

REPRESSION AND ANIMAL ADVOCACY

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“Repression and Animal Advocacy”

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This thesis looks at the dynamics of contention around animal advocacy in four European countries. More specifically, it aims at understanding how and why State and private actors respond to the animal protection movement in attempting to repress it. For this task, it develops a typology of repression centred around three main forms: coercive repression, that encompasses diverse tactics to contain or proactively counter animal advocates within the existing moral and legislative frameworks and legislative and discursive criminalisation. The former consists in the creation of ad hoc laws, while the latter relies on the promotion of a rhetoric that frames activists as extremists or terrorists, or the animal rights ideology itself as dangerous, through a series of processes identified via the development of a specific typology. The cases studied in this work are the UK, Austria and Spain, where significant repression of animal advocates occurred, and Italy, where less repression occurred in a first period, before waning as the movement was gaining momentum—despite a significant level of underground direct action. This work constitutes the first account of the Italian and Spanish movements and their repression. After presenting the main features of the movement’s history and structure in each country, the thesis analyses instances of repression and seeks to determine what factors can enable an understanding of the occurrence of repression. To do so, it tests two traditional hypotheses put forth by repression theorists, pertaining to the threatening character of a movement to repressive agents and to its weakness, that would present less risk of a backfire. The thesis concludes that the repression of the movement is better understood as a result of (varying aspects of) threat in the UK and Austria, weakness in Spain and weakness, or lack thereof, in Italy.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis focuses on the dynamics of contention in the field of animal protection politics in four European countries, and more precisely on the repression of the animal advocacy movement by State authorities and actors of animal industries.

As this social movement developed considerably in the last decades and aimed increasingly at improving the legislation regarding animal protection, by developing political strategies, corporate and State actors sought to hamper or contain the activists' actions and their effects and delineate their possibilities in terms of tactical repertoires.

A broad understanding of repression will be adopted in this work, to allow for a holistic approach of the interactions between animal advocates, their political opponents and State authorities. Hence, repression will refer here, following Charles Tilly's (1978, p. 100) definition, to 'any action by another group which raises the contender's cost of collective action'.

This thesis relies on a case study in four European countries: the United Kingdom, Austria, Spain and Italy. It features an empirical dimension, which focuses on the animal advocacy movement in each of these countries as well as its strategies and on the forms that the repression of the movement has taken and how these interact. Another dimension is analytical, aiming to determine the factors explaining the occurrence or absence of repression and the motivations of repressive agents.

Importantly, this work particularly focuses on the repression of the legal or non-violent, above-ground part of the movement, even though the actions of the underground, law-breaking minority will have to be presented, as well as the response of authorities, as these interactions are hardly completely dissociable to, and have implications for, the dynamics that are the focus of this thesis.

1. CONTEXT

Although organisations advocating for the protection of animals have existed since the 19th century, the 1960s and 1970s constituted a shift in the movement both in terms of ideology and importance. Scholars such as Peter Singer (1975) and Tom Regan (1983) gave it a new impetus and accompanied a radicalisation of the movement. Animal rights advocates thus not only oppose ‘unnecessary’ animal suffering, as welfarists do, but also claim the right to life and freedom for exploited animals and hence the end of their exploitation.

The emergence of animal rights philosophy calling for more substantial changes to the way animals are treated led some activists to adopt more radical strategies in parallel. The most famous example of this tactical radicalisation is the Animal Liberation Front (ALF). This organisation advocates direct action methods such as sabotage and the liberation of animals. The expressed goal of the ALF is not only to save animal lives directly through the latter but also to inflict economic damage on animal exploiters through sabotage. However, the guidelines of the ALF make it clear that people claiming to act on behalf of it must make all necessary efforts to avoid physically harming any animal, human and non-human alike. The ALF is not a formal structure, it is decentralised and anybody acting according to its guidelines can claim to act on behalf of it (Animal Liberation Front, n.d.; Best and Nocella II, 2004). Other groups then appeared, such as the Animal Rights Militia or the Justice Department. Contrary to the ALF, they reserve the right to physically harm humans in their missions. Yet, as shown in chapter 4, in the entire history of the movement, only six cases of (mainly minor) injuries resulted from actions of such groups and there was only one case of a murder attempt, which was later proven to have been orchestrated by corporate agents who attempted to set up an activist (Potter, 2011, p. 51). However, although it involves a minuscule proportion of activists, illegal actions by animal advocates inflicted a considerable amount of economic loss on animal industries and in particular the research industry (Potter, 2011; Sorenson, 2011; Poszlusna, 2015).

Alongside these developments, and while more and more institutionalised welfarist and animal rights organisations appeared, that operated within

institutional avenues and resorted to public education or lobbying activities, other groups developed aboveground strategies that were at the fringe of legality. Civil disobedience actions such as hunt sabotage have been undertaken in the United Kingdom since the 1960s. The late 1990s saw the development of pressure campaigns, first in the UK and then in many Western countries, that targeted companies tied to animal experimentation and of which the success was often the result of both aboveground protest tactics and accompanying clandestine direct actions. Among these, the Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC) campaign, the first global campaign of this scale in the history of the movement, has aimed since 1999 until its demise in 2014 to close down Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS), the biggest animal-testing laboratory in Europe. SHAC was a loosely coordinated campaign and as such, combined perfectly legal actions such as demonstrations in front of companies financially supporting HLS, or letter writing campaigns and actions on the fringe of legality, such as demonstrations in front of executives' homes, exposing individuals' involvement in animal exploitation to their neighbours, call campaigns that have been likened to harassment and sometimes libelling. The coordination of the campaign came to publicise information about illegal actions, although it did not clearly advocate such kind of actions. Hence, they sustained a grey area regarding their stance on illegal direct action (Aaltola, 2012), which would later be used against them (Potter, 2011; Liddick, 2006).

In parallel, the animal advocacy movement as a whole has become ever more important, leading Marsh (1994) to label it one of the major social movements of the second half of the 20th century. The growth of this movement represents a clear threat to the interests of industries using animals, whether it be the pharmaceutical industry, the farming industry, or any other. Since the 1980s, organisations targeted by animal rights activists have sought to develop strategies of countermobilisation. Earlier forms of countermobilisation focused on communication campaigns directed at public opinion (Jasper and Poulsen, 1993; Unti and Rowan, 2001). However, it will be argued here that a later and more covert countermobilisation strategy from animal industries has been to influence state institutions to obtain a tougher repression of animal advocates, whether they act legally or not, while publicising a discourse that attempts to frame animal

advocates as terrorists and extremists in order to weaken their impact and to delegitimise their ideas. As Potter (2011, p. 55) puts it, in the context of the USA: 'they needed to displace activists from their moral high ground. A key development in orchestrating this fall from grace was the decision to wield the power of language'.

Repression has taken diverse forms. Probably the most obvious form has been the arrests and detention of leading aboveground activists as has happened in Austria in 2008 or in Spain in 2011. In both countries, activists from various successful organisations were prosecuted in dubious use of existing laws, which in the Austrian case, brought Amnesty International to express concerns over the respect of human rights in the country. Both cases drew the attention of the international animal protection movement, and manifestations of solidarity were displayed worldwide. In both instances, prosecutors and judges showed clear personal biases as will be shown in chapter 3 and in the Austrian case, the trial was proven to have been the result of a backlash organised by authorities following corporate demands (Ellefsen, 2012). The Austrian activists were found not guilty in two sets of trials spanning six years and the Spanish case was dropped after four years due to the lack of proof against the accused (Pontevedra, 2015). In the United States and in the United Kingdom, SHAC coordinators were the object of severe jail sentences for 'conspiracy', although they were not found guilty of any particular crime (Potter, 2011; Lovitz, 2010). Repression has also taken the form of unusually tough sentences for civil disobedience acts or minor crimes, for example in the case of SHAC in the United Kingdom (Aaltola, 2012). Infiltrations by State and corporate actors have also been a way of repressing the movement (as will be shown in chapter 3, infiltration can be argued to be, at least in some instances, not only a tool *for* repression, but also one *of* repression).

Repression has also taken less evident forms, such as what I will refer to as legislative criminalisation, that may not have as adverse consequences on individuals, but that may well be more destructive for the movement as a whole. Those consist in taking away their means of action from activists: many countries, beginning with the USA, have for example undertaken to pass so-called 'ag-gag' laws to further criminalise activists who conduct undercover investigations in

breeding facilities in order to reveal the images on internet and in the media. Yet, using images of animal abuse to educate the public about the conditions of animals used for human purposes is one of the main and arguably one of the most efficient ways for animal advocates to advance their case. For example, O’Sullivan (2011) argues that differences in the treatment of various types of animals are better explained politically than they are economically, and that they result from their degree of visibility to citizens. This type of laws raises democratic questions in that they specifically target the animal protection movement. Furthermore, this form of legislative criminalisation constitutes a clear breach of the freedom of information and of the rights of people, both as consumers and as citizens, to know what they buy and how animals are treated. Another type of attack against fundamental democratic rights is threatening freedom of protest. In the USA, anti-terrorist legislation has been used to forbid lawful and peaceful demonstrations on the ground that they could instil fear in the targeted institutions (Potter, 2011). In the UK, demonstrations in front of Huntingdon Life Sciences have been limited to one authorised demonstration per week, at a precise time and day every week. Anti-social behaviour orders have been widely used to forbid animal advocates who were charged with a criminal offense to participate in any protest activity related to animals, even after they were found not guilty (Aaltola, 2012). In France, where the hunting lobby is particularly strong (Farrachi, 2008), a law now criminalises people who attempt to hamper a hunt.

There is also evidence of cooperation and data sharing between European intelligence services and between those and corporate agents. Europol and Eurojust in particular appear to be leading the offensive, organising meetings and conferences with corporate agents and with the media and producing reports, spreading the ‘extremism’ and ‘eco-terrorism’ rhetoric (Ellefsen, 2012; Europol, 2008 to 2013).

2. TERMINOLOGY AND ANIMAL ADVOCACY

Although the term ‘animal rights’ can sometimes be used to describe the animal advocacy movement as a whole, I will use ‘animal rights’ here solely to refer to the upholders of the abolition of animal exploitation—whether reforms are pursued on

the short term or not (but one should note that interviewees might sometimes use this term differently). To refer to the movement as a whole, I use 'animal advocacy/advocates' or 'animal protection/protectionists' interchangeably. Amongst these actors, one finds welfarists and the advocates of animal rights, to which I will refer more often as 'abolitionists' to avoid any confusion. Among abolitionists, one finds those I refer to as 'reformist abolitionists'—those who do advocate for reforms although their end goal is abolition—and 'fundamentalist abolitionists': those who refuse to advocate for reforms. Some, such as Szttybel (2007), have proposed to call the former 'animal rights pragmatists', but I wish to argue that not only does this entail a value judgement, but more importantly, the term is less self-evident and subject to interpretation. Jeangène Vilmer (2008) has proposed, respectively, the terms 'inclusive abolitionists' and 'exclusive abolitionists', which do not entail any value judgement. Nonetheless, I chose to use 'reformist abolitionists' and 'fundamentalist abolitionists' as they are self-evident and less prone to confusion. I do know that the term 'abolitionism' is now widely used to refer only to what I call 'fundamentalist abolitionism', but I use it here on purpose for both sub-categories of animal rights actors to make a point that Gary Francione and others have unjustifiably appropriated this term, mixing ideology (the fact of supporting the abolition of animal exploitation) and strategical-ideological considerations (whether actors consider that reforms are morally justified and whether they are useful or counterproductive towards achieving abolition on the long term). In particular, I refuse the phrase 'new welfarists', coined by Francione (1996), as I argue that he voluntarily confuses ideology (whether or not people think animals can be killed and imprisoned for certain purposes) and strategy (how do we get there?), in order to discredit reformist abolitionists, implying that they are in fact not abolitionist at all, but welfarist. Beyond the unfairness of this to people who sincerely want abolition but think reforms are relevant to get to it and the fact that it is intellectually dishonest and practically false, I most importantly believe this kind of, somewhat inconsequential, inner fights can have practical implications for cooperation in the movement and for its efficacy, especially in a movement where identity and group recognition is a strong feature, as I developed in other writings (Josse, 2013a,

2013b). Finally, it is important to underline that classifying certain organisations as welfarist or abolitionist can be tricky. Indeed, the term abolitionist here refers to the abolition of all animal exploitation, not to be confused with a sectoral abolitionism: all welfarist organisations in Spain for example, seek the abolition of bullfighting (no one in the movement would define it as ‘necessary suffering’). Some organisations being specialised in one specific field of animal exploitation may be *sectorally* abolitionist, but that does not per se mean that they are *comprehensively* abolitionist.

Finally, it should be said that some scholars or authors have advocated for nuanced forms of abolitionism that would not necessarily mean the end of all animal *use*, focusing more on the notion of suffering and well-being and arguing that some forms of human-animal relationships that some abolitionists would refuse, likening it to *exploitation*, could in fact be beneficial to both humans and animals, or at least not create suffering while not impeding well-being. Among these are, noticeably, Garner (2013) and Cochrane (2012). However, these nuances are not thought to be relevant to this work, given that the activists and organisations studied do not integrate these debates in their advocacy and abolitionists either defend a strict notion of abolitionism or do not enter these debates and focus on conveying notions such as anti-speciesism and the end of practices involving the death and suffering of animals: notions that are compatible with any version of abolitionism, be it strict or nuanced.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND THE SELECTION OF CASES

The aim of this research work is to determine the strategies developed by the movement in the countries studied, describe and analyse the response of State authorities and opponents and seek to explain the occurrence of repression. The research questions that this work aims to answer are as follows.

Firstly, which forms has repression taken and how do these interact? Who are the repressive agents? What are the dynamics between State repression and repression and countermobilisation by private actors? Do private agents mobilise more when the State is less involved? The answer will come from an analysis of the repression of the movement in different countries, drawing on frameworks

and theories of repression, such as those presented in chapter 1, to create a categorisation of the different forms it takes.

A second set of questions pertains to the explanation of repression: What are the reasons for the occurrence of repression? Is there a correlation between the level of radicalism in different countries and the occurrence or absence of repression? Or is the success of the movement in politically challenging animal industries a reason for repression? Is there a coherent trend towards the repression of the animal advocacy movement, or are there just punctual and unrelated events?

Answering these questions involves a comparative analysis of the movement in the countries studied in order to determine factors preceding repression such as the political resources developed by animal advocates, the relationships between different strands of the movement, as well as the tactics and communication strategies relied upon by different actors in the animal advocacy movement and the image public opinion had of the movement.

The choice of countries studied is directly aimed at answering these questions. The main initial hypotheses I wanted to test were: 1) national animal advocacy movements and groups are more likely to suffer repression when the amount and severity of underground direct action is higher; 2) Repression is more likely to occur when the movement is successful in challenging animal industries; 3) Repression is more likely to occur when the movement is weak (i.e. there are weak links or poor relations between movement actors and with other movements, they have little political support, they have a poor public image or public visibility). Hence, I wanted to study countries where there had been substantial repression, but also that featured different relevant characteristics enabling to test these hypotheses.

The UK was an obvious choice, as it is the country in Europe where the movement suffered by far the most repression, and as will be shown in chapter 3, all types of my typology of repression (coercive repression, legislative criminalisation and discursive criminalisation) occurred. Furthermore, the British movement had had a strong underground direct action element for decades, saw very intense aboveground confrontational tactics from the late 1990s through the

2000s, the movement as a whole was bigger than in other countries and it was very successful in challenging animal industries and was all but weak.

The Austrian case featured a very successful movement, less confrontational, with an almost non-existent underground direct action sector, which was very strong in terms of the factors pertaining to the third hypothesis. The Spanish case displayed a younger movement, with very little confrontationality and also very little underground activity. It was less successful than in the two former countries and appeared weaker. Both countries had encountered substantial repression in very similar cases.

Finally, I wanted to triangulate the findings pertaining to these three cases by studying a country where the movement did not meet substantial repression. I considered several options. One was the Netherlands, where, as I developed in earlier writing (Josse, 2013a), there was a successful and strongly institutionalised movement. Furthermore, this feature was partly reinforced by the perception of some of the movement's actors that they could face repression following the infamous killing of the far-right leader Pim Fortuyn in 2002 by a leftist militant that happened to also be an animal rights campaigner (although his expressed motives were not related to animal advocacy—see Loadenthal, 2017, p. 18). Yet, I thought the characteristics of the movement in this country pertaining to my hypotheses did not make it the right candidate: the movement was successful, but it was strong and there was little confrontation and too little direct action to make it a salient case. Another option I considered was France, not the least because of the convenience of speaking the language and the connections I had in the movement that would have facilitated the conduct of relevant interviews. Yet, at the time (2013), the French movement was rather unsuccessful and there was little to no confrontation and underground activity.

I instead selected Italy, as it displayed a successful movement, with very confrontational actors and a very strong underground direct action element, as will be shown especially in chapter 4. Furthermore, the movement had evolved in terms of weakness and strength in recent years, notably with relationships in the movement shifting, as we will see in chapter 5. Finally, repression decreased in Italy as the movement, and even more so its radical grassroots strand, was gaining

momentum. This made for the potential to adequately test all hypotheses. I was particularly interested in explaining why the Green Hill campaign, in the early 2010s, did not trigger repression. Indeed, this pressure campaign targeting a company tied to animal experimentation, at first sight similar to others in Italy and elsewhere that were repressed, was a huge success and culminated in hundreds of protesters breaking in the facility and liberating beagles. These images became a strong symbol for the movement in Italy and internationally.

4. STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This research addresses a number of gaps in the relevant literature. The repression of social movements or cause groups by private and State actors has extensively been studied. The repression of the animal protection movement has sparked academic and non-academic interest in the United States and more recently as regards the United Kingdom. Yet very few authors, and even fewer scholars, have looked into what happened in other European countries in the last decades in terms of the repression of the movement. This is also true as regards the development of the movement and its strategies in those countries, at least in English language. Furthermore, existing studies are all case studies limited to one country, campaign, or group in the movement. They also tend to consider only one aspect of repression at a time (to follow the typology I develop in this thesis, either coercive repression—or some elements of it, legislative or discursive criminalisation). Yet to grasp the scale of the backlash against the movement in some countries, and its implications, it is crucial to consider all dimensions of it and to adopt a holistic approach.

This is what **Chapter 1** will show in reviewing the literature. As the chapter demonstrates, the originality of this thesis resides firstly in adding to the general literature on contentious politics and the repression of social movements, by testing several existing theories of repression while existing works generally aim to test just one. Secondly and most importantly, it enriches the empirical literature on the animal protection movement itself and its repression, especially in continental Europe. The chapter also presents the theoretical background of the

thesis. The threefold typology of repression developed for this work is contrasted to the existing literature and the selection of theories of repression explanation selected to analyse the repression of animal advocates is explained.

Chapter 2 sets the background to the following discussion. It focuses on the history and structure of the movement in the countries studied and how its opponents were politically organised. These elements are important in that they serve to explain where the movement was in its evolution before the occurrence of repression and how that is relevant. The structure of these national movements is a relevant element because it can have implications as to the efficiency of repression and their capacity to respond efficiently to it. Furthermore, it is the first account of the Spanish and Italian animal advocacy movements and the first comprehensive account of the Austrian movement, at least in English.

Chapter 3 presents the forms repression has taken, ranging from bills being passed that considerably limit animal advocates' rights to dissent (what I term 'legislative criminalisation'), or that punish illegal actions with an unprecedented severity—by integrating civil disobedience acts or minor offences into the anti-terrorism legislation—to the incarceration of activists without proof of a crime having been committed, or even a clear accusation, or the infiltration of the movement ('coercive repression'). This wave of repression has also relied upon the promotion of a discourse by political elites or other state agents and by private actors—noticeably through the creation of ad hoc groups—that tend to criminalise activists and assimilate even the ideology of animal rights itself as a violent one ('discursive criminalisation'). This discourse serves to justify the other forms of repression of the movement. I identify a typology of discursive criminalisation that allows for a better understanding of the various rhetorical processes involved.

The two remaining chapters provide an analysis of the factors that may explain the occurrence—or absence—of repression in the countries studied. They do so following two main schools of repression explanation theorists, as developed further in the literature review. **Chapter 4** focuses on the level of threat to repressive agents represented by animal advocates. Several aspects of potential threat are examined: the frequency and intensity of underground direct actions, the attitudes of the wider movement and of the repressed groups towards these

actions, aboveground confrontational tactics and the degree of ideological radicalism of the repressed groups and the wider movement. It also looks at factors that may have altered the perception of authorities as to these features of the movement. Finally, it looks at the degree to which the movement was successful in challenging animal industries and thus may have represented an economic threat.

Chapter 5, following repression theorists that argue that repressive agents tend to repress weak groups as it is less likely to backfire against them, analyses the movement in terms of public support and media coverage, institutional support, movement cohesion and links with other social movements. It concludes by bringing together the two models to determine if the conjunction of threat and weakness works as an explanatory factor.

5. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

The research strategy of this thesis involves a qualitative design, dealing mainly with non-quantifiable information, emphasising on words rather than numbers in terms of both collection and analysis of data. It takes a holistic approach to the analysis of the repression of the animal advocacy movement in European countries. That is, it does not limit itself to one country as has been the case in the literature on the repression of animal advocacy until now. Contrary to most works on social movements repression, it will aim to test several theories to explain repression. These include the threat model, the weakness model, and the threat and weakness model presented in chapter 1. Finally, it will consider the role of State *and* private repressive agents and take into account a wide range of repression methods, whereas scholars have tended to focus on only one form of repression or one type of repressive agents at once. It will thus add to the body of literature in the field by filling the gaps identified in the review of the literature on repression.

As far as the analysis of the movement and its repression and the study of its effects are concerned, this will be undertaken through a comparative case study of the following countries: Austria, Spain, the United Kingdom and Italy. This

because, in the three former countries, major occurrences of repression have taken place. As far as Italy is concerned, the animal protection movement has recently mobilised substantially and become very successful, while repression waned and political elites even facilitated the movement. Yet, the number of clandestine direct actions in this country is amongst the highest in the world, just after Sweden and the UK, as shown in chapter 4. Thus, it is thought to be an interesting case to study, to triangulate conclusions drawn from the other cases.

This empirical study is largely based on interviews conducted in each of these countries. Twenty interviews were undertaken with 22 interviewees, of which 19 were in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted with activists and NGO representatives and one with a former Special Branch officer, active from the 1980s to the 2000s and with experience in the surveillance of the animal advocacy movement. One was undertaken via email exchange at the demand of the interviewee. Seventeen interviews were conducted in person, two through Skype (depending on the availability of the interviewees). Access to them was gained through personal connections and snowballing. Advocates were chosen for their knowledge of the movement in their country, having been involved in animal advocacy for years and sometimes decades and most of the time because they occupied leading roles in relevant organisations and groups. In order to select them, I conducted research into these national movements to gain a better idea of who the main acting structures and main actors were in each country and contacted them directly or through connections and during a congress on repression in Madrid in December 2012. I conducted more interviews in countries for which there was no English literature on the movement and its repression (6 interviewees in Spain and 7 in Italy). Having already studied the Austrian movement (Josse, 2013a), I conducted 4 interviews with key figures of the movement and/or defendants in the trials and for the English case I interviewed 3 leading figures of the movement and 1 police officer, to fill gaps in the already rich literature on the British movement and the growing one on its repression. The imbalance in interview sources is not thought to be problematic in that I double-checked factual information through publicly available sources and trial files accessed through interviewees in the Austrian case and systematically sought to

triangulate data through several interviews as regards strategies, information on the different actors of the movement or on political actors for or against animal protection. Furthermore, I used primary sources of another type to assess the point of view of State and corporate agents, such as communiqués, intelligence reports or website material, as explained below. The number of interviews conducted is thought to be appropriate, in that interviews were primarily aimed at getting access to factual information, rather than studying the activists' subjective experience of repression, which would have necessitated a larger sample to be able to make generalisations. Also, the selection of leading and veteran activists in each country counterbalances the size of the sample as they had a detailed and long-term vision of the movement in their country (and often elsewhere), as well as a better knowledge of the functioning of groups than less experienced or less prominent activists would. Finally, it should be noted that several interviewees are both scholars and prominent activists, such as Stallwood (KSI) or Balluch (MBI). As partakers in the movement, they may, as the other interviewees, hold subjective views on events or actors dealt with in this work.

As far as research ethics are concerned, anonymity and confidentiality were granted to the interviewees who wished so, especially given the sensitivity of the subject.

5.1 DISCURSIVE CRIMINALISATION: DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

As language is central to the topic of discursive criminalisation, discourse analysis will be used in order to understand how the criminalisation of activism is undertaken through political, corporate and media discourses. Reports from public institutions were analysed (e.g., Austrian Ministry of the Interior, 2011; Home Office, 2001; European Commission, 2013), politicians' statements, newspaper articles and communication campaigns from animal industries, in order to assess how these construct animal advocates as extremists or terrorists.

Actions by repressive agents, as non-verbal discursive acts, were analysed (e.g. the disproportionate deployment of anti-terrorist police forces to exaggerate the threat represented by the arrested Spanish activists as developed in chapter

3). Indeed, as Girgen (2008, p. 10) states, such acts are also claim-making instances. He cites the example of a hunger strike undertaken in 1981 by imprisoned members of Northern Irish Republican paramilitary organisations, in order to 'reconstruct themselves as "political prisoners", rather than the official and legal conception of them as "terrorists"'. Discourse analysts adopt a functionalist definition of discourse: they are interested in language in use (Richardson, 2007). However, not all discourse analysts agree on what constitutes 'discourse'. For some, it is limited to speech and text, for others, such as Fairclough (1993) and Harré (1995), it also includes visual images and nonverbal acts. Parker (1989, cited in Wood and Kroger, 2000, p. 19) adopts a very encompassing definition, seeing discourse as 'delimited tissues of meaning [...] written, spoken, or reproduced in any form that can be interpreted'.

Amongst discourse analytical approaches, critical discourse analysis (CDA) is thought to bring an interesting perspective, particularly relevant to the study of the criminalisation of the animal advocacy movement, in that it emphasises on the importance of the relation between power and language. CDA consists in a set of approaches—Fairclough and Wodak (1997) identify eight approaches to CDA—that focus noticeably on relationships between language and power and on social issues, such as racism, gender, etc. Like post-structuralism, it considers discourse as constructing social agents, in the same way that the latter construct discourse (Hutchby and Wooffit, 1998). Critical discourse analysts also tend to have assumptions regarding the relationships between power and language, while other discourse analysts such as conversation analysts insist on beginning the analysis of data without premade assumptions and to make assertions that strictly arise from the analysis. Hence, CDA and conversation analysis would tend to be categorised respectively as what Wood and Kroger (2000) and Woods (2006) refer to as 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches. Finally, CDA is more concerned with the macro-level, whereas conversation analysts for example are usually more interested in micro-level discourse and situated analyses, focusing on talk in interaction and investigating aspects such as turn-taking, preference, or the structure of sequences, being mostly concerned with everyday life conversation, although recent developments have seen a growing interest of conversation

analysts for the study of talk in more institutional contexts (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998; Wood and Kroger, 2000). In allowing a more macro critic of discourses in society, CDA might be more appropriate for a political science work than approaches such as CA.

CDA also allows tracing of the evolution of the anti-animal protection discourse among industry organisations, and explain how discourse can sometimes overtake the ones that promote it. An example of such a situation is provided by Potter (2011, p. 103). Indeed, he states that the exaggeration of the 'terrorist' threat allegedly represented by animal advocates, that was at the beginning a voluntary attempt to undermine the movement's influence, began to generate genuine fears in businesses potentially targeted by animal advocates, and 'fear fed on itself'. Echoes of this are found in my study, as shown in chapter 4. In the same way, it can be noted that Europol's reports on terrorism, before 2008, included animal rights direct actions only when these were reported as terrorism. From then on, they are systematically counted (Ellefsen, 2012, p. 198).

