in January 2016, ruling that the state had to provide stricter rules for the collection of electronic data during house searches (Conseil Constitutionnel, 2016b).³⁷

The political climate created by the opposition to the law proposing labour reforms (*loi de travail*) that caused massive protests from April until August 2016 characterises a fourth phase in the episode of contention. The state heavily used the measures of the state of emergency against protesters, notably the social movement *Nuit Debout*.³⁸ For instance, they employed the state of emergency's authority to limit people's freedom of movement on a specific time and for a specific location, to prohibit people to go to protests. This was an inventive move as it was the first time the provision was applied in this way.³⁹

On the morning of the 14th of July 2016, the French national day to celebrate the beginning of the French Revolution, President Hollande announced that he would not propose another prolongation of the state of emergency (France24, 2016). The same night however, the attacks in Nice took place in which a man killed eighty-six people and injured over 434 when he drove a lorry into a celebrative crowd on the promenade (Le Monde, 2016b). As a consequence, Hollande pulled back from his plan to lift the state of emergency. Instead, he proposed to prolong the state of emergency with six months, adding more extreme measures to its repertoire while also pushing through reforms in common criminal law (Jacquin, 2016). Another attack took place only twelve days after the attack in Nice, when two armed men killed a priest in a church in suburb of Rouen in Northern France (BBC, 2016).

³⁶ Author's interviews with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

³⁷ Author's interviews with Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris.

³⁸ A movement comparable to the American Occupy movement.

³⁹ Author's interview with Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris.

Although the two main collectives, *Nous ne céderons pas* and *Stop état d'urgence* had already decreased their activity before, they completely disappeared during the summer.⁴⁰

In October 2016, the government used the state of emergency to dismantle the improvised refugee camp “The Jungle” in Calais. The government used the law on the state of emergency to limit the freedom of movement in the specific zone of the camp, by declaring it a “protected zone.”⁴¹ Furthermore, the state prohibited famous journalist Gaspard Glanz, concerned with questions about refugees, from entering the camp by giving him a prohibition for the specific day of the dismantling (Le Monde, 2016c).⁴²

In January 2017, the organisations VoxPublic and Open Society Justice Initiative revived the campaign against the state of emergency by bringing together the associations and individuals that were still working on the subject to exchange information and think about coordinated action.⁴³ This became the *Réseau état d'urgence – antiterroriste*. The newly formed network focuses on a concrete goal: to make sure the state of emergency will not be prolonged a sixth time when it ends the 15th of July after the Presidential and Parliamentary elections of May and June 2017.⁴⁴

In the beginning of March, a window of opportunity seemed to open when Minister of Justice Jean-Jacques Urvoas stated that the conditions for France to be able to get out of the state of emergency had been met (Jacquin, 2017b). However, after two incidents that same week (a school shooting in Grasse and the attack near the British Parliament in London) President Hollande stood firm with his decision to leave the decision to lift the state of emergency to his successor (Le Monde, 2017a).

⁴⁰ Author’s interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

⁴¹ Author’s interviews with Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris.

⁴² Author’s interviews with Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris.

⁴³ Author’s interview with Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris.

⁴⁴ Author’s interviews with Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris.

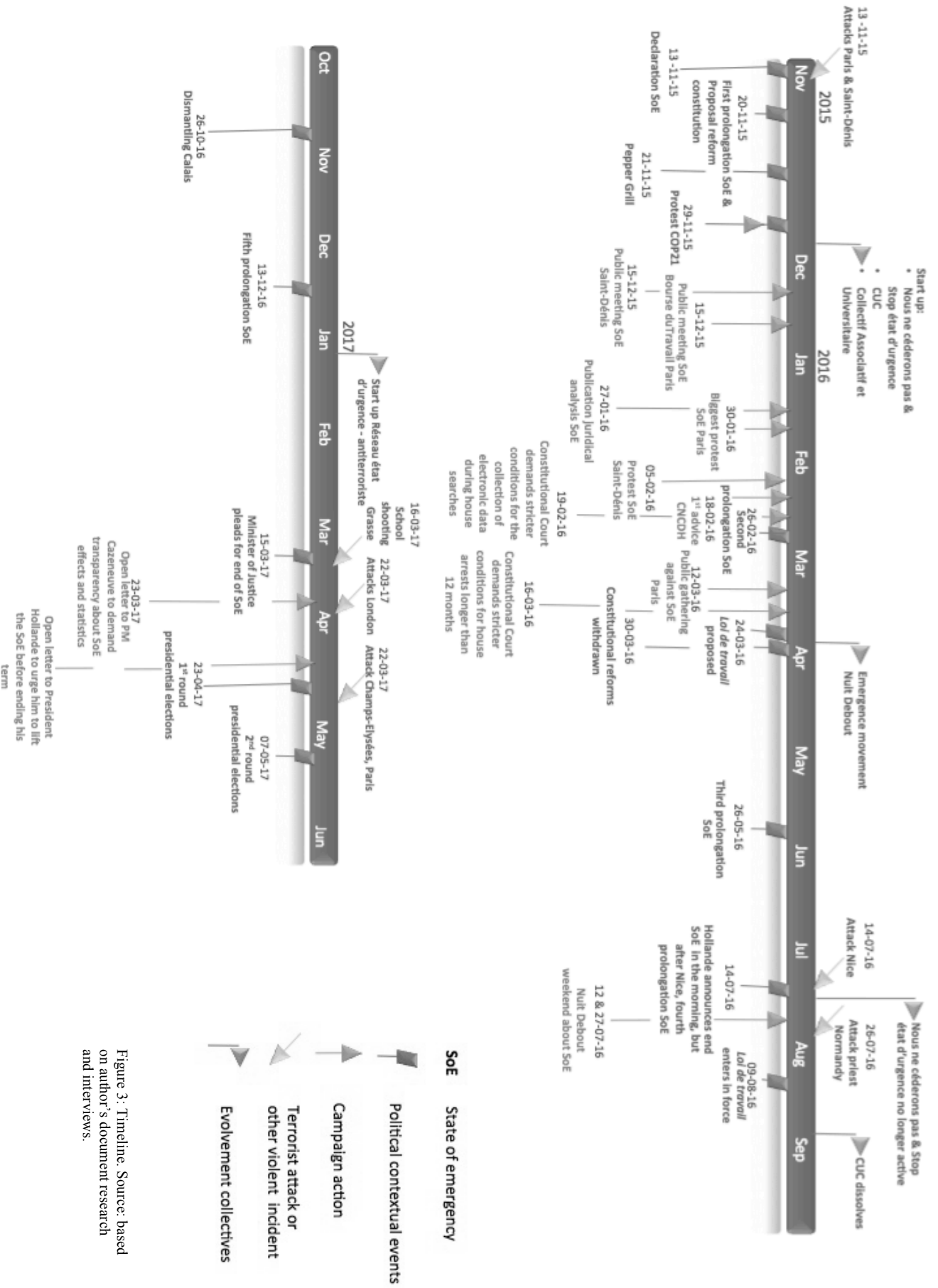


Figure 3: Timeline. Source: based on author's document research and interviews.

2.6 Interacting Episodes of Contention

It is interesting to see how the episode of contention of France's state of emergency interacted with other contentious episodes: the COP21, the labour reform law and Islamophobia, racism and police violence. As the government used the state of emergency to prohibit the COP21 demonstration and place activists under house arrests, the forbidden demonstration against the Climate Summit transformed into a protest against the state of emergency. People came protesting despite the prohibition to show their disagreement with the way the measure was used. Of the people that resisted the prohibition, 317 were placed in custody (Le Point, 2015). One of them is Matthieu Quinquis, at the time student at the University of Nanterre. He explains that going to the forbidden protest was for him a question of principle: "to say: 'no, you can't prohibit me to say what I think.'"⁴⁵

Similarly, the use of the state of emergency against protesters during the protest against the labour reform law constituted an interaction between two episodes of contention. This time, the use of the state of emergency to forbid specific activists to attend protests fed into the contentious episode of the state of emergency, as it led to media attention and contention in court.⁴⁶ Lawyers defended activists that were targeted with this measure and attacked its constitutionality by pointing to the violation of the right to protest, bringing their case all the way to the constitutional court.⁴⁷ Additionally, it was a subject on which the labour unions could easily position themselves against the state of emergency, as it was hindering their mobilisation against the labour reform law.⁴⁸ For activists within the episode of contention on the labour reform law, the state of emergency became a context with which they had to deal and adapt their strategies to.⁴⁹

Finally, demonstrations against racism, Islamophobia and police violence, often named the state of emergency as one of the problems in slogans and on flyers without it being the main focus of the demonstration.⁵⁰

This discussion provides empirical examples of the idea that it is not possible to see the episode of contention of the state of emergency as an isolated event, but rather as a phenomenon that interacts, merges and adds to other contentious episodes. The interactive nature of an episode of contention should therefore not be limited to interaction *within* the specific episode (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015), but also include the interactions *between* different episodes, to provide a complete understanding of how an episode of contention evolves.

⁴⁵ Author's interview with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris.

⁴⁶ Author's interview with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

⁴⁷ Author's interviews with Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris.

⁴⁸ Author's interview with Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris.

⁴⁹ Author's interview with Sebastien Kurt, 14-03-17, Paris.

⁵⁰ Author's participant observation during Women's March, 08-03-17, Paris; Support Evening Collective Baras 18-03-17, Bagnolet; March for Justice, Against Racism and Police Violence, 19-03-17, Paris.

In this chapter, I have argued that the declaration of the state of emergency builds upon the proceeding counterterrorism legislative developments in France. Consequently, activism against the state of emergency is nothing new, since several actors were already involved in protesting counterterrorism laws in the past, or even contested previous usages of the state of emergency.

I have mapped the contentious episode on the state of emergency, with the aim to identify the main actors and important events within the episode of contention, as well as to give an overview of how the campaign evolved over time. It is clear that the episode of contention has united a variety of actors that worked alone or cooperated in several collectives. Events that have shaped the evolvement of the campaign include the extensive use of house searches, the use of the state of emergency against left activists, the constitutional debates, the protests against the labour reform law and the attacks in Nice. During the summer of 2016, campaign activity reached a low point to be revived again in January 2017 with the prospect of the presidential and parliamentary elections.

Lastly, the characteristics of the contentious episode of the state of emergency are also influenced by its interaction with other contentious episodes, notably that of left activists protesting the COP21, the contentious episode on the labour reform law and the one on Islamophobia, racism and police violence.

CHAPTER 3

Analysing collective action frames: the motivation and legitimisation of the campaign

After mapping the contentious episode in the previous chapter, this chapter will be focused on how activists legitimised and motivated their campaign. I will describe and analyse the collective action frames and the concrete actions and strategies that were central to the campaign. Furthermore, I will discuss how collective action frames were contested and constructed through the interaction between different actors within the episode of contention, by analysing the main framing disputes. First, I will engage in the academic debate on meaning-making in contentious politics, elaborate on the concept of collective action frames and propose a theoretical framework combining the approaches of Benford and Snow (2000) and Gamson (1992).

3.1 Mobilising for collective action: collective action frames

A key contemporary development in the literature on contentious politics and social movements is the “cultural turn.” In contrast to approaches focusing on structural explanations or the assumed rationality of individuals, authors associated with the cultural turn argue in favour of bringing greater attention to culture (Polletta, 1997), identity (Polletta & Jasper, 2001), narratives (Davis, 2002), and framing (Benford & Snow, 2000) for an understanding that takes the “meaning-work” of social movements into account (Casas-Cortés, Osterweil & Powell, 2008:22; Noakes & Johnston, 2005:3).

Within the cultural turn, the work on framing has been most influential (Kurzman, 2008:9). The process of defining a situation in order to mobilise people for collective action, is referred to as the articulation of collective action frames: “action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organisation” (Benford and Snow, 2000:614). Three scholars have laid the conceptual groundwork for collective action frames: Gamson (1992) and Benford and Snow (2000).

In their work on collective action frames, Benford and Snow articulate three core framing tasks: diagnostic framing, prognostic framing and motivational framing (2000:615; Snow & Benford, 1988). Diagnostic framing refers to the “problem identification and attributions” of the collective action frame: what do activists define as the problematic condition and whom do they blame for this condition? (Benford & Snow, 2000:615). Prognostic framing involves the part where activists “articulate an alternative set of arrangements”: how do they aim to change the problematic condition? (Benford & Snow, 2000:615). Finally, activists’ motivational framing is what moves “people from the balcony to the barricades” urging others to act (Benford & Snow, 2000:615).

Instead of framing tasks, Gamson focuses on the content of collective action frames and identifies three basic components: injustice, agency and identity.

1) Injustice: “the moral indignation expressed in this form of political consciousness. This is not merely a cognitive or intellectual judgment about something being unfair but also what cognitive psychologists call a hot cognition – one that is laden with emotion (see Zajonc 1980). An injustice frame requires a consciousness of motivated human actors who carry some of the onus for bringing about harm and suffering” (Gamson, 2011:464).

2) Agency: “the consciousness that it is possible to alter conditions or policies through collective action. This implies some sense of collective efficacy and denies the immutability of some undesirable situation. It suggests not merely that something can be done to change things but that ‘we’ can do something” (Gamson, 2011:464).

3) Identity: “the process of defining this ‘we,’ typically in opposition to some ‘they’ who have different interests or values” (Gamson, 2011:464).

The similarities between the approaches are significant, as both entail that collective action frames define a situation as problematic, articulate blame, propose a plan of action or solutions and convince people to mobilise. Moreover, in line with a general consensus in the literature, the authors emphasise the contested and constructed nature of collective action frames, stating that they “are not merely aggregations of individual attitudes and perceptions but also the outcome of negotiating shared meaning” (Gamson, 1992:111).

Despite the considerable overlap of the two approaches, they also differ on some points. The first difference is the emphasis on “injustice” as a driving force behind mobilisation. Whereas Gamson (1992:32) argues that collective action frames necessarily contain an injustice component as the “hot cognition” that something is wrong and needs to be changed, Benford and Snow (2000:615) observe that not all collective action frames contain an injustice component, giving the example of self-help and religious movements. However, they do acknowledge that injustice frames are reasonably universal across movements that advocate for political or economic change (Benford & Snow, 2000:616).

Likewise, the authors regard the role of collective identity, which Polletta and Jasper (2001:285) define as “an individual’s cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution”, in collective action frames differently. Gamson (1992) includes the creation of a collective identity as one of the main components of collective action frames whereas Benford and Snow (2000) treat the construction of a collective identity not as a core framing task but rather as a by-product of the framing process (Benford & Snow, 2000:631).

Similarly, although both approaches recognise the importance of emotions in social movements, an aspect that has been overlooked for years (Jasper, 2011), they are more central to

Gamson's approach than Benford and Snow's, as Gamson includes it explicitly in the injustice component that is "laden with emotion" (2011:464). Gamson's approach can integrate Jasper's work on emotions, as reciprocal emotions ("those the members feel for each other") are part of the identity component and shared emotions ("those they have in common toward other objects") are included in the injustice component (2011:294).

This last point is connected to a more fundamental difference underlying the two approaches: the fact that Gamson conceptualises collective action frames by identifying components (form), and Benford and Snow by articulating framing tasks (function). This difference in focus renders Benford and Snow's approach more suitable for an emphasis on strategic framing processes, which could potentially overshadow the emotional aspect. Critiques on the dominant framing perspective reflect this implication by stressing that it treats culture reductively as "mere instrumental tactics" (Casas-Cortés, Osterweil & Powell, 2008:24) and turns meaning-making "into a set of independent variables" (Kurzman, 2008:10). In his "insiders critique," Benford himself agrees that while the role of emotions is recognised in the literature "we continue to write as though our movement actors [...] are Spocklike beings, devoid of passion and other human emotions" (1997:419).