CDA finally allows us to understand how the slippage between labelling modes of actions as terrorism to denouncing the ideology of animal rights as intrinsically violent, is operated. Another aspect of this work is to show how this discourse draws upon and is embedded in wider societal discourses regarding terrorism (discursive resonance). Indeed, as Potter (2011) shows, in the USA the terrorism rhetoric was already being used by the industry before 9/11, but it is only after this event that it was able to spread in political elites and in the media.

CHAPTER 1: THE REPRESSION OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND ANIMAL ADVOCACY: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND THE LITERATURE

1. DEFINING REPRESSION

Many researchers have attempted to theorise and explain repression, all the more so since the 1980s. Scholars who have studied it have mainly focused on two main perspectives. The traditional one considers repression as the independent variable, attempting to explain and forecast the effects of it on the dynamics of movements, such as mobilisation. More recently, many scholars began to take an interest in explaining repression (Earl, 2003; Davenport, 2005). Yet, as Davenport (2005) states it, despite the number of enquiries in this field, no one has been able to come up with a proper model to predict the effects of repression on mobilisation and only one assertion can be made as to the opposite relationship: dissent increases the prospects of state coercion (see also Siegel, 2011; Russell, 2020; Davenport and Loyle 2012, Boykoff, 2006). The present thesis concentrates on the explanation of repression.

Relying on a cross-country analysis, as this thesis does, contributes to fill a gap in the literature on repression, most researchers relying on single country case studies (Davenport, 2005; Russel, 2020) and this is particularly evident as concerns the repression of animal advocates.

Earl (2003, p. 45) cites Stockdill's (1996, p. 146) definition of repression, as a common definition in the field. According to him, repression is constituted by 'any actions taken by authorities to impede mobilization, harass and intimidate activists, divide organizations, and physically assault, arrest, imprison, and/or kill movement participants'. However, she argues that this definition leads scholars to ignore 'further conceptualizations' and thus compare findings about types of repression that are fundamentally different in essence. Also, most of them have overlooked the importance of different types of regimes. Finally, they tend not to differentiate overt and covert forms of repression.

Davenport (2005) also deplores this sole focus on overt state repression, such as infringement of civil liberties and physical coercion. He argues that it is crucial to also consider covert forms of repression as well as non-governmental repression, and to consider the role of secret services or private actors, in order to look at the bigger picture and better understand and contextualise the effects of a particular form of repression.

That is why a more encompassing definition such as Tilly's (1978) can enable a better understanding of the dynamics surrounding repression, because it allows taking into consideration more elements that tend to be ignored if a narrower definition is taken, beginning with repression by private actors. Tilly (1978, p. 100) considers 'any action by another group which raises the contender's cost of collective action' as constituting repression. I adopt this definition here also as private, corporate agents play an important role in the backlash against animal advocacy, either through pushing government authorities to take action, or through activities undertaken directly by private agents. It should be noted however, that while one could remark that activists could also be said, following this definition, to repress their political opponents, collective action in the words of Tilly is to be understood as 'collective oppositional social action' (Peterson and Wahlström, 2015, p. 8).

Ferree (2005) also regrets the lack of interest for the role of private agents in this field of research, arguing that it is fundamental to consider this role. She gives the example of the women's movement. She argues that often, private actors rely on forms of 'soft repression', like 'ridicule', 'stigma' and 'silencing'. It might be argued that the three forms were or are being used against animal advocates and vegans and vegetarians for animals (e.g. see Olivier, 2002 and Carrié, 2018 on the concept of 'vegephobia', targeting ethical vegetarians) and an interesting point to investigate, would be how women animal advocates in particular suffer from the 'micro-level' and 'meso-level' repression that constitute 'stigma' and 'silencing' to Earl. Such an analysis could draw from works such as Adams' (1990), on the interconnectedness of the oppressions of women, minority groups and animals. However, as detailed later in this section, this is not the type of repression the present work deals with.

Furthermore, Earl (2003) argues that Stockdill's (1996) definition ignores many other activities that can raise the cost of action for a movement. For example, Oberschall (1973) made the distinction between coercion and channeling. Tilly (1978) introduced the idea that movements can be facilitated, tolerated or repressed. Thus, repression should include elements that do not necessarily involve the use of force, as they can also impede the development of protests.

This emphasis on State overt, physical repression partly stems from the fact that, as Boykoff (2006, p. 8) notes, most of the literature on repression has focused on the policing of *protests*, understood as demonstrations, whereas dissent goes further than demonstrating and repression further than the mere policing of them. Surely, one explanation of this is that protest events can be singled out and counted, and violent policing can be evaluated in more objective terms. This helps, among other things, to look at it quantitatively in order to draw more generalisable conclusions (e.g. Poulos and Haddad, 2016). Furthermore, direct physical repression of protests has been regarded as declining at the end of the 20th century, to the benefit of negotiation, while being replaced, many scholars argue, by more subtle types of repression (Boykoff, 2006; Russell, 2020).

Starr, Fernandez and Scholl (2011) also argue that the study of repression must move away from a mere interest in the policing of protest to comprehend the wider social control of dissent. The unit of analysis then shifts from protest events to social movements. They state that the use of intelligence, undercover surveillance and infiltrations, mass arrests conducted pre-emptively, police attacks on legal and pacifist protests as well as the use of conspiracy charges have been increasingly used in recent times. The latter can be seen in the case of animal protection in the USA when SHAC activists were subjected to very severe jail sentences albeit not having been found guilty of any particular crime (Potter, 2011), as well as in the UK, as shown in chapter 3. They emphasise on the increasing criminalisation of dissidents, for example through labelling trespassing and damaging property as 'severe and violent crimes and even terrorism' (Starr, Fernandez and Scholl, 2011, p. 87). This is again something observed in the cases of the present work.

2. A TYPOLOGY OF REPRESSION

From these observations, Earl (2003) developed a typology of repression aimed at allowing more complex and theoretically more complete analysis and to make hypotheses more easily. It allows her to review the existing literature on movement repression from a new angle and to assess and reorganise what we know and what we do not know yet, about this phenomenon. She first identifies three main theoretical dimensions of repression. The first is the identity of the repressive agent: they can be 'state agents tightly linked to national political elites (and hence more subject to their control), such as military/police agencies in authoritarian regimes or national police agencies in democratic countries'. They can be state agents 'loosely connected to national political elites, such as local police agencies', or 'private citizens or groups such as vigilantes or countermovements' (Earl, 2003, p. 47). To justify the focus on the link with national political elites, Earl states that it is sometimes harder for these to make their will operationalised by local police. However, it should be noted that Earl ignores an important category of agents: transnational governmental agents, who are becoming increasingly important in social control, as underlined by Starr, Fernandez and Scholl (2011). This is particularly true in the case of animal advocacy, transnational authorities such as Europol and Eurojust playing a key role in the repression (especially as far as discursive criminalisation is concerned) of the animal rights movement at the European level, as will be shown in chapters 4 and 5. This, for example through producing reports where political elites are encouraged to take action against 'animal rights extremists' (interestingly, this label is used in those reports to describe activists conducting direct actions, as well as legal, non-violent ones) (Europol, 2008 to 2013), organising conferences and official or secretive meetings with industry representatives to elaborate responses to the animal rights 'threat', or encouraging and undertaking the sharing of data on so-called animal rights extremists, between states and between these and the industry (Ellefsen, 2012). In 2013, the European Commission has commissioned a report on the betterment of data sharing between intelligence agencies on

‘travelling violent offenders’ (European Commission, 2013) who travel inside Europe to attend protest events or activist gatherings, and on the possibilities to impede them from travelling. A dedicated section considers animal rights activists.

The second dimension Earl (2003) refers to is the character of the repressive action: repressive agents can seek to coerce or to channel contenders. Finally, the third dimension differentiates between observable and unobserved forms of repression. It is important to note, as she underlines, that ‘unobserved’ does not mean that it is ‘unobservable’, but that the action of the repressive agent is not seen—and is meant not to be seen—by the general public. For example, special sections ‘specifically designed to protect animal-testing industries’ were added to the British Serious Crime and Police Act 2005, that rendered ‘campaigns against animal experimentation *de facto* illegal’ (Aaltola, 2012, p. 160). This type of amendments are used to render the silencing of a specific movement less evident to public scrutiny.

Boykoff (2006, pp. 289-290) identified twelve ‘modes of suppression’, feeding into five ‘mechanisms of suppression’. These mechanisms are : ‘resource depletion’, ‘stigmatization’, ‘divisive disruption’, ‘intimidation’, which he calls ‘isolating mechanisms’, that result in ‘emulation’, which he calls a ‘decisional mechanism’, by which social movement participants demobilise. He, like Ferree (2005), considers the media as repressive agents. The latter is, to Ferree (2005) a key player in silencing dissenters. Both argue that, for example, ‘covering protest events is not equivalent to providing a voice in the media for protesters, and soft repression may be particularly an issue of excluding the perspectives and frames that make sense of the actions of the movement’ (Ferree, 2005, p. 149). She goes further, considering everyday interaction between citizens outside of specific movements or countermovements, as potentially repressive.

For the present work, I developed a specific framework through which to analyse the repression of the animal advocacy movement. A wide definition of repression as adopted here presents the risk to develop too many mechanisms involving too many actors, making the present work an ‘interminable makework project’, as Lichbach (2005, p. 233) points out. It could thus lose explanatory value.

He recommends, instead, to focus on fewer mechanisms organised into a tighter and coherent framework.

Hence, I chose to focus on State agents (tightly and loosely connected to national political elites—an example of the latter is to be found in chapter 3 with Austrian states resorting to legislative criminalisation at regional level) and on the private actors that are countermovements (such as in the UK and Italian case) and companies or industries. Earl (2003) states that there is a gap in the literature regarding the explanation of private repression. Although I deal with the media on several occasions throughout this thesis, I do not consider their role as repressive agents, but rather as instrumental to assess the degree of weakness of the movement (in chapter 5), or to determine how the actions and discourse of repressive agents were perceived in public debate (chapter 3). The media in this framework are thus seen more as a tool the different parties to this field of contention rely on.

Secondly, I develop a typology aimed at analysing the repression of the animal advocacy movement that is composed of three forms: coercive repression, legislative criminalisation and discursive criminalisation. Coercive repression here refers to measures aimed at countering the movement within the existing moral and legislative frameworks. The two forms of criminalisation on the other hand, aim at changing those frameworks. Legislative criminalisation consists in the passing of new laws that render previously legal acts illegal, or punish illegal acts more severely. Importantly, they are aimed at a specific movement. Discursive criminalisation consists in the promotion of a discourse that is aimed at delegitimising a movement and justifying other forms of repression by exaggerating the threat activists represent through framing them as (violent) extremists or terrorists.

Because of the emphasis on protest policing, sometimes scholars equate 'coercive' repression to *physical* coercion of protesters, as Capinska (2016, p. 34) for example remarks, because it is easier to quantify and thus study. However, I use it here to refer to all actions that seek to impede activists actions in an arbitrary way. The literature often uses terms interchangeably and confusingly, as Capinska (2016, p. 32) notes as regards 'repression' and 'coercion'. However, she proposes

a definition of coercion as follows (p. 40): ‘a State’s rhetorics, actions, and institutional or legal arrangements compelling individuals within its jurisdiction to act in desirable ways or restraining them from diverging from the established way of living, without their necessarily being aware of it’. On the contrary, repression would be ‘the use of violent or non-violent, legal, rhetorical, financial, or institutional sanctions designed to hinder, control, or stop the dissenters’ actual actions’. Capinska’s criticism of democratic peace theory and the assumption of certain scholars, such as Davenport, that certain States are less repressive than others because these States actually act more preemptively, is certainly valuable. Surely, distinguishing the ‘responsive’ repression of dissenters and the preemptive arrangements (‘coercion’ to Capinska) of the State to prevent dissent is relevant, but I argue that such a use of these words can further blur the notions dealt with in this area of research, whereas she intends to clarify them. However, I agree that many researchers’ understanding of coercion as synonymous to physical coercion is problematic.

Further, I argue that the notion of ‘channeling’ as defined by Earl (2003) is not entirely satisfactory, and that elements of it are in fact coercive. Indeed, she considers as coercive ‘shows and/or uses of force and other forms of standard police and military action (e.g. intimidation and direct violence)’ (Earl, 2003, p. 49), whereas channeling would comprehend ‘more indirect repression, which is meant to affect the forms of protest available, the timing of protests, and/or flows of resources to movements’ (p. 48). However, I wish to argue that oftentimes, and as will be developed in chapter 3, these elements are in fact coercive, as they are clearly aimed at weakening, suppressing, or impeding specific groups to act. I contend that channeling would be better understood as consisting of measures nudging contenders in general towards less threatening avenues through incentives (e.g., fiscal) and/or through *preemptive* measures rendering more radical actions less attractive because more difficult. As Earl (2006, p. 130) herself remarks, the control of protest ‘may be occurring long before insurgency is evident’. Yet, to refer to elements to be seen in chapter 3, preventing activists from legally demonstrating in places of animal exploitation for example is coercive: it merely closes possibilities for contention. In the same way, rendering

street collection impossible, when it is one of the only ways of fundraising for certain groups is not about encouraging another way of protesting, it is about weakening these groups. Impeding organisations from organising effective demonstrations, by imposing a route that renders it ineffective because there is nobody to witness it, is not about discouraging violence or radicalism, it is about closing this possibility for groups. In sum, I argue that channeling would be better understood as pushing dissenters towards another type of tactical repertoire, while anything that simply reduces the options in a given repertoire for a specific group is coercive: it is aimed at weakening or preventing certain groups to act. Such a definition is closer to the one of Peterson and Wahlström (2015, p. 8) who define channeling as: 'legislative and legal means that selectively lower the costs of dissent for some oppositional actors and *indirectly* raise the costs for others' (emphasis added). They (Peterson and Wahlström, 2015, p. 12) provide a good example of channeling as I (and they) understand it: the Russian State developed 'a system of licensing and governmental support for non-governmental organisations, which favours NGOs willing to work with the regime and inhibiting more critical and thereby threatening NGOs'.

I will not deal with channeling (in my understanding) or 'ridicule' (in Ferree's understanding) here, because I want to avoid a catalogue-like range of mechanisms that would confuse the analysis and the goal of this study, but rather I want to focus on forms of State repression that arbitrarily target a specific movement and repression by private agents that can be deemed democratically illegitimate. That a State would want to nudge dissent in general towards certain forms of contention rather than others—that is, if it does not responsively try to suppress a specific movement—or that the State, or the opponents of a movement, would try to weaken its arguments by resorting to ridicule, even in an 'unfair' manner (Ferree, 2005, p. 152) is not per se democratically illegitimate.

This brings us to the choice of 'discursive criminalisation' as an analytical category. The term 'criminalisation' is used in the literature in a wide array of senses that I would argue often confuse the analysis. For example, some, like Stephens Griffin (2021, p. 463) consider surveillance as criminalisation. It is even sometimes used as a synonym for repression. I use 'criminalisation' here in the

most direct sense: making into a criminal, either rhetorically (discursive criminalisation) or de facto (legislative criminalisation). This choice of category excludes other rhetorical repressive mechanisms such as those identified by Ferree (2005). This stems from my focus on State authorities and *organised* private agents (industries and countermovements). Indeed, as Ferree (2005, p. 144) herself states: 'ridicule is a decentralized weapon that is, not coincidentally, rarely deployed by the state'. It is more of a 'civil society-based' element. And in the case of opponents using it, I do not consider it outside of what could be deemed democratically legitimate interactions. It is to be expected that opponents would try to undermine a movement threatening to them by ridiculing them and their grievances. It is not so much about suppressing dissenters or impeding them to act, but rather deligitimising their ideas or discourse. Yet, discursive criminalisation, as I understand it, calls for the suppression of opponents. The logical consequence of labelling some groups or individuals as 'terrorists', or 'extremists' (as understood as 'violent') is that they should be incapacitated, neutralised. It could be understood as an example of 'stigma', but as defined by Ferree (2005), stigma is much broader.

Surely, the consequences that Ferree identifies, such as demobilisation or unwillingness to identify with a movement or its ideas, are similar to some of those of the mechanisms I use (we will come back to it in the conclusion). But many mechanisms not constituting repression can also produce similar effects. For example, de Moor (2020) shows that demobilisation and depoliticisation of the environmental movement in the UK resulted partly from repression but also from factors such as austerity measures or the reduced opportunities to meet and organise because of anti-squatting laws.

Finally, many scholars distinguish between what they call 'hard' and 'soft' repression where 'hard repression' would be understood as 'violent' (Ferree, 2005, p. 141). Yet it does not add analytical value compared to the categories above and it opens the door for very subjective and confusing classifications. While notions such as channeling, coercion or criminalisation (however they are defined) convey the idea of specific mechanisms, the terms 'hard' and 'soft' seem arbitrary and the notion of violence (unless defined merely as physical violence, in which

case 'physical coercion' would be sufficient) too prone to interpretation. Elements of 'soft' repression might be experienced by activists themselves as as much violent, if not more, than elements of 'hard repression'. For example, Jämte and Ellefsen (2020, p. 383) categorise surveillance as hard repression, alongside 'violence and harassment'. While known or perceived surveillance can be experienced by activists as very violent, so can elements of 'stigmatisation' and 'labelling' that they classify as 'soft' repression. This shows the confusion that such terms can create. Furthermore, 'soft' could be understood as conveying the idea that it is less of a threat to dissenters, whereas elements of 'soft' repression like discursive and legislative criminalisation can be as damaging if not more, as shown in the present work.

3. EXPLAINING REPRESSION

Earl distinguishes six main approaches in the literature regarding the explanation of repression. Some scholars, among which McAdam (1982) or Tilly (1978) argued for a 'threat' model of repression explanation, according to which the more a movement appears threatening to authorities, the more it will be repressed. Contenders can be threatening as regard to their methods, their ideas, or their success. Others such as Gamson (1990), on the contrary, defend a 'weakness' model, whereby authorities will prefer to repress weak movements that they are sure to be able to counter without them being able to resist or to respond politically, in order to avoid the cost that a failed attempt at repression would have in terms of image and credibility. In the same way, Wisler and Guigni (1999) demonstrated that the less media attention a movement gets, the more it is likely to be repressed, the media acting as 'watchdogs'. Waddington (1998) showed that the degree of institutionalisation of dissenters played an important role in the policing response of authorities. Finally, others like Stockdill (1996) consider that both previous models are not contradictory and that movements which are both threatening and weak are more likely to be repressed.

Other scholars focus on political opportunities (e.g., Kitschelt, 1986; Kriesi, 1989). As Earl (2003) states it, in political opportunity structures, the focus is on

institutional aspects of politics that change very slowly over time, which makes them more appropriate for the study of repression undertaken internationally. However, volatile political opportunities can serve to explain 'short-term shifts in protest and repression' (Earl, 2003, p. 54). Hence, Tarrow (1989) contends that levels of repression decrease as a movement develops and that they increase again at the end of a cycle, when a scission appears in a movement, between increasingly violent, radical groups and increasingly institutionalised groups. Yet some argue that the focus on POS brings too simplistic dichotomies, 'such as the degree of openness or closure of a political system' (Combes and Fillieule, 2011, p. 1047), that 'overlooks the pattern of tactical moves and countermoves between regime and challengers, as both sides engage in a series of choices regarding action, repression and concessions' (Rasler, 1996, p. 149). Finally, others have argued for temporal approaches that do not rely on political opportunities, focusing on 'internal police characteristics', such as 'openness to protest' or 'agency preparation' (Earl, 2003, pp. 53-54), or on the State's 'repressive capacity' or 'culture limits' (Davenport, 1995; Gurr, 1986).

Earl's typology helps making sense of the numerous and often conflicting explanations of the occurrence of repression put forth by scholars. Yet, one should note that these frameworks often overlap. For example, of the four dimensions of Political opportunity structures relevant to repression identified by McAdam (1996, p. 27), two could also be part of other frameworks: the 'presence or absence of elite allies' could be framed in terms of weakness of a movement, while the 'State's capacity and propensity for repression' directly relates to the last category identified by Earl (2003, p. 54).

I chose, for the present work, to focus on the three former frameworks ('threat', 'weakness' and 'threat and weakness'). Indeed, these look at the issue of explaining repression through the prism of movement characteristics. In fact, they focus on elements movements largely have agency on. One of the aims of my research being to understand how the animal advocacy movement could prevent, or better respond to repression, framing the analysis in this way is particularly relevant. Concerning political opportunity structures, I agree with the critics of the concept that see it as 'bearing too structuralist and deterministic a vision of reality,

without taking into account the importance of the *social construction* of opportunities' (della Porta, 2013, p. 959, italic in the original). For example, as we will see, groups in the cases studied here sometimes actively sought to make political allies, while others did not.

4. THE EFFECTS OF REPRESSION

Starr, Fernandez and Scholl (2011) studied the effects of repression on social movements. Hence, they state that one consequence is that organisations are diverted from their normal activities and their goals, as they have to allocate temporal and financial resources towards self-defence instead. Another consequence can be the appearance of a culture of security, rather than openness, which can abate the political and strategic possibilities of a movement, notably in terms of mobilisation or networking. As they demonstrate, the fear of surveillance pushes structures within a movement to communicate less among themselves and that decreases the overall efficiency of the movement. Repression often results in the demobilisation of activists and a shift from contentious issues and tactics to more consensual ones as well as a decrease in solidarity inside the movement, as some groups are not wishing to be associated with marginalised ones. Contrary to previous research findings suggesting that repressed movements tend to split between more radical and more moderate elements, Starr, Fernandez and Scholl (2011) argue that those movements tend to become more pacified as a whole. However, they underline that movements have also developed tactics to respond to and confront repression, relying on tactical innovations, solidarity and judicial struggles to oppose infringements of their rights.

Zwerman and Steinhoff (2005) found radicalisation in studying New Left activists in the 1960s and 1970s, calling for paying attention to micro-cohorts: they argue that later cohorts adapted differently to repression and radicalised.

Hess and Martin (2006) argue that repression can also have beneficial effects for movements. They show that repression, when it is perceived as unjust, can trigger public support and greater mobilisation, thus leading to a backfire.

Hence, it can constitute a transformative event with unexpectedly positive repercussions. As will be shown in this work, this was, to some extent, the case in Austria.

5. THE REPRESSION OF THE ANIMAL ADVOCACY MOVEMENT IN THE LITERATURE

The literature on the repression of the animal advocacy movement focuses primarily on the situation in the USA (e.g. Girgen, 2008; Lovitz, 2010; Potter, 2011; Shirley, 2012; Glasser, 2011; Smith, 2014). Only recently did the scholarly literature grow as concerns the UK, focusing exclusively on SHAC (e.g. Aaltola, 2012; Donovan and Coupe, 2013; Ellefsen, 2016, 2018). Only one scholarly work in English has looked at a continental European country: Ellefsen (2012) studied the Austrian case, relatively early in the repression cycle, which did not enable him to analyse the full outcome. Thus, there is a clear lack of an encompassing and especially cross-country comparative case study. Furthermore, existing studies account for either discursive criminalisation (e.g. Girgen, 2008; Aaltola, 2012; Sorenson, 2011), legislative criminalisation (e.g. Lovitz, 2010; Shirley, 2012), coercive repression (e.g. Ellefsen, 2012; Donovan and Coupe, 2013), or a combination of some aspects of coercive repression and legislative criminalisation (e.g. Glasser, 2011; Ellefsen, 2016) to the exception of Potter (2011) for the situation in the USA (however, Potter's account is not an academic work, but rather a journalistic investigation). Hence, this study is of importance in that, by adopting a holistic and cross-cases approach, it enables to grasp all the implications of the current backlash against the movement. Indeed, as will be shown in chapter 3, discursive criminalisation serves to justify legislative criminalisation and coercive repression and the three evolve in relation to one another.

Potter (2011) provides a clear and thorough account of the situation in the United States. According to him, a shift occurred with the 1987 arson of a laboratory under construction in the University of California. The industries' tactics (particularly the animal research lobby) to fight back against illegal animal protection activists had already been to adopt a terrorism semantic. However,

from this point the term began to spread in political discourse, as the FBI officially classified it as a terrorist organisation. This enabled animal industries to advocate legislation to specifically target animal advocates. This was first undertaken at state level. Then, the industry began to push for federal legislation by spreading the terrorism label and threat further into the political discourse, notably through congressional hearings and with the support of some sympathising politicians and into the public discourse through the media.

In 1992, the Animal Enterprise Protection Act (AEPA) created the crime of 'animal enterprise terrorism'. However, the law did not generate convincing results in reducing direct action. A long-lasting campaign ensued to create minor laws and modifications (including death penalty for those found guilty of animal enterprise terrorism), that failed to pass in most cases.

The 9/11 events provided a perfect opportunity for the industry to outbid on the terrorism threat that the animal advocacy movement was supposed to represent. The terrorism label for radical animal protection activists became widespread and fear fed on itself, politicians and firms commissioning ever more reports on this perceived threat. Animal advocates from all organisations were subjected to relentless surveillance. Several activists that were found guilty of illegal actions were subjected to extremely tough sentences, sometimes amounting to more than 20 years in jail.

In 2000, the National Animal Interest Alliance, a pro-industry lobby, released a document analysing existing laws and providing guidelines for future developments. It concluded that the law should be expanded beyond the Animal Liberation Front to include non-violent acts that had more negative impact on the industry, such as 'pies in the face' (Potter, 2011, p. 124), a then popular way among animal advocates to publicise their cause.

In the same way, after seven senior activists from SHAC were sentenced to jail—although not found guilty of actual illegal activity, but considered as encouraging conspiracy and terrorism, the Center for Consumer Freedom declared the government should 'build on the victory against SHAC and take aggressive action against mainstream organizations like PETA and the Humane Society of the United States' (Potter, 2011, p. 113).

In 2006, the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA) was passed, that updated the AEPA, enlarging the definition of what an 'animal enterprise' is and the type of actions that are concerned by the law, as well as strengthening the sentences. It prohibits any person from engaging in certain conduct 'for the purpose of damaging or interfering with the operations of an animal enterprise.' The statute covers any act that either 'damages or causes the loss of any real or personal property' or 'places a person in reasonable fear' of injury. The law thus considerably threatens freedom of speech and activists were prosecuted for legal demonstrations on the ground that it constituted an attempt to inspire fear to the targeted organisations or individuals. It also threatens freedom of information, as this law was used to prosecute activists that merely filmed inside farms in order to release the images to the media.

This law, and the terrorism rhetoric in general, also allows authorities to sometimes refuse the rights to legal peaceful protest to mainstream groups, on the ground that their ideology (animal rights) would be conducive to extremism and violence. Thus, what is seen is the criminalisation not only of a type of actions, but of an ideology.

Girgen (2008) focused on discursive criminalisation in the USA. He analysed how elites attempted to construct the animal advocacy movement as a social problem, in order to justify its repression. To this end, he relied on the claims-making analysis of items published in the *New York Times*, as well as transcripts of congressional hearings. He found that animal industries 'constructed animal use as beneficial, and animal users as making an important contribution to society, and in doing so, attempted to establish the "non-problematicity" of both', while constructing animal rights, the animal advocacy movement and the activists 'as a serious social problem and threat. Claims-makers vilified their opponents by portraying them as dishonest, manipulative, hypocritical, extremist, and even malevolent, and characterized the philosophy and policies of animal rights as unnecessary, unwise, and even harmful' (Girgen, 2008, p.151). The present study conducts similar discourse analysis in European countries in chapter 3 and shows that findings are consistent with what Girgen found in the US.

Sorenson (2011) also analysed the rhetoric used by animal rights opponents in the US to discredit and frame animal advocates as extremists. By trying to elevate non-human animals to a higher moral status, and hence undermining the supposed superiority of the human species, animal advocates are portrayed as misanthropes more concerned with leading an anti-human crusade rather than a pro-animal one. Sorenson underlines that these arguments stem from right wing currents of thought and radical Christians, but are taken up by animal industries to back up the construction of their discourse regarding animal rights activists as extremists. Thus, they attempt to frame animal rights as a threat to society and not only to security or business.

Ellefsen (2012) accounts for the coercive repression encountered in Austria. In May 2008, armed Special Forces raided and searched 23 houses and offices. Ten activists were accused of forming a 'criminal organisation', according to article 278a of the Austrian criminal code—a law that was never used in such a way before. A lot more were surveilled. This was the culmination of a two years investigation of animal advocacy groups led by a 35-strong police unit called 'SOKO clothing' that was set up in fall 2006 to fight illegal actions against clothing companies, as a result of the pressure exercised on the government by the Austrian clothing company Kleider Bauer. Ellefsen (2012, p. 184) states that at least 40 people were subjected to surveillance, which included tapping and the localisation of mobile phones, homing devices on cars, personal observations, financial investigation of groups and individuals, bugging of at least one home and one office and hidden cameras were set to monitor people's front doors. He states that there were two known infiltrators, but as we will see in chapter 3, there were in fact three infiltrators and 297 activists were surveilled.

The arrests were followed by massive media attention and displays of solidarity were conducted internationally. Seven defendants went on a hunger strike. Charges were made official one year later and extended to 13 people. Most of the original accusations were dropped. Undercover infiltrators did not find any evidence of illegal activities in 18 months of surveillance.

Ellefsen (2012) states that the police and the state prosecutor had differing agendas. While the former considered 16 organisations and more than 300

activists—that is, almost the entirety of the movement in this country (Josse, 2013a)—as suspicious, the latter put an emphasis on two organisations and ostensibly tried to keep the moderate, international association Four Paws out of suspicion, in an effort to ‘separate the goodies and the baddies’ (Ellefsen, 2012, p. 196). The repressed activists succeeded in making their story heard in the media and in exposing misconduct by the SOKO unit. They also made article 278a a topic of political debate, highlighting that ‘any NGO constituting (by definition) an organisation aiming for “significant influence on economy or politics” [...] is threatened by this law’ (Ellefsen, 2012, p. 188). Thus, ‘if any of the defendants had been found guilty of the charges under [article] 278a, this would undoubtedly have had a wider effect on Austrian grassroots activism and dissent’ (Ellefsen, 2012, p. 189).

Ellefsen (2012, p. 191) states that this is a case of partially failed repression, since defendants were acquitted. It should be noted that the repressive cycle had not ended at the time he was writing, as several defendants had to go through a further set of trials, as shown in chapter 3. Nevertheless, the result remained the same.

Finally, Ellefsen (2012) underlines the role of transnational agencies such as Europol and Eurojust in the international backlash against the animal rights movement and points to the fact that SOKO attended workshops on ‘animal rights extremism’ organised by Europol. He also states that these agencies increasingly share data with private firms. According to della Porta and Diani (2006), transnational protests have brought increasing collaboration between national police bodies with ever less transparency. They say it is particularly true in Europe. An example of such collaboration given by Ellefsen (2012) is the simultaneous raids of 32 activists’ homes in the UK and abroad in 2007, involving 700 police officers in the first such operation relating to animal rights.

Aaltola (2012) used critical discourse analysis to reflect on the debates surrounding SHAC in the United Kingdom. She demonstrates that authorities took on the industry’s discourse consisting in trying to establish the non-problematicity of animal experimentation and its beneficial character for society, while framing animal rights activists as misinformed, violent and dangerous to society as a whole.

At the same time, 'moderate animal welfare organisations, like the RSPCA', are 'brought to the fore as the "respectable" choice' (Aaltola, 2012, p. 171), in an effort, I would argue, to divide the movement between welfarists and abolitionists, institutionalised organisations and militant grassroots groups.

Jacobsson (2013) studied the dynamics surrounding the animal advocacy movement in Poland and claims that a set of laws would have channeled parts of the movement towards non-contentious activities such as animal rescue and shelter, and away from underground direct action.

Wahlström and Peterson (2006, pp. 370-371), studying the animal advocacy movement in Sweden, revealed that the Swedish Security Police (SÄPO), undertook a systematic mapping of illegal activities by animal advocates and that by displaying these and labelling them as 'a threat to national inner security', the State 'contributes, through the police, to the framing of militant activists as illegitimate in their methods and, by association, perhaps also in their grievances'.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORY AND STRUCTURE OF THE MOVEMENT IN THE COUNTRIES STUDIED

This chapter sets out the context in which repression took place in the four countries studied in this work. It focuses on the historical developments that led to the period considered in each country in the next chapters, presents the main actors of the movement at the time and their main political opponents. For the UK, this period stretches from the late 1990s to the early 2010s, as this is when most of repression took place, partially as a reaction to the wave of anti-vivisection pressure campaigns described in the present chapter. In Austria, the main episode of repression occurred in the late 2000s and early 2010s and involved a wide portion of the movement, but mainly targeted two very different organisations: VGT (Verein Gegen Tierfabriken – Association Against Factory Farming) and BaT (Basisgruppe Tierrechte – Grassroots Group for Animal Rights). In Spain, two similar groups were targeted from 2011: Animal Equality and Equanimal. Finally, in Italy, a network of grassroots activists undertook several pressure campaigns throughout the 2000s that encountered some level of repression, before organising another similar campaign in the early 2010s that was extremely successful and yet was not met with repression. The question of the level of confrontationality of the different groups and their attitudes towards underground direct action will be dealt with in chapter 4, while the nature of the relationships between the movement's actors will be laid down in chapter 5.

1. THE UNITED KINGDOM

Britain stands out as a case study as the country was the cradle of the animal advocacy movement. This is where organised advocacy began in the 19th century, as well as the renewal observed in the second half of the 20th century, giving rise to the more radical animal rights/liberation movement. As far as the UK is concerned, this thesis will examine mainly the dynamics of contention that developed in the late 1990s and 2000s. We will thus focus here on the

development of the modern British animal advocacy movement and examine the context leading up to this particular period in the movement.

1.1 HISTORY OF THE MODERN BRITISH ANIMAL ADVOCACY MOVEMENT

After a decline observed in the first half of the nineteenth century, the movement gained traction again in the 1960s and even more so in the 1970s (Ryder, 2000; Stallwood, 2014; Traïni, 2011; Kean, 1998). As Garner (1998, p. 93) points out, it was 'revitalised and radicalised by the appearance of national groups and grass-roots activism informed by the language of animal rights or liberation'.

This renewal was stirred up by intellectual and academic work on one hand. Hence, often stated as instrumental are Ruth Harrisson's book *Animal Machines* (Harrisson, 1964) and Brigid Brophy's article in the *Sunday Times* *The Rights of Animals* (Brophy, 1965), the work of the so-called 'Oxford Group', gathering academics such as, most famously, Richard Ryder from 1969 (Tichelar, 2017; Ryder, 2000). Two academics who were influenced by the work of the group published what would become intellectual milestones of the modern movement. These are the Australian Peter Singer, who authored *Animal Liberation* in 1975, and the American Tom Regan, who wrote *The Case for Animal Rights* in 1983. On the other hand, from the 1960s, direct action became a strong feature of the movement, beginning with the Hunt Saboteurs Association, of which activists would attempt to prevent hunts from being carried out (Thomas, 1983; Tichelar, 2017). This trend continued in the 1970s with the creation of the Band of Mercy and subsequently of the Animal Liberation Front (ALF), in the name of which activists would free animals from certain facilities such as laboratories and cause economic damage to companies benefitting from the exploitation of animals (Monaghan, 2013a; Poszlusna, 2015; Best and Nocella II, 2004). This was followed by the radicalisation, in terms of ideology and strategy, of old organisations such as the RSPCA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) from the mid-1970s and the BUAV (British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection) from the beginning of the 1980s, which had lost their reforming vigour in the previous decades (Stallwood, 2014; Ryder, 2000), and to the creation of new groups such

as Animal Aid, Zoo Check (now the Born Free Foundation) or Lynx, with a clearly animal rights-oriented agenda, and more grassroots campaigns (Garner, 1998).

Garner (1998) notes that in the early stages of its renewal, the movement obtained legislative progresses thanks to its ability to generate public support and create outrage. For example, the Agriculture Act 1968 recognised the importance of animal welfare, which became one of the stated aims of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF). Woods (2012), remarks that in addition to the milestone Brambell report, Ruth Harrison's book (1964) was instrumental in this decision, as the first work to bring the suffering of animals in intensive farming to the knowledge of the public. The Act also created the Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council, set up to advise ministers. In 1973, investigations of the newly created Compassion In World Farming organisation resulted in a temporary halt in live exports (Garner, 1998). Following these developments, at the end of the 1970s the movement organised so as to be able to influence the political arena, to an extent that was not seen before and since. This began with the Animal Welfare Year campaign, in 1976 through to 1977, seeing the creation of five joint committees on distinct issues that were then united into the General Election Coordinating Committee for Animal Welfare (GECCAP), which was aimed at bringing major political parties to integrate animal welfare policies in their manifestos for the 1979 general elections (Garner, 1998; Hollands, 1980). Later, PAL (Political Animal Lobby) continued to lobby for animals from 1990 (Garner, 1998; Ryder, 2000).

In the early 1980s, the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) was at the height of its popularity, but it progressively lost public support, following actions such as the poisoned Mars bars hoax in 1984, or car bombings in 1990, although the ALF was never proven to be responsible for the latter (Baker, 1993; Mann, 2007; RLI). In 1985, the Animal Rights Militia appeared, and contrary to the ALF that had a charter strictly discarding harming people, it promoted 'military-style tactics' (Hall, 2006, p. 19) and did not exclude resorting to physical violence. At the same time, new groups were set up that were more image-conscious and resorted to communication campaigns that greatly affected public opinion, such as Lynx, set up in 1985 and focusing on the issue of fur (Baker, 1993, p. 198; Stallwood, 2014,

p. 103). Animal rights and vegetarianism were, at that time, booming as a public issue, especially amongst the young (Grant, 2012; RLI; Kean, 1998).

At the beginning of the 1990s, important groups were fairly institutionalised, in the sense that they had secured a reasonable amount of political support, and had achieved a certain level of professionalisation, and 'the existing specialist organisations were all working well', according to Ryder (2000). However, the more grassroots section of the movement appeared to be plateauing, as emphasised by Roberts and Lyons (RLI). They, like Baker (1993), explain it by the downturn in the popularity of the Animal Liberation Front. But a new wave of animal rights organisations appeared in the early 1990s, such as Uncaged, Viva!, Nature watch, and, as they emphasise, more established animal rights groups got new leaders, renewing the tactics and strategies of their organisations. According to Roberts (RLI), 'around that time, there was a series of more legitimate-minded organisations coming along to fill the gap left by ALF in terms of trying to capture popular public support'.

The mid-1990s were marked by the live exports demonstrations in the South of England, of which public opinion was very supportive (Kean, 1998). Benton and Redfearn, cited in Garner (1998, p 86), credit it to the fact that the campaign did not resort to a rhetoric of animal rights but instead limited itself to 'identifiable welfare targets'. They also explain that other issues being at stake in the campaign allowed drawing support from other groups. This, although many radicals did take part in demonstrations, sometimes conspicuously, as Roberts and Lyons (RLI) and Munro (2005) note. The latter (p. 84) states that a peaceful protest organised by Compassion In World Farming was 'hijacked by extremists who smashed the window of a lorry ... The media ignored the animal welfare issue behind the demonstration and focused on "the brick through a window" story which featured pictures of men in balaclavas'. Kean (1998, p. 206) notes that advocates of wild animals saw a milestone success in the passage of the Mammals Protection Act in 1996, which encouraged LACS, the RSPCA and IFAW to launch a joined campaign to lobby for a ban on hunting.

The period leading up to the point that particularly interests us here, was thus on the whole a good one for animal advocacy in the UK. Garner (1998, p. 76)

noted that 'the revitalisation of the movement in the last few years has not meant only new groups but also increasing membership for old ones'. Furthermore, the Labour party, coming back to power in 1997, had promised, as their famous leaflet went, that 'New Labour' would mean a 'new life for animals' (Higgins, 2008) and had noticeably pledged to set up a royal commission on vivisection and to ban hunting with hounds. It is in that context that a new form of campaigns arose, beginning with Consort Beagles, and giving rise to the most important, international and long-lasting one: Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC). This was a development that would also, arguably, contribute to put an end to the momentum enjoyed by animal advocacy in the UK in the last quarter of the 20th century.

1.2 STRUCTURE OF THE MOVEMENT IN THE 1990s

Garner (1998, p. 95) counted about 30 'substantial' national animal protection groups in Britain in the mid-1990s. This is, compared to the three other countries studied, considerable and even more so is the fraction of these groups that were professionalised, in the sense that their activity was not only or essentially sustained by volunteers. This can be explained by the fact that a structured animal protection movement had existed for longer in this country. In Austria, Italy or Spain, there was no real *movement* before the 1980s, outside of an equivalent to the RSPCA for the two former countries. This state of affairs and the anteriority of the British movement itself, despite Traïni (2011) underlining that before the 18th century, the British were renowned in Europe for their perceived cruelty to animals, probably finds its source in the fact that a democratic system was in place earlier on in this country, leaving room for open societal debate and social movements to develop. Another specificity of the modern British animal advocacy movement, compared to the other countries considered in this work, is how compartmentalised it was and remains, with most groups specialising in particular areas of animal exploitation. Here, to set the background in which the main repressive events took place, I will present the main groups active in the UK in the late 1990s, beginning with non-specialised organisations and going on to

specialised groups, with a particular focus on two areas that were particularly salient in the British movement—and particularly contentious: animal experimentation and hunting.

The oldest organisation, in the UK as worldwide, was the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA). Set up in 1824, it has remained, for almost two centuries, the most important British NGO in this area. When the movement gained momentum again in the 1970s, with the appearance of new, more radical groups, it created tensions with members who thought the RSPCA was not radical enough. In 1970, the RSPCA Reform Group was created, under the leadership of Brian Seager, John Bryant, and Stanley Cover. As Ryder (2009) recounts, they backed Vera Sheppard in undertaking to engage the RSPCA in pursuing the abolition of foxhunting and other forms of hunting. In 1972, five members of the Reform Group were elected to the RSPCA's Council and Richard Ryder became chairman from 1977 to 1979. During these years, the RSPCA took a strong stance against blood sports, but also 'developed comprehensive animal welfare policies across the board, elevating the welfare of farm, laboratory, and wild animals to a priority status equal with the welfare of domestic species' (Ryder, 2009, p. 492). Most importantly perhaps, they 'revived the Society's campaigning function, which had been allowed to lapse since the Edwardian era'. The society established lobbying activities, nationally but also at the European level with the creation of the Eurogroup for Animal Welfare. In Britain, the RSPCA supported the creation of the General Election Coordinating Committee for Animal Welfare. Garner (1998) states that the society always sought insider status with success and respect, but even more so as a result of animal welfare becoming a topical issue from the 1970s onwards. Ryder (2009, p. 493) points out that 'tensions persist to this day between, on the one hand, the nationally and internationally-minded campaigners and, on the other, the dogs and cats rural conservatives'.

Other important non-specialised groups included two welfarist international organisations—the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and the World Society for the Protection of Animals (nowadays World Animal Protection)—and the animal rights group Animal Aid. IFAW, founded in Canada in 1969, was very active in the UK from the end of the 1970s, on a diverse range of

animal issues. In 1990, it founded the Political Animal Lobby, which Richard Ryder led in the 1990s and that Garner (1998, p.101) describes as 'the lobbying arm of IFAW'. It most noticeably made a one million pounds donation to the Labour party before the 1997 general elections, in an attempt to bring them to act upon animal welfare, and particularly to ban hunting with hounds, should they win the elections (Ryder, 2000). The World Society for the Protection of Animals, established in 1981 as a result of the merging of the World Federation for the Protection of Animals and the International Society for the Protection of Animals, also played a considerable role in animal politics in the UK in the 1980s and 1990s (Garner, 1998; Ryder, 2000). Animal aid on the other hand was one of the more radical, animal rights organisations appearing around the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s. At the time it primarily focused on general campaigning and public education, although it also took part in lobbying efforts (RLI).

As far as established specialised groups went, two areas in particular counted several important groups: animal experimentation and hunting. Concerning animal experimentation, two long established organisations were particularly influential: the National Anti-Vivisection Society (NAVS), founded in 1875, originally as the Victoria Street Society, by Frances Power Cobbe and the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV), founded in 1898 (it became Cruelty Free International when it merged with the American NGO New England Anti-Vivisection Society in 2012). NAVS was the world's first organisation focusing on animal experimentation. It remained an important structure in this area until now, although as indicated by Roberts and Lyons (RLI), it is now less active, since NAVS's leader Jan Creamer has somewhat given priority to her new organisation, Animals Defenders International. Whereas the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection was, at the beginning of the 20th century, a radical and politically active organisation, it had turned away from campaigning, towards animal rescue and shelter and at the turn of the 1980s, had very little will and capacity to organise campaigns. A new generation of activists, among which Kim Stallwood, undertook to gain leadership and managed to be elected at the NGO's board. They renewed the image and tactics of the organisation, focusing on the education of the public, political lobbying and the organisation of demonstrations, for example the World

Day for Laboratory Animals, in conjunction with the National Anti-Vivisection Society, which in the 1980s, gathered a maximum of 9000 people in London in 1983 (Stallwood, 2014). Stallwood (2014, p.107), states that the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection was the first animal group in Britain to create a 'professionally produced corporate identity'. Garner (1998, p.82) also notes that BUAV has 'made strides in their attempt to gain insider status', while Animal Aid and the National Anti-Vivisection Society concentrated more on 'general campaigning'. Maybe because of the successful first attempt at taking over the BUAV by 'radicals', several attempts were made afterwards, in the 1980s and 1990s, resulting in regular struggles for leadership. Stallwood (2014), underlines that attempts at bringing together BUAV and NAVS, which supported incremental change, all failed.

Other institutionalised organisations focusing on vivisection were the Fund for the Replacement of Animals in Medical Experiments (FRAME), founded in 1969 and Uncaged, appearing in 1993. According to Garner (1998), FRAME has been an important actor in the field of animal experimentation politics and played an important role in the passage of the 1986 Animals (Scientific procedures Act), despite not having a strong public profile. Uncaged on the contrary, was more visible. A professional organisation, it nonetheless benefitted from rather strong grassroots support, with a network of local groups disseminating their campaigns via street stalls and demonstrations. It noticeably initiated the International Animal Rights Day and a boycott campaign against the firm Proctor & Gamble. It gradually got more orientated towards political action, resulting in leaders Angela Roberts and Dan Lyons closing down the NGO to create the Centre for Animals and Social Justice in 2011, solely focused on promoting and developing research in the area of animal politics (RLI).

As regards hunting, two important and radically different groups coexisted, of which the history is inextricably linked: The League Against Cruel Sports (LACS) was founded in 1924, noticeably by leaders of the Humanitarian League after it ceased activity (Stallwood, 2014) and the Hunt Saboteurs Association (HSA), founded in 1963. The former has been, for the major part of the 20th century, the main actor on hunting issues, through public education, gathering and releasing

evidence of animal cruelty in hunts and political action. The NGO was instrumental, together with the International Fund for Animal Welfare and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, in securing the Hunting Act 2004, which put an end to hunting with hounds (Tichelar, 2017). The HSA on the other hand was not interested in institutional avenues. It was created by members of LACS who wanted to continue and intensify actions on the ground that they had begun undertaking in 1960-62, whereas LACS wanted to stop these actions. Membership of the two organisations overlapped for a long time but they remained administratively and financially independent (Thomas, 1983). The HSA kept to its grassroots model, but remarkably remained active throughout five decades. This even after the 2004 ban on foxhunting, which was never fully enforced and has even been threatened to be repealed by the Conservatives when they came back in power after Gordon Brown's mandate (Tichelar, 2017). Although one might expect these groups to share activity on hunting with conservation groups, Garner (1998, p. 42) underlines that the latter, among which most remarkably the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, tended to 'stand clear of the hunting issues'.

Finally, groups of importance in other fields included Compassion In World Farming, a welfarist organisation formed in 1967 and focusing on farm animals, the Born Free Foundation, originally Zoo Check, founded in 1984, dealing with the issue of the captivity of wild animals, Viva! (Vegetarians' International Voice for Animals), an animal rights group focusing on farm animals and vegetarian/vegan outreach and Respect for animals, an animal rights organisation focusing on fur. Two of these groups in particular gained considerable importance in the 1990s and impacted substantially on politics. As Garner (1998) points out, the important role Compassion In World Farming played in the live exports campaign of the mid-1990s was instrumental in establishing it as a main actor in Britain and beyond, the organisation subsequently becoming international. Respect for Animals, continuing as of 1993 the grassroots campaigning work undertaken by Lynx in the 1980s, had a strong impact on the animal protection movement in terms of communication strategies (Baker, 1993) and Stallwood (2014, p.103) writes that 'over the years, their public educational activities made a significant dent in sales',

laying the ground for the Fur Farming (Prohibition) Act 2000, which banned raising animals solely for their fur.

The British movement was thus rich in terms of well-established and influential institutional and grassroots groups, both welfarist and abolitionist. Additionally, a myriad of local grassroots groups covered the national territory, conducting public educational activities such as organising conferences or information stalls, or protest activities such as demonstrations (RLI, KSI), with varying degrees of coordination with, and support from, national organisations, as we will see in chapter 5.

1.3 A NEW PARAMETER: THE PRESSURE CAMPAIGNS OF THE LATE 1990s AND 2000s

A new feature of the movement appearing in the second half of the 1990s and that would have an immense impact on animal advocacy in Britain and beyond, was the emergence of more or less loosely coordinated campaigns aimed at closing facilities linked to animal experimentation. Although these campaigns were not to officially resort to violence, they came to involve de facto an entanglement of legal and illegal activities. The latter ranged from petty crimes such as vandalism to harassment, and illegal direct actions on behalf of groups such as the Animal Liberation Front or the Animal Rights Militia conducted by individuals in the pursuit of the same goals.

The first of these pressure campaigns was the Consort beagles campaign, which resulted in the beagles breeding facility Consort kennels being shut down after 10 months. The two leaders of the campaign, Gregg Avery and Heather James, then went on with an also successful two years campaign against Hillgrove farm, which was the only facility breeding cats for experimentation in the UK, before launching Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC) in November 1999. The latter was the only such campaign to become international and the first global campaign of this scale in the history of the movement, with actions being undertaken in more than 11 countries on several continents (Monaghan, 2013a; Understanding Animal Research, n.d.b). It was aimed at closing down Huntingdon

Life Sciences (HLS), the biggest animal-testing laboratory in Europe. SHAC combined perfectly legal actions such as demonstrations in front of companies financially supporting HLS, or letter writing campaigns and actions on the fringe of legality, such as demonstrations in front of executives homes, exposing individuals responsibility in animal exploitation to their neighbours, call campaigns that have been likened to harassment and libelling. SHAC was both an organisation and a campaign of which any individual or group could act on behalf of. As such, they came to publicise illegal actions, although they did not clearly advocate such kind of actions. Hence they fell into a grey area regarding their stance on illegal direct action, which would later be used against them (Potter, 2011; Liddick, 2006; Aaltola, 2012).

Similar campaigns organised by other networks of activists included Close Down Regal Rabbits in 2000, which led to the closure of the facility after 12 days, Save the Newchurch Guinea Pigs, beginning in 1999 and ending in 2006 with the closure of the farm—in the context of which the infamous digging up of a corpse as a ransom took place, Save the Shamrock Monkeys in 2000 (Shamrock Farm was the UK's only importation and quarantine centre for research primates, which closed after 15 months of campaigning) and Stop Primate Experiments at Cambridge (SPEAC) which prevented the University of Cambridge from building Europe's largest primate research center in 2003, followed by SPEAK after the decision of the university to build a new biomedical sciences building, involving research on animals (Hall, 2006; Mann, 2007).

These campaigns, although (very) successful at first glance, would arguably have dire consequences for the movement as a whole, justifying, to the eyes of the public, the repression that ensued, undertaken by State authorities and industry actors.

1.4 POLITICAL OPPONENTS

The animal advocacy movement politically opposes several interest groups. Among these, in Britain, one finds the National Farmers Union (NFU), as by far the most important pressure group on animal husbandry, since the 1950s. 80% of

farmers were traditionally members of the NFU. In 1993, it had 114 447 members, 68% being farmers and the rest being smallholders. It spent 700 000 pounds on public relations activities (Garner, 1998). The National farmers Union obtained in 1947 a statutory right to be consulted by the government as to decisions pertaining to its interests and Garner (1998, p. 151) states that ‘the relationship between agribusiness interests (more specifically, the NFU) and the State in Britain is regarded as the classic example of a policy community’, in which (p. 7) ‘a limited number of participants exist in a close relationship with a shared set of beliefs, excluding those interests who do not share the prevailing ideology’.

Particularly relevant for the developments that will be studied here, the pharmaceutical industry is very strong in Britain. Two leading pharmaceutical companies worldwide were, in the 1990s, Merck & co (US) and Glaxo Wellcome (UK)—the latter, after a merging, became GlaxoSmithKline in 2000. Garner (1998, pp. 48-49) underlines that drugs were very important in Britain’s exports since the 1950s, representing many jobs and investments and that ‘there is no question that this had an impact on animal experimentation policy’. The sector directly employed around 67 000 people in the 1980s (Garner, 1998, p. 49) and that figure is the same today (Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry, 2019). The Department of Health And Social Security, in the 1970s, to a select committee into animal research, ‘described itself as the “sponsor” of the industry, “responsible for monitoring the well-being of that industry and for representing its interests within the Government machine”’ (Home Office, 1983, p. 2, cited in Garner, 1998, p. 49). Garner (1998, pp. 49-50) also notes that: ‘In Britain, only purpose-bred animals are allowed to be used in research and this requirement has spawned a number of commercial enterprises, the most notable being Shamrock Farms’. The latter would later be targeted by the Save the Shamrock Monkeys campaign and close in 2000, after a 15 months campaign (Monaghan, 2013a).

Political organisation of the animal research community dates back to the 19th century and they have since succeeded in effectively retaining access to the highest level of decision-makers (Lyons, 2013; Traïni, 2011; Garner, 1998). The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry, founded in 1929 as the Wholesale Trade Association, counted over 150 member companies in the 1990s,

but according to Garner (1998), the most important lobbying group in this area was the Research Defense Society (RDS), founded in 1908. He notes that the industry began to mobilise extensively from the 1980s onwards, through the RDS, the Animals in Medicines Research Information Center, the British Medical Association and the creation of two campaigning bodies in 1991: Seriously Ill for Medical Research and the Research for Health Charities Group, the former being specifically targeted at countering animal advocates opposing animal experimentation. Poszlusna (2015, pp. 72-73), notes that these organisations 'quickly adopted the methods used by pro-animal activists, like using spiteful slogans or sticking propaganda posters (in the anti-animal version these often featured pictures of defenseless people, mainly children, who were supposed to be beneficiaries of animal testing)'.