The two approaches outlined above are complimentary rather than contradictory. I propose a combined framework of collective action frames that includes both the main components and framing tasks, as summarised in *figure 3*. I added "creating a collective identity" as a fourth framing task, in coherence with the focus on collective identity as an integral part of collective action frames through the identity component. The main components do not equal the specific framing tasks. Rather, activists can perform multiple framing tasks within a single component. For instance, within the injustice component, activists define a problematic situation and attribute blame (diagnostic framing) but at the same time convince people of the wrongness of the situation and spur them into action (motivational framing).

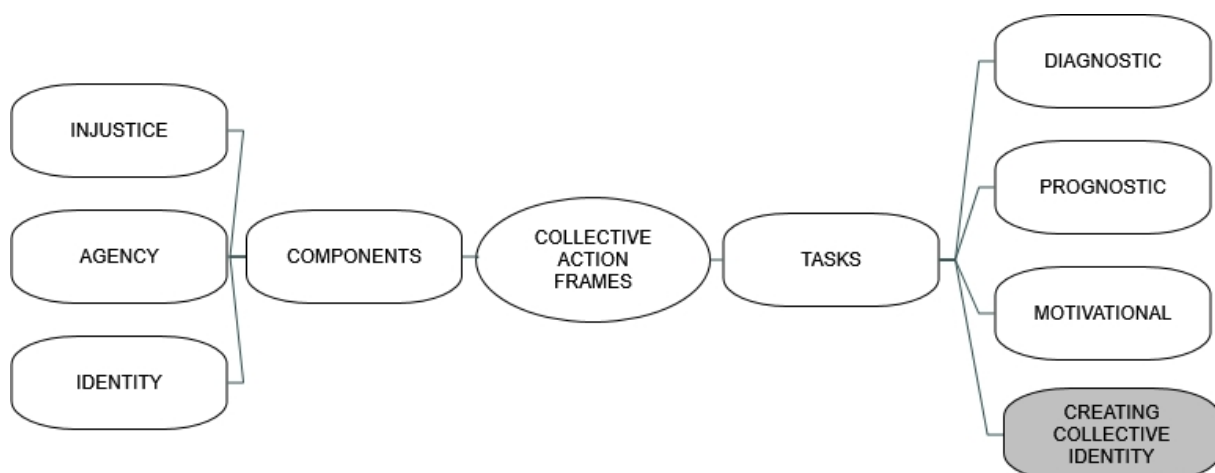


Figure 4: Collective action frames framework, source: created by author based on Gamson (1992) and Benford and Snow (2000), "creating collective identity" added by author.

Combining Benford and Snow's approach and Gamson's approach will enhance the collective action frames framework as it combines a more central place for the notion of collective identity and the role of emotions with the strategic aspect of framing tasks, hereby recognising that "feeling and thinking are parallel, interacting processes" (Jasper, 2011:286).

3.2 Injustice: "Police partout, justice nulle part!"⁵¹

As discussed above, the injustice component of collective action frames gives activists an emotional "fire in the belly" (Gamson, 1992:32) that spurs them to action and allows them to define a situation as problematic. It is therefore both diagnostic and motivational framing. To operationalise this component, I have asked activists what they identified as the most problematic features of the state of emergency and the main reasons for them to mobilise. The reasons are as diverse as the collection of actors and I will discuss them under three main themes: the rule of law and democracy, discrimination and racism against Muslims, and the arbitrary use of the state of emergency against left activists.⁵²

3.2.1 *The State of Exception: derogation of the rule of law*

The derogative effect of the state of emergency on the rule of law is an element that all respondents included in the injustice component of their collective action frames.⁵³ Problematic features linked to this effect include a distorted balance of power, potential arbitrary use of the state of emergency, the violation of the right to a fair trial, the normalisation of the state of emergency and the effect on France's democracy.

First of all, as discussed in *chapter 2*, the state of emergency lifts the judicial control of a range of measures by turning them into administrative authorities (Cassia, 2016). Activists interpret this shift as a distortion of the balance of power between the legislative, executive and the judiciary branches as all power is transferred to the executive.⁵⁴ One activist stresses that this is problematic, as the French constitution already grants a lot of power to the executive.⁵⁵ Others add that the French constitution defines the judiciary as the guardian of individual liberties, a role it cannot fulfil when

⁵¹ Reoccurring slogan used by protesters on the streets, meaning: "Police everywhere, justice nowhere!" Author's participant observation during March for Justice, Against Racism and Police Violence, 19-03-17, Paris.

⁵² The categories in which I divided activist's objections are purely designed to provide a clear overview and are by no means intended to be exclusive or isolated from each other.

⁵³ Author's interviews with Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris; Alain Dru, 19-04-17, Montreuil; Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris; Cécile Marcel, 02-04-17, telephone; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris; Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés; Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris; Pierre Lalu, 06-03-17, Paris; Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Sebastien Kurt, 14-03-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris; Yves Veyrier, 30-03-17, Paris.

⁵⁴ Author's interview with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

⁵⁵ Author's interview with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris.

measures are outside of its jurisdiction.⁵⁶ For several activists, this worry is linked to the critique on the administrative court lacking independence.⁵⁷

The state of emergency law grants the authorities the right to use its measures when they have “serious reasons to think” that the *behaviour* of a person constitutes a potential threat to the public security or public order (Cassia, 2016:78-79, my translation). The word “behaviour” has replaced the notion of “activity” since the state of emergency was prolonged for the first time on 20 November 2015 and is a source of critique (Cassia, 2016:79).⁵⁸ Several respondents argue that “behaviour” is more subjective than activity and therefore leaves more room for arbitrary use.⁵⁹ The state can identify an individual as a threat based on behaviour that is perfectly legal, but becomes suspicious under the state of emergency (Cassia, 2016:79). For instance, Sihem Zine states that “behaviour” oftentimes means: “the practice of orthodox Islam” which is a vague notion in which the state can include “whatever they like.”⁶⁰

The way in which people targeted by the state of emergency can appeal to the measures constitutes a third group of critiques. Firstly, Sihem Zine stresses that the fact that people can only appeal to the measures a posteriori in administrative court is problematic, specifically for house searches.⁶¹ People find themselves in the odd situation of contesting an act that has already taken place.⁶² Secondly, activists point to the fact that the administrative court works with “*notes blanches*”: a piece of paper with observations about a person, without a name, date, source and signature, because it contains sensitive information or the anonymity of the sources needs to be protected (Carnets de Justices, 2016). Activists identify this as problematic because the administrative court takes the note blanche as being true, unless proven otherwise, while the observations on the note blanche do not have to be proven. Lawyer Arie Alimi, admits that he was shocked when he saw that the notes blanches were “never justified by other elements. They don’t have any proof of nothing.”⁶³ Lawyers indicate that it is almost impossible to defend people who are targeted based on notes blanches, as this requires negative proof: for example, proof that someone does not have opinions favourable to Islamic State (IS).⁶⁴ Therefore, some activists argue that these administrative procedures violate the right to a fair trial and the right to be assumed innocent.⁶⁵

⁵⁶ Author’s interviews with Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris.

⁵⁷ Author’s interviews with Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

⁵⁸ Author’s interviews with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris.

⁵⁹ Author’s interviews with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris.

⁶⁰ Author’s interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

⁶¹ Author’s interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

⁶² Author’s interviews with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris.

⁶³ Author’s interview with Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris.

⁶⁴ Author’s interviews with Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris; Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen.

⁶⁵ Author’s interview with Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris; Sebastien Kurt, 14-03-17, Paris; Yves Veyrier, 30-03-17, Paris.

Fourthly, activists define the prolongations of the state of emergency that add to its normalisation as a problematic feature.⁶⁶ Besides, the government has used these prolongations to include some of the state of emergency's provisions in the common law system, making activists fear for a permanent state of emergency.⁶⁷

Lastly, activists voice objections about the effects of the state of emergency on France's democracy. The CUC is especially focused on this aspect and argues that the state of emergency is part of a larger process of the deconstruction of the democracy and that France has become a "post-democratic" society (Bordenet, 2016).⁶⁸ Yasser Louati adds that with the state of emergency in force "France could become a dictatorship within two weeks."⁶⁹ Within this development, some activists specifically fear the role of the popular extreme right party *Front National* (FN) led by Marine LePen.⁷⁰

3.2.2 *A community set aside: discrimination and racism against Muslims*

"Instead of targeting more precisely, in the end they ended up creating distrust and mistrust of a community that could ultimately be a great ally."⁷¹

A vast majority of the people targeted by the state of emergency are people of the Muslim faith, or people perceived to be part of the Muslim community, rendering the state of emergency "Muslim-centric."⁷² This biased use of the state of emergency is a reason for activists to state that the execution of state of emergency measures violates the right to non-discrimination and the freedom of religion.⁷³ The discriminatory use of the state of emergency is problematic on different levels: for the individual, for the Muslim community as a whole and for the social cohesion of France's society at large. Finally, it is also linked to the phenomenon of police violence.

Firstly, activists argue that the discriminatory targeting of Muslims under the state of emergency has profound consequences on the individual level, as it leads to stigmatisation and

⁶⁶ Author's interviews with Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Cécile Marcel, 02-04-17, telephone; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés; Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris; Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris.

⁶⁷ Author's interviews with Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Cécile Marcel, 02-04-17, telephone; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés; Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris.

⁶⁸ Author's interview with Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés.

⁶⁹ Author's interview with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

⁷⁰ Author's interviews with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris.

⁷¹ Author's interview with Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen.

⁷² Author's interview with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

⁷³ Author's interviews with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

psychological harm.⁷⁴ According to Sihem Zine, one of the founders of ADM, events such as the violent house searches are traumatising for the people involved and have a stigmatising effect on the families that are targeted as even their friends and family look at them in a “weird way.”⁷⁵

Secondly, activists state that the discriminatory nature of the state of emergency has an impact on the Muslim community as a whole as it adds to the association people make between being Muslim and being a terrorist.⁷⁶ Consequently, Lila Charef, head of the legal department of the CCIF, says that it has led to a “state of general suspicion vis-à-vis citizens of the Muslim faith.”⁷⁷ Activists point to the “Stop djihadisme” campaign the government lanced as a striking example of this climate of suspicion.⁷⁸ This online campaign includes signs to recognise potential radicalised persons (among them are having a beard, having a special diet and clothing) and a telephone number to notify the authorities of potential suspects⁷⁹ (Stop-Djihadisme, 2015). Some activists suggest that the proposal to change the nationality clause in the constitution is another example of how the state stigmatises the Muslim community (Bourdon, 2017).⁸⁰ Yasser Louati points to the racist dimension of the proposed reform by stating that it would in practice mean that a white person who commits a terrorist act would not lose his citizenship, but a Muslim and/or immigrant would.⁸¹ Serge Slama affirms that this practice implies that “one category of the French population is not considered as completely French.”⁸²

Finally, several activists agree that the targeting of a specific segment of the French society has significant consequences for the social cohesion of France’s society as a whole.⁸³ It plays into existing societal divisions and the alienation of Muslim citizens who do no longer identify with the French state and feel like the state does not want them to live in France.⁸⁴ These developments complicate bridging existing gaps, working together and living together and could counterproductively play into the hands of terrorist groups such as Islamic State (IS) (Bourdon, 2017:16).⁸⁵

Multiple activists argue that although incidents of police violence, especially in Paris’ banlieues, have been a problem for years, the state of emergency has influenced the level of police violence in France

⁷⁴ Author’s interviews with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

⁷⁵ Author’s interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

⁷⁶ Author’s interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

⁷⁷ Author’s interview with Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen.

⁷⁸ Author’s interviews with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Sebastien Kurt, 14-03-17, Paris.

⁷⁹ Campaign accessible via <http://www.stop-djihadisme.gouv.fr/>.

⁸⁰ Author’s interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris.

⁸¹ Author’s interview with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

⁸² Author’s interview with Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris.

⁸³ Author’s interviews with Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris.

⁸⁴ Author’s interviews with Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris.

⁸⁵ Author’s interviews with Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris.

by giving the police a feeling of complete freedom and power.⁸⁶ Besides the state of emergency being a “*état d’urgence*” with technical measures, is also a “*état d’esprit*” (Bourdon, 2017) that comes with a specific mind-set and has a liberating effect on the police.⁸⁷ The violent nature of the house searches, which even led to an administrative letter in which the Minister of Interior had to ask law enforcement to only use violence when necessary, underlines this point (Borredon, 2015).⁸⁸

“Indeed, they have entered their houses with a big mouth, helmets, rifles with snipers, do you realise? Children of four, five years old, parents that are handcuffed, mothers getting their children out of bed. But that’s... But no, that’s too much; we see that in movies in the first place, or in books.”⁸⁹

Moreover, some activists argue that the police have abused the perceived freedom of the state of emergency to settle personal disagreements with specific people or certain neighbourhoods.⁹⁰ One activist adds that some Muslims whose houses were searched “have heard words that reflect revenge” meaning that these events had an element of retribution as if to punish people for the terrorist attacks of November 2015.⁹¹

For some activists the fact that a substantial part of the police force is favourable to the ideas of France’s extreme right party FN, makes the situation even more problematic.⁹² Because it means that when FN would come in power, this part of the police would be ready to execute their measures: “whether FN is in power or not, its ideas are already in power.”⁹³

Didier Fassin’s ethnographic study of policing in the banlieues during the state of emergency of 2005 supports the kind of verbal violence and personal settlements as put forward in this section and they are therefore not unique to the present state of emergency (2013). As it has been for years and still is today, ethnic minorities in the banlieues are not reassured when they see a policeman but are afraid of what might happen instead (Fassin, 2013).⁹⁴ If anything, the state of emergency has further deepened existing cleavages between segments of the French society, making it even harder to improve the relations and troubling the prospect of working together in the future.⁹⁵

⁸⁶ Author’s interviews with Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris.

⁸⁷ Author’s interviews with Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris.

⁸⁸ Author’s interviews with Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

⁸⁹ Author’s interview with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

⁹⁰ Author’s interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

⁹¹ Author’s interview with Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen.

⁹² Author’s interviews with Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

⁹³ Author’s interview with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

⁹⁴ Author’s interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

⁹⁵ Author’s interview with Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris.

3.2.3 *Crushing the social movement: the state of emergency and left-wing activists*

The government has not only used the state of emergency in an arbitrary way against Muslims but has also targeted left activists. In this section, I will discuss how the state used these measures against left activists and how this produced police violence during protests.

Some activists are convinced that the government is using the state of emergency to crush the social movement and political opposition.⁹⁶ To do this, activists argue, the state has used different instruments provided by the state of emergency, notably the authority to prohibit entire protests, to place people under house arrest and to prohibit specific people to go to protests. The justification that the state uses to employ these measures against left activists is that they could potentially cause disorder while the state needs the police to focus on the fight against terrorism.⁹⁷ Arie Alimi stresses that in this way, a link between terrorism and anything is easily made.⁹⁸

Joël Domenjoud argues that the state also used the state of emergency to discourage left activists, giving the example of the activists placed under house arrest during the COP21. He observes that the targeted activists were distributed a bit to neatly across France to be coincidental and that this was a way of sending a message to activists' networks: "watch out, we are watching you."⁹⁹

In some activists' opinions, the arbitrary use of the state of emergency against political opponents violates human rights, including the right to protest, the freedom of expression, and the freedom of movement.¹⁰⁰

Respondents link the use of the state of emergency against left activists with police violence during protests. This phenomenon was most visible during the protests against the labour reform law. Pierre Lalu who has participated in *Nuit Debout*, describes it as the "the most violent repression in France" he has ever seen.¹⁰¹ Sophie Wahnich adds that it was "horrific" with the "ambiance of a civil war" and that she does not think the protests could have been "gassed as they were" without the state of emergency.¹⁰² Moreover, respondents indicate that the police use the state of emergency as a justification for their behaviour during protests as a sort of "joker" to say: "I do what I want."¹⁰³

3.3 Debating Injustice

Collective action frames are not solid entities, but are constructed and contested through the interaction of different actors that are active within the campaign (Gamson, 1992; Benford & Snow, 2000). Besides being emotional, the injustice component also has a strategic part, aiming to fulfil the

⁹⁶ Author's interviews with Alain Dru, 19-04-17, Montreuil; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris; Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris; Sebastien Kurt, 14-03-17, Paris.