Garner (1998, p. 192) writes that:

'unlike the farm animal welfare policy network in Britain, the division of influence within the policy arena dealing with animal research is much more balanced, and, because of this, Home Office Ministers are much more likely to be influenced by the demands of the animal protection movement than their colleagues in MAFF are.'

He also underlines that RDS appeared too uncompromising at the turn of the 1980s and was subsequently marginalised for a time, allowing the more moderate animal advocacy groups to play a substantial role in the process leading up to the 1986 Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act.

As regards the issue of hunting, the main pressure group has been the British Field Sports Society (BFSS). The Countryside Movement was created in 1996 and brought an argument pertaining to conservation in the debate on this issue (Garner, 1998). In 1997, the Countryside Alliance was founded, which brought together the BFSS, the Countryside Business Group and the Countryside Movement, noticeably in an attempt to prevent a ban on hunting with hounds, as the Labour Government came into power. The group, although stating aims pertaining to hunting and non-hunting issues, such as the life of rural areas, transports or housing, focused its attention and funds essentially to the former. It organised many marches in opposition to animal protection supporters, the

biggest of which gathered 400 000 people in 2000 (Tichelar, 2017; Poszlusna, 2015).

Garner (1998) notes that whereas animal industries lobbied together in the United States—which, as Potter (2011) highlights, was influential in the repression of the animal advocacy movement observed there—it was not the case in Britain before the 2000s. Hence, the British situation was, in this aspect, similar to the one found in Austria, Spain and Italy. One will note, however, the specificity of the British case—like Italy but contrary to Austria and Spain, with the appearance of *ad hoc* organisations designed to counter the animal advocacy movement. We will come back to this in chapter 3.

2. AUSTRIA

2.1 HISTORY AND STRUCTURE OF THE AUSTRIAN MOVEMENT

The first animal welfare organisation to be founded in Austria was the Wiener Tierschutzverein (WTV, Viennese Society for the Protection of Animals), created on the model of the English Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) in 1846. Two other important animal welfare groups appeared afterwards: the Österreichischen Tierschutzverein (ÖTV, the Austrian Society for the Protection of Animals) founded in 1899 and Vier Pfoten (Four Paws) in 1988. Nowadays, ÖTV and WTV are not very active campaigning structures. The first one focuses particularly on zoos and wild animals, while the latter focuses on animal care and shelter (Anon11; Anon12; EVI). Vier Pfoten is now the biggest organisation of the country and expanded internationally: as of 2018, it had offices in 13 countries (Four Paws, 2018).

According to Balluch (2012), it is around the mid-1980s that animal advocacy really emerged as a social movement. Vier Pfoten appeared around this period and although it displayed welfarist goals, many of its early active members were abolitionists and it used a rhetoric closer to the one of animal rights groups than WTV and ÖTV used to, and dealt with issues such as factory farming or animal experimentation to a greater extent, creating a bridge between the more traditional organisations and animal rights groups that were to come (Anon11).

As far as animal rights groups are concerned, by far, the main one was VGT, co-founded by Martin Balluch in 1992. There were, in the 2000s, a few smaller, local groups among which Basisgruppe Tierrechte (BaT) in Vienna, also targeted by repression, founded in 2002. VGT, composed of approximately 18 000 members in 2014 and 25 employees (EVI, AnonI4), is a reformist abolitionist organisation, resorting to vegan outreach as well as very down to earth political campaigns for reforms. Its ideological and strategical fundamentals are clearly laid down, in the NGO's materials, or in essays written by its co-founder and leader Martin Balluch (2006; 2008). While some animal rights NGOs sometimes struggle with reconciling their uncompromising activist base and their will to push for new legislation, and thus sometimes go quiet in terms of communication regarding the latter, VGT stands its ground on advocating for reforms, should they be perceived as minor or major. As regards modes of action, VGT resorted to a large panel, ranging from institutional action such as lobbying, vegan outreach and more largely education of the public, to civil disobedience. This organisation, since the end of the 1990s, has been the driving force of the Austrian movement. With clear and convincing strategies, they have been able to take along most of the other animal rights groups with them, while benefitting from the support of the bigger animal welfare groups (Balluch, 2006; AnonI2, AnonI4, EVI), Martin Balluch (2006, p. 157) attributing the origin of the movement's unity to a 2002 conference organised by VGT. Whereas the other main Austrian animal protection NGO, Vier Pfoten, as an important international organisation, developed a strong corporate identity, VGT remained a relatively grassroots group, in spite of its important growth in the 2000s. An illustration of the attachment of VGT to its grassroots component, is to be found in its relatively horizontal structure: employees being allowed to decide to a large extent what they wanted to focus on, in their work (EVI). This, despite the prominence of its leading figure Martin Balluch.

As far as Basisgruppe Tierrechte is concerned, as its name suggests, it is a small grassroots group, an interviewee stating that it was composed of 10 to 15 active members at most (AnonI2). Without fully endorsing a fundamentalist abolitionist approach, it had from the onset, a more 'uncompromising' abolitionist position and with a strong far-left backbone. Like VGT's core members, most

members were highly politicised (Anon12, EVI, Anon14). As an example, it ran a program on animal rights hosted by an anarchist radio. Relations with VGT appear to have been complex and irregular. Some members were, at the onset, active in both organisations and one interviewee who left the group and became an employee of VGT was the co-founder of BaT. The group took part in campaigns against fur shops with VGT in the mid-2000s, with weekly demonstrations and stalls in front of the stores, but eventually decided to do it on different days or places, as a result of poor relations. BaT members did not always agree with directions taken by VGT in terms of communication, that seemed too welfarist to them, but nonetheless followed its agenda, as did most local groups (Anon12). Before the main episode of repression described in chapter 3, the group was showing signs of slow down and has since limited itself to film screenings and debates once every while.

Another national animal rights group linked to VGT, was the Austrian Vegan Society (VGÖ), founded in 1997. It had, in 2014, 5 employees and more than a thousand members (Anon14). There was always porosity between members of VGÖ and VGT, beginning by the President of VGÖ, Felix Hnat, who is also an active member of VGT. Thus, although its purpose is the promotion of veganism, it is very active in the animal advocacy movement and supports activist initiatives to a greater extent than vegetarian or vegan societies usually do in other countries.

Finally, contrary to the British (as of the 1990s) and Spanish movements, but similarly to the Italian movement more recently, the main welfarist and animal rights organisations were to be found in a formal coalition, called Pro-Tier (Pro-Animal). Existing since 1978, its main purpose is lobbying, although interviewees (EVI, Anon14, MBI) noted that it mainly issued joint press releases, in occasions when consensus was reached between the member organisations. It has a dedicated seat in the Animal Protection Council (Österreichischer Tierschutzrat), that was created in 2005, and is an advisory institution to the government, composed of representatives from animal industries, the ministries of health and agriculture and animal protection NGOs (Pro-Tier, 2018).

The Austrian movement was thus, in the 2000s, a small and still emerging movement, with far less substantial groups than in the other countries. The

grassroots strand of the movement was also very small, interviewees estimating that there were at the time only 200 to 300 active animal rights campaigners in the country. This explains the prominence of VGT and its agenda-setting role in the movement and especially to grassroots activists (AnonI2), as we will expand in chapter 5. Indeed, VGT was the only national organisation aiming to mobilise these activists. This led to an absence of strong oppositions in the Austrian movement, as VGT succeeded in spreading a reformist agenda amongst animal rights groups, although some like BaT did not always agree with the discourse promoted by VGT (AnonI2). A situation quite different to the one seen in the other cases studied in this thesis, such as Spain or Italy.

2.2 THE 2000s: VGT AND THE CONFRONTATION WITH THE CONSERVATIVES

Despite its relatively small breadth, the Austrian movement, under VGT's leadership, managed to reach substantial political influence, making it the most successful national movement among those studied here. Hence Austria, that was behind most European countries at the beginning of the 2000s as regards its animal welfare legislation, became in only a decade one of the most advanced globally (Balluch, 2006; Pedersen, 2009). This section focuses on the developments of this decade, that led, as we will see in chapters 4 and 5, to the main repression episode of the late 2000s and early 2010s.

According to Balluch (2012), when the animal rights movement emerged as a stand-alone issue in the mid 1980's, there was a lack of interest in public opinion regarding the treatment of animals. In these conditions, animal advocates could not hope for any significant political success, such as the ban of certain practices or proper improvements to the condition of the animals used. The movement thus focused on raising awareness on the situation of animals in Austria, rather than emphasising on lobbying or political campaigns. Balluch (2012) states that this showed to be fruitful when they decided in 1998, as they felt an evolution in public opinion, to campaign for a ban on fur farming. The campaign was successful and laid the ground for subsequent political campaigns that enabled them to obtain a wide range of victories, including among others,

bans on wild animals in circuses, on caged hens and rabbits, on experimenting on apes and on selling cats and dogs in shops, the appointment of animal solicitors in each provincial state who can open judicial cases on behalf of animals and the inclusion of animal protection in the constitution, as follows: 'The state protects the life and wellbeing of animals in its responsibility for them as fellows of mankind' (Pedersen, 2009, section II:B:ii:a.).

In the course of these endeavours, Verein Gegen Tierfabriken (VGT) came to directly confront the Österreichische Volkspartei (ÖVP), the main conservative party. As will be shown in chapter 4, this was arguably the main reason of the backlash observed a few years later. This confrontation is explained by Balluch (2006). He describes how, after the animal rights conference of 2002, animal rights organisations led a joint press conference for the first time. This press conference was held just before a national election, and political parties to officially commit themselves to voting for a new animal protection law. The conservatives pointedly ignored this request. As a result, activists operated a thirteen hours long siege of their headquarters, which was widely covered by the media. 'The result made headline news: "Conservatives promise a new animal law if reelected". And they were reelected' (Balluch, 2006, p. 157). However, the subsequent bill introduced by the government in 2004 did not meet expectations. 'Therefore, we decided to step up the campaign at the political level and directly confront the major obstacle—the Conservatives' (p. 159). Activists investigated many factory farms and produced a video in order to reflect the situation of farmed animals in Austria, which was projected on giant screens in many cities during street demonstrations. 'In the video, the footage of each type of factory farm was directly related to the Conservatives' suggestions for a new law in each respect, to underline their complete disregard for the wellbeing of the animals' (p. 159). Animal advocates commissioned a survey that showed overwhelming support for a ban on battery cages and in parallel launched a letter-writing and emailing campaign against ÖVP. They received substantial media coverage and this became a 'major public issue' (p. 159). They took advantage of elections that were taking place in March 2004 in two provinces to convey a clear message to voters: 'Conservatives support animal abuse' (p. 159). They then challenged the ÖVP during their electoral meetings and

in live televised shows, which ended with some of the party candidates physically assaulting activists at a rally. This benefitted the activists' cause as it was widely covered in the media. As a result, 'the Conservatives lost 50 percent of their votes in the province where this attack took place, and their governor was defeated in the other. Our impact was now undeniable' (p. 160). Yet, as the activists felt that there was no will to accept substantial compromises from the conservatives, the confrontation continued, in the streets with demonstrations and poster campaigns, and in the media. The government, instead of a ban on battery cages for hens, wanted to make 'enriched cages' compulsory, first from 2012, then bringing it forward to 2009. However, animal advocates felt this would bring negligible improvements. Thus, as the government planned to organise the promotion of the first battery farm using such cages in Austria, activists broke into it the night before. 'They had invited a hen expert from Germany, who was quoted in their press release as praising the farm. We released pictures from the very same farm depicting featherless birds in crowded cages, dead birds, and filthy conditions' (p. 160). The government, in seeking for a compromise solution, set up a commission. All the major animal advocacy groups combined to communicate through advertisements in major newspapers on each day the commission met, urging the Prime Minister to reconsider his position. At this occasion, 78 prominent artists and scientists added their names to the advertisement. In parallel, the conservative candidate to the presidential elections eventually dissociated herself from her own party, declaring that she favoured a ban on battery cages, just before the election. For Balluch (p. 161), it was 'too late: she narrowly lost the election'. During the next weeks, animal advocates continued lobbying outside and inside parliament, the Freiheitliche Partei Österreich (FPÖ) apparently also feeling the need to dissociate itself from its governing partner, as they invited Balluch to participate in the discussions in the National Council. The government finally resigned itself to allow a ban on battery farming that was voted with an exceptional full unanimity.

With a wide range of actions that helped sustaining media interest in the issue, the movement had been able to raise a considerable amount of public concern and consequently of political support by opposition parties. As Balluch (p.

161) sums it up: 'Apart from the Farmers' Union, which spent a lot of money on advertisements making wild claims against us, there was virtually no opposition to our views'. Animal advocates thus obtained many other breakthroughs such as listed above.

Finally, the NGO, as well as other grassroots groups following its agenda, such as BaT, also confronted companies or industries directly. This was the case with a successful campaign against circuses with animals, as we will see in chapter 4, with Austrian activists targeting the clothing chain Peek and Cloppenburg as part of an international campaign against its selling of fur and with the campaign they launched in 2006 against Kleider Bauer, the biggest clothing retailer in Austria, that would be central to the repression case. Through regular protests and information stalls in front of Kleider Bauer's shops, they aimed to pressure the company to stop selling fur.

2.3 POLITICAL OPPONENTS

As concerns the opponents of animal advocates in Austria, the hunting lobby is particularly important. The pig industry is also noticeably powerful and that explains why it has been very difficult for the movement to obtain breakthroughs for these animals. However, it was decided in 2012 to phase out farrowing crates. As stated by an interviewee (Anon11), 'it is going to take years before it comes to reality (2033) and it's a small improvement, but it was the first time the pig industry was defeated. We didn't really think it was possible'.

A specificity of the Austrian case is that the main farmers union, Bauernbund, is a sub-organisation of the Conservative party, ÖVP (Bauernbund, 2018). It claims 236 000 members as of 2018 (Bauernbund, 2018), when the party overall has 600 000 members, making up for almost 40% of the total. There are, all in all, 6 sub-organisations constituting ÖVP: Bauernbund, a youth organisation, a women organisation, a business federation, a workers union and a senior citizens organisation. To put these numbers into perspective, there were in 2010, 346,260 people working on farms in Austria (Eurostat, 2012). It might come as a surprise that the leading farmers union be a sub-organisation of a party, but this situation

is better understood in light of, and explains, the political history and structuration of the Austrian political landscape on agricultural issues. Indeed, amongst Austrian political parties, ÖVP appears as the most clearly uncompromising supporter of farmers and all interviewees drew a clear line between this party and the others concerning this issue. Regarding animal welfare, ÖVP was the only party that systematically opposed the ideas of animal advocates and consistently defended the interests of animal industries. When asked if the conservatives were opposing improvements for animals, more because of their beliefs or because of the animal industry's lobbying, an interviewee (Anon11) stated that 'they are not only influenced by the lobbies, they *are* the lobby'. Interviewees depicted a party that is taken over by farmers and hunters, or people that come from these backgrounds, who represent a considerable proportion of their members and Members of Parliament. A telling example of this opposition from the conservatives to any improvement for animals is that it was until recently, the only mainstream party which did not have a speaker for animal welfare. They only decided to have one, after animal advocates made a press release and highlighted it in the media. Still, this speaker is most of the time, a farmer.

More generally, farmers and hunters are overrepresented in the government or in the parliament. Although they represent a very small proportion of the population (people working on farms represented 4% of Austrians in 2010 (Eurostat, 2012), while hunters represented 1.4% in 2002, almost a third of them also being farmers (Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU, 2003), they control one third of the National Council and always hold important positions such as Ministers. Indeed, as Austria is a particularly federal country, every state (Bundesland), even the smaller ones, is strongly represented in the institutions, leading small rural states to have a power proportionally greater than their population share. For example, every state chooses one Minister. Hence, rural states generally set farmers to this position. In 2004, the agriculture minister was the owner of the largest battery farm of the country, with 450 000 birds (Balluch, 2006).

3. SPAIN

3.1 HISTORY OF THE SPANISH MOVEMENT

The first Spanish organisation advocating for animals was ADDA (Asociación Defensa Derechos Animal – Association for the Defense of Animal Rights), founded in 1976 (AI, SNI). It is a welfarist organisation. Other organisations followed in the 1980s, such as ALA (Alternativa para la Liberación Animal – Alternative for Animal Liberation), founded in 1985 or ANDA (Asociación Nacional para la Defensa de los Animales – National Association For the Protection of Animals), founded in 1989, but according to Díez Michelena (ADMI) and Nuñez (SNI), it is only in the second half of the 1990s that there was an important expansion phase in the movement, especially with grassroots groups organising many demonstrations and happenings. Most of these groups were focusing on two issues: bullfighting and other popular events involving animal suffering, and abandoned and mistreated pets.

According to Nuñez (SNI), compared to most Spanish groups and organisations at the time, that focused on ending bullfighting and ‘on cats and dogs’, and had ‘some kind of environmental-conservationist message’, the creation of ALA in 1985, was ‘ground-breaking’. The organisation was different in that it was openly advocating for vegetarianism and then veganism, which was something that no animal rights group was doing then. It focused on new issues such as animal farming, animal experimentation and animals used in entertainment. To Nuñez, ALA was ‘sort of the first seed of an animal liberation movement in Spain, or an animal rights movement in Spain, and it evolved ... and in the early 2000s it became an animal rights organisation in itself, that meaning with no confusion, like with a very strong animal rights ideology. ... It was the first strong, clearly animal rights group that existed in Spain’. She and other interviewees (CRI, JBI, JMI) stated that most of the more recent animal rights groups in Spain, such as Animal Equality, Equanimal (that became part of Animal Equality in 2012), the political party PACMA (Partido Animalista Contra el Maltrato Animal – Animal Party Against Animal Cruelty) were inspired by ALA. Equanimal,

for instance, was the result of the fusion of ALA with Derechos para los Animales (Rights For Animals), in 2006 (Calvo, 2006).

As most groups were focusing on issues related to pets and bullfighting, others decided to specialise on other issues that were less touched upon. That is the case of ANDA and FAADA (Fundació para el Asesoramiento y Acción en Defensa de los Animales—Foundation for Assistance and Action in Favour of Animals), founded 1997. The former, originally essentially focusing on these issues, decided in the late 1990s to shift their focus on other issues, while still being part of, and supporting coalitions of NGOs acting upon them (ADMI). Rather, they decided to act more on farm animals, animal experimentation and wild animals in captivity. FAADA, originally only focusing on raising funds to assist cats and dogs shelters, expanded its focus to all fields of animal exploitation, before deciding in 2012 to focus essentially on wild animals in captivity (used as pets, in circuses, in zoos, dolphinariums and other types of entertainment) (JBI).

Still, as Nuñez (SNI) explains, bullfighting has been, and still is, integral to the movement in Spain:

‘There are other groups that are more focused on bullfighting, but many of the animal rights organisations like us have done a lot of anti-bullfighting protest in the past and big animal rights groups like PACMA focus a lot of their attention on bullfighting. And I think it makes sense: I mean it’s difficult for people to think about animal rights when the country is so openly permitting and allowing such a terrible form of animal mistreatment. I think that it’s what many organisations think: that it’s a stone in the animal rights movement and that we should get rid of it as soon as possible and I think that is why it’s so core to the animal rights movement’.

Finally, the Spanish movement and especially the animal rights part of it, appears to have undergone an important politicisation. Nuñez (SNI) stated that it had become:

‘less political in the sense less linked to the Left and at the same time more involved in politics. The movement is definitely looking more at the laws, politics, politicians, how to do lobbying more effectively, it’s also beginning to look at corporations. [...] I would say 5, 7 or 10 years ago it was a movement that was mainly focused on educating the public’.

Trying to characterise the Spanish movement, Nuñez (SNI) emphasised that ‘what is unique about the animal rights movement in Spain is how ideological it still is and it was in the past. Very much focused on sentience, the idea of animal rights, people understanding the philosophy of animal rights’.

3.2 STRUCTURE OF THE MOVEMENT IN THE EARLY 2010s

ADDA, ANDA, FAADA, Anima Naturalis, Libera!, Animal Equality and Equanimal before its merging with the former, were amongst the most important animal NGOs in Spain, as indicated by the interviewees, as well as their reach on social media and their number of adherents. The two former define themselves as welfarists, the others as animal rights NGOs, except FAADA which, being focused on the issue of wild animals in captivity, and having an abolitionist stance on a sector basis, does not officially define itself as an animal rights NGO—understood as pursuing the end of all animal exploitation. Animal Equality is especially important in terms of influence, as demonstrated by its online reach: they had, including the Latin American countries where the NGO is present, around 200 000 contacts in their database—newsletter subscribers, petition signatories—(JMI) and about 900 000 ‘likes’ on Facebook, at the moment of the interviews (Animal Equality, 2014).

However, the interviewees emphasised that most of the Spanish animal rights organisations, including Animal Equality, were still very grassroots, and comparatively a lot smaller than many of their European and especially American counterparts. ANDA and FAADA, on the contrary, did not rely much on volunteers and were not very active in the streets, leading Nuñez (SNI) to say about FAADA:

‘I don’t think they are an organisation at the moment [...] that many activists would consider an active ... organisation’. Rather, they are more professionalised—according to interviewees, FAADA was the animal NGO with the most employees: 14 as of 2014 (JBI)—and institutionalised. ANDA, in particular, is very active in political lobbying, and appears to have secured access to decision-makers to far greater lengths than any other Spanish organisation (ADMI; JBI)). Indeed, according to Díez Michelena (ADMI), they are most of the time the only animal advocacy group present at negotiation tables with government actors and industry groups. ANDA, who acts at regional, national and European level, is also part of Eurogroup For Animals.

Although it is the oldest animal NGO in Spain, ADDA, according to the other interviewees, did not appear to be very visible in the movement at the time. Although it did not run its own shelters, its main activity, according to Nuñez (SNI) and Berengueras (JBI), consisted in the organisation of a yearly fair since 2004, AnimalAdda, to promote adoption and support shelters (ADDA, 2014).

Animal Equality was, to all interviewees, the most influential group in the abolitionist strand of the movement and their action appeared to be well recognised amongst interviewees, despite some expressing incomprehension at their fundamentalist abolitionist stance (ADMI). Beginning as a generalist organisation, they increasingly came to focus on farmed animals. At the moment of the interviews, in the summer 2014, Animal Equality had, in Spain, about 1200 adherents (JMI, SNI). Equanimal and Animal Equality, both created in 2006 and very influenced by ALA, had merged in 2012, keeping the latter name. As we will expand further later, this was partly as a result of repression, both organisations feeling that they would be stronger together (JMI, SNI). They had no lobbying activity, their main endeavours consisting in raising public awareness on the condition of animals and on vegan outreach, through educational actions, investigations and civil disobedience. As regards the latter, they most importantly organised open rescues, but also disrupted fashion events involving fur or bullfights. Equanimal, before the merging, also conducted hunt sabotages. Both organisations before the merging, had become very successful in getting media

attention, in particular thanks to their investigations into fur farms, but also into slaughterhouses and pig farms (JMI, SNI).

Libera! also originated from ALA (SNI). It defines itself (CRI) and is perceived by other interviewees (ADMI, JBI, SNI) as an animal rights NGO, although they do not emphasise it in their communication, especially towards politicians: ‘what we do is trying to understand the politicians’ needs and make them fit to our needs and design new laws. We don’t go there and say “let’s be honest we want all the world to be vegan”’ (CRI). The NGO is sustained only by volunteers. Although it began as a campaigning group, its main endeavour is now lobbying, but it still has a certain degree of campaigning activities. They are particularly active in Catalonia, but also in Galicia and, like Anima Naturalis and Animal Equality, in some Latin American countries, such as Argentina. It is a reformist abolitionist organisation, working on all fields of animal exploitation (CRI). According to Nuñez (SNI), ‘they have been quite successful definitely with some campaigns, like for example getting the selling of animals off the streets [...] in Catalonia’. However, they acted more at the level of Members of Parliament and members of the regional parliament, than as an expert group having direct access to negotiations. Indeed, although he said ANDA was working with Libera! on some campaigns via different coalitions, Díez Michelena (ADMI) stated:

‘we are in 11 working groups and 3 committees [in government] and I have never seen them. [...] even in the ethical committee in Catalonia for farm animals, I have never seen them in any kind of these official groups. One thing is you try to lobby, putting pressure on politicians, but another thing is that you are integrated in the process of setting up new legislation. So that means that the authority has an obligation to call every stakeholder whenever they are setting new legislation. But of course, when deciding which ones, it’s up to the authorities. And probably what’s happening is that the authorities never call Libera! or Anima Naturalis, or Equanimal [...] It’s different when you are talking about new measures for slaughterhouses, if you

are facing someone who thinks slaughterhouses should not exist’.

Further, he described Libera!’s activity as ‘lobbying outside the system’. Berengueras (JBI) confirmed this view: ‘at least at national level, I don’t recall hearing about them in meetings’.

On the other hand, Anima Naturalis is an animal rights organisation that made its speciality of spectacular street actions and campaigns, attempting—quite successfully according to interviewees—to attract media attention, similarly to PETA (several interviewees brought this comparison) in the United States and elsewhere. Anima Naturalis is active in Spain as well as in Latin America. Although several interviewees stated that Anima Naturalis could sometimes engage in political lobbying, they recognised them as more efficient in raising media attention through spectacular campaigning.

Finally, the political party PACMA (Partido Animalista Contra el Maltrato Animal – Animal Party Against Animal Cruelty) has established itself in the political landscape over the years. Founded in 2003, they went on from scoring 0,17% in the 2008 general election (El Pais, 2008), to 1,19% in the same election in 2016, with 286 702 votes (El Pais, 2016). Surprisingly, they present themselves as abolitionist. As of the early 2010s, although there were or had been animal protection parties in the UK and Austria, only the Spanish one was of any importance. The Austrian one had only existed for two years around 2008 (Anon11), without presenting candidates to elections.

4. ITALY

4.1 HISTORY OF THE ITALIAN MOVEMENT

The oldest animal advocacy NGO in Italy, ENPA (Ente Nazionale per la Protezione Degli Animali – National Association for the Protection of Animals), was founded in 1871 in Turin by Giuseppe Garibaldi. A proper social movement for animals began developing about a century later, in the 1970s and 1980s. At that time ENPA was not very active nor very subversive anymore (CPI; IFI). Vivisection, from that

time on, became the main issue for the movement, similarly to the UK and contrary to Spain or Austria. This was partly due to the work of famous Swiss writer Hans Ruesch, who published a series of books in the late 1970s denouncing animal experimentation. This brought a lot of media attention to the topic and Ruesch was sued by pharmaceutical companies (CPI; MRI). At that time, many groups formed, in the late 1970s and 1980s, of which most were focusing on animal experimentation. While many died off after 5 to 10 years (CPI), two remained active that became big names in the Italian movement: LAV (Lega Anti Vivisezione – Anti-Vivisection League), founded in 1977 and OIPA (Organizzazione Internazionale Protezione Animali – International Organisation for Animal Protection) founded in 1981 by Ruesch and others. LAV would become the most important and most famous Italian campaigning organisation (Understanding Animal Research, n.d.a). Whereas it focused for the first decade on animal experimentation, it then came to develop campaigns on all topics and especially on captivity and farming (CPI; RBI) and quickly became an established and institutionalised organisation, moderating its actions and discourse. Indeed, although Bennati (RBI) insisted that LAV had always been an abolitionist organisation, the other interviewees said that in the 1990s and 2000s, the organisation had more of a welfarist discourse.

In the 1980s, the question of farming was not much considered and the one of captivity neither (RBI). Hunting on the other hand was a strong issue, although most NGOs acting in this field at the time were conservationist rather than animal protectionist and it was approached, until the turn of the century, more as an ecological issue (MRI, IFI). In 1990, a referendum took place that aimed to restrict the practice of hunting, backed by the Radicals, the Greens and most Left parties. Although 92% of voters positioned in favour of the proposal, not enough voters turned in, so the referendum could not be considered (Italian Ministry of the Interior, 2020); MRI; IFI). However, a law was passed in 1992, regulating hunting in order to protect the fauna, providing a national basis on which provisions can be added at the provincial level.

The question of companion animals was, of course, an important issue and the late 1980s and early 1990s saw important developments in this area, with the

passage of crucial bills. In 1991, it was forbidden to kill cats and dogs in kennels and in shelters, while the law created obligations for the State as regards to the treatment of stray animals and making it illegal to use stray animals for the purpose of experimentation. Several nowadays leading members of ENPA were, at that time, involved in politics and were able to push for these developments. These include Carla Rocchi, then a Green Senator and later sub-secretary of health, under Minister Umberto Veronesi (2000-2001), now president of ENPA and Annamaria Procacci, then a member of Parliament (IFI).

Ferri (IFI) dates back political interest for the animal issue to the mid-1990s. The Radical party and the newly created Green party had incorporated animal protection in their manifestos and statutes and politicians from more mainstream parties were feeling that public opinion was increasingly concerned with the treatment of animals. There was also stronger media interest. Around that time, the movement was already strong and able to mobilise. For example in 1993, LAV organised the first demonstration at a beagle-breeding facility called Morini, that would be the object of an important grassroots campaign a decade later and gathered 3000 people (CPI).

From the late 1990s and early 2000s, many grassroots groups formed with often strong ties to the anarchist movement, deep ecology and green anarchism (MRI, RBI, IFI, CPI). From 2000, the SHAC campaign was introduced in Italy by a network of grassroots activists that undertook an important campaign the following years, from 2002, against the aforementioned Morini. For the first time the grassroots movement decided to close down a facility in Italy, with a campaign similar to the ones that sprung up in the late 1990s and early 2000s in the UK. Although Morini ended up closing down years later, the campaign was not particularly successful and was met with repression in the indifference and even antipathy of public opinion (CPI, MRI, RBI). After this campaign ended in 2004, activists involved in it, moved on to another somewhat similar campaign aimed at the fur industry. AIP (Attacca l'Industria della Pelliccia - Attack the Fur Industry) was a national network of small independent groups that went on until 2010. It was a pressure campaign-based network where targets were decided upon one after the

other to make companies go fur-free. This campaign was also affected by repression (MRI, CPI), as we will see in the following chapter.

Meanwhile, from 2008 to 2010, another group of activists undertook a campaign targeting animal experimentation in universities: CCVU (Coalizione Contro la Vivisezione nelle Università – Coalition Against Vivisection in Universities). The goal was to move the attention from private institutions to public ones, and in particular the financing of experimentation via public funds. There also, it failed to reach its objectives. The model was the same as the previous ones, but with a stronger intellectual contribution, via conferences and a will to organise debates in universities and with the public (MRI). Reggio (MRI) described it as radical. It aimed at creating a national network of campaigns but in fact was limited to the region of Varese and some occasional events in Bologna. However, it was not met with particular repression.

In the late 2000s, farm animals and veganism became more of a focus for the movement. The first Veggie Pride took place in Rome in 2008 and was then organised every year in Milan. This yearly demonstration, derived from the French one existing since 2001, aims at publicising ethical vegetarianism and veganism (MRI). Whereas in the late 20th century, these were strongly rejected in Italy, they very rapidly became more mainstream in the 2000s (IFI, CPI). This change was stronger and quicker than in Spain or Austria, although the UK remains the country where vegetarianism is the more entrenched, having been mainstream for a long time and being very widespread (Choquet, 2015).

The late 2000s and early 2010s saw a certain degree of radicalisation of the biggest organisations (MRI, RBI, IFI). First ENPA, under Carla Rocchi's leadership, in the mid-2000s, became more active on campaigning and began adopting a stronger discourse, although its activities remain mainly linked to its shelter activities, lobbying and campaigning in the media about dogs and cats and taking legal action (RBI, IFI). Ferri (IFI) insisted that ENPA now addressed issues such as meat consumption, on ethical and environmental grounds. OIPA and all the more so LAV, who had a more welfarist approach in the 2000s, at least officially, began expressing abolitionist views in the early 2010s (MRI, CPI, RBI). For example, OIPA

made an advertising campaign in 2014, showing a pet and a farm animal and stressing the inconsistency in 'loving one while eating the other' (MRI).

Finally, the early 2010s were marked by the so-called Green Hill campaign, launched in 2010 under the name Fermare Green Hill (Close Down Green Hill) by the network of activists already involved in the Morini, AIP and SHAC Italy campaigns. It was similarly built on the purpose of closing down a facility, in this case, breeding beagles for animal experimentation. However, as will be discussed later in this chapter and in chapters 4 and 5, these activists learned from previous experiences, in Italy and in the UK, and built this campaign entirely differently. The campaign did not only succeed in closing down the facility, but also enabled to mobilise a lot more, to gain massive public support and to obtain a law restricting animal experimentation. This was cited as a milestone for the whole movement by all interviewees. The campaign culminated with hundreds of protesters seemingly spontaneously liberating beagles openly and in front of the media. The images became a worldwide symbol. As Pomo (CPI) stated, animal experimentation had always been 'a very important issue in the movement, but the Green Hill campaign managed to make it a big issue in society, which was not the case before'.

4.2 STRUCTURE OF THE MOVEMENT

Italy had, in the early 2010s, a dynamic situation in the movement, with many small local groups springing everywhere, focusing on demonstrations and protest actions (RBI). Very few groups were nationally based, most of them focusing on one city or region, mostly in the North (RBI, MRI). Most organisations in the South would be shelters or organisations dealing with problems related to animals on the field and tended to be less about campaigning (MRI). In the same way, there were more vegetarians and vegans in the North and farm animal welfare and fur issues would be more relevant in the North while stray animals would get far more attention in the South, keeping in mind that this issue is de facto more critical there (MRI, IFI).

The three main organisations were LAV, ENPA and OIPA. LAV was a bureaucratised organisation, but with, at the same time, a strong presence on the ground through its local groups in the main cities. Some of these groups were more action-oriented than others, some more radical than others, and with a relative freedom to organise as they wish (RBI)—for example, some took part in radical campaigns such as CCVU (MRI). OIPA worked the same way. As stated above, both had moved towards a more clearly abolitionist stance in recent years. ENPA, even though it radicalised its discourse recently on some aspects, remained a welfarist organisation and was the most institutionalised and recognised by institutional stakeholders (MRI; MMI).

Other organisations, that were historically important but less so in the early 2010s include LIDA (Lega Italiana dei Diritti dell'Animale – Italian League for Animal Rights) and LAC (Lega per l'Abolizione della Caccia – League for the Abolition of Hunting). Also active at national level were LIPU (Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli – League for the Protection of Birds), LDNC (Lega Nazionale Per La Difesa Del Cane – National League for the Defence of dogs) and AVI, the Italian Vegetarian Association (MRI, MMI).

Ferri (IFI) and Bennati (RBI) indicated good cooperation between big organisations in general and specifically between LAV and ENPA, citing issues such as hunting and dolphinarium. An indicator of this cooperation is the Nel Cuore coalition, that regroups important organisations such as LAV, ENPA, LAC and OIPA (MRI; IFI, RBI). It is used for lobbying and was established through the impulse of Michela Vittoria Brambilla, a former minister under Berlusconi who is an open animal advocate. Before creating Nel Cuore, she established a first attempt with a manifesto called La Coscienza degli Animali (Animal consciousness), that was signed by almost 150 000 people among which many personalities. The manifesto is, naturally, not comprehensively abolitionist, but fairly so sectorally (IFI, RBI, MRI). Although many interviewees saw Brambilla at first as an opportunist and were wary of her belonging to a party clearly on the right of the political spectrum, most of them recognised that her engagement was genuine and now welcomed her help (RBI, MRI, CPI). According to Bennati (MRI) and Ferri (IFI), the fact that Brambilla initiated the Nel Cuore coalition made it easier to put everyone around

the table. Carla Rocchi and in a lesser dimension Gianluca Felicetti, respectively presidents of ENPA and LAV, were drivers of the process (RBI; IFI). The member NGOs do not meet regularly but exchange via a mailing list, about the most important campaigns to follow, or simply the letters to write to politicians or the government. The coalition has also for example undertaken communication campaigns in the media (MRI). Finally, LAV and other organisations launched through the Nel Cuore coalition a website called 'Voto con il cuore' (Vote with the heart), listing politicians' stances on animal related issues to help citizens deciding when voting with animal protection in mind. Bennatti (RBI) expressed satisfaction at the feedback received from voters. They also invited election candidates to pledge on a number of consensual political demands (RBI).

Amongst more grassroots and activism-oriented organisations, one found Animalisti Italiani, created in 1998 by a former president of LAV out of disappointment at the bureaucratisation and moderation of the latter. For its first two years it was the Italian branch of PETA, before becoming independent, although keeping the same kind of tactics. It is resolutely grassroots but rather established and well accepted by others in the movement (MRI; CPI, IFI). It resorts to light civil disobedience like non-authorised voiceful demonstrations they define as 'flashmobs' (AI1; AI2), but is not perceived as particularly radical. This abolitionist group gathers rather small numbers of activists—generally around 100 to 200 come to its actions (AI1; AI2)—but enjoys some visibility in the street via a network of local groups taking on their campaigns. It counted, as of 2014, around 15 000 donators. The objects of its demonstrations and campaigns vary a great deal and might be said to lack focus: they tend to react to the news. For example, activists (AI1; AI2) gave examples of demonstrations they had recently organised, such as one where they chained themselves in front of the Danish embassy to protest the infamous killing of Marius the Giraffe in Copenhagen zoo, ones against the closure of a local shelter or one in front of the house of a person who burned a dog in Naples, in which case the activists felt the judicial system failed to do its work. Finally, they mentioned demonstrations in supermarkets selling specific kinds of meat. They stated that their goal with these actions was mainly to attract media attention. The NGO also developed a phone line that people can use to

signal cases of mistreatments. Eventually, they, in the last two years prior to the interview, began developing some political links, meeting with '3 or 4' politicians and organising a stall at a Left party event.

The same group that did the Morini campaign and the Green Hill campaign created two local groups in 2012: Nemesis Animale and Essere Animali. Both merged as Essere Animali in 2014. It is a reformist abolitionist grassroots organisation, but that is rather professional in the way they conduct campaigns and gives importance to its image, trying to build connections with the media, politicians and more established groups such as LAV. Pomo (CPI) explained:

'I have always been, me and the others, focusing on single issue campaigns because we thought it was working and really important. We were doing some local group kind of activism, usually supporting this or that campaign, but we never put a lot of effort on creating an organisation talking about all aspects of animal rights. And so, after years of experience, this was our first project really long term not to be stopped when some campaign would be won'.

The organisation, as of 2014, focused its work on investigations on hen farming, be it caged, free range or organic. They did an investigation on pig farming in Lombardia, which is the biggest region for pig farming in Italy, and another one on the local zoo in Romania. According to Pomo (CPI) their biggest project was, around 2013, an investigation in mink farms in Italy. 'It took almost 2 years and we have been in all Italian farms and this has been the launch for a campaign to ban mink farming'. The organisation also conducted some open rescues of hens and minks and the latter created a lot of attention, which Pomo (CPI) explains by the particular interest on fur farms in Italy. Finally, Essere Animali also focuses on 'traditional' educational work, through presentations in schools, street information stalls and local campaigns.

A group becoming notorious in the early 2010s was 100% Animalisti, but it had poor relations with other groups who perceived it as reactionary and did not appreciate its tactics and discourse, being described by all interviewees as 'aggressive', 'sterile' and 'offensive'. According to Reggio (MRI), the main reason for the group being perceived as reactionary was the fact that its founder has been

a local candidate for the far-right Norda Forze party. The association was founded in the mid-2000s. Some split offs, like Fronte Animalista (Animal Front) came to being, although these local groups use the same rhetoric and methods, leaving Pomo (CPI) and Reggio (MRI) wondering why they split in the first place. Those groups were described as aggressive towards other animal protection groups: 'If they have a conflict about veganism or strategy, they begin to say the other groups or persons in animal rights are the enemy, just want to make money, or they agree with vivisectors' (MRI). Reggio (MRI) went on to compare them to hooligans, in the way they campaign.

Finally, there is in Italy an important grassroots intellectual movement, much like in the neighbouring France (Jeangène Vilmer, 2008), of which Oltre la Specie (OLS), founded in 2002, is an incarnation. It diffuses ideas and debates in the movement via its journal *Liberazioni*, on the model of the French *Cahiers antispécistes*. Oltre la Specie organises events such as conferences and the Veganchio festival near Milan, which allows for different networks of grassroots activists to reflect on strategies, and also publishes books (MRI).

4.3 OPPONENTS

In Italy, hunters are politically very strong, as emphasised by activists in Animalisti Italiani (AI1; AI2), Bennati (RBI) and Pomo (CPI). The latter detailed: 'they are able to stop almost every bill that is proposed ... Behind the hunters there is the weapon industry and it is strictly connected with the State. ... Sometimes they do demonstrations in the streets and [there are] thousands of people'. But Bennatti (RBI) noted that there were many different federations of hunters 'with different causes, different languages, different positions. They are not united, this is the main point'. A situation very different from the neighbouring France for example, where there is only one federation, to which hunters have to become members in order to obtain a permit, which gives this federation tremendous political power and financial resources and allows hunters to have clear and coherent political demands (Farrachi, 2008).

Pomo (CPI) stressed that the advocates of animal experimentation had ‘a lot of contacts everywhere because the pharma industry is really big [although] even if they tried very hard, they did not manage to stop the laws that were proposed. The reforms on the vivisection law in Italy, some of them were really good for animals’ (CPI). A group specifically aimed at opposing animal advocates exists since 2012, called Pro-Test. It is the Italian branch of the UK group of the same name, linked to Speaking of Research. Pomo (CPI) and Roberto (RBI) attested that they were politically quite influential thanks to the status of their academic members. As will be shown in chapter 3, they were very active in trying to criminalise the movement.

Bennati (RBI) stressed that the meat industry was not only economically powerful but politically very well organised and that it had developed strong political networks. A very vocal group representing animal farmers and actively opposing animal protectionists is Federfauna, but it has little credibility because the language of its attacks against animal protectionists is so extreme. Thus for example, it gave a ‘Hitler award’ every year to an animal advocate, referring to the supposed vegetarianism of the dictator. In 2013, they awarded it to Brambilla, which created outrage, even leading an Italian MEP to table a question in the European parliament (Motti, 2013).

Two other interest groups that politically count in Italy, are the fur industry and circuses. The first is stronger than in the other countries studied given the importance of the fashion industry in Italy, but is rather poorly organised politically, according to Pomo (CPI), having few political contacts. Activists in Animalisti Italiani (AI1; AI2) attested that circuses would gather thousands of people when they demonstrate, that they would also lobby and that several MPs were closely related to them.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the British case is a peculiar one, in that the organised animal advocacy movement was much older and more structured than it was in Italy, Austria and Spain, with many well established and powerful organisations at the time repression took place. There was less cooperation inside the movement and

between animal advocates and other social movements than was the case in Austria. Finally, the political context in which animal advocates were acting in the mid-1990s was fairly favourable, with a growing access to decision-makers, Labour winning the 1997 general elections and the backing of public opinion.

The Italian movement is a rather young one, like in Austria and Spain, with a strong but rather divided, radical (both ideologically and tactically) grassroots strand and several important, institutionalised organisations that tend to be ideologically more radical than in the other countries and that work particularly well together. The grassroots animal rights movement has developed strong ties with radical anarchists, although some leading circles of activists have sought to move away from these in order to avoid repression and appeal to, and mobilise, a larger public. They have succeeded in doing so via the Green Hill campaign, which enabled to mobilise thousands, and on one occasion, tens of thousands of non-activists and frame animal experimentation as an important issue in society, resulting in one of the most ambitious laws voted on animal experimentation in Europe and that created links between grassroots and more established organisations. A particularity of this national movement is also to have seen the historical involvement of major intellectuals such as Garibaldi, Capitini and Ruesch and more recently of a major political actor, Michela Brambilla, who successfully attempted to coalesce the main organisations, while disseminating their ideas in the circles of power under Berlusconi.

While the first animal protection groups appeared early in Austrian history, active political campaigns are quite recent and largely due to one group, VGT, that became the driving force of the movement and imposed a pragmatic reformist abolitionist agenda and strategies clearly aimed at the political sphere, that received support from established welfarist organisations and local grassroots groups. While often relying on confrontational tactics, they always aimed to keep the sympathy of public opinion and kept confrontation at 'acceptable' levels to this end, never falling into pitfalls seen in other countries in campaigns such as with SHAC in the UK.

The important changes that happened in the mid-2000s and improved considerably animal welfare regulations clearly threatened animal industries. This

situation called for a reaction from animal industries, and the Conservatives were likely to be willing to retaliate after the very confrontational campaign that animal advocates undertook against them.

As concerns Spain, organised animal advocacy is quite recent, dating back to the transition to democracy in the 1970s. Although some groups do rely on shocking protests and on civil disobedience, like Anima Naturalis, and others like Animal Equality and Equanimal before they merged, there were never groups that claimed a very radical image, or pressure campaigns such as SHAC. Thus, the picture that can be painted of the Spanish movement is a quite moderate one on the tactics front and very little activity by activists outside the law, like the Animal Liberation Front. Interviews highlighted an improved cohesion in recent years, especially among animal rights actors and recognition for the value and complementarity of the work of others. Animal Equality appeared to be recognised and appreciated by all actors for their work on raising awareness, although some expressed incomprehension towards their fundamentalist abolitionist positioning, in spite of it having softened more recently.

CHAPTER 3: FORMS OF REPRESSION

This chapter aims to determine the forms repression took in the four countries studied, following the typology developed in the introduction. The question of the causes and motivations for repression (including the nature of the actions undertaken by activists in the various countries studied, the role of individual politicians or political entities and the role of private interests) will be dealt with in the two following chapters.

The present chapter thus presents the elements of coercive repression found in some or all of the cases. This category includes tactics employed by authorities to hamper the activities of activists within existing moral and legislative frameworks and is the most diverse. It includes arrests, intimidations, obstruction, innovative use of existing laws, surveillance and infiltration. The chapter then goes on to discuss two forms of repression that can be thought of as more proactive, seeking to change the playing field in which the belligerents evolve. One is discursive criminalisation, which seeks to frame activists as extremists or terrorists, so as to delegitimize them and their actions, thus weakening their impact and to justify the other forms of repression. It is, hence, an end in itself, but also a means. The final type of repression, legislative criminalisation, consists in the creation of new legislative provisions aimed at reducing the scope of legal actions activists can resort to.

The UK case is particular in that all three forms of repression were substantively used and repression has been going on for a long period of time and cannot be brought down to one particular case, although the SHAC campaign was one of the main targets of repression. The Austrian and Spanish cases are very similar, as the main instances of repression were concentrated around one coherent repressive episode in each case, with many similarities. The Italian case, as stated in the introduction, was selected to test theories of repression explanation. Indeed, the Italian movement was very radical, with many underground direct actions being committed, and yet very little substantive repression occurred and those instances decreased over time, as the movement

gained traction. One campaign in particular, Fermare Green Hill, at the beginning of the 2010s, did not trigger repression whereas experiences from other countries would lead one to expect it.

1. COERCIVE REPRESSION

This part first deals with the main repressive episode in Spain and Austria, as those are apart among the four countries studied, while presenting many similarities. It then goes on to present other elements of coercive repression in the four cases, before focusing on surveillance and infiltration. The latter two are quite different from the other repressive elements presented here, as they could be thought of as mere tools for repression, but I argue, along many researchers, that they can also be conceived as a form of coercive repression in themselves (e.g. Boykoff, 2006; Peterson and Wahlström, 2015, p. 10; or Jämte and Ellefsen, 2020, p. 383, who for example categorise it as ‘hard repression’, alongside ‘violence and harassment’). Firstly, and as we will see, surveillance can be meant to be seen, so as to act as a deterrent, while infiltrators can act as agents provocateurs and push activists to radicalise.

But even when this is not the case, researchers such as Cunningham (2003), O’Brien (2015), Marx (1974) or Boykoff (2006) showed that the knowledge or expectation of infiltration can bring activists to limit themselves and refrain from cooperating with other groups or include new members and that it can be a strong source of demobilisation in a movement. O’Brien (2015, p. 794) argues that infiltration can do even more harm to a movement on the long term, by weakening trust, than agents provocateurs can do on the short-term. Yet, infiltration and surveillance can hardly be thought by authorities to remain unknown indefinitely, so one can argue that the effects of it have to be conceived as accepted by repressive agents and thus part of their strategy (see Loadenthal, 2014).

Furthermore, the information produced through surveillance, can serve authorities to disrupt movements (Boykoff, 2006, pp. 281-284), as Hasler, Walters and White (2020) for example found in the case of environmental activists opposing the construction of a pipeline in the US. But it also leads to the

'construction of threat' (emphasis added), which in turn can lead to what Monaghan and Walby (2012, p. 137) refer to as *'mission creep'*, whereby the focus of authorities gradually incorporates more moderate contenders. One factor of this is that intelligence actors have a vested interest in sustaining their fundings.

1.1 MAIN EPISODE OF REPRESSION IN AUSTRIA AND SPAIN

The major instance of coercive repression in Austria and Spain consisted in the prosecution of an important number of activists in what appeared to be clear political attempts at beheading parts of the animal advocacy movement in those countries. As will be shown, many similarities can be highlighted between these two cases.

In Austria, the operations started in 2006 with invasive surveillance and infiltration and culminated with the prosecution of 13 activists, through two rounds of trials, spanning from 2008 to 2014. The main charge against them was that they were accused of belonging to a supposed criminal organisation according to the 278a article of the Austrian Criminal Code, in an interpretation deviating from its original intent, but that its rather vague wording allowed for. For the first time this article was used against a social movement and it was a major political event in the country (Ellefsen, 2012).

In Spain, 12 activists were arrested in 2011 (13 more people were later added to the case) and the police and prosecution went to great lengths to portray it as an important antiterrorist operation, as seen in the section on discursive criminalisation. Here also, the accusations were rather vague and entailed linking the activists to an ensemble of illegal actions the activists could not reasonably be thought to be at least entirely responsible for. The core accusations revolved around mink liberations from fur farms. The case was eventually dropped after the investigative judge behind its opening was replaced (Pontevedra, 2015).

In Austria, this cycle of repression started in the fall of 2006 with the creation of a special police unit named SOKO-Bekleidung (*'Sonderkommission'* meaning *'special investigation team'* and *'Bekleidung'* meaning *'clothing'*, as this unit was formed, as we will see in the next chapter, after complaints by Kleider Bauer to the Minister of Interior. Indeed, this company was the target of a

campaign to bring it to stop selling fur, led by VGT and to which such groups as BaT participated. 297 activists were subjected to surveillance in one way or another for a year and a half. As it was later revealed by infiltrated police agents in court, the police could not find evidence of any important criminal damage by the activists (SOKO report¹). On May 21st 2008, 23 houses and bureaus were raided by the police, in a very forceful manner. Each team consisted of 11 to 25 police agents. Doors were broken, activists had guns pointed to their heads and agents threatened to kill a dog. 10 people were arrested during the house raids and submitted to sometimes violent and threatening detention, Balluch (MBI) stating for example that the head of the SOKO unit told him: “now we’ve got you, you will never come out again”. He walked around me 20 minutes and ... He tried to scare me and threaten me’. Afterwards, he was submitted to a forceful and degrading collection of DNA. House raids concerned members of the organisations VGT, BaT, Four Paws and Respektiere. 10 were arrested and spent 105 days in custody. In 2009, three more people were involved, bringing the number of prosecuted activists to 13. The first trial began on March 2nd 2010 and ended on May 2nd 2011, when all the accused were found not guilty. There were almost 100 days in court, often three days a week. About 100 witnesses were called, amongst which only five from the defence. After appeal from the State prosecution, another set of trials concerning five defendants resulted in 2014 in their acquittal.

In Spain, two organisations, that would later merge in part as a result of repression, as discussed in chapter 5, were the object of the repressive episode: Equanimal and Animal Equality. The investigation into these two groups was initiated by a judge who decided to reopen a case after a police investigation into two mink liberations in 2007 (concerning around 20 000 animals) had been closed. The rationale was that both organisations had conducted investigations into mink farms and conducted open rescues (see chapter 5 for a discussion on these). On June 22nd 2011, a police operation across the country saw 11 activists from both

¹ SOKO Bekleidung (2010), Bericht über die verdeckt geführten Ermittlungen im Sinne des Sicherheitspolizeigesetzes [Report on undercover investigations under the Security Police Act]. The Report, henceforward referenced as ‘SOKO report’, was made available to the parties of the trial on 30 November 2010 and accessed by the author through interviewees.

organisations house raided and arrested on the day, while a twelfth was amongst the accused but was not arrested as he was on holiday (I will come back to the latter detail in the discursive criminalisation section as it is instrumental to show that the whole operation can be argued to constitute a propaganda effort). All over Spain, around 200 agents were invested in a massive operation officially designed at arresting what the police, the judge and hence the media called ‘eco-terrorists’. The arrests and detentions also presented many irregularities. First of all was the conduct of the police during the house raids. According to Nuñez (SNI), they threatened activists on several occasions, when they were asking questions about the procedure. For example, the Spanish law makes it clear that the owner of the house has to be present when it is searched. The police did not allow this. Nuñez said: ‘if we raised any questions about it, we were just asked to sit down, behave or we would suffer the consequences.’ Another was that activists were not able to express their informed consent as required by law before the police conducted DNA tests. The 11 arrested activists were detained five days for questioning and three activists then spent a month and a half in jail. A move Moreno (JMI) saw as a way to justify the discourse of authorities and the scale of the operation. Indeed, the defendants’ lawyers asked the court to justify their detention. The judge not being able to justify it, they eventually went free. Afterwards, 13 people were prosecuted, additionally to the former 12, including this time, non-activists. The case was dropped due to the lack of evidence before a trial could take place (Pontevedra, 2015).

1.1.1 Accusations

In both cases, the accusations made against the persons charged were vague, encompassing acts at least some of which the defendants were clearly not responsible for, with a will to assimilate them to a broad and theoretical whole (direct action for animals in general). In both cases, the proper accusations were not made public nor available to the defendants, while authorities communicated so as to criminalise them and portray them as dangerous criminals or terrorists.

To the Austrian interviewees, the prosecution aimed at accumulating as many charges as possible to further their case for the existence of a ‘criminal

organisation'. Balluch (MBI) stated: 'They made up a huge number [of illegal actions] and collected the last 20 years and made it look fantastically big and as if a lot was happening'. Völkl (EVI) added that bigger events outside of Austria were mixed with domestic acts, to 'make it look more impressive'. The supposed criminal organisation was referred to, at times, as Animal Liberation Front, ELF (Earth Liberation Front) or Angry boars (EVI).

Beyond the 'criminal organisation' charge, certain defendants were accused of minor criminal damage, animal liberation and resistance to the police and blackmailing of a company (Kleider Bauer). Two ALF actions in particular were part of the case, one pig liberation and one destruction of circus placards, which were still part of the second set of trials but for which no one was eventually found guilty.

During the trial, the prosecution invoked as proof of the guilt of the defendants that during the time they were in jail, there was little property damage on the grounds of animal rights. However, an interviewee (Anon12) pointed that, firstly, as we will see in chapter 4, there were always very few such actions in Austria, secondly that the level of surveillance at the time was higher than ever and thirdly that, as defendants did point out to the judge during the trial, illegal actions did in fact happen at the time.