⁹⁷ Author's interviews with Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris; Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris.

⁹⁸ Author's interview with Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris.

⁹⁹ Author's interviews with Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

¹⁰⁰ Author's interview with Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris.

¹⁰¹ Author's interview with Pierre Lalu, 06-03-17, Paris.

¹⁰² Author's interview with Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris.

¹⁰³ Author's interviews with Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris.

framing tasks of defining the situation as problematic and motivate people to take action. In the previous section, I have outlined the most important motivations that activists mention to indicate the injustices of the state of emergency. In this section, I will map the main internal debates within these motivations. I divide these debates in the following subsections: the principle of the state of emergency, the state of emergency versus the entire body of counterterrorism legislation, the state of emergency as a danger for democracy and the connection to police violence.

3.3.1 *A question of principle?*

The first debate within the injustice component is the divide between organisations that regard the principle of state of emergency as unjust and those who accept the state of emergency as a lawful instrument but critique the way it has been executed. For instance, whereas Raphaël Kempf thinks the whole idea of the state of emergency is flawed as it originates from the Algerian war, Amnesty International does not critique the declaration of the state of emergency itself but focuses on how the government failed to provide valid justifications for the successive prolongations and the discriminatory dimension in the execution.¹⁰⁴

3.3.2 *The cherry versus the pie*

Secondly, an ongoing debate among activists within the campaign concerns the balance between emphasising the state of emergency specifically, and a focus on counterterrorism laws in general.¹⁰⁵ For most respondents included in this research, simply lifting the state of emergency does not solve the problem. For this group, the sliding of exceptional measures into the existing law framework is more dangerous than the state of emergency itself and they want to continue the struggle to contest the existing body of counterterrorism laws.¹⁰⁶ Respondent Jean-Marie Fardeau, moderator of the *Réseau État d'urgence- antiterroriste*, estimates that about a third of the participants in this network perceive the state of emergency as the main problem and will quit the struggle once the state of emergency is lifted.¹⁰⁷ The debate therefore reflects a diagnostic choice between focusing only on the present state of emergency and focusing on the long-term struggle.

3.3.3 *The state of emergency as a danger for democracy*

Another debate revolves around the focus on the state of emergency as a danger for France's democracy. On the one hand, there are actors specifically focused on this aspect, notably the CUC that argues that France cannot even call itself a democracy anymore.¹⁰⁸ On the other hand, this discourse is too radical for labour unions *Force Ouvrière* (FO) and *Confédération française démocratique du*

¹⁰⁴ Author's interviews with Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris.

¹⁰⁵ Author's participant observation during Meeting *Réseau Etat d'urgence- Antiterroriste*, 30-03-17, Paris.

¹⁰⁶ Author's interviews with Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Cécile Marcel, 02-04-17, telephone; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés; Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris.

¹⁰⁷ Author's interview with Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris.

¹⁰⁸ Author's interviews with Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris; Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés.

travail (CFDT). They argue that the state of emergency could potentially be dangerous for the democracy in the long term, but that we cannot state that the democracy is in danger because of the state of emergency today.¹⁰⁹ Frédéric Sève, Secretary General of the CFDT, adds that some organisations use the campaign as an instrument to voice a radical political discourse, to which his organisation cannot relate.¹¹⁰

3.3.4 Nuancing police violence

It is interesting to see that although the effect of the state of emergency on police violence is not explicitly contested, it is mainly the organisations from within the Muslim community that nuance their position.¹¹¹ For example by emphasising that there were also policemen who behaved with integrity, who were polite and who were sometimes even embarrassed for the measures they had to execute.¹¹²

3.4 Agency: a three-dimensional strategy

Building upon the previous section that indicated why activists think the state of emergency is wrong, this section will focus on how they attempted to reach their goal: the end of the state of emergency. I will analyse the different ways in which French activists shaped the agency component of their collective action frames. Within this component, activists aimed to fulfil both the prognostic framing task and the motivational framing task. I will first discuss the actions and strategies that were central to the campaign, followed by the alternative solutions activists included in their campaign.

3.4.1 Strategies and actions within the campaign

Actions against the state of emergency took place on three different, complementing levels.¹¹³ First of all, activists engaged in actions aimed at mobilising the population, such as public gatherings, meetings, conferences, petitions, testimonies, blogs and media performances. Secondly, lawyers performed actions on the juridical level, such as assisting victims who wanted to appeal, filing complaints against the measures and questioning their constitutionality at the constitutional court. Thirdly, there were actions aimed at the political level, to influence the government and parliamentarians in order to end the state of emergency. Such actions included lobbying, interrogating candidates and parliamentarians, and publishing open letters to political representatives.

Not all actions fit neatly into these three categories. For example, some activists used strategies linked to civil disobedience in order to challenge the state of emergency, which could be

¹⁰⁹ Author's interviews with Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris; Yves Veyrier, 30-03-17, Paris.

¹¹⁰ Author's interview with Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris.

¹¹¹ Author's interviews with Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

¹¹² Author's interview with Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen.

¹¹³ Author's interview with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen.

summed up as: keep doing what you are doing despite the state of emergency.¹¹⁴ A good example is protest movement *Nuit Debout*, of which members stated that the best way to contest the state of emergency was to ignore it and to keep occupying their *Place de la Republique* even when the police told them to leave.¹¹⁵ The same is true for Joël Domenjoud, who during his house arrest kept on organising discussion cafés in the library in his neighbourhood as an act of resistance, following the idea that “if I can’t go to the COP21, well I will bring the COP21 to me.”¹¹⁶

Another category of actions is focused on the assistance and support of victims of the state of emergency. These kinds of actions, such as giving legal advice and assistance, explaining about legal procedures and giving psychological support, constitute the lion share of what organisations and people working from within the Muslim community do.¹¹⁷

It is interesting to see how the strategic focus in general moved from a focus on mobilising the population to a focus on influencing politics, whereas the juridical battle has remained more or less constant.¹¹⁸ When associations concluded that it was very hard to mobilise people around the subject of the state of emergency, especially after the constitutional debates had ended and the attacks in Nice increased public support for the state of emergency, they shifted their focus to the government and parliamentarians in the light of the 2017 elections.¹¹⁹ However, Nicolas Krameyer from Amnesty International France argues in the opposite direction: they have seen that political decision makers are not inclined to change their mind when the public support for the state of emergency remains high.¹²⁰ Amnesty International therefore shifted their efforts from convincing politicians to mobilising the population.¹²¹

3.4.2 *Alternative solutions of the campaign*

The proposition of alternative solutions is part of the agency component of collective action frames and in Benford and Snow’s terminology, the prognostic framing task (2000). I discovered during the interviews that the question of alternatives was a contested question in itself. When I asked respondents about possible alternatives to the state of emergency, people sometimes got a bit frustrated: the problem is that we do not *need* alternatives, they told me.¹²² This idea touches upon the

¹¹⁴ Author’s interviews with Pierre Lалу, 06-03-17, Paris; Sebastien Kurt, 14-03-17, Paris; Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

¹¹⁵ Author’s interviews with Pierre Lалу, 06-03-17, Paris; Sebastien Kurt, 14-03-17, Paris.

¹¹⁶ Author’s interview with Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris.

¹¹⁷ Author’s interviews with Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

¹¹⁸ Author’s interviews with Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Author’s interview with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

¹¹⁹ Author’s interviews with Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Author’s interview with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

¹²⁰ Author’s interview with Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris.

¹²¹ Author’s interview with Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris.

¹²² Author’s interviews with Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris.

critique that the logic of the state of emergency is already present in the common law framework. The government has presented the state of emergency as a necessary tool to combat terrorism, but it is not, because France already has extensive counterterrorism legislation. For these activists, there is no solution other than lifting the state of emergency.¹²³

Nevertheless, some respondents had a list of proposed alternatives, but these were organisation or person specific and not proposed by the campaign or a collective as a whole. For instance, some organisations emphasised the importance of a focus on prevention of terrorism by looking at the social conditions and cleavages in the country and reforming the police system,¹²⁴ and others proposed a whole re-evaluation of the existing arsenal of counterterrorism laws, in addition to the end of the state of emergency.¹²⁵

3.5 Debating strategies

The interaction and framing disputes within the campaign in order to construct the agency-component of the collective action frames vocalised predominantly on the strategic use of specific arguments. The kinds of actions or strategies in a more general sense were not contested, as most organisations agreed that the best strategy was to engage in actions on all terrains: politics, population and judiciary and just try as many different things as possible.¹²⁶ I will discuss the main debates structured by the following subdivision: the efficiency argument, the constitutional debates and the danger of extreme right.

3.5.1 *The efficiency argument*

One of the most important strategic choices activists indicate is about the use of “the efficiency argument.” This argument is linked to the idea that the state of emergency is useless in the combat against terrorism.¹²⁷ At a first glance, the efficiency argument seems to be a promising way to convince the French society of the need to end the state of emergency, as it could be a way to undermine the government’s discourse that presents the state of emergency as a necessary tool to provide safety. However, activists are reluctant to use this argument. Firstly, activists could state that France does not need the state of emergency to fight terrorism because the same measures also exist in common law.¹²⁸ However, this argument is in a way legitimising the existing counterterrorism

¹²³ Author’s interviews with Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris.

¹²⁴ Author’s interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

¹²⁵ Author’s interview with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

¹²⁶ Author’s interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris.

¹²⁷ Author’s interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Yves Veyrier, 30-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris; Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris; Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Alain Dru, 19-04-17, Montreuil; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

¹²⁸ I note that although the measures of the state of emergency also exist within the common law framework, the difference is that there are more guaranties for human rights and civil liberties, as they require prior permission of a judicial judge.

measures in common law¹²⁹ and would therefore make it more complicated to critique the existing counterterrorism legislation and logic in the future.¹³⁰ Secondly, activists could suggest that the state of emergency has been inefficient in the fight against terrorism without making a reference to the existing body of legislation, but rather by pointing to the terrorist attacks that have happened under the state of emergency. However, this too is problematic as it might be interpreted as a call for even more extreme measures.¹³¹ This debate also has a moral dimension, as saying that something is inefficient may draw the attention away from the idea that it is fundamentally wrong.¹³²

3.5.2 *The constitutional debate*

A similar debate revolved around the extent to which the campaign should focus on the constitutional reforms that Hollande proposed in November 2015, notably the nationality clause. Within the two collectives that were active in the beginning of the state of emergency, there were organisations for which the nationality clause was a fundamental issue, and others who emphasised the need to focus on the state of emergency specifically.¹³³ This last category insisted that the nationality clause should not become the heart of the campaign, because this would complicate mobilisation once the constitutional reforms would be out of the picture.¹³⁴ In the end, no real decision was made on the matter and the campaign focused on both aspects (Stop état d'urgence, 2016).¹³⁵ However, when the nationality clause was abandoned in March, there were a lot of associations that ceased to be active in the campaign as they considered they had obtained their goal.¹³⁶

3.5.3 *The danger of extreme right*

Finally, a more recent debate focused on whether or not the campaign should explicitly name the candidature of Marine LePen of FN for the presidential elections as a threat.¹³⁷ Focusing on LePen could help mobilise the French population, as the things she could do with the state of emergency dispositions are both easily imaginable and horrible.¹³⁸ Contrarily, using this argument could imply that the state of emergency is not a problem, or less of a problem, when another person is elected president. Engaging in this logic would make it extremely difficult to critique the state of emergency

¹²⁹ Author's interviews with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris.

¹³⁰ Author's interviews with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris.

¹³¹ Author's interview with Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris.

¹³² Author's interviews with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris.

¹³³ Author's interview with Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris.

¹³⁴ Author's interviews with Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

¹³⁵ On the flyer activists used to mobilise people for the protest on 30 January 2016, the title of the protest is: "Stop the state of emergency! Stop the nationality clause!" (translated by the author). Flyer accessible via: <http://www.ujfp.org/spip.php?article4646>.

¹³⁶ Author's interview with Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris.

¹³⁷ Author's participant observation during Meeting Réseau Etat d'urgence- Antiterroriste, 30-03-17, Paris.

¹³⁸ Author's participant observation during Meeting Réseau Etat d'urgence- Antiterroriste, 30-03-17, Paris.

once LePen were not elected.¹³⁹ Activists participating in the *Réseau état d'urgence- antiterroriste* debated this question with regard to an open letter they would publish in the French newspaper *Libération*.¹⁴⁰ In the end, they decided to go for a subtle formulation, where people can understand that Front National is the main danger, but it is said in a general phrase that could apply to all candidates: “do not leave the state of emergency to the next ones” (*Libération*, 2017).¹⁴¹

3.6 Identity: Pointing fingers is easy; creating a collective identity is hard

In this section, I will discuss the identity component of the campaign's collective action frames. Firstly, I will discuss how activists attributed blame and defined their opponents to perform diagnostic framing. Secondly, I will elaborate on the collective identity within the campaign, or rather: the absence of a collective identity.

3.6.1 Who to blame? Defining a “they”

Most activists blame the government of President Hollande and his party (*Parti Socialiste*) for the multiple prolongations of the state of emergency.¹⁴² In their opinion, they are the ones who have proposed the prolongations and have continuously told the population that the state of emergency was essential in ensuring their safety and to counter the terrorist threat.¹⁴³

On another level, some activists hold the parliament responsible, because it has each time voted in favour of the prolongations.¹⁴⁴ Others point to the failure of the constitutional court to play its constitutional role as guardian of civil liberties.¹⁴⁵ Finally, a few activists blame the French population for their lack of mobilisation against the state of emergency and for not caring enough about their civil liberties.¹⁴⁶ However, this is a contested view, as not everyone agrees that the population can be held responsible if the government does not inform them about the real meaning and consequences of state of emergency.¹⁴⁷

Activists ascribe different interests to the government and come up with different reasons as to why having the state of emergency could be in the government's interest. Most respondents agree that the

¹³⁹ Author's interview with Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris.

¹⁴⁰ Author's participant observation during Meeting Réseau Etat d'urgence- Antiterroriste, 30-03-17, Paris. Open letter available at: Available at: http://www.liberation.fr/debats/2017/04/17/m-hollande-levez-l-etat-d-urgence-avant-de-partir_1563332.

¹⁴¹ Author's interview with Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris.

¹⁴² Author's interviews with Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris.

¹⁴³ Author's interviews with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris; Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

¹⁴⁴ Author's interviews with Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris.

¹⁴⁵ Author's interviews with Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris.

¹⁴⁶ Author's interview with Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris.