In Spain, although the police and the judge in charge of the investigation said the defendants were responsible for mink liberations, arson and other crimes, the judge declared the investigation secret, so the accusation was not known until the activists' lawyers obtained this information several weeks later. They only had access to the case's files 6 months afterwards. A procedure similar to that of the Austrian case. Even as of the interviews in summer 2014, activists still had not received the formal accusation as the judge was still investigating.

Other than mink liberations, the defendants were accused of crimes such as revealing industrial secrets, as Nuñez (SNI) explained:

'what they are trying to argue is that as we go into these fur farms and we film what is happening and we're releasing the information to the public, we're revealing secrets of the industry [that other companies might use] so it's like we're releasing the Coca-Cola

formula or something like that. That's one of the kind of crimes they're trying to build a case on'.

More generally, according to Nuñez (SNI):

'they present the story as if we were the heads of the ALF. And basically, from the interrogatory we had with the judge and the way the police presented the case, they are trying to charge us for all the ALF activity since ALF started in Spain... They try to present everything as a package: if you're doing open rescues and investigations, it's the same as mink liberations and arson and it's all terrorism. That's their argument. We can see this very clearly... no matter what you do, your organisation or you as an activist are an open door to terrorism'.

In that sense, the Spanish case is very similar to that of Austria. A similitude that Nuñez (SNI) and Balluch (MBI) themselves underlined.

Finally, the accusation also revolved around the notion of 'illicit association' and the risk for Animal Equality was to be dissolved. Nuñez said: 'it's something that is used for like armed, terrorist groups and they're trying to ... link it to not only mink liberations, but also investigative work'.

1.1.2 The individuals prosecuted

The Austrian interviewees expressed incomprehension as to why those people were prosecuted rather than others, or as to why the three who were later added to the case were so. Völkl (EVI) said the arguments used to prosecute some could have been used for others, who were raided then not prosecuted. Asked how much of the core people in VGT this represented, he stated : 'this was all of the core... the important people who organise stuff and push campaigns. Maybe one person was not as important'. Exemplifying the justifications given to prosecute activists he spoke of his case: 'they found some chemicals from the university in fact and a lot of camouflage clothing because of our investigations, including balaclavas and of course this was a main point'. The choice to prosecute certain individuals appears to have been driven by the need to correspond to the definition of a criminal organisation under the 278a paragraph: a large group of

persons planning to commit serious crimes for profit or gaining influence over politics or the economy—this point was amended after the case at hand to prevent its use against legitimate democratic actors such as NGOs (EVI)—and that organisations in a way designed at shielding itself from prosecution or investigation. Thus for example, the second justification for prosecuting Völkl (EVI) was that he worked on computer support in VGT and took care of encryption: 'they said I was the IT expert of this organisation they believed to have found'.

People with institutional roles, who were not animal activists, were also prosecuted, such as a Green MP who had warned Balluch of the imminence of house raids. She was prosecuted for revealing confidential information, although she was not charged as being part of the supposed criminal organisation. The conversation had happened over the phone and Balluch's was tapped at the time (MBI). A judge was also prosecuted, this time as a supposed member of the 'criminal organisation'. Balluch (BMI) explained that after a hunt sabotage in 2005, VGT activists got fined, which they appealed. Two years later, this judge dropped all the charges:

'this is the time when the police unit was already following us and they said she must be one of us, bribed by us. She was 2 months phone tapped, she had a house raid, she was questioned by the police a number of times. She was suspended from her work and it was one of my charges that I would have bribed her. I was found not guilty and I think 6 years later the prosecutor removed the charges [on her]. They were desperate. Twice they had experts going through her house looking for bribe things. They wanted to see bills for everything that they found. They saw a well in the garden and they had this fantasy that this well was a bribe from me.

So I would have paid her the well! For 300€ fines!'

He added that what triggered this belief of the police was that he 'reported favourably about her on an internal email'.

In Spain, contrary to Austria, many defendants were not important members of the targeted organisations. Some even, according to Moreno (JMI), had already dropped out from activism, after having been briefly involved. After

the merging of Equanimal into Animal Equality, Moreno (JMI) estimated the organisation had about 100 volunteers and it employed five persons. Putting aside three non-activists, 22 activists were accused, which represents more than a fifth.

Amongst the 13 late accused were, indeed, people who were never involved in animal activism. One was the mother of Sharon Nuñez. The reason invoked was that the latter and other activists used Nuñez's mother's car to go to Galicia to interview a mink farmer who wanted to stop his activity. The activists interviewed him and were supposed to interview another one and both also were involved in the case, being accused of revealing industrial secrets, which was also an accusation impending on the activists for their investigative work. The interview of the fur farmers were crucial to the activists as they were willing to reveal publicly the conditions of animals in these farms. The interview was mediatised and included shocking revelations about employees going drunk to work and beating the animals up (SNI, JMI).

1.1.3 The Building of the case by the prosecution

The Austrian activists on trial had very different defence strategies. BaT members refused to actively defend themselves and to answer questions. They only issued press releases. An interviewee (AnonI2) explained that it was partly due to deontological reflections:

'At times we felt uncomfortable with being presented as the super clean guys ... only doing good stuff because we always thought what if an ALF guy got convicted? Then it would be like "oh this is the real criminal we were waiting for". And it's not the way a social movement presents itself like "we are so harmless, nobody has to fear us in any way, they are claiming we are diminishing their profits, it's not true and they can make profits all the same and we're just [nice] people". This is not the way you want to present yourself and this is not how we present ourselves. We always try to make a political stand and say "we are not doing anything and there is no evidence against us, but if people are liberating, we have nothing against hurting profits of companies because we want to

end animal exploitation, we don't want it to be profitable". ...we always felt like "is this really good to present your campaigns as not having any effect because otherwise they will prosecute us?"

But he also stated that BaT members adopted this position in response to the absurdity of the accusations made and the questions asked:

'Maybe in some cases you can find it helpful to say certain things to counter what the police says because you know this is not true ... but for us the accusation was so absurd... There was not even a question. It was about fantastical things... It's not like "where have you been this day?" It's about "you know that there is a criminal organisation that is doing all these bad things and you want to be part of it and therefore you held this speech". What can you say? Yes I did hold the speech but there's nothing to do with any imaginative organisation'.

On the other hand, VGT members decided to 'open themselves totally, talk about everything and explain everything. It was days and days that they were answering questions' (AnonI2). VGT also communicated very openly outside of court and worked heavily on press relations, which was decisive in the failure of repression, as the conclusion will show. According to an interviewee (AnonI4), the VGT defendants all said in court that they supported certain ALF actions but were careful to draw a line between 'acceptable' actions and others, always keeping public sympathy in mind: 'like "yes I am for open liberations, I did it myself. I value the animals more than the laws and this was an emergency" ... you have to find a way to justify breaking the law'. He stated that the judge and the accusation tried to 'trick [them] all the time': 'there were emails where I said I was happy about some criminal damage and the judge asked me "why are you happy?" and all kinds of stuff like this. I said "you should put it in context: I can understand the anger of people who do things like this, but I wouldn't do it"'.

BaT had to justify sometimes mentioning direct actions on an animal rights show on an anarchist radio, as well as on their website. An interviewee (AnonI2) said they did not want to draw a clear line at any type of illegal action, to stay

coherent with their message that animals should be freed from exploitation, but that they 'were not rambling around like "the ALF is so great"'. He stated that this was very important in the trial: 'They dug up so many emails, phone calls, sms, and every time you mentioned "you heard about the liberation in some place? That's great!" it's like proof of your attitude'.

Like in Austria, the Spanish prosecution tried to use everything they could to link the activists to illegal activities and prove a connection between both organisations in this context. Equanimal and Animal Equality were groups that did not get along before the repression and their eventual merging into one organisation (JMI, SNI). However, during the raid of the house of an Equanimal activist, the police found an Animal Equality pin, while they found a book about the history of the Animal Liberation Front in Nuñez's house. The latter stated: 'they say that is a proof of the connection between both organisations, that acted secretly to inform the ALF'. This echoes the way prosecutors in the Unabomber case in the US 'itemised everything Kaczynski owned in his cabin' to link him and therefore terrorism to the organisation Earth First! (Sauvant, Fitzgibbon and Nurse, 2016, p. 78).

1.1.4 Irregularities and specificities in both cases

In Austria the media and public opinion gradually moved from accepting the authorities' claims on the defendants to supporting them against a perceived political repression. The final turning point was the discovery, by activists, of an undercover agent. Although they did not get all the files they normally should have had access to—and the police were later convicted for not giving them access to these—the defendants, along the trial sessions, got access to more and more files. In them, they came to find a page that was involuntarily left there by the police where 'there was a big stamp saying "top secret, don't put into the files, for internal use only"' (EVI). The document presented observations of activists, called 'Zillperson' (target person) and mentioned a person described as 'VE'. Activists understood that VE stood for 'verdeckte ermittler' (undercover investigator in German). The document was called 'Observation Protocol from a blockade of an

animal transporter'. Völkl (EVI) said that the defendants had, before uncovering this document, asked in court whether there were undercover agents in the movement and that the police had repeatedly lied in court, answering that it was not the case. So:

'To prove it 100% we employed a private detective to find out about this person ... We tried to reconstruct who it could be, and we had to think back: it was 2007 when this happened and now it was 2011 ... So we [gave a list] to this detective and we found out it was a person that called herself Danielle Durand. ... At the moment of the trial, she was gone. She wrote her last email in October 2008, so long after the custody. [It said] that she was now leaving for France, to her family'.

The defendants handed the evidence to the judge who, according to interviewees, was infuriated for having been lied to by the police. Völkl (EVI) said:

'you could feel that she was really [angry] speaking to the police, she didn't believe it and she asked "why didn't you tell me?" and the police said "it was not important and not relevant", it was their main argument. The attorney of the State did know of course, and he also did say ... it was not relevant because it was not evidence against us nor for us, so in the eyes of the prosecutor, this Danielle Durand who had been inside our activism circle for 16 months was irrelevant!'

This finds a parallel in the UK, where the police often withheld information on infiltrations from juries and judges in trials of environmental activists and animal advocates (Schlembach 2018, p. 495).

Danielle Durand was then summoned as a witness and, as Völkl (EVI) puts it, 'all the subtle and diffuse arguments against us cleared up and she always said "no, the radios were only because of investigations, not for arsons, the camouflage was for investigations, the encryption is for planning civil disobedience", and all what we'd been saying all the time in the trial, she as an objective police woman

explained, in our way'. Another interviewee (AnonI4) echoed this view: 'suddenly a 150-page report came to the court with all information. And inside, everything says we are innocent, everything we say, she can confirm. And that's the reason why they didn't give it to the judge. They knew if this came out we'd be found not guilty'.

The discovery of Durand's infiltration and subsequently of two other persons sent undercover by the police (they were also summoned as witnesses) constituted a major scandal in Austria and was decisive in overwhelmingly bringing public opinion to fully support the activists. A defendant (AnonI4) said 'it was definitely the biggest justice scandal of the year and every newspaper had 2 pages about it'. Not only did the use of sexual relationships shock the public, but it was revealed that Durand had been undercover without permission from a court, as Austrian law requires.

This was a decisive shift and the trial ended rapidly after that, with all defendants being acquitted of all charges. As Völkl (EVI) puts it, 'the judge finished the trial as quickly as possible. 100 [witnesses from the accusation] were heard. We had 200 for us, only 5 were heard. Because the judge didn't need them'.

The State then appealed the verdict and a second set of trials took place in 2014. Charges pertaining to the so-called criminal organisation were ditched but five activists were prosecuted for the other charges in individual trials that were far less advertised by the government and the police and only lasted one day each. Again, all defendants were found not guilty. Finally, after public pressure and campaigns by NGOs from across the political spectrum, the 278a article of the Criminal code was amended, so as to make it necessary to pursue economic gain in the definition of a criminal organisation.

In Spain, the judge in charge of investigations, as well as the police, clearly violated the presumption of innocence. They presented the accused as terrorists and guilty of mink liberations but also of arson (see the discursive criminalisation section of this chapter) to the media, while neither the media nor the charged persons had access to the actual accusations. The judge leading the investigations, while interviewing an accused member of Equanimal, revealed that his father was a mink farmer (JMI). The accused twice requested the replacement of the

investigative judge (The Spanish 12, 2011), but their demands were dismissed, the second time because of timing, having only obtained the case's files 6 months after the arrests. Despite this, Nuñez (SNI) stated that:

'[the State prosecutor] is the one that is trying to push things forward. After three years the judge ... we think that he feels that the case is going nowhere. Because they honestly have nothing. Pages and pages of nothing, just talking about our investigations and talking about pins and stuff like that. And the books they found in our house and how we're related to the ALF because maybe we talked about open rescues in telephone conversations. ...but we know for sure that the state prosecutor wants to push the case forward. When we went for questioning again six months ago [the interview was in August 2014], he was the one who wanted us all to be questioned again'.

Although most of the accused did not live in Galicia, the choice was made to bring the case there: that is where the activists were detained after their arrest, where the judge in charge of investigations is from and where the trial then happened. This choice was not random. Indeed, as Nuñez (SNI) highlights: 'Galicia is where 90% of fur farms are in Spain and a lot of the economy of the area depends on fur farming'. She stated that the justification given for the choice of the place was that most investigations done by activists happened there.

Finally, the Spanish case presents a specificity worth mentioning, although it cannot be said to constitute an irregularity. The 'popular accusation' is an institution of the Spanish judicial system not found in other European countries, through which a natural person or a legal entity can participate in the proceedings from the onset of a case and, as article 125 of the constitution reads: 'participate in the administration of justice through the institution of the jury, in the manner of and with respect to those criminal trials as may be determined by law, as well as in customary and traditional courts'. This, even if the person or entity is not involved in any way with the case (Álvarez, 2018). In the present case, the popular accusation comprised mink farmers, insurance companies and a hunting

organisation. Indeed, Equanimal had conducted peaceful hunt sabotage activities (SNI).

1.2 OTHER INSTANCES OF COERCIVE REPRESSION

1.2.1 Austria

Before the main episode of repression discussed above, there was little resort to coercive repression by Austrian authorities. There were at least two other trials involving animal rights activists prior to 2008: one concerning 10 people in the 1980s and another two men in 1998, involving minor offences such as gluing the locks of fur shops. The first case attracted some media attention, but, according to Völkl (EVI), ‘the newspaper just made fun of it’, describing the activists as ‘nice people and naïve students’. In both instances, they were treated as simple offences and just received fines (MBI, EVI, AnonI4).

Interviewees all said there had always been regular bureaucratic struggles when it came to organising demonstrations and street information stalls. However, they usually managed to organise these events eventually, although they once organised a blockade of the local authority in the Styria region, because according to protesters they illegitimately forbid demonstrations and they won their case. Völkl (EVI) stated: ‘I think that’s normal that depending on the local government and people that are affected, there is some resistance against activities like information stalls, people are not used to it and it’s not common so there are always certain biases’.

To an interviewee (AnonI2), the ‘first foot in the door’ for the police to repress the movement was the campaign VGT and BaT led to bring the Peek & Cloppenburg clothing chain to stop selling fur, that took place in the mid-2000s, before the Kleider Bauer campaign (which would lead to the main repressive event, as will be shown in the following chapter). Indeed, the police did not follow the normal procedure regarding authorisations of demonstrations and exchanged information with the company to enable them to prevent the demonstrations by organising their own on a weekly basis in front of their own stores, with people paid by Peek & Cloppenburg to organise petition-signings ‘in favour of the

economy'. Furthermore, the interviewee added that according to Austrian law, the police should have talked to both parties to find a compromise, which they refused to do, resulting in a legal battle. He said: 'we didn't realise it then, but it was the first time that the police and the shop owners were thinking about ways to ban demonstrations. And this is what they did then with the Kleider Bauer campaign'.

An interviewee (Anon14) attested that, contrary to more radical, 'left-wing' demonstrators, animal advocates demonstrating in the street never suffered physically violent repression by the police. At the most, Balluch (MBI) spoke of threatening remarks and behaviour by police agents. A situation contrasting with the Italian case and in particular the Morini campaign.

Attacks and threats by opponents

Balluch (MBI) stated that VGT members had several violent or threatening encounters with opponents. For example, in 2006, 'two men came and threatened everybody in the office'. They said 'we are from the pharmaceutical industry and if you keep hassling us, we know where you are and we will find you and we will finish you'.

VGT activists were attacked at a demonstration with butyric acid by a man who is a horse carriage rider for tourists—activists had been reporting them for the illegal conditions in which most of them kept their horses (MBI). However, he declared that he had been paid for disrupting the NGO's campaign against Kleider Bauer, although the police did not believe this version. Adding to the suspicion that it might be true, Balluch (MBI) stated: 'we actually found one person who was paid by Kleider Bauer to attack us. There was once a few weeks where every one of our demos in Vienna, Graz and Innsbruck, was [violently] attacked by some person'. Activists managed to catch one in Vienna, who 'said he got 35 euros to do that. It was just a person of the street who likes fights'.

Finally, Balluch (MBI) stated that he had received 'really serious' death threats: 'I was once in a mountain cabin, alone in the evening. Suddenly I got a call ...saying he was now outside the house, he can see me through the light in the

window and he is coming in and killing me now'. He said since then he had been very discreet about his contact details, address and whereabouts, because 'too many people want to kill [him]'. He thus lived in 'a little room that is rented with another name'.

No such premeditated attacks did transpire through the interviews in Spain and Italy, although Italian activists had heated encounters with opponents (CPI). Given the scale of campaigns and virulence of debates in the UK, it is much more probable that such events occurred. Roberts (RLI) for example did receive death threatening phone calls while she was leading the moderate and institutionalised NGO Uncaged. Foxhunters have often hired people to violently deal with hunt saboteurs (RLI; Aaltola, 2004, p. 176).

1.2.2 United Kingdom

In the UK, many attempts have been made at preventing the normal conduct of protests. These have sometimes taken very overt obstruction forms. Hence for example, in 2008, the media reported that the police was offering £40,000 to animal rights protesters who were prevented from attending a protest against live exports two years before, in an attempt at an out-of-court settlement. The group's coach was stopped as it entered Dover and protesters were threatened of arrest and escorted back to London (Milmo and Mead, 2008). In 2005, Steven Best, an American independent scholar who overtly supports radical direct action and the Animal Liberation Front, was banned from entering the UK, as he was supposed to give a speech at a meeting related to the Save the Newchurch Guinea Pigs campaign (Isacat, 2014; Hall, 2006).

But most of the time, these attempts have been more subtle, aiming at restricting protests in time, space and form. Thus, many demonstrations, especially the recurrent ones in front of facilities tied to animal experimentation, were limited in terms of frequency and duration (Hall, 2006), but also constrained in their form, for example banning the use of megaphones or 'shouting in unity', as well as the use of costumes or masks (Ellefsen, 2016, p. 447). Organisations targeted by animal activists, such as HLS, GlaxoSmithKline and the University of

Oxford, resorted to courts to obtain injunctions against groups, creating 'exclusion zones' under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, with perimeters ranging from 50 meters to several kilometres (Metcalf, 2008; Monaghan, 2013a). The breaching of an injunction could lead to up to five years imprisonment. Over thirty injunctions were obtained against SHAC between 2003 and 2014 (Ellefsen, 2016). Beyond injunctions, mainly directed at grassroots groups, institutionalised, moderate groups were also victims of such attempts at curtailing their activities, as Roberts (RLI) pointed out:

'When you think of NAVS' big marches where you had 20 000 people, well the last march they did, the police gave them the routes around all the quiet streets so there is no point in marching because no one can see you. ...NAVS obviously realised that and didn't organise any more marches which ended the big presence in London once a year'.

To Lyons (RLI), peaceful aboveground groups were not repressed in a 'direct, criminal law sense', but by such more subtle ways.

Another way of weakening animal advocates has been to render street stalls more difficult to conduct. In 2006, the Home Office ordered Scotland Yard to investigate street collections by animal rights activists, which led the police to conclude that these activities, although they had always been tolerated until then, were illegal as they were not authorised by local authorities. The police claimed that the money often served to fund radical animal rights activists (Laville, 2007). Roberts and Lyons (RLI) explained that these used to be the main fundraising means for many animal protection organisations. Roberts stated that it was now 'almost impossible to do a stall without permission', whereas 'when we first set up Uncaged we could normally turn up in a town centre and the public would donate hundreds of pounds for our campaigns, and the police and council would be quite relaxed about it'. To Lyons, the main reason was that around the height of the SHAC campaign, 'the police had it in their heads that anyone doing street collection was funding SHAC and therefore terrorism', which Roberts credited to Understanding Animal Research, a pro-research group: 'they had been saying to the police for years "you need to cut off the funding for these people and they get all the funding on the streets"'.

Another way UK activists were coerced was through exceptionally harsh sentences for minor offenses and prosecutions via unconventional interpretations of existing laws (Aaltola, 2012; Monaghan, 2013a). For example, Section 241 (Intimidation or annoyance by violence or otherwise) of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 has been used against protesters of the badger cull in the absence of threats or violence, but more importantly, anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs), introduced by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, have been widely used in order to prevent activists from demonstrating, and this even when they were acquitted (Aaltola, 2012; Isacat, 2014). In 2009, four activists found guilty in the 'SOCPA 7' trial, were even given indefinite ASBOs, preventing them from ever protesting against animal experimentation again (Corporate Watch, 2009). As Ellefsen (2016, p. 453) states, 'in addition to the ASBOs (on conviction) handed down to SHAC organizers, activists who participated in SHAC protests also received stand-alone ASBOs'.

'Conspiracy to blackmail' charges were used to target leading activists. This was first resorted to in 2006 against four organisers of the Save the Newchurch Guinea Pigs campaign, three being sentenced to 12 years in jail and one to four years (Ellefsen, 2018). In 2007, Operation Achilles, involving 700 police officers, saw 32 house raids in the UK, but also in Belgium and the Netherlands, against people involved with SHAC and SHAC organisers were charged with conspiracy to blackmail. In 2009, a first trial resulted in three founders and four other activists being sentenced to between four and 11 years in prison. During a second trial, the five other leading members of SHAC were served jail sentences, three being convicted of conspiracy to blackmail charges and receiving between three and a half and six years and two being convicted of conspiracy to commit SOCPA section 145. Soon after, Operation Aries resulted in the arrest of the people who had filled the void left by the previous organisers and another trial in 2010 resulted in their conviction for conspiracy to blackmail or section 145 of SOCPA with similar custodial sentences. Eventually, the remaining SHAC organiser was convicted of conspiracy to blackmail in 2014 (Ellefsen, 2016; 2018).

Hence, as Ellefsen (2016, p. 449) states it, the police and the prosecution succeeded in their 'strategy to link SHAC "leaders" to the coordination of some of

the unlawful underground activities of the Animal Liberation Front and similar groups targeting HLS by unlawful repertoires' and in 'convincing the court such connections existed'. On the contrary, their Austrian and Spanish counterparts, as seen in this chapter, failed in very similar endeavours and in spite of the latter being inspired by the strategy developed in the UK, as shown in chapter 4.

A strategy of authorities to disrupt activists has also been to respond disproportionately to minor offences, as Ellefsen (2018, p. 762) shows:

'...from 2009, some operations were headed by the Metropolitan Police Terrorism Command (SO15). In 2012 a number of activists were raided by armed SO15 forces, and taken to court, for a series of minor incidents, including ordinary protests where police had often been present without interfering, and accusations of petty crime (e.g. spray painting slogans)'.

He cites a representative of the SO15 Disruption Team, describing this as a 'strategy to 'disrupt extremism', by using non-terrorism law, as it targets 'people who are associated with extremism and keeps them on the back foot by arresting them for fraud, aggravated public order offences and failure to insure vehicles, to name just some'.

1.2.3 Spain

Before the 2010s, very little repression took place in Spain. Nuñez (SNI) felt animal advocates were 'as targeted as any other social movement'. To her, the movement was not visible enough in Spain to trigger the attention of authorities, and 'as soon as the movement started to appear in the media and show its head, they tried to cut the head off'. People having faced arrest had been activists conducting civil disobedience: breaking in at a bullfight with placards (ADMI, CRI), or disrupting a catwalk (SNI, JMI). But none of them received custodial sentences and they only faced fines.

In 2010, after jumping into a catwalk with banners to protest fur, two activists from Animal Equality faced a trial and had to spend two days in home confinement. During the trial, the police said the activists had been violent and

aggressive towards them, but the activists could provide the court with images of the scene that showed the contrary (JMI, SNI).

Riverola (CRI) stated that most of the time activists were not faced with difficulties when organising demonstrations, although anti-bullfighting ones were more often met with resistance. She gave the example of Occupy Tordesillas, a group emerging in the early 2010s to protest bullfighting in this city. She said they were met with very high hostility from the population and the police that did not want to protect them against the people attending. Many times, the police stood between protesters and supporters of bullfighting in a way aimed at protecting the supporters, although activists were peaceful, while many supporters were throwing objects at protesters and the police did not try to prevent them from doing so.

Berengueras (JBI) also said when organising authorised demonstrations in front of bullrings, several times the police identified every single participant, asking everybody to provide their ID. She felt it was aimed at intimidating activists.

Like in the UK, authorities tried to make it more difficult for groups to conduct traditional peaceful protests. Berengueras (JBI) gave the example of anti-bullfighting demonstrations for which authorities ‘kept changing the routes’ or, in case of an annual demonstration in Tordesillas against the Toro de la Vega, ‘every year it’s worse, they keep sending us further and further away from the town’.

A few years prior to the main episode of repression, FAADA wanted to conduct a billboard campaign against fur in Bilbao, Galicia—as we have seen, a region where fur farming is economically significant—but the city council forbid it.

1.2.4 Italy

Ferri (IFI) summarised what all interviewees felt in this way: ‘there is no will to suppress animal rights in Italy’. They noted that some groups were faced with stronger responses than others, but stressed that this was more due to their ties with anarchists than to their fight for animal rights. This is something that transpires in the government’s literature: a 2006 report about criminality in Italy for example mentions animal rights activists and more specifically direct actions but also AIP and the Morini campaign and expresses concern at a perceived

strengthening of interest from radicals with an 'anarcho-insurrectional and marxist-leninist matrix' (Italian Ministry of the Interior, 2006, p. 404).

In general interviewees thought the police and authorities treated animal advocates relatively well compared to other countries and several interviewees, like Ferri (IFI) said that police and especially intelligence services agents on the ground showed a relative sympathy to the activists, sometimes tolerating small breakouts from the law when a relation of trust was built.

Pomo (CPI) noted that, while some people received custodial sentences for ALF-type actions, their sentences were not very high compared to other countries and they were treated in a proportionate manner, not being kept in custody between their arrests and the trial for example. Nevertheless, it should be noted that in 2013, an activist having burnt vehicles in the name of the Animal Liberation Front in 2012 saw their sentence increased by a half, by considering the action as terrorist (Cerini, 2019).

In the 2000s, several grassroots campaigns suffered repression. This was the case of AIP (Against the fur industry), with a common form of repression, also identified in the three other cases. Pomo (CPI) recalls that after 'some successful campaigns', they picked a big target: the Italian company Max Mara. 'It is a very powerful company. We were very naïve at the beginning, we did not know of the connexions the owners had with politicians'. Their demonstrations in front of the stores were sent farther and farther away, as far as 150 meters and restrictions were imposed such as forbidding the use of megaphones. Activists tried to find ways to get around this, but Pomo (CPI) said he felt the police was doing its best at trying to stop the campaign and did manage to do so.

However, the Morini campaign was by far the most heavily repressed, which Pomo (CPI) explained by the many underground direct actions targeting 'the farm and family of the farmer, a lot of actions, big and small, to the companies, the suppliers, and the customers. The police were trying to connect these underground actions to the above-ground campaign'. These actions included a massive liberation of 99 beagles at the farm and vehicles being burned. However, there was no trial relating to these events, no proof having been found to incriminate individuals (CPI). Thus, contrary to the three other countries studied,

Italian authorities did not resort to strategies to link the above-ground coordinators of the campaign to illegal underground acts, although it appears the temptation was there. Indeed, some leaders of the Morini campaign were house raided and according to Pomo (CPI):

‘They said they wanted to get some proof linking us to the beagle liberation and some other actions on the farm. But they had no evidence at all, they were trying to criminalise us and scare us.

Most of us were really young, they wanted to scare the parents.’

He explained that the State prosecutor had asked for five activists to be arrested, but that the judge did not approve of the arrests, stating that ‘there were no realistic reasons to imprison us’. The judge ordered the house raids instead.

There were trials, however, relating to the demonstrations, that often did not respect the conditions given by the police, for example going past the police to enter the premises of the farm. Some activists were convicted on these grounds for minor offences (CPI). The activists coordinating the campaign were also banned from the town, preventing them from participating in the demonstrations. Pomo was banned for three years. However, he stated that they ‘had a lot of support and even more demonstrations went on. It galvanised people. Even small demonstrations like 3 or 4 people’.

But to Pomo (CPI), ‘the worst moment’ was at the end of 2005:

‘it was the last big demonstration we organised, in that moment when most of us [organisers] were not able to go to the march, and it was brutally attacked by the police. People were beaten and kicked with broken bones and fractured heads, 20 to 30 people went to hospital and a lot more were not going because they were scared: going to hospital means giving your name to the police’.

One week after, the police announced that all demonstrations around the farm would be forbidden. Pomo (CPI) said: ‘It’s quite typical: they beat you and say you have been violent’. To him, it was ‘quite the end of the campaign’.

Pomo (CPI) explained that one month later, they learned that the farm was on the verge of closure and that there was a project deposited by the council to turn the farm into houses: ‘So for one year, we kept on doing whatever the police

would allow us to do, to keep the pressure ... But we knew the place was going to close'. However, they realised after a year that their actions were not effective, so they decided to get in touch with local authorities to:

'get the beagles out and get all the information. And what we did for the remaining three years was monitoring the situation, the company was completely dead. They were not selling any more animals to labs, they were selling beagles to shops just to keep doing something. And they were selling rodents to snake owners. So the company was dead and they closed in 2010, 4 years later, because they didn't want to show that they were closing because of us, but they did close because of us'.

The Morini and AIP campaigns took place in the 2000s. After this, repression appears to have faded out. The grassroots campaign developed by the Coalition Against Vivisection in Universities, although Reggio (MRI) deemed it 'very radical' as to its conflictual tactics and abolitionist ideas and stressed it was similar to the SHAC and Morini campaigns, did not meet a particular repression. But even more remarkable is the absence of repression against the Green Hill campaign.

1.3 AUTHORITIES' RESPONSE TO GREEN HILL

As seen in Chapter 2, one major campaign in Italy was Fermare Green Hill, in 2012 and 2013. It was similar to the Morini campaign, in that it was aimed at closing down a beagle breeding facility for experimentation, and it was coordinated more or less by the same people. However, the authorities' response was completely different and, as we will see in chapter 5, the campaign was both successful in terms of its immediate objective of closing down Green Hill, but also in terms of creating a national debate on animal experimentation, leading to political success and significant legislative changes.

Contrary to the Morini campaign, authorities did not attempt to disrupt the campaign with bans on organisers or pressuring them in any way. It should be noted nonetheless that no illegal underground activity was conducted in relation to this campaign and, as chapter 5 will show, the attitude and discourse of the

coordinators were radically different to the ones they had adopted for the Morini campaign, leaving little to authorities to criminalise them.

The most symbolic episode of the campaign was the spontaneous and overt release of dozens of dogs by participants of a regular demonstration in front of the facility. For 15 minutes, the police did not intervene. Pomo (CPI), said:

‘Basically the people outnumbered them. They were not prepared to what happened ... Green Hill is a very big place on a hill. To completely secure it, you need hundreds of policemen and they did not have that number. So they could secure one side when people started to enter. But we started to enter on the other side and they could not stop people on both sides. So at the beginning they were outnumbered. Then they tried, when they could get police on the other side where people were entering through fences, but they were not really active’.

He said the police had orders not to behave violently, explaining:

‘there were cameras everywhere, the media and most of the people in the front were women, some elderly, no one was masked, no one was behaving violently so you could not even criminalise these people. These were completely normal people... Beating them would really be bad for the image of the police’.

He explained police agents were, at first, very gentle, trying to discourage the demonstrators to take dogs out but not physically stopping them. Only after 15 minutes, the police decided to toughen up their stance, close the accesses and declare demonstrators would be arrested if they continued. People were continuing to liberate the animals and many were then arrested, inside or outside the facility.

All in all, 13 people were arrested and charged for theft, criminal damage and resistance to the police, the latter being ditched afterwards. No coordinator of the campaign was arrested. Those who were, among which some were animal rights activists, some non-activists and some coming to these demonstrations for the time, were kept in custody for a few days. For Pomo (CPI), this was good for the campaign in that ‘the liberation got even more media attention because of the

arrests and there were non-stop demonstrations in front of the prison. Brambilla went to visit them in prison, and also other politicians’.

1.4 SURVEILLANCE

1.4.1 Austria

Austrian intelligence services had been monitoring the movement since at least 2002 as indicated by the reports that were made public (Austrian Ministry of the Interior, 2002), but an interviewee (AnonI4) believed it must have been since the mid to late 1990s, citing files that he had seen during the trial that proved that ‘they were surveilling, taking photos in demonstrations, visiting undercover and writing some reports about meetings,... But it wasn’t a taskforce, it was the regular counter-terrorism’.

The SOKO unit resorted to very invasive surveillance tools and strategies. According to a police document presented in court, optical and acoustic surveillance was undertaken on 297 people and 18 video-traps were set at doors². There is evidence of at least two GPS trackers being put in activists’ cars and the home of a BaT member being audiotaped (EVI, AnonI2). All the prosecuted activists had their phones tapped and their emails were analysed through keywords such as ‘ALF, butyric acid, animal rights, animal liberation, very simple minded but obvious keywords’ (EVI) and the computers that were not encrypted were scanned. ‘So they got loads of emails containing these words and then we had to discuss these emails every day in the trial’ (EVI).

There were also personal observations for several of them. Asked if they had suspicions of that, an interviewee (AnonI2) said he never suspected it but that another BaT member did, having seen someone following him home at night after a civil disobedience action, and that he found confirmation in the court files. As they were planning another action the next day:

² Hnat, F. (2012), *State repression of the animal rights movement: Update and insights from the Austrian case*, presentation at the International Animal Rights Conference, Luxembourg, 18 September 2012.

‘We were meeting in a café and it was like in a movie, one friend of mine ... called and said “ok let’s cancel”, because he saw people talking to their collars, like a spy movie, on the other side of the street and pretending to look at postcards that were for sale. And in retrospect it’s crazy we didn’t think there was something going on, because the police don’t do that to people who are just trying to lock themselves to a door’.

1.4.2 United Kingdom

The UK case is by far the one where the scale of surveillance on the movement was the greatest. Although a police squad called the Animal Rights National Index (ARNI), compiling intelligence on the movement, had existed since 1984, the contemporary policing strategy regarding animal rights in the UK can be traced back to 1994, when the Home Office published updated guidelines for Special Branch. In it, the priority goes from counter-insurgency to maintaining the ‘Queen’s peace’. It highlights the need to monitor demonstrations and gather intelligence ‘on animal rights extremist activity’ and preventing their attacks on people and property (Klug, Starmer and Weir, 1996).

The surveillance of animal rights activists in the 2000s was undergone by a series of police bodies. At the top, one found the ‘terrorism and allied matters’ committee of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO). The main unit, the National Public Order Intelligence Unit (NPOIU), to which ARNI was incorporated in 1999, ran a database listing several thousands of ‘domestic extremists’ (Monaghan, 2013a; Lewis, Evans and Taylor, 2009). NPOIU worked together with two other ACPO branches: the National Domestic Extremism Team, which pooled intelligence gathered by investigations into protesters across the country and the National Extremism Tactical Coordination Unit (NETCU), created in 2004 to coordinate the action of police forces and share intelligence with and advise companies and institutions targeted by campaigners. NETCU worked with foreign counterparts in Europe and the United States, exchanging intelligence and expertise (Donovan and Coupe, 2013) (during the Austrian trial, SOKO agents said they received training sessions by NETCU). As of 2009, the police apparatus aimed

at surveilling 'domestic extremists' received 9 million pounds of public funding and employed 100 people (Isacat, 2014; Monaghan, 2013a; Lewis, Evans and Taylor, 2009). This apparatus was set up by ACPO with the backing of the Home office most specifically to deal with animal advocates (Isacat, 2014; Monaghan, 2013a; Metcalfe, 2008). According to Lewis, Evans and Taylor (2009), only as radical activity by animal advocates receded, the units 'expanded their remit to incorporate campaign groups across the political spectrum ... divid[ing] their work into four categories of domestic extremism: animal rights campaigns; far-right groups such as the English Defence League; "extreme leftwing" protest groups, including anti-war campaigners; and "environmental extremism"'. The whole domestic extremism apparatus of ACPO—which is a private body—was widely criticised, including among police officials, for lacking transparency and accountability. For example, it could not be submitted to parliamentary scrutiny or freedom of information laws.

The first aspect of this invasive surveillance of so-called 'domestic extremists' was thus to collect a massive amount of non-anonymised data on protesters, regardless of whether they committed an illegal action. According to Lewis, Evans and Taylor (2009), the NPOIU:

'filters intelligence supplied by police forces across England and Wales, which routinely deploy surveillance teams at protests, rallies and public meetings. The NPOIU contains detailed files on individual protesters who are searchable by name ... Vehicles associated with protesters are being tracked via a nationwide system of automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras ... ANPR "interceptor teams" are being deployed on roads leading to protests to monitor attendance'.

The database relied upon included around 9000 protestors as of 2013, with data such as photographs, telephone calls and emails, CCTV footage, log of journeys via registration plates, attendance at demonstrations and meetings, political pamphlets, comments on blogposts. In several lawsuits, the police was found to store information illegally, although it 'continued unperturbed' (Evans and Lewis, 2013, p. 205).

Beyond ethical questions raised by this kind of surveillance, it can have concrete repercussions on protesters, who may be deterred from participating in demonstrations. Indeed, Lewis, Evans and Taylor (2009) give the example of a man with no criminal record, who 'was stopped more than 25 times in less than three years after a "protest" marker was placed against his car after he attended a small protest against duck and pheasant shooting'. Another example of surveillance that can act as a deterrent is to be found in the Forward Intelligence Teams (FIT), who filmed and photographed demonstrators at public gatherings. The images were kept in 'force-wide databases so that police can chronicle the campaigners' political activities' and served for 'spotter cards', 'used to identify the faces of target individuals who police believe are at risk of becoming involved in domestic extremism' (Lewis, Evans and Taylor, 2009). These teams were created after the Special Branch guidelines of 1994, to monitor environmental and animal rights activists, such as hunt saboteurs (Monbiot, 1996). However, their role, beyond mere surveillance, as a deterrent for activists has been widely recognised (Netpol, 2011) and even acknowledged as a goal by police officials (National Policing Improvement Agency, 2007; Holt and Hartley, 2008).

1.4.3 Spain

After the Spanish defendant's lawyers obtained their case file from the judge in charge of the investigations, they discovered a substantive amount of surveillance material on them, going back two years prior to the arrests. The police had monitored their emails and their phones were tapped for over a year, despite the lack of a formal authorisation by a judge—something activists knew as the judge in charge of the investigation read emails in front of them when they were being questioned after their arrest. From the information provided in the files, activists could conclude that they had been followed during investigations in fur farms. Some of the activists, among which Nuñez, were also told during questioning that they had been followed. According to Nuñez (SNI), the files included information about everything the activists were doing, 'from the morning to the night', a few weeks before their arrests. However, surveillance in Spain might not have gone as far as in Austria, as the activists had no reason to think that microphones were

installed in their homes or car and the conversations mentioned in the files were all telephone conversations (SNI).

Outside of the main case, Berengueras (JBI) said FAADA knew from a police source that their core members were physically followed by the Catalan police (Mossos d'Esquadra) after organising with Libera! Spain's biggest antibullfighting demonstration at the time in 2013 and having been identified by police at peaceful antibullfighting demonstrations. She also said members of FAADA obtained access to a non-public report from the national police (Guardia Civil), via the same source, and after the arrests of Animal Equality and Equanimal activists. All the main organisation's web pages were analysed and the relationships between groups as well.

Contrary to the UK and Austria, no special police unit was created to investigate the animal rights movement in Spain, nor in Italy.

1.4.4 Italy

In terms of surveillance, Ferri (IFI) said she had confirmation from an agent of intelligence services during a demonstration that her mobile was tapped. Bennati (RBI) said LAV thought intelligence services must have an interest in them, given exchanges they had with them. He thought it was because of the local groups of LAV, in which there were sometimes more radical activists, or close to anarchism. He said LAV was mentioned twice in reports of the Ministry of the Interior as possibly being infiltrated by violent activists. Nevertheless, Bennati stated that they never had issues with the police and some members of the organisation benefitted from personal protection from the police when they took over 90 dogs from a criminal organisation near Naples and that the police took this job very seriously. Also, LAV has been cooperating with the police, providing trainings to police agents on how to implement the law as regards animal mistreatments so there is a trust relationship.

Activists had knowledge, however, of Italian police cooperating with their international counterparts on intelligence sharing. For example, Reggio (MRI) and Pomo (CPI) mentioned Italian intelligence services participating in pharmaceutical industries meetings about repression with the chiefs of industries and chief of

intelligence services of several countries. Also, Pomo (CPI) recalled that when the group of activists he was part of, that coordinated the Morini and Green Hill campaigns, were still organising the SHAC campaigns in Italy in the mid-2000s, when activists from the UK or other countries were coming to Italy, intelligence services were policing their demonstrations a lot more. One of the agents regularly policing them, that they knew well, told them Italian services had been instructed by their British counterparts to check all protestor's IDs.

1.5 INFILTRATION

1.5.1 Austria

Three infiltrators were uncovered by activists. Contrary to the UK where the vast majority of them were men (Lewis and Evans, 2013), all were women. One was not a police officer but a civilian, indicated in the police documents in court as 'verdrauens person' (trusted person). In court, she said she began spying for the police in 1997. She first infiltrated the movement, particularly VGT, in 1999, for a couple of years. Then in 2007, she stayed 6 months with VGT, for the SOKO unit. She was jailed several times and accepted this work in order to get reduced time in prison and would get paid according to the information she would bring. However, interviewees stated that her report and interventions in court did not bring much material, contrary to Danielle Durand.

'Danielle Durand' was a proper police officer, also deployed in 2007, for a year and a half, by the SOKO unit. When her mission ended, Durand disappeared, saying she was going to France. Balluch (MBI) said she had a made-up social history going back to 2005. According to Balluch (MBI), she was transmitting information to the police for each action they undertook. He gave the example of the blockade of an animal transport lorry. She wrote an SMS during the action and the police came. She also told the police when and where they were undertaking hunt sabotages. Balluch said they never suspected her because her actions were 'not very successful': 'when I organise a hunt sab, I don't tell anybody where we go so she wouldn't know either. I wouldn't say it on the phone and I might switch targets

after the meeting. We were aware that the police must know a lot about us’.

According to Völkl (EVI), in VGT:

‘she was just an activist, not in the organising team. We are very democratic, so if one person of the office or the activists wants to do something, you can say on the email list I want a meeting about that and all persons interested meet and plan it. In fact, VGT is just giving the infrastructure, they can take everything they need from the material for demos and from where we store stuff. So, there are different sized groups doing different stuff and she was involved in one of them, that’s the reason she was involved in investigations. So, she was in a very core group, but never employed, sitting here on her own computer, but she came with us on the hardcore activities’.

Danielle Durand also went once to a BaT meeting, where members would discuss the group’s strategies and actions and that were open to new people. At the time Durand was already in VGT. She asked questions about the group’s perception of violence and ALF-type actions. Other than that, they just know that she tried to learn more about members of the group asking questions to other people. An interviewee said: ‘she was checking us out and I think she found us rather uninteresting. “Just talk, no action”’ (Anon12). To the activists’ knowledge, Durand did not go to other groups in Austria.

Finally, another infiltrator, who also testified in court, came to some events in the early 2000s but did not infiltrate specific groups. She came to the trial as a witness. Papers uncovered by activists during the trial attested to her presence to at least an activist conference and an art exhibition in 2001, but they did not know how often she came to events.

Asked whether he had any reason to believe that there were others before, Balluch (MBI) said:

‘No, I just know that we’ll never know, because the police office refused to open the files for us. ...three convictions to the police were given for not [doing so]. They didn’t until today so there must be some dirt or something in there... Both those files we found out ourselves with the private detective and our own detective work’.

He mentioned that after uncovering these three infiltrators, they came to suspect a fourth, who:

‘came exactly at the same time as this special police unit was formed and Danielle Durand came. I wasn’t very suspecting like now, but eventually we decided to put someone on his tracks and they could prove a few things that he didn’t tell us ... and he was employed by a ministry. We don’t know which one. He wanted to get employment with us and he gave me a social history that was very different, there was no employment by ministry in it. I was astonished that he can change his social history. Because he did not write it himself, he had a public, an official social history. It was different to the one our detective found. And I said there is something dodgy. ...We had secret internal lists and he persuaded somebody to [give him access to] his email account for some other reasons and we later discovered that he had put a forwarding device for this list. He forwarded internal board emails. ...I confronted him but he denied it, but they always do. ... I hope I wasn’t doing him wrong. I just said “don’t come close to us, just go to another group” and I showed him the proofs’.

In the same way as many undercover agents in the UK, Danielle Durand did go beyond mere activism activities as an infiltrator and was in a relationship with a leading activist. The 1999 infiltrator did not cross that line, although Balluch (MBI) said ‘I was traveling with her around Austria, we had some fun time. ...We spent nights together, we travelled, we went swimming together. She wasn’t just business, definitely not’. ‘Both were personal, not just coming at a demonstration and going home. They wanted to have personal relations’.

Contrary to many UK infiltrators however, the interviewees said Austrian infiltrators did not seek to radicalise activists and push them to undertake more ALF-style actions. Balluch (MBI) said:

‘It’s hard to distinguish. They did not stand out as somebody who would be doing this. I would say, first they did commit illegal acts, it is fully true. Placards, painting on boards and graffiti, we did that together. Then secretly with a locking device into factory farms together, just her

and I [the 1999 infiltrator]. Otherwise she was doing civil disobedience actions, half illegal or not illegal’.

Völkl (EVI) remarked that Danielle Durand ‘did slightly push to increase encryption, which was a prosecuted argument’. Balluch (MBI) said Durand ‘kept saying “it is so strange we are not more radical” but she didn’t really say “let’s go do it”’. Yet he remarked that ‘she said the same thing in court, which is good. She said that from the outside she was expecting us to be far more radical or militant than we were’. Another interviewee also underlined that to him, the fact that the police withheld her report from court was ‘because she was honest. You saw it in the language: first she says “the animal activists shout etc” and in the end she says “we did a demonstration against bad farmers”’. So you feel that within this year, she got more understanding’.

After the discovery of Durand’s infiltration, VGT activists did not agree on whether they should expose Danielle Durand publicly. Some activists preferred to censor her name and face in the media and in the NGO’s communication, while others like Balluch did not (Anon14, MBI). The latter said: ‘there are always people around me who say “we must be fair” etc.’ He strongly disagreed and said he did expose her whenever he could and ‘had the influence’.

1.5.2 United Kingdom

Evans and Lewis (2013) account for the infiltration of the British movement by the police. In the mid-1980s, ‘police felt they were losing the battle’ (Evans and Lewis, 2013, p. 34) against the Animal Liberation Front. Thus, ARNI was created and, in addition to undercover agents, who began being deployed in the animal rights movement as early as 1983, ‘by the 1990s, police were running around 100 informants in animal rights groups’. In the 1980s and 1990s, deployments of undercover agents in the animal rights movement were undertaken by the Special Demonstration Squad, a top-secret unit within London’s Metropolitan Police. From 1999, it operated alongside spies sent by the NPOIU, before the latter replaced it from 2008. At least 100 undercover agents were sent by the SDS and the NPOIU, mostly for long periods of time of several years, into protest groups. The animal advocacy movement being one of the most infiltrated. Agents (almost

exclusively men) actively sought relationships with activists to gain credibility in the movement. Evans and Lewis (2013) cite an SDS agent stating that when he was deployed, only one out of ten officers would not have had sex with campaigners. They state that out of the many known infiltrators, only one did not. One, Bob Lambert, who was undercover for eight years in the animal rights movement, even had a child with an activist. They were not only interested in radical direct action such as those of the ALF, infiltrating also very moderate grassroots groups, as well as groups such as the hunt saboteurs or SHAC. Some actively sought to radicalise activists and were sometimes very influential. Lambert for example produced a well-known ALF leaflet. Evans and Lewis (2013, p. 23) quote an SDS operative: 'As a rule of thumb, you could allow yourself to run with the organisation, but you had to stop short of organising or directing it'.

Bob Lambert was one of three militants who planted incendiary devices in three Debenhams stores in England to protest the sale of fur. This was one of the most damaging attacks by the ALF, resulting in millions of pounds of damage. He was instrumental in the plotting of the attacks and like the two others, carried out one of the three attacks alone. Evans and Lewis (2013, p. 42) state that the rules at the time were very vague and that agents could carry out a crime if it prevented a more serious crime. The practice in the SDS was to commit a crime and then report it to a superior who would retrospectively authorise it.

The unofficial motto of the SDS was 'by any means necessary'. And indeed, not only did deployed officers break many ethical barriers, but Special Branch went to great length to ensure the success of their deployment and the end of it. The identities attributed to officers were those of dead children who would be their age if they were still alive. Should campaigners have doubts and investigate their real identity, their queries for documents would spark alerts to their services. Special Branch even carried out a fake raid at a woman's place Lambert was in a relationship with, to add credibility to his cover story to leave the movement (he told his fellow activists and activist wife that he thought the police was closing in on him for his illegal actions). Undercover agents disposed of very important funds. For example, the NPOIU agent Mark Kennedy's deployment alone costed 1.75 million pounds. The NPOIU disposed of substantially more funding than the

SDS did. Whereas the SDS spoke of its targets as 'subversives', the NPOIU spoke of 'domestic extremists'. At first animal rights took 'the lion share' and it is only later that it concerned itself with other movements (Evans and Lewis, 2013, p. 201).

Finally, a trend developing from the 2000s and even more so in the 2010s was the development of private companies offering spying (including undercover) services to businesses targeted by protesters. Many former Special Branch officers were involved, benefitting from their former networks (Lubbers, 2012, 2015; Evans and Lewis, 2013). According to Evans and Lewis (2013, p. 295), 'there were more private spies than police in protest groups as of the early 2010s'.

The discovery of the actions of the SDS and NPOIU undercover agents by the public as of 2011, after Mark Kennedy's cover was blown by activists and many others' began being uncovered, led to a major public outcry, leading to many inquiries and changes.

Stallwood (KSI; 2014, p. 116), who was amongst the leading members of BUAV in the 1980s, is convinced that some of the inside struggles in the organisation, whereby certain members tried to steer the organisation away from public educational and political work to support and fund direct action, were instigated by 'agents provocateurs and police informants' trying to hinder the movement. He recalls seeing, at a police station after a national demonstration he had organised, several demonstrators going behind the counter, changing clothes and exchanging with the police officers they clearly appeared to be 'on familiar terms with'.

More generally, Stallwood (2014, p. 153) says:

'the animal movement has sometimes played into the hands of the animal industrial complex by using language and actions that could be deemed violent. But I'm convinced that not only are these instances extremely rare and carried out by a tiny minority of advocates, but that some of those advocates are in fact *agents provocateurs*'.

Asked to reflect on this, a former police officer (Anon13) said: 'I think sometimes it's easy to find an excuse as external', although he acknowledged that 'it's a possibility, but I'm not saying it's an actuality'. He recognised that pushing

suspects to commit illegal acts to be able to arrest them was a tactic sometimes used in Special Branch:

‘We tried infiltration, we have tried this or that, and nothing works. Very often it’s a very small bunch of operation officers and the decision makers. ...What can we do? These people are still going out there and doing what they do. There is an option. They are not doing something illegal now, let’s push them into illegality because then we can apply the law. We’re talking about extremism, which is not illegal. Not terrorism. They have not done anything illegal, they are just extremists. ...You can imagine the chief constable, saying “fix this problem for me”. “I need a budget”. “You have got a budget”. “Do you want me to tell you what we are actually going to do?” “Get on with it”. “Do you want me to tell you what happens?” “No. If I don’t know, I cannot be held responsible”.’

He also spoke of a supporter of animal research who on his own infiltrated an animal rights group opposing animal experimentation, to provide information to the police:

‘There was a particular target for animal rights protestors and nobody could work out, either the target or the police, how animal rights advocates were able to get such good information about what was going on. ...He was eventually asked to help in an observation post. They had dug an observation bunker in the countryside, camouflaged, running 24/7. He said, “I’ll do my stint”. He did his stint and he didn’t know what was going on. They took him there; he sat in the bunker with some other people, did his stint and went back. And then he was able to work out where it was. Nobody knew...They had out-professionalised the professionals’.

1.5.3 Spain and Italy

In Spain and in Italy, nothing goes to show that there were undercover agents in the movement. Spanish interviewees did not think there were. Nuñez (SNI),

although she did not believe there had been infiltrators in Equanimal or Animal Equality, said one point had made her suspicious:

‘During the raids, only our homes were raided but not our offices, so they knew that all the information and investigations were at home, because we used to work at home then and not at the office. And why would they not raid our offices? The only thing I can think of, is maybe there was someone infiltrated who knew there was no information at the office, but it’s just speculations’.

Italian interviewees said except for rumours, they had no knowledge of proofs of infiltration by the police. The only infiltrator interviewees had knowledge of, was a UK activist coming with other British to discuss the SHAC campaign (MRI). Indeed, Mark Kennedy did travel to Milan in 2010 to that end (Evans and Lewis, 2013). Nevertheless, some interviewees thought it was very probable that small grassroots animal rights groups close to anarchism may be infiltrated (RBI, IFI).

1.6 DISCUSSION

As we have seen, coercive repression as defined in this work encompasses a wide range of very different actions that have been used against the animal advocacy movement in the countries studied. To better make sense of them, I suggest conceptualising them as either reactive methods of containment or proactive measures of suppression.

The first category includes methods aiming at circumscribing protest in time, space and form, such as observed here in all countries. This is a strategy that is widely and increasingly used against all kinds of social movements (Peterson and Wahlström, 2015, p. 10). A second element in this category is unobserved surveillance, that is not meant to be seen. As I discussed, the animal advocacy movement has been the object of particularly strong surveillance in the UK and Austria relatively to other movements, which appeared to be less the case in Italy and Spain. In the UK (Stephens Griffin, 2021; Evans and Lewis, 2013), like in the US (Potter, 2011; Sauvart, Fitzgibbon and Nurse, 2016) or in Canada (Monaghan and Walby, 2012), environmental activists were also a strong focus of surveillance.