¹⁴⁷ Author's interview with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris.

government has been using the state of emergency as a tool to reassure the population after the terrorist attacks in November 2015, as well as those in July 2016.¹⁴⁸ They agree that the government used the state of emergency to create an image of an acting government, taking action to protect its people against terrorism, and to create (the illusion of) safety.¹⁴⁹

Other interests that activists ascribe to the government are that they could ignore the real problems in the country by instead focusing on the Islam, as a way to hide their lack of vision.¹⁵⁰ Multiple respondents add that the state of emergency serves the governments' interests because they have used it for different ends than combating the terrorist threat, like muting political opposition, dismantling the refugee camp in Calais, fighting regular crime and drug crimes in the banlieues, and pushing through reforms in common law (Cassia, 2016).¹⁵¹

Moreover, activists suggest that a phenomenon nicknamed "*la syndrome de 14 juillet*"¹⁵² is an important determinant of the government's interest.¹⁵³ This nickname links back to 14 July 2016, when President Hollande announced the end of the state of emergency on the morning of the terrorist attacks in Nice, after which he quickly pulled back. The government fears that when they lift the state of emergency, another terrorist attack will happen right afterwards and the population will blame them for what happened.¹⁵⁴ No one dares to take the responsibility to end the state of emergency, especially with the elections of 2017 coming up.

3.6.2 *Constructing a common identity*

Within the campaign, there was no collective identity and there has also not been a real attempt to construct one. In contrast, respondents emphasised the diversity of the groups involved and the importance of accepting everyone's personal particularities.¹⁵⁵

No significant attempts at formulating a common identity took place within the collectives against the state of emergency. For instance, the collective *Nous ne céderons pas* was based on a text that member organisations would sign (Nous ne céderons pas, 2015), that was exclusively about the vision on the state of emergency but not about a collective identity. Within the CUC, activists posed

¹⁴⁸ Author's interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris.

¹⁴⁹ Author's interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris.

¹⁵⁰ Author's interviews with Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris.

¹⁵¹ Author's interviews with Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris; Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris; Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris; Alain Dru, 19-04-17, Montreuil; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

¹⁵² Author's interview with Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris.

¹⁵³ Author's interviews with Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris; Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris.

¹⁵⁴ Author's interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris; Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris; Yves Veyrier, 30-03-17, Paris.

¹⁵⁵ Author's interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

the question of formulating a common identity but did not really get to the question due to time and resource issues.¹⁵⁶

I conclude from this chapter that the collective action frames that activists used were diverse and that there was not one overarching collective action frame guiding the campaign. Although all activists agreed that the state of emergency is problematic and needs to be lifted, they prioritised different unjust aspects of the state of emergency and pursued different end goals. Nevertheless, the one aspect all respondents included in their collective action frames was the impact of the state of emergency on the rule of law.¹⁵⁷ One major debate that I have not yet discussed concerns the inclusion of the notion of Islamophobia in the injustice component. I will discuss this in *chapter 5*, when we will take a closer look at the identity splits within the campaign.

More consensus existed about the agency component of collective action frames, as the frame disputes about this component essentially revolved around the use of specific arguments, whereas activists agreed on the strategy of directing actions at three main fronts: the population, the judiciary and politics. Also, I conclude that although activists did succeed in defining a more or less coherent “they,” they have not succeeded in the framing task of defining a “we.”

Apart from some victories on the judicial level, the big protest on 30 January 2016 and the abolition of the constitutional reforms, which only some activists ascribe to their campaign (Bourdon, 2017),¹⁵⁸ the campaign has not led to a sustained mobilisation of the population against the state of emergency nor obtained its main goal: the end of the state of emergency. The question that will be central to the remainder of this thesis is: why not? In the next chapter, I will focus on how activists interpret and explain their limited success. Issues and debates that have been highlighted in this chapter, such as the absence of a collective identity and shared goals will be further explored in the next chapter as activists weave them into their narratives of failure.

¹⁵⁶ Author’s interview with Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris.

¹⁵⁷ Author’s interviews with Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris; Alain Dru, 19-04-17, Montreuil; Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris; Cécile Marcel, 02-04-17, telephone; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris; Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés; Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris; Pierre Lalu, 06-03-17, Paris; Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Sebastien Kurt, 14-03-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris; Yves Veyrier, 30-03-17, Paris.

¹⁵⁸ Author’s interview with Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris.

CHAPTER 4

Narratives of failure: how activists interpret and explain the limited success of their campaign

This chapter will explore the different narratives that activists use to explain the limited success of their campaign and interpret the obstacles they faced. I will briefly review the social movement literature on decline and failure before moving on to the discussion of the concept of narratives of decline that I will use in an adapted version in this chapter. Thereafter, I will describe and analyse activist's narratives. Most activists integrated external and internal factors in their explanations. For analytic purposes, I will separate these two, discussing first the external and then the internal explanations.

4.1 Analysing failure: “like death and taxes at social gatherings”¹⁵⁹

Almost thirty years after movement failure and decline has been identified as “one of the fields most glaring deficiencies” (McAdam, McCarthy & Zald, 1988:728) and multiple invitations to counter this tendency (Kamenitsa, 1998; Voss, 1996; Owens, 2008;2009), it is still an understudied subject within the research on social movements and contentious politics today. A reason for this gap in the literature is that in contrast to the exciting emergence of social movements, the topic of failure is unpopular: “Like death and taxes at social gatherings, it is a topic that many of us avoid” (Voss, 1998:227). However, while they are undertheorised subjects, decline and failure are important empirical realities. Owens notices that it is an issue that is very important to activists: “in fact, there are times where it can seem like decline is the only thing activists talk about” (2009:12). For the present research project, this observation is very true, since activists continuously started to talk about why and how their campaign did not work out. It is therefore an important theme that emerged from the data.

As put forward by Owens, existing studies on failure and decline can be divided into three main categories (2009:15). The first group of studies uses decline to build and test models of mobilisation, by treating decline and failure as the exact opposites of emergence and success (McAdam, 1982; Gamson, 1995; Voss, 1996; Kamenitsa, 1998; Jessup, 1997). Secondly, there are studies focusing on decline as an inevitable part of a common cycle of protest (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015:229) and on the outcomes of processes of demobilisation and transformation of social movements (Kriesi, 1995). Thirdly, there are scholars who study why movements decline, focusing on the external factors such as opportunity structures (McAdam, 1982), the internal factors like the fragmenting of collective identity (Gamson, 1995) or a combination of both (Koopmans, 1993).

Nonetheless, these perspectives look at the objective explanations and outcomes of failure and decline, but ignore internal processes of how decline and failure are perceived by those involved.

¹⁵⁹ Voss, Claim Making and the Framing of Defeats: The Interpretation of Losses by American and British Labor Activists, 1886-1895, 1998:227.

Owens argues that decline can be measured objectively, for instance by looking at the number of members of a movement (2008:234). However, decline is also subjective; it is “a discursive construct” (Owens, 2008:244) and a “subjective experience” that activists live through (Owens, 2009:13). For instance, a political opportunity structure does not objectively hinder or facilitate mobilisation, rather “its existence and openness is subject to debate and interpretation and can thus be framed by movement actors as well as by others” (Benford & Snow, 2000:631). This perspective demonstrates the importance of understanding failure and decline from the activist’s point of view. It also underlines the potential of studies of decline and failure to integrate structural, resource mobilisation and framing perspectives of collective action into one comprehensive understanding of failure and decline (Kamenitsa, 1998).

Focusing on this subjective dimension, Owens aims to understand the way in which activists themselves interpret and explain decline (2008:241). Using the concept of narratives, defined by Polletta as “an account of a sequence of events in the order they occurred so as to make a normative point” (2006:91), he introduces *narratives of decline*: the stories activists tell to make sense of the decline of their social movement (2009:241). Narratives of decline are dialogical, which means that their meaning is produced through interaction between different actors (Owens, 2008:245). Consequently, there is not one objective account of decline and failure, but competing narratives exist: it depends on whom you ask.

Applying Owens’ concept of narratives of decline to the case of the campaign against France’s state of emergency is problematic in two ways. Firstly, whereas the concept is originally meant to capture the decline of a specific social movement organisation, this research is focused on a campaign in which a broad variety of actors are involved. It is therefore more appropriate to talk about the decline of a campaign.

Secondly, Owens emphasises that decline is relative: “always compared to some time before, as well as some time after” (2009:12-13). The question we need to ask is: is the case of the campaign against France’s state of emergency a case of decline or rather one of failure? In the literature, decline and failure are often used interchangeably. Yet, in order to further develop the theoretical framework of these concepts, it is important to make the distinction. Owens defines decline as “deterioration, a downward trajectory, or, more terminally, death” (2009:12). A downward trajectory implies a situation of departure from which one can go down. It is therefore obvious that something cannot decline if it never really took off. Failure on the other hand, does not need a specific point of departure and relativity in time; it just needs a stated goal. The concept of failure has not been defined in the literature on contentious politics, maybe because it is such a straightforward word. The dictionary definition describes failure as the “omission of occurrence or performance; specifically a failing to perform a duty or expected action” and as “lack of success” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Which of these concepts is more suitable for the campaign against France's state of emergency? The contested and constructed nature of the topics of decline and failure immediately reveals itself when posing this question, since the opinions on the subject differ. Some activists interpret the big demonstration against the state of emergency on 30 January 2016 as the peak of the campaign, after which it declined.¹⁶⁰ Contrastingly, other activists suggest that the campaign never really took off in the first place.¹⁶¹

Nevertheless, all respondents agree that the campaign has only had limited success and failed in obtaining its main goal, illustrated by the undeniable fact that the state of emergency is still in place. Furthermore, activists have identified obstacles to the campaign from the beginning, not just after the peak of January 30th. Therefore, I argue that the label failure is a better fit. It is important to note however that the campaign is still ongoing and activists are still contesting the state of emergency. My intention is not at all to discredit these efforts by already labelling them as a failure. Instead, following the narratives that activists shared with me, I suggest that the campaign has failed to obtain its main goal within the timeframe of this research project, between November 2015 and May 2017.

The conclusion that failure is the better fit does not mean that the idea and approach behind the concept of *narratives of decline* cannot be applied to the case at hand. I propose to tweak the concept slightly, calling it *narratives of failure* and applying it to a campaign instead of a specific social movement organisation. In this format, the concept looks at how activists explain and interpret the failure of their campaign. Rather than providing objective explanations of the failure of the campaign, it focuses on how the process is understood by the activists involved. I will delve into activists' narratives of failure in the remainder of this chapter.

4.2 External obstacles to the campaign against the state of emergency

Activists include multiple external obstacles in their narratives of failure. I have subdivided these explanations in changing political opportunity structures (4.2.1), obstacles to mobilising the population (4.2.2) and difficulties with convincing politicians (4.2.3).

4.2.1 Changing political opportunity structures

The first category of explanations that activists use in their narratives of failure consists of external events that they interpret as having influenced the campaign. These explanations, on a more abstract level, are about changing opportunity structures: "aspects of a regime that offer challengers both openings to advance their claims and threats and constraints that caution them against making these claims" (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015:49). A change in opportunity structures can either facilitate activists' claim making or hinder it. As mapped in *chapter 2*, events such as the house search at Pepper Grill and the prohibition of the demonstration against the COP21 boosted media attention and drew in

¹⁶⁰ Author's interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

¹⁶¹ Author's interviews with Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris.

supporters, hereby having a positive impact on the campaign. Contrastingly, this chapter discusses political opportunity structures that activists believe to have constrained their campaign: the constitutional debates, the protests against the labour reform law, the Nice attacks and the 2017 elections.

First of all, activists ascribe a dual effect to the constitutional debates.¹⁶² On the one hand, some respondents argue that the debates helped mobilise a bigger part of the population, as they occupied a central place in the media.¹⁶³ Adrienne Charmet adds that it would not have been possible to mobilise as many people to protest on 30 January 2016 without the nationality clause, since a lot of people mobilised especially on this topic and would otherwise not have come.¹⁶⁴ In this sense, the constitutional debates were an enabling political opportunity structure, facilitating a greater mobilisation against the state of emergency.

On the other hand, the previous chapter has shown that the prominence of the constitutional debates within the campaign was a subject of internal debate. Some respondents expressed fear that the constitutional reforms would overshadow the existence of the state of emergency itself.¹⁶⁵ Indeed, mobilisation reached a peak in January and decreased in the months thereafter. The cancellation of the reforms was for some organisations the end goal and the campaign did not succeed in retaining or expanding the mobilisation of the population once the reforms were cancelled.¹⁶⁶

This example of how different activists interpret one event in different ways (as enabling mobilisation, as hindering mobilisation or as a combination of both) demonstrates the importance of studying campaign failure from the point of view of those involved. It underlines that political opportunity structures are subjective and only become enabling or hindering through the interpretation of activists (Benford & Snow, 2000:631).

The same is true for the second event: the protests against the labour reform law. Although most respondents agree that the contentious episode against the labour reform law constrained the campaign because it became “*the* new battlefield,”¹⁶⁷ it also created new opportunities. For instance, the government’s use of the state of emergency against labour reform law protests, enabled labour

¹⁶² Author’s interviews with Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

¹⁶³ Author’s interviews with Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris.

¹⁶⁴ Author’s interview with Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris.

¹⁶⁵ Author’s interviews with Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

¹⁶⁶ Author’s interviews with Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris.

¹⁶⁷ Author’s interviews with Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris; Alain Dru, 19-04-17, Montreuil; Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Yves Veyrier, 30-03-17, Paris.

unions to be more present in the campaign as their social base was directly targeted.¹⁶⁸ Additionally, the individual prohibitions to protest received media attention and were contested in court, which redirected public attention to the state of emergency.¹⁶⁹

In contrast, activists ascribe a much less ambiguous effect to the events on the 14th of July 2016. The attacks in Nice are unanimously interpreted as a hindering political opportunity structure, further complicating the campaign and undoing the progress made between November and June.¹⁷⁰ After Nice, “it was damned,” expressed the President of the LDH, as the attacks gave a new impulse to the fear of the population and their support for the state of emergency.¹⁷¹ This, combined with the time span of six months before the next revaluation of the state of emergency, made the energy of the campaign drop to a low point.¹⁷²

Lastly, during the period of fieldwork, activists were working in light of the upcoming elections. Elections present an interesting political opportunity structure, as they could result in a shift in power and therefore the responsiveness of the authorities towards activists’ claims (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015:63). Furthermore, they establish an opportunity to gain more visibility and force candidates to take a stance on the subject (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015:64).¹⁷³ Yet, apart for creating possibilities, the elections also obstructed activists from reaching their goal, as politicians were very reluctant to take the responsibility to lift the state of emergency right before the elections.¹⁷⁴

4.2.2 Obstacles to mobilising the population

“...the political climate finally turns us into prisoners of the state of emergency.”¹⁷⁵ |

The extent to which collective action frames are effective in mobilising the population and convincing politicians is a question of frame resonance: “the effectiveness or mobilizing potency of proffered framings, thereby attending to the question of why some framings seem to be effective or ‘resonate’ others do not” (Benford & Snow, 2000:619). Benford and Snow identify two sets of interacting factors that determine frame resonance: the credibility of the frame and its relative salience (2000:619).

A frame’s credibility is the sum of three factors: frame consistency, empirical credibility and the credibility of the claim makers (Benford & Snow, 2000:19). Frame consistency refers to the

¹⁶⁸ Author’s interviews with Yves Veyrier, 30-03-17, Paris; Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris ; Alain Dru, 19-04-17, Montreuil; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris.

¹⁶⁹ Author’s interviews with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris.

¹⁷⁰ Author’s interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris; Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris; Yves Veyrier, 30-03-17, Paris.

¹⁷¹ Author’s interview with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris.

¹⁷² Author’s interview with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

¹⁷³ Author’s interviews with Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris.

¹⁷⁴ Author’s interview with Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris.

¹⁷⁵ Author’s interview with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

conformity of a movement's beliefs, claims and actions (Benford & Snow, 2000:20). The empirical credibility of a frame is determined by the perceived fit between the frame and real world events (Benford & Snow, 2000:20). The final factor influencing the credibility of a frame is the perceived credibility and trustworthiness of the claim makers (Benford & Snow, 2000:621).

The salience of a frame is also determined by three factors: centrality, experiential commensurability, and narrative fidelity (Snow & Benford, 1988; Benford & Snow, 2000:621). Centrality is about how central the beliefs, ideas and values communicated in the frame are to the lives of those that activists wish to mobilise (Benford & Snow, 2000:621). Experiential commensurability has to do with whether the frame resonates with the personal, everyday experiences of those who are targeted for mobilisation (Benford & Snow, 2000:621). Finally, narrative fidelity refers to the extent to which a frame is congruent with the target's culture and cultural narratives (Benford & Snow, 2000:622).

It is important to note that Benford and Snow (2000) use these factors to analyse the resonance of a specific frame in a positive sense. I somewhat turn this around by looking at the absence of these factors to account for the *lack* of resonance of the campaign's frame.

A frame's resonance is always relative (Benford & Snow, 2000:619) compared to other frames. Therefore, it is important to remind ourselves of the government's framing of the state of emergency as an essential tool to be able to counter the terrorist threat (Cassia, 2016; Bourdon, 2017).¹⁷⁶ Why did the campaign not succeed in countering this frame? Activists' narratives of failure emphasise different aspects: the overwhelming public support for the state of emergency, the emotional response to the state of emergency, the lack of visibility in people's daily lives and a general indifference of the population.

The most prominent theme in activists' narratives of failure is the overwhelming public support for the state of emergency, especially during the first months.¹⁷⁷ Polls of the French polling station Ifop show that the French population supported the prolongations of the state of emergency with 91 per cent in November 2015 (Le Monde, 2015) and 78 per cent in January 2016 (Atlantico, 2016). Strikingly, after the attacks in Nice, 50 per cent of the population wished to reinforce the existing state of emergency (Ifop, 2016). The fact that the majority of France's population supported the state of emergency compromised the potential resonance of the campaign's frame. It is hard to

¹⁷⁶ Author's interviews with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris.

¹⁷⁷ Author's interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris; Alain Dru, 19-04-17, Montreuil; Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris.

transmit a message coming from a very small minority and after a while, it can even be depressing as “you get the impression to be crazy, when you’re against it.”¹⁷⁸

Secondly, activists mark the fact that the state of emergency was highly emotional and linked to the public trauma caused by the attacks of November 2015 as an obstacle to the campaign’s framing.¹⁷⁹ The emotional response made it difficult to speak up against the state of emergency and those who did were met with violent responses.¹⁸⁰ The LDH and the Syndicat de la Magistrature note that they were accused of “supporting terrorists” and “being the allies of terrorist goals” when they critiqued the state of emergency during its first weeks.¹⁸¹ In this state of fear and shock, people tend to be willing to trade public liberties for protection: a poll conducted after the Nice attacks stated that 81 per cent of the French population was willing to be restricted in their freedoms in return for better protection (Jacob, 2016).

When comparing the collective action frames of the campaign to the framing of the government, it is clear that the dominant emotion of fear renders the population more receptive to the governments’ frame (“the state of emergency will protect you”) than to the activists’ frame (“the state of emergency has dangerous consequences”). In abstract terms, the success of the government’s framing compared to that of the activists could be ascribed to a greater centrality, as the most important value for the population seemed to be protection rather than public liberties. Additionally, the government’s frame had a better fit with the perceived empirical reality of the population. More easily than with the attacks on satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*, people identified with the victims of the November 2015 attacks as they were just outside on a terrace, attending a concert or visiting a football game (Bouanchaud, 2016).¹⁸² The population felt directly and personally targeted by the attacks and the terrorist threat therefore became an important part of their perceived empirical reality.

Thirdly, activists account for the limited public mobilisation against the state of emergency by pointing to the lack of visibility of its consequences in people’s daily lives,¹⁸³ which leads to a low level of experiential commensurability. This problem is closely related to the normalisation of the state

¹⁷⁸ Author’s interview with Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris.

¹⁷⁹ Author’s interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris; Pierre Lalu, 06-03-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Alain Dru, 19-04-17, Montreuil; Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris; Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris.

¹⁸⁰ Author’s interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

¹⁸¹ Author’s interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

¹⁸² Author’s interview with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris.

¹⁸³ Author’s interviews with Sebastien Kurt, 14-03-17, Paris; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris; Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris; Alain Dru, 19-04-17, Montreuil; Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

of emergency,¹⁸⁴ as it has lost its “newness” and people start to forget that it is still in force.¹⁸⁵ Furthermore, since only a very small part of the population is directly targeted by the measures of the state of emergency, people are generally not confronted with the consequences on a daily basis.¹⁸⁶ It is clear from the presidential campaign, that the existence of the state of emergency is not really a topic of debate. Nicolas Krameyer says that for Amnesty International France “the state of emergency is the great forgotten issue of this campaign.”¹⁸⁷

Finally, for some respondents, the indifference of the population on the topic of the state of emergency is part of a more fundamental development of disinterest, apathy and discouragement.¹⁸⁸ For some, this is a general development starting with the presidency of Nicolas Sarkozy who discouraged mass mobilisations.¹⁸⁹ For others, the indifference is linked specifically to questions of public liberties, as past examples show that it is hard to mobilise people around these topics.¹⁹⁰ For historian Sophie Wahnich, the lack of public interest in the state of emergency reveals the great paradox of France’s contemporary society, in which we on the one hand state that the people do not trust politicians anymore, but on the other hand, the people give complete power to the same politicians.¹⁹¹

All in all, activists’ framing in the campaign against France’s state of emergency had a lower level of resonance than the frame used by the government, on both the credibility and the salience dimension. Specifically, the collective action frames of the campaign did not resonate with the dominant value of safety (centrality), the everyday experiences of the population (experiential commensurability), and the population’s perceived empirical reality (empirical credibility).

¹⁸⁴ Author’s interviews with Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris; Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris.

¹⁸⁵ Author’s interviews with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Alice Benveniste, 17-03-17, Paris; Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris.

¹⁸⁶ Author’s interviews with Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris; Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris; Alain Dru, 19-04-17, Montreuil.

¹⁸⁷ Author’s interview with Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris.

¹⁸⁸ Author’s interviews with Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris.

¹⁸⁹ Author’s interview with Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris.

¹⁹⁰ Author’s interviews with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Raphaël Kempf, 04-04-17, Paris; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris.

¹⁹¹ Author’s interview with Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris.

4.2.3 Obstacles to convincing politicians: the state of emergency as a political trap

“They didn’t have the courage not to begin it, and they don’t have the courage to stop it.”¹⁹² |

Not only did activists have a hard time mobilising the population against the state of emergency, they also struggled to make their cause resonate with French politicians. In their narratives of failure, activists included different obstacles: the state of emergency as a political trap, the lack of political courage and the governments’ interests.

Firstly and most importantly, activists interpret the state of emergency as a political trap that the government itself created and cannot seem to get out of (Le Monde, 2017b).¹⁹³ This is due to the frame the government used to justify the state of emergency and the way in which they portrayed the terrorist threat. The government stated that “the international terrorist threat” and the “imminent risk of an attack” motivated their choice to declare the state of emergency¹⁹⁴ (Vie Publique, 2015). Yet, international terrorist groups have threatened France for years and the terrorist threat is not likely to disappear anytime soon. It is very difficult to justify the end of the state of emergency, when the threat it responds to is interpreted so broadly.¹⁹⁵ Relatedly, some respondents state that the government has “sold” the state of emergency to the public as a necessary tool for protection from the terrorist threat.¹⁹⁶ By using this justification they have in fact planted their own trap: if they would argue now that the state of emergency is not necessary, they admit that they have used an invalid justification for two years.¹⁹⁷

Secondly, for many respondents the unresponsiveness of the politicians is a matter of “lack of political courage.”¹⁹⁸ This lack of courage is linked to the *syndrome de 14 juillet* that has created a political climate in which no one dares to take the responsibility to end the state of emergency.¹⁹⁹ This fear of the present government could be reinforced by the idea that such an event could further boost support for the extreme right party FN (Bourdon, 2017:31). Activists that are still active in the campaign against the state of emergency have adjusted their tactics to this political reality. For

¹⁹² Author’s interview with Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris.

¹⁹³ Author’s interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris.

¹⁹⁴ Author’s interview with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris.

¹⁹⁵ Author’s interviews with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris

¹⁹⁶ Author’s interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

¹⁹⁷ Author’s interviews with Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris.

¹⁹⁸ Author’s interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris; Alain Dru, 19-04-17, Montreuil; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris.

¹⁹⁹ Author’s interviews with Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris; Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris.

instance, the *Réseau état d'urgence – antiterroriste* is planning on producing a detailed pitch for the newly elected parliamentarians to hand them arguments with which they could justify the end of the state of emergency.²⁰⁰

The interpretations above depart from a government that would be willing to end the state of emergency but does not dare to do so because of potential political consequences. Contrastingly, other explanations for the government's unresponsiveness focus on the idea that the government benefits from the state of emergency and does not *want* to end it.²⁰¹

Theoretically, the unresponsiveness of the government that activists include in their narratives of failure corresponds to a lack of frame consistency: it is difficult for the government to accept the opposition campaign's framing because it clashes with their justification of the state of emergency and their actions. Furthermore, activists' framing also hits a wall in terms of centrality: the government has its eyes on the potential next attack and the upcoming elections²⁰² and therefore prioritises the value of safety²⁰³ over the values of public liberties, democracy and non-discrimination that are prominent in the campaign.

4.3 Internal obstacles to the mobilisation against the state of emergency

Besides external obstacles, activists also identify internal difficulties that complicated the campaign. I have subdivided the internal explanations in difficulties concerning resources and organisation (4.3.1), the existence of different priorities (4.3.2) and the lack of a collective identity (4.3.3).

4.3.1 Difficulties of organisational structures and resources

Some explanations within activists' narratives of failure correspond to the resource mobilisation approach to collective action that focuses on the organisation of collective action and the resources available to activists to sustain collective action (McAdam, Tarrow & Tarrow, 2009:268-270). These explanations focus on the idea that the campaign against the state of emergency lacked resources in terms of adequate organisational structures,²⁰⁴ as well as time, energy, means and knowledge.²⁰⁵

Firstly, in terms of organisational structures, some of the activists currently active in the network *Réseau état d'urgence – antiterroriste*, point to the lack of coordination and rather undemocratic leadership style during the first months of the campaign (December 2015 – February 2016) as an explanation for its limited success.²⁰⁶ These critiques especially apply to the collective *Nous ne céderons pas*, led by the LDH. Activists point out that although the LDH managed to bring

²⁰⁰ Author's interview with Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris.

²⁰¹ Author's interviews with Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris; Alain Dru, 19-04-17, Montreuil; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²⁰² Author's interview with Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris.

²⁰³ Author's interviews with Yves Veyrier, 30-03-17, Paris; Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris; Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris.

²⁰⁴ Author's interviews with Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris.

²⁰⁵ Author's interviews with Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris; Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

²⁰⁶ Author's interviews with Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris.

together a wide range of actors, it was not very active in the coordination of actions and data collection²⁰⁷ and in sustaining the campaign once the constitutional reforms were cancelled.²⁰⁸

Moreover, they suggest that in contrast to the informal network *Réseau état d'urgence – antiterroriste*, the LDH, being the oldest and most important human rights organisation in France that is used to making decisions, structured the collective in a hierarchical way with little room for discussion and deviant views.²⁰⁹ Activists that interpret this leadership style as an explanation for limited success suggest that a horizontally created network that works with ad-hoc coalitions could be more effective in facilitating cooperation between groups with different mandates and positions.²¹⁰ For example, Amnesty International France has a mandate restricted to international human rights, and could therefore not immediately pronounce itself against the state of emergency.²¹¹ Instead, Amnesty pointed to the obligation of the government to give a solid justification as to why the state of emergency was necessary.²¹² This position is much more nuanced than the message that was carried out by the two collectives and it was therefore difficult for Amnesty to associate itself with these groups.²¹³

Secondly, activists suggest that the campaign required a lot of time and energy, while the campaign was for most of them just a small component of their job, or completely outside of their job.²¹⁴ This has exhausted activists, especially since the state of emergency has been in force for almost two years.²¹⁵ Others add that the lack of competences and knowledge on the specificities of the state of emergency formed an obstacle.²¹⁶

4.3.2 Different priorities within the campaign: what do “we” want?

The lack of a clearly defined common goal is a reoccurring theme in activists’ narratives of failure. Although the ultimate goal is quite straightforward: the end of the state of emergency in France, actors prioritised different issues and sub-goals along the way. These framing disputes have been outlined in *chapter 3*.

A striking example of how actors did not only prioritise differently *within* the contentious episode of the state of emergency but also *between* different contentious episodes, concerns the labour unions. Adrienne Charmet recalls that some labour unions present in the collectives *Nous ne céderons pas* and *Stop état d'urgence* did not want to take a hard stance against the government during the

²⁰⁷ Author’s interview with Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris.

²⁰⁸ Author’s interview with Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris.

²⁰⁹ Author’s interviews with Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris.

²¹⁰ Author’s interviews with Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris.

²¹¹ Author’s interview with Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris.

²¹² Author’s interview with Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris.

²¹³ Author’s interview with Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris.

²¹⁴ Author’s interviews with Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris.

²¹⁵ Author’s interview with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

²¹⁶ Author’s interview with Frédéric Sève, 05-04-17, Paris.

period of wage negotiations, which made working together difficult.²¹⁷ It is clear from this interaction that the labour unions chose the episode of contention on wages over the episode of contention on the state of emergency. A similar prioritising occurred when the contentious episode on the labour reform law overshadowed the one of the state of emergency.

Besides, a few activists explain the failure of the campaign by suggesting that organisations sometimes chose their self-interest over the interest of the campaign.²¹⁸ For instance, Yasser Louati argues that organisations saw the state of emergency as an instrument to increase their visibility: once they saw that the public attention for the state of emergency remained low, they found participating in the campaign less rewarding and ceased their activities.²¹⁹

4.3.3 *The lack of collective identity: who are “we”?*

As has been referred to in *chapter 3*, there have been limited attempts to construct a collective identity for the campaign’s participants. Although none of the respondents explicitly includes ‘the lack of a common identity’ in their narratives of failure, themes of division between organisations, working milieus and segments of society are prominent.²²⁰

Firstly, an issue that demonstrates the lack of a collective identity is the fact that two collectives (*Nous ne céderons pas* and *Stop état d’urgence*) existed simultaneously while having the same focus and conducting similar actions.²²¹ An illustrative example of how such a dual mobilisation can constrain the campaign is the public gathering that the collectives organised together on 12 February 2016. The event was negotiated difficultly between the two collectives, as one was in favour of a static demonstration and the other one preferred a walking demonstration. In the end, they did both, with a public mobilisation that was possibly smaller than if everything had been unitary.²²² Likewise, the existence of two collectives meant that organisations that were members of both had to spend twice as much time and energy on weekly meetings.²²³ Some of these organisations were in favour of a fusion, but this was out of the question as the LDH principally refuses to work with political parties, which were present in *Stop état d’urgence*.²²⁴ The question of working together with political parties is one that divides French civil society historically.²²⁵

More generally, multiple activists pointed to the difficulty in France to mix milieus that do not

²¹⁷ Author’s interview with Adrienne Charmet, 27-04-17, Paris.

²¹⁸ Author’s interviews with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²¹⁹ Author’s interview with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²²⁰ Author’s interviews with Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²²¹ Author’s interview with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

²²² Author’s interview with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

²²³ Author’s interview with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

²²⁴ Author’s interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

²²⁵ Author’s interview with Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

have “the same way of being in the world.”²²⁶ For instance, political cleavages and divisions based on different working milieus were the main reason for the fact that the CUC did not succeed in attaining its goals and people dropped out of the group.²²⁷

It is clear from the argumentation above that the activists that were involved in the campaign against France’s state of emergency did not constitute a coherent “broader community” with which individuals could cognitively, morally and emotionally connect, as the definition of collective identity prescribes (Polletta & Jasper, 2001:285). Rather, they remained a patchwork of different actors, with no perception or experience of a shared status.

This chapter has described and analysed the narratives of failure activists use to make sense of the limited success of their campaign. In their narratives, activists included external explanations, focusing on the constraining effects of political opportunity structures and issues of frame resonance, as well as internal explanations, focused on the lack of resources, common priorities and a collective identity.

A combination of the findings of this chapter and the previous chapter leads to an important insight: there was no collective identity created within the campaign (collective action frames) and activists use this to account for the campaign’s limited success (narratives of failure). Activists link the lack of a collective identity and the failure to create a unified opposition movement to the involvement of different segments of France’s society. An important narrative of failure that I have not yet discussed concerns the existence of multiple splits within the campaign between movements and milieus, which often failed or refused to work together. I will further develop this specific narrative in the next chapter.

²²⁶ Author’s interview with Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris.

²²⁷ Author’s interviews with Sophie Wahnich, 08-03-17, Paris; Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés.

CHAPTER 5

Common cause, divided identities: the split mobilisation against France's state of emergency

In the previous chapter, I have described and analysed the narratives of failure that activists use to make sense of the limited success of their campaign. Within their narratives, activists often referred to issues that point to the lack of a collective identity. Whereas I have discussed some of these issues in the previous chapter, this chapter will delve further into this narrative with an in-depth discussion of more fundamental splits that existed within the campaign. These splits include a division between universalist and communitarianist organisations (5.1), big associations and organisations working “on the ground” (5.2) and the two groups that the state of emergency has mainly targeted: the Muslim community and political left activists (5.3). For each of these divisions, I will describe how activists include them in their narratives of failure, how the groups differ in terms of collective action frames and how activists have attempted to bridge the divide.

5.1 Historically divided: the debate between universalism and communitarianism

The limited coordination and cooperation between traditional human rights organisations in France and organisations working from within the Muslim community dates back to the historical divide between French universalism and communitarianism.²²⁸ After a brief historical contextualisation of the universalist-communitarianist debate, I will discuss activists' interpretation of the difficulties that these groups face when working together and how this impacted the campaign against the state of emergency. Then, I will elaborate on how organisations have attempted to overcome these difficulties.

5.1.1 The difficulties of working together: the universalist – communitarianist divide

The central idea of French universalism, or republicanism, originates from the French Revolution and constitutes a distinctively French notion of political representation based on “two related abstractions: that of the individual and that of the nation” (Scott, 2004:34). In contrast to the American “communitarian system” which characterises legislatures as “arena's for different interests,” French universalism rests on the idea that political representatives must “abstract their particularities,” such as wealth, profession and religion²²⁹ in order to each speak for the nation as a whole (Scott, 2004:34; Robcis, 2013:18). As the revolutionaries of 1789 rebelled against the Old Regime that was based on the communitarian representation of corporate interests, the value of universalism became integral to the modern French political identity (Scott, 2004: 34). Because of its historical meaning, the concept of universalism is emotionally alive in the minds of the French people and at the centre of their politics (Scott, 2004:33). Similarly, the concept of communitarianism evokes a negative emotional

²²⁸ Author's interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris.

²²⁹ Because religion is one of the particularities that political representatives should abstract themselves from, the notion of universalism has fused with the debate on laïcité, French secularism (Weill, 2006:30).

response.²³⁰ According to Serge Slama, the association of certain communitarianist organisations with anti-Semitism has further strengthened this negative connotation.²³¹

The distinction between universalism and communitarianism is not limited to legislatives but extends to France's civil society. Traditionally, French organisations that defend human rights are universalist while organisations that defend the rights of a specific group are categorised as communitarianist.²³² To illustrate this perceived difference using the state of emergency as an example is to say that the two strands of organisations defend human rights from a different starting point: whereas universalist associations would defend an innocent person that the state has placed under house arrest based on the idea that this is an unjust restriction of individual freedom, the ADM or CCIF would defend their "Muslim brothers and sisters."²³³

Because of the negative connotation to communitarianism, communitarianist associations working in France are controversial.²³⁴ An example is the CCIF: the discreet entrance via a courtyard, the heavy iron door that leads to the office and the fact that they do not publish their complete address online²³⁵ all testify of the fact that the CCIF has "a lot of enemies" (Mouillard & Sauvaget, 2016). Yet the attacks of November 2015 have intensified the critique on the organisation (Mouillard & Sauvaget, 2016). Among other things, the CCIF is accused of exaggerating the amount of Islamophobic acts, being close to Islamic fundamentalist individuals and organisations (Bastié, 2016), pursuing political Islam and using the excessive victimising of Muslims to secretly advance a communitarian society (Mouillard & Sauvaget, 2016). In contrast, the CCIF's work is recognised internationally, for instance by the European Commission and the United Nations (UN) as well as by domestic institutional actors such as the CNCDH (Bastié, 2016; Mouillard & Sauvaget, 2016).

Related to the criticisms on communitarian associations defending the rights of Muslims is the "semantic battle" over the word "Islamophobia" (Mouillard & Sauvaget, 2016). Despite the fact that the CNCDH institutionalised the term in 2013, it is still contested in France as critics argue that using Islamophobia as an argument undermines every prospect of having a fundamental public debate about the Islam and its values (Mouillard & Sauvaget, 2016). Important in this regard is the notion of "Islamogauchisme" that has entered the public debate almost two years ago and captures the idea of a person from the left milieu who is deemed too tolerant vis-à-vis certain principles of the Islam and continuously uses the argument of Islamophobia to indicate why something is wrong.²³⁶ The word is used in an insulting way, and Matthieu Quinquis remembers that certain members of the *Collectif Associatif Universitaire* were hesitant to talk about Islamophobia because they did not want to be

²³⁰ Author's personal communication with Serge Slama, 05-06-17, email correspondence.

²³¹ Author's personal communication with Serge Slama, 05-06-17, email correspondence.

²³² Author's personal communication with Serge Slama, 05-06-17, email correspondence.

²³³ Author's personal communication with Serge Slama, 05-06-17, email correspondence.

²³⁴ Author's interview with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris.

²³⁵ Authors fieldnotes, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen.

²³⁶ Author's interview with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris.

publicly associated with Islamogauchisme.²³⁷ He continues: “If we refuse to engage with the subject on these grounds, it means in fact that we admit that today, defending the liberties of cults and religions, has become scandalous.”²³⁸

Thus, it is clear that the negative image of communitarianist associations creates a division between civil society organisations that is hard to overcome. When universalist organisations do cooperate with communitarianist organisations, they are met with heavy criticisms and accused of “playing the communitarianist game” and therefore that of extremist organisations that claim to act based on the Islam.²³⁹ The Burkini affair during the summer of 2016²⁴⁰ is illustrative of this point. Françoise Dumont, President of the LDH states that her organisation has never received as many insults as during the time they were working on the Burkini affair with the CCIF.²⁴¹

Nonetheless, the discussion of collective action frames in *chapter 3* has shown that it is impossible to overlook the discriminatory dimension of the state of emergency.²⁴² It therefore seems impossible to create a successful campaign without involving those who have been targeting the most²⁴³ and hereby risking to be labelled as “Islamogauchist” or supporting communitarianist organisations. The question remains therefore, how participants of the campaign have attempted to bridge the gap.

5.1.2 Bridging the gap: new allies

“Thus, it was interesting to see how finally organisations were brought together who up to then did not necessarily engage in activism together. And so, the state of emergency... The positive aspect if I may say so, is that it has nonetheless served as a catalyst for the federative elements of organisations, representatives of the civil society. At this moment, we continue to work together with these associations.”²⁴⁴

Despite the difficulties and differences that I outlined in the previous section, the quote above shows that some activists believe the state of emergency has given a positive impulse to the rapprochement

²³⁷ Author’s interview with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris.

²³⁸ Author’s interview with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris.

²³⁹ Author’s personal communication with Serge Slama, 05-06-17, email correspondence.

²⁴⁰ The decision of multiple French cities and towns to introduce the “Burkini ban” outlawing the full body swim suit on beaches, sparked public outrage and international media attention during the summer of 2016. For more information on the “Burkini affair” see: http://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2016/08/24/les-photos-d-une-femme-contrainte-d-enlever-son-voile-a-nice-suscitent-emoi-et-incomprehension_4987497_3224.html?xtmc=interdiction_burkini&xtcr=72.

²⁴¹ Author’s interview with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris.

²⁴² Author’s interviews with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Arie Alimi, 27-03-17, Paris; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris; Christine Lazerges, 19-04-17, Paris; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²⁴³ Author’s interviews with Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés; Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris.

²⁴⁴ Author’s interview with Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen.

between the two milieus. Françoise Dumont, President of the LDH agrees that the state of emergency, and especially the constitutional proposal to change the nationality right for binational citizens, provided common ground for traditional and communitarianist organisations and that they continue to work together on other issues ever since.²⁴⁵

Additionally, respondents point to *Réseau état d'urgence – antiterroriste* as a successful bridge between the two strands of associations, as it includes ADM and the CCIF.²⁴⁶ Serge Slama ascribes the emergence of this junction to the work of certain NGO's of a more Anglo-Saxon cultural tradition, such as the Open Society Justice Initiative,²⁴⁷ who are less stuck in the universalist – communitarianist divide than their French counterparts (Bastié, 2016). He adds that another reason for the successful cooperation in this network could be due to a new generation that cares less about historical cleavages.²⁴⁸

Yet, it is important to note that not all alliances are new. Big international human rights organisations such as HRW and Amnesty International are used to working with organisations that are active “on the ground” and are not hesitant to work with organisations that are labelled as communitarianist. For instance, Amnesty International worked closely together with ADM, the CCIF and CRI to get in touch with people who had been targeted by the measures of the state of emergency.²⁴⁹ This cooperation between big associations and organisations that are active “on the ground” is the focus of the next section.

5.2 Behind a desk or on the ground? “Real work” versus “blablabla”²⁵⁰

After an interview, I usually asked respondents if there were any other organisations or individuals that would be relevant for me to meet. Several times, the people I spoke with told me that it was now time for me to meet “the real ones”; “the people on the ground.”²⁵¹ This is how I first encountered the way in which activists experienced the divide between people working from behind a desk (“*les militants des bureaux*”²⁵²) and people working on the ground (“*les gens du terrain*”²⁵³). In this section, I will discuss how this divide was included in activists’ narratives of failure. I will first outline the distinction before moving on to a discussion of how activists have aimed to overcome the divide.

²⁴⁵ Author’s interviews with Françoise Dumont, 03-03-17, Paris; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen.

²⁴⁶ Author’s interview with Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris.

²⁴⁷ Author’s personal communication with Serge Slama, 05-06-17, email correspondence.

²⁴⁸ Author’s interview with Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris.

²⁴⁹ Author’s interview with Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris.

²⁵⁰ Author’s interview with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

²⁵¹ Author’s interview with Serge Slama, 29-03-17, Paris; Aïnoha Pascual, 05-04-17, Paris.

²⁵² Author’s interview with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris.

²⁵³ Author’s interviews with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

5.2.1 Real work versus “blablabla”

“I told them, how can it be that *one* person alone, so me, with my scooter, who is formerly put under house arrest, who had to resume life but I have paused my life, who has visited all the banlieues of Île de France, who has visited all people placed under house arrest, in all the departments, how can it be that one person, who does not have any contacts to start with, succeeds in doing that? Because it is done with a strong will. And with the sincerity of helping fellow human beings. And how can it be that *you*, recognised associations with *websites*, with infrastructures, with juridical advisors, stuff, secretaries and *everything!*? You, you, you... you did not really tackle this issue!?”²⁵⁴

It were respondents working from within the Muslim community that most often pointed to the divide between big human rights associations on the one hand and associations and individuals working on the ground on the other.²⁵⁵ These respondents, who defined themselves as “*gens du terrain*” emphasised their proximity to victims of the state of emergency’s measures as their specificity.²⁵⁶

The activists that include this divide in their narratives of failure generally portray big associations as business-like organisations that do not really know what is happening on the ground and use the state of emergency as a platform to gain visibility.²⁵⁷ Halim Abdelmalek feels like big associations use people’s distress to upgrade their image, rather than to really help and listen to a person.²⁵⁸ He, he underlines, is a man of action, whereas the big associations just talk without really changing anything.²⁵⁹

Another difference that activists point out is the distinction between those who are living through the measures and those who just write and talk about it. Activists working on the ground argue that in their work with victims, they see the real impact of the measures of the state of emergency on the individuals that are targeted.²⁶⁰

These differences could explain a difference in collective action frames. Firstly, in terms of agency it is clear from the data that organisations or individuals that define themselves as working on the ground are almost exclusively focused on the support of victims, rather than mobilising the population or convincing politicians.²⁶¹

²⁵⁴ Author’s interview with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

²⁵⁵ Author’s interviews with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²⁵⁶ Author’s interviews with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

²⁵⁷ Author’s interview with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²⁵⁸ Author’s interview with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

²⁵⁹ Author’s interview with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

²⁶⁰ Author’s interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

²⁶¹ Author’s interviews with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

Secondly, when looking at the injustice component of the collective action frames, organisations and individuals that define themselves as working on the ground put a greater emphasis on the psychological impact that the measures of the state of emergency have on the individuals that are targeted.²⁶² Being unjustly targeted is “destructive, for the person, for their close ones, for their children” and leads to stigmatisation and a climate of fear.²⁶³ For some people, it is “psychological torture” to know that “the Ministry of Interior thinks that you are a terrorist, whereas you have done nothing.”²⁶⁴

Activists included this divide in their narratives of failure in two main ways. Firstly, some activists state that it complicated the campaign against the state of emergency because big associations used the topic as a platform but did not really care about the victims of the state of emergency.²⁶⁵ Secondly, some argue that big associations have no real consciousness of what is happening on the ground, yet they are the ones that have the best infrastructure to make their voices heard.²⁶⁶ As a consequence, the stories of a very important part of the population (those that are mainly targeted: the Muslim community) are being put aside, while it is exactly these people that could show the real impact of the state of emergency and help mobilise the population.²⁶⁷

It is important to note that the difference between “real work” and “blablabla” does not necessarily overlap with the divide between universalism and communitarianism as discussed in the previous section. The distinction between big associations and people working on the ground exists also within the segment of organisations working from the Muslim community. Sihem Zine, President of ADM for example puts forward that after the attacks of November 2015, the Minister of Interior immediately surrounded himself with big national Muslim federations, such as the CFCM.²⁶⁸ However, she states that there is a big distance between these large associations and what is actually happening on the ground, and very few Muslims actually identify with this big federation (Sauvaget, 2015).²⁶⁹ Furthermore, whereas the CCIF defines itself as an “*association du terrain*” that works closely to the victims,²⁷⁰ Halim Abdelmalek perceives the CCIF as one of the big associations.²⁷¹ This example demonstrates that activists interpret the distinction in different ways and that it is not an absolute, objectively observable divide.

²⁶² Author’s interviews with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²⁶³ Author’s interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

²⁶⁴ Author’s interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

²⁶⁵ Author’s interviews with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

²⁶⁶ Author’s interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

²⁶⁷ Author’s interviews with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²⁶⁸ Author’s interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

²⁶⁹ Author’s interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

²⁷⁰ Author’s interview with Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen.

²⁷¹ Author’s interview with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

5.2.2 Decreasing the distance between the desk and the ground

Did organisations that participated in the campaign aim to bridge the gap between the desk and the terrain and if so, how? Apart from the partnerships in which big human rights associations such as HRW and Amnesty International depended on associations on the ground for their empirical evidence and access to victims,²⁷² activists have aimed to bridge the gap in three different ways: by cooperating in collectives, through individual connections and by creating new associations.

First of all, collectives such as the *Réseau état d'urgence –antiterroriste* that are built on the exchange of information are a way of bridging the gap. In this network, organisations such as the ADM and CCIF share information about what is happening on the ground within the Muslim community with organisations that might be more focused on lobbying in politics or mobilising the population.²⁷³ Likewise, the network includes several lawyers who share information about their cases with the network.²⁷⁴

Secondly, individual attempts to bridge the gap between organisations on the ground and big associations sometimes led to collaboration. For instance, Yasser Louati, former spokesman of the CCIF had joined forces with lawyer Jérôme Karsenti, member of the CUC, to engage with young people in the banlieues.²⁷⁵ There were talks about starting projects together, but these never really took off. Jérôme Karsenti ascribes this to the split between associations and people active on the ground, saying that the youths have “such a sentiment of not being understood, that in the end the discourse that we carry out is a discourse a bit too technocratic.”²⁷⁶

Thirdly, the frustration and disillusion that people working on the ground felt towards big associations sometimes led to the creation of new associations. Halim Abdelmalek for example, has tried to work with established associations but ended up feeling frustrated and disappointed as he felt like these associations did not genuinely depart from the will to help a person.²⁷⁷ He and Sihem Zine started helping people individually and created ADM “to continue helping people. Because we could not leave them all alone.”²⁷⁸ It is clear from this quote that they believed that if they would not continue their work, no one would. Working within an association however is different from helping people individually, and not all people that are used to working on the ground want to adapt to this lifestyle. For instance, Halim Abdelmalek left ADM as a consequence of internal disagreements and is now back to helping at his own level:

“I prefer to *help* at my level. I help four, five people, but I *really* help them, to taking place in an assembly, talk for two hours, and at the end, everyone goes home but there is *nothing* after that.”²⁷⁹

²⁷² Author’s interviews with Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen; Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris.

²⁷³ Author’s interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

²⁷⁴ Author’s interviews with Jean-Marie Fardeau, 11-04-17, Paris; Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris.

²⁷⁵ Author’s interviews with Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²⁷⁶ Author’s interview with Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés.

²⁷⁷ Author’s interview with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

²⁷⁸ Author’s interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

²⁷⁹ Author’s interview with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

5.3 The fellow sufferers: an alliance between left activists and the Muslim community?

As is clear from the collective action frames discussed in *chapter 3*, activists argue that the state of emergency has targeted two distinct groups. Firstly, the state of emergency has targeted people based on their religious affiliation: the Muslim community. Secondly, it has targeted a group because of their political activism, which is labelled as “extreme” or “radical” left. Whereas one could expect that these two groups would be natural allies because of the comparable wrongs that have been done to them, the reality is more complex.

5.3.1 A split mobilisation: the house searches and the COP21

The mobilisation during the first weeks of the state of emergency is illustrative of the divide between activists from the Muslims community and left activists. Yasser Louati, former spokesman of the CCIF, states that the tension between the two groups originates from a divergence in perceptions of when the state of emergency became problematic.²⁸⁰ For some organisations and activists, the troubles of the state of emergency started with the COP21 when left activists were targeted. However, for the Muslim community the starting point was right after the declaration of the state of emergency when the violent house searches shocked their communities.²⁸¹

The importance that some respondents ascribe to the COP21 in mobilising people against the state of emergency, underlines the idea that although there was some media attention for violent house searches, “the attention was very much focused on the activists that were placed under house arrest during the COP21.”²⁸² This event became the most important example of the potential arbitrary use of the state of emergency (Amnesty International, 2016), as people now realised that not only Muslims would be targeted but that it could be used against anyone.²⁸³ Without the COP21, activists are unsure if the political, juridical and civil societal reaction would have been the same.²⁸⁴ The mobilisation really took off because the state was targeting the usual allies of human rights organisations²⁸⁵ For some activists, this is an uncomfortable truth:

“It is in fact, they affected ‘us.’ When it is the others... it is very problematic, so I am very, very uncomfortable with that idea. That in fact, when it affects the Muslims, we are a bit immune: ‘maybe that the guy is a bit radicalised after all.’ I think that is absolutely unacceptable. [...] It is so tragic, and it says something about the state of France today that is absolutely detestable. And I am ashamed. I am really ashamed.”²⁸⁶

²⁸⁰ Author’s interview with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²⁸¹ Author’s interviews with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

²⁸² Author’s interview with Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris.

²⁸³ Author’s interview with Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen.

²⁸⁴ Author’s interviews with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris; Laurence Blisson, 03-04-17, Paris.

²⁸⁵ Author’s interview with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris.

²⁸⁶ Author’s interview with Matthieu Quinquis, 20-03-17, Paris.

Yasser Louati explains how the difference in perceived starting points led to a split mobilisation, as the protests against the state of emergency of 30 January and 12 March were each prepared in separate meetings organized along racial lines.²⁸⁷ The first meeting was held in Saint Denis the 15th of December 2015 where the participants were people from immigrant and Muslim backgrounds, mostly from the banlieues.²⁸⁸ The second meeting took place at in Paris and was organised by “white” activists. In the end, Louati continues, some people from the second meeting argued that it could not take place without the people from Saint Denis as they were the ones that were targeted first.²⁸⁹ He went to their meeting to represent the CCIF and his first words were symbolic for the way in which the state of emergency united the two groups: “Join the club.”²⁹⁰

However, the attempt to merge the two movements led to difficulties and complicated debates, the main one being on whether or not Islamophobia should be placed on the agenda.²⁹¹ This can be linked back to the controversy of the term Islamophobia as discussed in the beginning of this chapter. The frame disputes evolved mainly about how to present the injustice component of the collective action frames as left activists emphasised the unjust use of the state of emergency during the COP21 while organisations from the Muslim community wanted to vocalise on the discriminatory and racist use of the state of emergency.²⁹² From the perspective of Yasser Louati it was a real battle to make sure that questions of racism and Islamophobia were not ignored in the mobilisation: it was difficult to even get the word Muslim on the flyer and there have even been manoeuvres to remove it.²⁹³

After making the divide explicit, the question remains how this divide has influenced the campaign and why activists include it in their narratives of failure. Several respondents ascribed the failure of the campaign against the state of emergency up to now to the lack of a comprehensive Muslim voice.²⁹⁴ They believe that the Muslim community is not sufficiently heard²⁹⁵ while the voices of the people that have lived through the practical consequences of the state of emergency have the biggest potential of making the French population more aware of the dangers.²⁹⁶

²⁸⁷ Author’s interview with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²⁸⁸ Author’s interview with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²⁸⁹ Author’s interview with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²⁹⁰ Author’s interview with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²⁹¹ Author’s interview with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²⁹² Author’s interview with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²⁹³ Author’s interview with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

²⁹⁴ Author’s interviews with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris; Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris.

²⁹⁵ Author’s interviews with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris; Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris; Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés.

²⁹⁶ Author’s interviews with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris; Jérôme Karsenti, 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés.

5.3.2 *Joining forces: the left-Muslim alliance*

Lila Charef, head of the legal department of the CCIF, suggests that it is interesting to see the connections between left activists and Muslim families that have lived through similar situations.²⁹⁷ Indeed, when analysing the collective action frames that left activists and activists working from within the Muslim community use, a lot of similarities come up as both groups emphasise the risk of arbitrary use, police violence and the individual impact of the state of emergency.

Firstly, both groups have experienced the arbitrary use of the state of emergency directly. Halim Abdelmalek was placed under house arrest, because he was photographed with his scooter in the street where the director of Charlie Hebdo lives, while being on the phone, and because he has a beard.²⁹⁸ This constituted his “dangerous behaviour.” Joël Domenjoud was placed under house arrest because his active involvement in the radical anarchistic milieu was deemed “dangerous behaviour.”²⁹⁹

Furthermore, both groups emphasise their troubled relationship with the police. In the context of the state of emergency, police violence against Muslims was expressed mostly during the house searches and violence against left activists reached a peak during the protests against the labour reform law. However, both groups have a longer history of clashes with the police, leading to shared feelings such as “an incarnated hate of the police,”³⁰⁰ that people are “afraid of the police,”³⁰¹ that “everyone hates the [institution of the] police during protests”³⁰² and that since the state of emergency “it is completely impossible to have a normal relationship with the police.”³⁰³

Finally, as they have experienced the measures of the state of emergency themselves, both groups prioritise the individual impact of the state of emergency on a person’s life. This concerns for example the fear of a house search that could happen at any time.³⁰⁴ According to Yasser Louati, this fear is also why few people from within the Muslim community dare to mobilise against the state of emergency: “people are truly scared to death” to be targeted next.³⁰⁵ Some activists observe that the measures of the state of emergency are mostly used against people who are active, for example in mosques, Muslim associations or in the organisation of protests within the radical left milieu.³⁰⁶ In this sense, the state of emergency is also perceived as an instrument of the state to discourage such activities of both groups.

²⁹⁷ Author’s interview with Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen.

²⁹⁸ Author’s interview with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

²⁹⁹ Author’s interview with Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris.

³⁰⁰ Author’s interview with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif.

³⁰¹ Author’s interview with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone.

³⁰² Author’s interview with Sebastien Kurt, 14-03-17, Paris.

³⁰³ Author’s interview with Alain Dru, 19-04-17, Montreuil.

³⁰⁴ Author’s interviews with Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris; Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

³⁰⁵ Author’s interview with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

³⁰⁶ Author’s interviews with Halim Abdelmalek, 27-04-17, Villejuif; Sihem Zine, 03-04-17, telephone; Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris.

We have seen that there are clear similarities in the situations and the usage of collective action frames of activists from the Muslim community and left activists. Did these similarities lead to collaboration? This is still a work in progress. During the protests against the labour reform law, Yasser Louati has spoken at *Nuit Debout* about the social fractures in the country and how they should not let their activism reflect these divisions: “If you march alone, it won’t work.”³⁰⁷ To be successful, according to Yasser Louati, activists have to try to appeal to the various segments of society and be as inclusive as possible, otherwise people will say: “it’s your trouble, not mine.”³⁰⁸

Joël Domenjoud has started visiting people from the Muslim community who have been placed under house arrest, with the aim of trying to find a common voice by combining the experiences of both targeted groups.³⁰⁹ He wants to turn this into a study on the negative psychological and social consequences of the state of emergency.

This chapter has discussed three different splits that divided participants of the campaign against France’s state of emergency and that activists included in their narratives to explain the campaign’s limited success. These splits are both general and specific. They are general in the sense that they reflect conclusions drawn from broader research on social movement dynamics, notably that activists working outside of the recognised framework and defining themselves as outsiders are usually sceptic and critical of “mainstream activists” that work more closely to the state (McAdam, Tarrow & Tilly, 2001; Koopmans, 1993; Pettinicchio, 2012). At the same time, the divisions are specific to the topic at hand, since the state of emergency specifically triggered some of the differences discussed in this chapter. For instance, the highly emotional context of the terrorist attacks might have amplified the negative connotation to communitarianist organisations. Yet, the state of emergency also united universalist and communitarianist organisations by providing common-ground for their objections. Similarly, the fact that the state of emergency has mainly targeted citizens of the Muslim faith and left activists has highlighted the differences and similarities between these groups and their situations. It can be concluded that the state of emergency triggered divisions between different segments of France’s society while at the same time providing new opportunities for collaboration.

³⁰⁷ Author’s interviews with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris; Lila Charef, 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen.

³⁰⁸ Author’s interview with Yasser Louati, 28-04-17, Paris.

³⁰⁹ Author’s interview with Joël Domenjoud, 20-04-17, Paris.

CONCLUSION

Fear over freedom: a challenging time

The contrast between the substantial impact of France's state of emergency on human rights, civil liberties and social cohesion on the one hand and the limited success of its contestants on the other, has been the red line throughout this thesis. I have aimed to address the following research question:

In the light of the profound impact of France's state of emergency on civil liberties and human rights, what campaign did French activists develop in opposition to the state of emergency between November 2015 and May 2017 in Paris and how do they explain its limited success?

The answer to this question provides insights on multiple levels: the specific case of the campaign against France's state of emergency, the functioning of different actors within the episode of contention and on a more general level, the current political climate in France and Europe. I will reflect on the main findings for each of these levels, as well as indicate the limitations of the present research and make suggestions for future research.

The campaign against France's state of emergency started almost immediately after the declaration of the state of emergency in November 2015 and its evolution was characterised by different events that influenced the focus of the campaign, notably the violent house searches, the COP21, the constitutional debates, the labour reform law and the 2017 elections. When I reflect on the findings presented in this research, diversity seems to be the word that best characterises the campaign. The topic of the state of emergency drew in a variety of actors that used a diverse collection of collective action frames to legitimate their campaign. Although all activists opposed the state of emergency, they prioritised different problematic aspects and sometimes pursued different end goals through a multiplicity of strategies on different levels. Furthermore, while activists had a clear idea of whom to blame for the state of emergency: the government of President Hollande and the French Parliament, they did not engage in real attempts to create a collective identity among the opposition members but rather emphasised the diversity of the organisations involved in the campaign.

The aim of this research was to map the campaign against France's state of emergency indicating its main actors, events and how it evolved over time. It should be stressed that this research project was limited to activism within the city of Paris and suburbs and the findings can therefore not be generalised to France as a whole. Paris constitutes a very distinctive political and activist environment that is not representative for other French cities, let alone the countryside. Due to time and resource limitations, I have decided to focus on Paris, as it is the hotspot of French activism. However, research focusing on different cities and places in France would enhance the possibilities of mapping the campaign on a national level.

Besides the incoherence of the collective action frames used in the campaign, the failure of the campaign within the timeframe of this research project is a second important theme. While almost everything within the campaign was contested, there was a general consensus about the idea that the campaign had not reached its main goal and has only had limited success. Activists use external as well as internal explanations to account for the failure of the campaign. External explanations include events that have hindered their claim making and the unresponsiveness of the population and politicians, while internal events focus on the internal dynamics, resources and collective identity of the opposition movement. The findings presented in this thesis affirm the importance of integrating structural, resources and framing perspective on contentious politics (Kamenitsa, 1998), as we have seen that the constitutional debates could be understood as facilitating collective action, hindering collective action, or a combination of both at the same time, depended on the activist's interpretation.

I have aimed to make a contribution to the still underdeveloped literature on activists' interpretation of failure and decline in social movement organisations and campaigns in three main ways. Firstly, I have separated the concepts of decline and failure that are often used interchangeably, by further specifying and defining what we mean exactly when using these concepts. Secondly, I have tweaked Owens (2008;2009) concept of narratives of decline in a way in which it can be applied to cases of social movement- or campaign failure. Thirdly, I have provided empirical evidence of a new, ongoing case of campaign failure and hereby added to the empirical knowledge on this topic. Future research could deepen our understanding of the relationship between these two concepts: why do activists interpret some situations as decline and others as failure?

On the level of the contentious episode, the main finding is that the state of emergency provided common ground and an opportunity for organisations that traditionally do not work together to approach each other. The splits that existed within the campaign between universalist and communitarianist organisations, big associations and organisations and individuals on the ground, and people from the Muslim community and left political activists, have both been highlighted and started to be bridged by the specific topic of the state of emergency. It would be interesting to see how the cooperation between these segments will develop in the future and whether or not activists will propose closer cooperation as a strategy to improve the campaign. The topic of contentious interaction and cooperation between left political activists and traditional human rights organisations on the one hand and activists from within the Muslim community on the other, is relatively new terrain. I suggest that future research could further explore this topic that might be especially relevant in the current political climate in Europe.

A contentious episode refers to all contentious interaction on a certain topic. I have aimed to map this contentious interaction by outlining the frame disputes that activists engaged in when constructing their collective action frames and the identity splits that existed within the campaign. This research however, is limited to interaction between activists within the campaign and hereby overlooks

another category of interactions: that of activists and the state or political parties. Although I have discussed some of these interactions, for example through the way in which the government used the state of emergency and their unresponsiveness to the activists' frame, it should be noted that this remains a one-sided story. Since I have only included activists in my research, the interests and values that are ascribed to the state are the product of activists' understanding. It would be interesting to be able to compare activists' interpretations with how state officials regard the state of emergency and interpret the campaign, for a more complete understanding of the contentious episode.

Finally, the case of the limited success of the campaign against France's state of emergency is exemplary for the current political climate in France and Europe that many perceive as unstable, dangerous and marked by terrorist attacks and fear. It is a climate defined by rising popularities of extreme right parties, the Brexit, the election of Trump and intolerance towards refugees, immigrants and anything or anyone unknown. The way in which governments respond to the challenges of the perceived terrorist threat, often countered by securitising politics, broadening and deepening counterterrorism legislation and the instalment of exceptional measures, is also characteristic. Responding adequately to terrorism is one of the major challenges facing modern democracies in the 21st century today (Bourdon, 2017:15).

I argue that the zeitgeist of the current political climate in Europe is extremely important for the case at hand and shines its light on all the aspects of this research. I would say that years ago, it would have been unimaginable for a regime with such derogating effects to be installed in France with about 90 per cent support of the population and almost no contestation. Terrorist attacks make people willing to trade liberties for safety, even if this safety is only illusory. The attacks in France in January 2015, November 2015 and July 2016 have traumatised the population and fed into the acceptance of exceptional measures that have now largely been included into the common law framework and accepted as the new normal, stirring France towards a "permanent state of exception" (Bourdon, 2017:15).

In this context, it is safe to say that despite the campaign's shortcomings, any successful campaign would have been very difficult to establish due to the contextual events and the overwhelming public support for the state of emergency. The characteristics of the political climate in Europe as presented above, could also be part of the answer to Tilly and Tarrow's question of why citizens of modern democratic regimes often "sit on their hands when they have the right to resist" (2015:233). Safety and protection seem to have become the most valued goods for European citizens and they happily sit on their hands and denounce some of their liberties if they believe that this could enhance these goods.

But as European citizens sit on their hands, the exceptional measures that were once presented as a concrete response to the terrorist threat slide into the common law framework and undo themselves of their temporary and exceptional nature that formerly legitimated their existence. “We are at the point of getting used to, everyone collectively, the idea that France lives under the state of emergency.”³¹⁰

Therefore, just as responding to terrorism in a way that respects civil liberties and human rights is said to be the greatest challenge for governments of democratic regimes, contesting these efforts and mobilising citizens against counterterrorism measures when they do endanger civil liberties, human rights, democracy and social cohesion, might very well be the most important challenge for activists in modern democracies today.

³¹⁰ Author’s interview with Nicolas Krameyer, 18-04-17, Paris.

Appendix 1: List of interviews conducted

Arranged by date of the interview.

| Name | Organisation / affiliation | Collective(s) | Date and place |
|----------------------|--|--|-----------------------|
| 1. Françoise Dumont | President <i>Ligue des Droits de l'Homme</i> (LDH) | <i>Nous ne céderons pas</i> | 03-03-17, Paris |
| 2. Pierre Lalu | <i>Nuit Debout</i> | | 06-03-17, Paris |
| 3. Sophie Wahnich | Academic | <i>Conseil d'Urgence Citoyenne</i> (CUC) | 08-03-17, Paris |
| 4. Sebastien Kurt | <i>Nuit Debout</i> | | 14-03-17, Paris |
| 5. Alice Benveniste | Law student & activist | <i>Collectif Associatif et Universitaire</i> | 17-03-17, Paris |
| 6. Matthieu Quinquis | Law student & activist | <i>Collectif Associatif et Universitaire</i> | 20-03-17, Paris |
| 7. Arie Alimi | Lawyer | <i>Réseau état d'urgence-antiterroriste</i> | 27-03-17, Paris |
| 8. Serge Slama* | Academic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Collectif Associatif et Universitaire</i> • <i>Réseau état d'urgence-antiterroriste</i> | 29-03-17, Paris |
| 9. Yves Veyrier | Labour union <i>Force Ouvrière</i> (FO) | | 30-03-17, Paris |
| 10. Laurence Blisson | Labour Union <i>Syndicat de la Magistrature</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nous ne céderons pas</i> • <i>Stop état d'urgence</i> • <i>Collectif Associatif et Universitaire</i> • <i>Réseau état d'urgence - antiterroriste</i> | 03-04-17, Paris |
| 11. Sihem Zine | <i>Action Droits des Musulmans</i> (ADM) | <i>Réseau état d'urgence - antiterroriste</i> | 03-04-17, telephone |
| 12. Raphaël Kempf | Lawyer | | 04-04-17, Paris |
| 13. Aïnoha Pascual | Lawyer | | 05-04-17, Paris |

| | | | |
|------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------|
| 14. Frédéric Sève | Labour Union <i>Confédération française démocratique du travail (CFDT)</i> | | 05-04-17, Paris |
| 15. Jean-Marie Fardeau | VoxPublic | <i>Réseau état d'urgence - antiterroriste</i> | 11-04-17, Paris |
| 16. Jérôme Karsenti | Lawyer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Conseil d'Urgence Citoyenne (CUC)</i> • <i>Réseau état d'urgence - antiterroriste</i> | 18-04-17, Saint-Maur-des-Fossés |
| 17. Nicolas Krameyer | Amnesty International France | <i>Réseau état d'urgence - antiterroriste</i> | 18-04-17, Paris |
| 18. Christine Lazerges | <i>Professeur émérite de l'Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne et Présidente de la Commission nationale consultative des droits de l'homme (CNCDH).</i> | Informal observer of <i>Réseau état d'urgence - antiterroriste</i> | 19-04-17, Paris |
| 19. Alain Dru | Labour union <i>Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT)</i> | <i>Nous ne céderons pas</i> | 19-04-17, Montreuil |
| 20. Joël Domenjoud | Formerly placed under house arrest COP21, left activist | | 20-04-17, Paris |
| 21. Lila Charef | Head of the legal department of the <i>Collectif Contre l'Islamophobie en France (CCIF)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nous ne céderons pas</i> • <i>Réseau état d'urgence - antiterroriste</i> | 25-04-17, Saint-Ouen |
| 22. Adrienne Charmet | <i>La Quadrature du Net (LQDN)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nous ne céderons pas</i> • <i>Collectif Associatif et Universitaire</i> • <i>Réseau état d'urgence – antiterroriste</i> | 27-04-17, Paris |

| | | | |
|----------------------|---|--|---------------------|
| 23. Halim Abdelmalek | Formerly placed under house arrest, activist Muslim community | | 27-04-17, Villejuif |
| 24. Yasser Louati | Former spokesman of <i>Collectif Contre l'Islamophobie en France</i> (CCIF) | <i>Nous ne céderons pas</i> | 28-04-17, Paris |
| 25. Cécile Marcel | <i>Observatoire International des Prisons</i> (OIP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nous ne céderons pas</i> • <i>Réseau état d'urgence - antiterroriste</i> | 02-04-17, telephone |

*Additional correspondence:

Author's personal communication with Serge Slama, 05-06-17, email correspondence.

Appendix 2: List of data collected through participant observation

| Name event | Description event | Date and place |
|--|--|--------------------|
| 1. Women's March | Demonstration for women's rights and against racism and police violence. | 08-03-17, Paris |
| 2. Support evening Collective Baras | Support evening for collective Baras, which defends the rights of illegal immigrants from West-Africa. | 18-03-17, Bagnolet |
| 3. March for Justice, Against Racism and Police Violence | Demonstration against Racism and police violence. | 19-03-17, Paris |
| 4. Meeting <i>Réseau Etat d'urgence-Antiterroriste</i> | Meeting of the network in which participants debated upcoming actions. | 30-03-17, Paris |

Appendix 3: List of specific organisations mobilised in the campaign

I lack the appropriate data to produce an exhaustive list of all the organisations mobilised against the state of emergency. The list that I provide here contains the first members of collectives *Nous ne céderons pas* and *Stop état d'urgence*. As these were the two biggest collectives mobilised against the state of emergency, it gives a good impression of the different organisations that participated in the campaign, but it is not complete.

1. *Nous ne céderons pas*³¹¹

AC ! Agir ensemble contre le chômage !, AFD International, Agir pour le changement démocratique en Algérie (Acda), Alofa Tuvalu, Altertour, L'Appel des appels, Assemblée citoyenne des originaires de Turquie (Acort), Association Avocats pour la défense des droits des détenus, Association démocratique des Tunisiens en France (ADTF), Association française des juristes démocrates (AFJD), Association France Palestine solidarité (AFPS), Association générale des étudiants de Paris-Sorbonne (Ageps), Association Grèce France Résistance, Association interculturelle de production, de documentation et de diffusion audiovisuelles (AIDDA), Association des Marocains en France (AMF), Association nationale d'assistance aux frontières pour les étrangers (Anafé), Association nationale des pieds-noirs progressistes et leurs amis (ANPNPA), Association pour la reconnaissance des droits et libertés aux femmes musulmanes (ARDLFM), Association des travailleurs maghrébins de France (ATMF), Association des Tunisiens en France (ATF), Association des universitaires pour le respect du droit international en Palestine (Aurdip), Attac, Cadac, Campagne BDS France, Cedetim, Centre islamique Philippe Grenier (CIPG), Centre de recherche et d'information pour le développement (Crid), CISPM/ Maroc, Collectif 3C, Collectif des 39, Collectif des associations citoyennes, Collectif CGT Insertion-Probation (UGFF-CGT), Collectif La Chapelle debout !, Collectif contre l'islamophobie en France (CCIF), Collectif des féministes pour l'égalité (CFPE), Collectif Judéo Arabe et Citoyen pour la Palestine (CJACP), Collectif Memorial 98, Collectif des musulmans de France (CMF), Collectif national pour les droits des femmes (CNDF), Collectif national des Faucheurs volontaires, Collectif Ouiouioui, Collectif Stop le contrôle au faciès, Comité pour le développement et le patrimoine (CDP), Comité pour le respect des libertés et des droits de l'Homme en Tunisie (CRLDHT), Commission islam et laïcité, Confédération syndicale des familles (CSF), Confédération générale du travail (CGT), CGT-Finances publiques, Conseil national des associations familiales laïques (Cnafal), Confédération nationale du logement (CNL), Confédération paysanne, Conseil des migrants subsahariens au Maroc, Conseil national des arts vivants (Synavi), Coordination de l'action non-violente de l'Arche (Canva), Coordination contre le racisme et l'islamophobie (CRI), Coordination nationale Pas sans nous, Droits devant !, Droit au logement (Dal), Droit solidarité, Emancipation Tendance intersyndicale, Emmaüs France, Emmaüs International,

³¹¹ As mentioned on first public announcement of the collective, accessible via <http://www.ldh-france.org/cederons-pas/>.

Espace Marx, Fédération des associations des travailleurs et des jeunes (DIDF-France), Fédération des CRICs, Fédération française des motards en colère (FFMC), Fédération internationale des Ligues des droits de l'Homme (FIDH), Fédération nationale de la Libre pensée, Fédération des Tunisiens citoyens des deux rives (FTCR), Femmes Solidaires, Filles et fils de la République (FFR), Fédération syndicale unitaire (FSU), Fondation Copernic, Fondation sciences citoyennes, Genepi, Génération libre, Ipam, Jinov International, La Cimade, La Ligue de l'enseignement, La Quadrature du Net, Le Gisti, Le Mouvement de la paix, Les Amis de la terre France, Les Amoureux au ban public, Les Céméa, Liberpensula Frakcio de Sat, Ligue des droits de l'Homme (LDH), Maison des potes, Mamans toutes égales (MTE), Marche des femmes pour la dignité (Mafed), Médecins du monde, Minga-agir ensemble pour une économie équitable, Mouvement pour une alternative non-violente (Man), Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'amitié entre les peuples (Mrap), Mouvement pour l'économie solidaire, Mouvement utopia, Négajoule!, Observatoire citoyen du CRA de Palaiseau, Observatoire international des prisons (OIP) – section française, Organisation de femmes égalité, Osez le féminisme !, Participation et spiritualité musulmanes (PSM), Planning familial, Pôle de renaissance communiste en France (PRCF), Réseau d'alerte et d'intervention pour les droits de l'Homme (RaidH), Réseau éducation sans frontières (RESF), Réseau euromaghrébin culture et citoyenneté (REMCC), Réseau Euromed France (REF), Réseau Immigration Développement Démocratie (IDD), SNEPAP-FSU, SNJ-CGT, SNPES-PJJ/FSU, Snuclias-FSU, SNUEP-FSU, SNUITAM-FSU, Solidarité laïque, Sud Intérieur, SUPAP-FSU, Survie, Syndicat des avocats de France (Saf), Syndicat français des artistes interprètes (SFA), Syndicat de la Médecine Générale, Syndicat national des arts vivants (Synavi), Syndicat national des journalistes (SNJ), Une Autre voix juive (UAVJ), Unef, Union juive française pour la paix (UJFP), Union nationale lycéenne (UNL), Union rationaliste, Union des travailleurs immigrés tunisiens (Utit), Union syndicale de la psychiatrie (USP), Union syndicale Solidaires, AC ! Trégor, Asti 93, Clamart-Citoyenne, Collectif 07 stop au gaz et huile de schiste, Collectif BDS Saint-Etienne, Collectif D'ailleurs nous sommes d'ici Tours 37, Collectif Justice & Libertés (Strasbourg), Collectif lyonnais jamais déchu, Collectif Maquis de Corrèze, Collectif Romeurope 94, Collectif de soutien aux sans-papiers du Trégor-Goëlo, Espace franco-algérien, Faucheurs volontaires de la Loire, Halte OGM 07, la revue *Inprecor*, le journal *Regards*, Réseaux citoyens Saint-Etienne, Revue *Mouvements*, Vigilance OGM 18.

2. Stop état d'urgence³¹²

AC !, ACORT, ADF, AMF, APEIS, ATMF, ATTAC, CCIF, CEDETIM, CFPE, CGT 75, CNT RP, Col. 3C, Col. des désobéissants, Col. des sans voix 18e, COPAF, CRLDHT, CSP 75, DAL, Droits devant, Ecologie sociale, FASTI, Femmes égalité, Filles et fils de la république (FFR), Fondation Copernic, FTICR, FUIQP, GISTI, HALEM, Initiative Décroissante pour le Climat, IPAM, MAFED, MCTF, MNCP, MRAP, REMCC, Rés. pour une Gauche Décoloniale, Syndicat de la Magistrature, SNES PJJ-FSU, Solidaire, Solidaires étudiant-e-s, SUD Aérien, SUD PTT, Sortir du colonialisme, Survie, UJFP, UTIT. With the support of political parties: Alternative libertaire, CGA, Ensemble, NPA, PCOF, PG.

³¹² As announced on the flyer promoting the protest of 30 January 2016, accessible via <http://www.ujfp.org/spip.php?article4646>.

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