Another element is what could be called non-interventionist infiltration, whereby undercover agents do not seek to influence (e.g., radicalise) activists, as observed in Austria. Finally, reactive containment methods include non-violent but arbitrary coercion (e.g., as seen in the UK case: coach of protesters stopped, conference speakers not allowed at the border, or in the Spanish case: billboard campaigns being forbidden).

The second category, proactive measures of suppression, includes limiting cash flows to the movement, as seen in the UK with street stalls, but also in Austria where the Minister of Finance commissioned three fiscal investigations on VGT at the time of the trials. It also includes conspicuous surveillance, such as that of the FITs in the UK, which is meant to be seen and to act as a deterrent. Interventionist infiltration, or agents provocateurs, who seek to radicalise activists, such as in the UK. Potter (2011, pp. 51-52) provides an example of this in the US with the case of corporate infiltrators seeking to push an activist to commit murder. Another element is physical violence and threats, such as those of the police or private agents, as seen in the UK, Austria, Italy and Spain. While police violence might sometimes not denote a will of the State to suppress contenders, but simply individual misconduct, the absence of sanctions from the hierarchy or even their support (for example in Austria, interviewees revealed that the head of the SOKO unit was promoted after the case) indicate a proactive strategy to deter activists. While there are countless examples of police violence against all kind of movements, environmental activists have suffered violence by private agents and in particular corporate ones, to a far greater extent than animal advocates, if one takes a global perspective (Poulos and Haddad, 2016). Another element of proactive measures resides in the innovative use of existing laws, as seen in the UK and Austria. This category also includes mass arrests and house raids used as a deterrent, as seen in Austria, Spain and the UK (and to a far lesser extent in the case of the Morini campaign in Italy). Finally, it includes what Ellefsen (2016) refers to as leadership decapitation, speaking of SHAC. As we have seen, it was also attempted in Spain and Austria.

2. LEGISLATIVE CRIMINALISATION

Among the countries studied, legislative criminalisation has been mostly a feature of repression in the UK. As such, the UK situation is closer to the one of the US, albeit arguably UK authorities have resorted to legislative criminalisation in a less conspicuous manner, whereas in the US, this political move has been very overt, with symbolic laws being passed, such as the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (Shirley, 2012; Glasser, 2011).

2.1 UNITED KINGDOM

The first example of legislative criminalisation in relation to animal advocacy was the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, which created the offence of aggravated trespass. With it, trespassing, which is a civil offence, became a criminal offence when it was conducted in the aim to obstruct or disrupt a lawful activity. This was a way to tackle civil disobedience actions, but especially hunt saboteurs (Tichelar, 2017, p. 81).

A second instance of such form of repression was a reaction to SHAC and similar campaigns. In 2005, the Serious Organized Crime and Police Act comprised two sections, 145 and 146, which made interfering with the contractual relationships of animal research organisations a serious crime. Section 145 stipulates that the offence is constituted by an act or the threat of doing, or that someone else will do, an act aimed at bringing someone to terminate a contract or not to enter into a contract with an animal research organisation. Section 146 focuses on the 'intimidation' of any person related to animal research, making it an offence to threaten them of doing any action or that someone else will do an action, in view of bringing them to abstain from doing something they are 'entitled to do'. Sentences vary from one to five years of imprisonment. This was widely used to prosecute SHAC activists, together with 'conspiracy to blackmail' charges, and reduced considerably the scope of actions available to activists to oppose HLS and the vivisection industry, as many non-violent, traditional actions such as leafleting and demonstrating could fall under the scope of the SOCPA sections (Aaltola, 2012; Ellefsen, 2016). Ellefsen (2016), states that the first time SOCPA

section 145 was used against three SHAC activists who conducted an office invasion, a tactic previously often resorted to. They received custodial sentences of up to four years. Following this, many activists, some affiliated to SHAC and some not, were convicted of SOCPA sections. Ellefsen (2016) shows that section 145 was more often used than section 146.

The Terrorism Act 2006, which punishes by up to seven years imprisonment the act of encouraging terrorism, and which originally was intended to extend to 90 days the period of detention without charge, was thought by the government as a way to tackle jihadists as well as animal rights activists (Travis, 2005). Paradoxically, one of the main arguments of Charles Clarke, then Home Secretary, to defend the law, was that contemporary terrorism, contrary to the practice of the IRA, aimed to maximise casualties (Clarke, 2005).

Although it does not imply the creation of new legislative provisions, it is also worth noting that the State called on judges and the Crown Prosecution Service to consider animal rights an aggravating factor in dealing with activists and even planned for a widening of the definition of terrorism for animal activists to fall into that category (Aaltola, 2004). And indeed, as shown by Ellefsen (2016; 2018), sentences applied to animal advocates in the UK for sometimes very minor offences, were particularly tough. As shown in the previous section, in the three other countries studied, sentences applied to activists, even those who did commit serious crimes such as criminal damage, were never as tough and the sentences given were mostly comparable to those handed for similar offences from non-animal activists.

2.2 AUSTRIA

Contrary to the UK, the creation of new laws specifically designed to counter animal advocates has not been a strong feature of repression in Austria. However, attempts were beginning to be made as of the beginning of the 2010s, regarding hunt sabotages and investigations in farms. In 2013, the manifesto of the newly formed government included the passing of a bill to criminalise campaigners taking images in farms at federal level (MBI, EVI, Anon14). The Lower Austria region had already adopted such a law previously, which gives the right to farmers to

‘arrest’ people and get their identity (in the law, farmers are called ‘Feldschutzorgan’—‘protection of fields authority’). Failure to obey the farmer is punishable by a fine. At the moment of the interviews, there had just been a case where activists went in a factory farm with journalists to record images and they were ‘arrested’ by the farmer using this law. The police came and confiscated the recordings (MBI, EVI).

Other laws in the Lower and Upper Austria and Styria regions target hunt sabotages and prohibit the filming of a hunt. Again, it gives the right to hunters to arrest and take people’s identity. Völkl (EVI) said he was ‘arrested’ by hunters with two other people while filming a hunt on a public road. He refused to give them his identity and was arrested and handed to the police. He was, at the time of the interviews, being charged with not identifying himself to a hunter. He risked a fine of several hundred euros. Balluch (MBI) remarked: ‘the funny thing is that you don’t have to identify yourself to the police, but farmers and hunters yes! So you see that this is a country ran by hunters and farmers!’

2.3 SPAIN AND ITALY

There have been no legislative measures passed in Spain and Italy, specifically aimed at the animal advocacy movement. In Spain, Díez Michelena (ADMI) spoke about lobbying by transporters of live animals to obtain legislation prohibiting activists from following trucks (an action NGOs such as ANDA were doing for investigations to monitor compliance to the legislation on the protection of animals). Their line of argument likened it to harassment. However, the General Director of the circulation of vehicles ruled that as long as activists were respecting the existing legislation and did not show any sign of aggressivity or attempts at distracting drivers, it should not be made illegal.

Nuñez (SNI) mentioned two occurrences of proposed new legislation that were not specifically targeting the animal advocacy movement but for which the movement was part of the reflection. Firstly, a law did pass, that aimed at criminalising the use of hidden cameras, as it would be considered to violate people’s privacy under any circumstance. Secondly, the far-right attempted, without success, to pass legislation in the early 2010s, to make it an offence to

reveal information to the public about risks to human health of certain food products, before investigations by authorities.

In Italy, there were several attempts by politicians to legislatively criminalise the activities of animal rights activists, either by assimilating animal liberations to terrorism (CPI), or preventing them to oppose hunts (Italian Senate, 2010), but none resulted in a law being passed. One of the strongest supporters of new legislative provisions against the movement in the 2000s and early 2010s was Carlo Giovanardi, a mainstream politician, who has been a parliamentarian and a Minister.

3. DISCURSIVE CRIMINALISATION

Like infiltration and surveillance, discursive criminalisation can be conceived as both a means of repression and a tool for repression. But unlike them, it is necessarily both: unobserved surveillance and non-interventionist infiltration could be conceived as mere tools for repression, despite the arguments put forth at the beginning of section 1 of this chapter. Discursive criminalisation is necessarily both, in that regardless of the goal pursued, it will impact on the ability of a movement to further their cause, and hence fall into Charles Tilly's definition of repression (see introduction).

Discursive criminalisation has been heavily relied upon in all the countries studied, by different actors. In Austria and Spain more specifically by authorities. In the UK, both authorities and opponents have importantly resorted to it, the former taking on the discourse of the latter, especially in the field of animal experimentation. In Italy, authorities, especially as the movement was gaining momentum in the early 2010s, did not seek to criminalise the movement, leading to a strong counter-mobilisation by animal industries, similarly to their British counterparts. As will be shown, discursive criminalisation was undertaken through language, images, as well as through performative actions.

3.1 A TYPOLOGY OF DISCURSIVE CRIMINALISATION

Several processes of discursive criminalisation of aboveground activists, often overlapping each other, can be identified in the countries studied. I propose the following typology. The overarching process can be called 'labelling' and has involved describing activists as 'extremists' or 'terrorists'. The term 'extremists', or terms in the same lexical field, have been used by authorities in Austria and the UK. In Italy, authorities have used it far less, especially in the 2010s. The terms 'terrorist' and 'eco-terrorist' were used by UK and especially Spanish authorities.

Labelling often enables what I will refer to as 1) 'tactical relativisation' and 2) 'ideological-tactical blurring'. Tactical relativisation consists in not differentiating between aboveground, non-violent (understood as not implying physical harm or property damage) civil disobedience and underground, violent acts. This translates into 'extremists' being assimilated to various degrees with 'terrorists' (the question of whether any of the actions conducted by animal advocates might actually qualify as 'terrorism' will be dealt with in the conclusion). Ideological-tactical blurring can be defined as speaking of 'extremists' or 'radicals' without differentiating ideology and tactics. Indeed, there is not necessarily a correlation between the radicality of ideas and the radicality—i.e. violence—of tactics. Welfarists might well engage in radical forms of contention, while abolitionists may exclude radical tactics from their repertoires (e.g., see Hall, 2006). Also, note that while the radicality of tactics might be easier to objectivise in a democratic framework, ideological radicality is necessarily subjective. Thus in some cases, terms pertaining to radicality or extremism may be used against abolitionists because of their ideas, and in other cases against welfarists who are sectoral abolitionists (see the discussion on typology in the introduction), as soon as the opponents or authorities perceive their opposition to a specific practice as illegitimate. With this form of discursive criminalisation, moderate (ideology) and institutionalised (tactics) groups might well be put on the same level as groups that do break the law, or even, via tactical relativisation, as 'terrorists'.

Another process, that I will refer to as 3) 'crime attribution', consists in either associating law-abiding activists with certain crimes without proof, or

inventing fictitious crimes altogether. This is a separate process and does not necessarily entail labelling, although the latter is often a tool for crime attribution, as it enables to resort to vague generalisations.

Finally, a last process can be termed 4) 'ideological criminalisation'. It consists in contending that the ideology of activists itself is dangerous or violent. This form might be thought to be identical to ideological-tactical blurring when it comes to criminalising ideas but in the latter, it is the labelled persons or groups that are deemed violent. With ideological criminalisation, the ideas themselves are deemed violent or dangerous. This feeds back into ideological-tactical blurring.

3.2 CRIMINALISATION OF ACTIVISTS

3.2.1 *Austria*

The Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz und Terrorismusbekämpfung (Federal office for the protection of the constitution and counter-terrorism), issues yearly reports about terrorism and threats to the constitution (Austrian Ministry of the Interior, 2020). They deal with groups and movements such as left-wing and right-wing activists, Islamists and animal rights activists.

Balluch (MBI) said: 'they always describe legal things we did but pretending it was illegal'. A shift in the language used to describe animal advocates and their actions occurs from 2007. Interestingly, this shift is chronologically coherent with the shift in Europol and other reports around 2006-2007. This is not surprising, given that police officers witnessing in court said that they attended Europol meetings and trainings by NETCU on how to deal with animal rights 'extremists'. Balluch (MBI) said the police and the prosecution clearly built their criminal organisation case around the model of SHAC and its repression: 'they used the same phrases and they tried, with this experience, to portray us like that in front of the judge'. Another defendant (Anon14) added: 'short before the trial, they started to use the word MGT (militant animal rights group), and it sounds very similar to VGT. And then they said "MGT did this and that" and they were just listing everything VGT did. They didn't list BaT because they are too small and never did hunt sabs etc'. Balluch (MBI) echoed this: 'you can see they were starting

to use the language years before and shaping a picture which in the end was the same in the trial'. To demonstrate that the office was preparing the ground for repression, another interviewee (AnonI4) added that in the SOKO unit, 'there were also people involved from this department and the leader of the taskforce, Erich Zwettler, who is responsible for the trial, afterwards he got a better job and became the head of the office'. Balluch (MBI) said in the reports, 'they are writing the same things that they wrote in the judge sheet against us. And they used to mention our names and we reported it, but you can't sue them sadly, because they're public officials. We reported it to the State prosecution and then they stopped using our names but they use the same phrases'. Völkl (EVI) furthered this:

'they wrote VGT with the plain name and we made a complaint because it wasn't right to connect us... they always wrote about ALF activities on one hand and then they wrote the militant animal rights organisation is doing info stalls here and there and then and then, the same people. So, they suggested they are the same persons all the time. So, we made a complaint and they wrote the same story about our legal activities but without mentioning our name. ... There are media reports from these, so they don't check and they write it as "the danger of militant animal rights groups in Austria"'.

For example, the reports claimed there were militant animal rights 'cells' in six regions of Austria, corresponding to those where VGT was active and that the 'militants' undertook meetings abroad, again corresponding to events VGT attended, or that the militants 'travelled abroad', corresponding to travels by VGT activists for investigations such as on fur farms. The 2011 report claims 'militant animal rights groups' constituted the biggest domestic threat, although there were only 3 ALF actions undertaken in that year (Austrian Ministry of the Interior, 2011).

According to interviewees (AnonI4, MBI, EVI), the terrorism/animal extremism rhetoric had been used by farmers and fur traders for a long time but was never taken seriously in society or the media before the events of the late

2000s. Balluch said that 'eco-terrorism' was not a phrase used in Austria and that the word 'terrorism' began being used in relation to animal rights only during the trial. As we will see in chapter 4, there were very few 'violent' direct actions carried out in Austria and according to the interviewees the vast majority of Austrians before the trial would have never heard of criminal damage being carried out for animal rights. Balluch (MBI) said it was just 'not an issue'. Even though he said some political opponents would have used 'terrorism' in relation to animal rights activists, he stated it never took on in the party political sphere. Even ÖVP, the Conservative party, which was virulently opposed to and by the movement, would not have used it. Völkl stated that the ÖVP and Bauernbund (the main farmers union and a sub-organisation of ÖVP) 'never liked that animal advocates go into farms, this is an old story that they try to criminalise the filming and photographing in animal factories, so they always tried to criminalise us with that, but it wasn't a major public topic. If you made a publication after a big investigation visiting 20-30 farms and published the results, afterwards they always wrote "they are illegal criminals who are breaking the law"' (see for instance Figure 1). But the media would not take on this discourse (EVI, AnonI4, MBI, AnonI2).

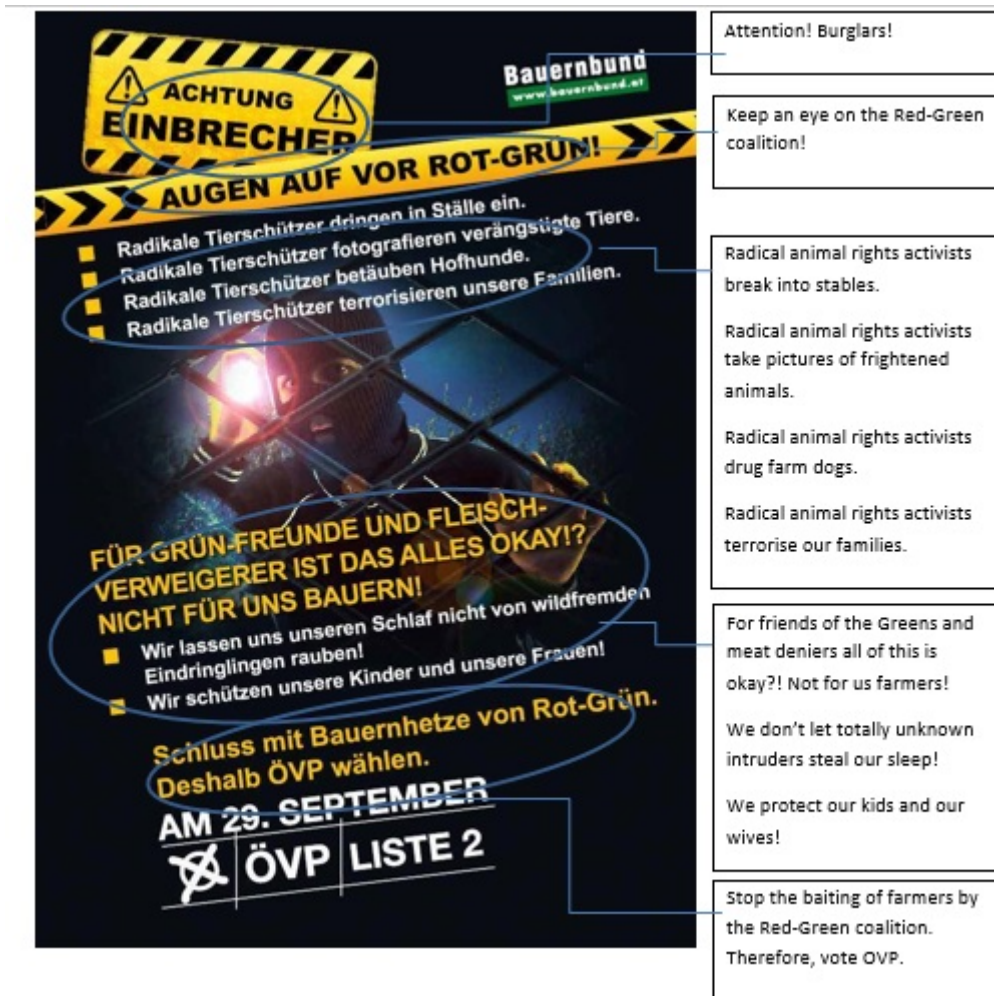


Figure 1. Bauernbund (2013) – Election leaflet [translation mine], available at: http://www.bauernbund.at/fileadmin/Inhaltsdateien/Teilorganisationen/Bauernbund/Dokumente/BB_Flugblatt_Tierschuetzer.pdf (Accessed: 30/09/2013)

Balluch said, talking about the period of the trial, ‘this rhetoric they used it, they tried it, but they failed at it’. To justify coercive repression, authorities resorted to the ‘crime attribution’ tactic identified in the typology of discursive criminalisation above. Balluch stated:

‘There was a very strong propaganda from the ministry. And the [ÖVP] police minister for example, when I was released from prison, did a press release on the very same day, saying that ‘all those in prison, who were on remand, must be connected to—a made up number of—64 cases of criminal damage or serious crime. Completely made up ... On a couple of occasions she said VGT was responsible for burning down a circus. We wanted to sue her for

libel, but we never managed because a public figure like her cannot be sued for libel in Austria’.

The interviewees said some media were criminalising the activists at the beginning of the case, but that it pertained more to individuals in certain media than to an editorial line of the media outlets, except for the *Kurier*, an important national daily newspaper, owned by the billionaire Christian Konrad, who appears as influential in facilitating the repression of animal advocates, as will be shown in the next chapter. This echoes Boykoff (2006, p. 23), who places mass media ownership as a structural element of media openness in a political opportunity framework. Balluch (MBI) said ‘there was especially in the *Kurier* a journalist who kept strongly writing against us. Obviously, he had a leak from the police who gave him some information and he wrote as slanderingly as possible about us’. The *Kronen Zeitung*, Austria’s best-selling newspaper (Müller, 2014), said in an article that VGT was responsible for arson. The NGO sued them successfully for libel (MBI).

3.2.2 United Kingdom

In the UK, discursive criminalisation occurred especially in the field of animal experimentation. The practice of avoiding debate over the matter itself by attempting to discredit animal advocates on the fact that they would be misguided, driven by emotions and thus irrational, goes back to the 19th century (Traïni, 2011). This was notably undertaken by the Association for the Advancement of Medicine by Research, from which The Research Defence Society originated and in turn became, in 2008, Understanding Animal Research. It was first set up in order to take back decision power on license applications from the Home Office, following the Cruelty to animals act in 1876, but it also actively thought to counter-mobilise against anti-vivisectionists (RLI). Understanding Animal Research was one of several pro-animal experimentation groups that initiated websites to gather and provide information on, and criminalise animal rights ‘extremists’ (Understanding Animal Research, 2020). In 2008, the organisation Pro-test was specifically set up to counter the animal advocacy movement, mirroring some of its tactics, organising counter-demonstrations and actively

engaging in the criminalisation of activists (Ellefsen, 2018). In another field, the Countryside Alliance, although it concerns itself not exclusively with animal related issues, was intended to, and focuses particularly, on defending all forms of hunting issues and countering anti-hunting groups. It has been very influential in the media and political fields (Tichelar, 2017; RLI).

Aaltola (2012) shows that authorities in the 2000s adopted the same discursive tactics as the advocates of animal experimentation such as HLS to discredit their opponents and justify their repression. She analyses the 2004 Home Office White Paper 'Animal Welfare – Human Rights: Protecting People from Animal Rights Extremists' and a 2002 House of Lords Commission Paper by the Select Committee on Animals in Scientific Procedures and shows that they both proceed by asserting the necessity of animal research for scientific progress, the supposed strictness of existing legislation in the UK, guaranteeing animal welfare, then go on to describe activists as extremists, violent and even terrorists. This line of argument is consistent with the findings of Girgen (2008) in the United States.

A Home Office consultation document entitled 'Animal Rights Extremism: Government strategy' from 2001 proceeds in exactly the same way. The Foreword states: 'the Government is committed to doing whatever is necessary to help the police tackle violent animal extremists'. This is an example of ideological-tactical blurring. Indeed, the document itself points out the need to also tackle non-violent and lawful acts by 'extremists'. Thus, the term 'extremists' clearly encapsulates activists opposing animal experimentation, whether they use 'violent' tactics or not. If it were not so, there would be no need for the prefix 'violent' in front of 'animal extremists'. But the reoccurring association of 'extremists' with violence is clearly aimed at implying that 'extremists' as a whole are violent. Thus, all activists opposing animal experimentation are associated with violence. The foreword then states 'It cannot be right that lawful and legitimate activities are damaged by violence and intimidation': as in the documents analysed by Aaltola (2012), the emphasis is put on the legality, thus the *legitimacy* of animal experimentation. The document goes further, stating: 'Some people object to the use of animals in scientific experiments and would like to see an end to such use. But this cannot be done without halting important areas of medical and scientific research'. Finally,

here again, it is claimed that ‘the use of animals is strictly regulated by Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, which is the most rigorous piece of legislation of its type in the world’—a claim that is also made in other countries, as Aaltola (2012) points out.

The term ‘extremists’ became in the 2000s the standard term used by authorities in relation to grassroots animal rights activists, especially in the field of animal experimentation, as well as the police apparatus to tackle them. Yet, as Ellefsen (2016, p. 453) points out: ‘There is no legal definition of domestic extremism in the UK’, although he notes that in 2014, the Metropolitan Police ‘laid out a new working definition of the term: “domestic extremism relates to the activity of groups or individuals who commit or plan serious criminal activity motivated by a political or ideological viewpoint”’.

Tactical relativisation was often resorted to by authorities, associating SHAC and similar groups with terrorism, while acknowledging that such association needed a widening of the definition of terrorism (Aaltola, 2004). In what can be argued to represent performative discursive criminalisation, the same process can be seen in the tools and agencies dedicated to the surveillance of activists. For example, the National Special Branch Information System (NSBIS), gathering information on thousands of activists, in the words of the police, aimed to ‘afford the sharing of terrorist/extremist intelligence across the UK’ (Rae, 2004). Ellefsen (2018, p. 752) notes that the police in the UK resorted to ‘high-profile operations, one being the largest of its kind in British history, with operations eventually being led by the Metropolitan Police’s Terrorism Command’. Like in Spain and Austria, the means deployed, just as the fact of bringing in the Terrorism Command, suggest a will to exaggerate the threat to public safety represented by activists.

Ideological-tactical blurring and tactical relativisation have had very serious implications for the policing of activists, enabling the repression of overt, non-violent activists. This led Sir Denis O’Connor, the chief inspector tasked with reviewing the policing of protestors after the scandal caused by the discovery of infiltrated agents in protest groups in 2011, to recommend, with the support of several senior officers, ‘ditching the flawed concept of “domestic extremism”’ and

to 'separate out investigations into serious criminals, which might justify undercover methods, and the routine policing of protest' (Evans and Lewis, 2013, p. 327).

3.2.3 Spain

Discursive criminalisation has been very strong in Spain during the main episode of repression, and the discourse of authorities revolved, more than in other countries, often around the notion of terrorism, rather than extremism. In particular, the arrests of activists were conducted in a way that was actively publicised by authorities and that was intended to immensely exaggerate the threat that the so-called terrorists were supposed to represent.

According to Díez Michelena (ADMI), the notion of eco-terrorism was something that the public would associate more with anglo-saxon countries. All interviewees said it was not used before the main episode of repression, either by politicians or animal industries representatives.

Nuñez (SNI) stated that as Animal Equality began gaining media attention in its opposition to fur, the fur industry began seeking to criminalise activists. Activists had jumped into catwalks in 2009, 2010 and 2011 and OEPP, the association of fur farmers, made a press release stating that activists were violent and had to be prosecuted : 'We could see that they were beginning to be concerned... because they were trying to speak to the media, sending up press releases, attending our trials...'

In terms of intelligence report on the movement, Nuñez (SNI) spoke about a research publication of the Guardia Civil a year before the arrests presenting the animal rights movement in particular as part of a growing ecoterrorist threat in Europe and in Spain, that should be dealt with as terrorism. According to her, 'it was kind of the bible of the police and the judge when they were thinking of our case'. She summarised the rationale of the publication and of the authorities as such :

"these are pears and these are apples but they're fruits, so they're all bad", so what they try to argue with the book, and the police tries to argue in the case, is that because we're an animal rights

organisation and we do investigations, we are giving out information to the ALF in order for them to do mink liberations and they kind of build on this radicalisation argument that animal rights groups start doing peaceful protests and they end up putting bombs, so they kind of say that's the same thing, ...that no matter what a group does ... it's always a way of having radicals infiltrating the movement, and groups always tend to radicalise'.

This is a clear example of tactical relativisation and echoes the discourse of animal industry representatives in the US (Potter, 2011).

In Spain, discursive criminalisation was undertaken through words as well as performative actions. The police operation of June 2011 itself appears as a clear attempt at framing the activists arrested as dangerous terrorists. The first hint of this is the use of disproportionate security means: around 200 agents were involved, many being armed and even helicopters were used. Nuñez (SNI) stated:

'The day we were arrested, honestly it's like they were arresting Oussama Ben Laden, I mean they had cut the whole road of my house, there were about 20 policemen, 3 or 4 of them went into my house, we were handcuffed... And then of course the footage—not mine specifically, but other activists—being arrested was in the media'.

Also, two activists were from the Basque country and the police there used the same methodology as they would with ETA members. Nuñez (SNI) said:

'For example when the police arrested me they didn't come in armed into my house, but there they came in heavily armed and the police force unit that arrested them was the same that deals with the terrorists and violence, ETA, in the Basque country. So I think it is again a media stunt. In Spain if you're related with ETA, it's like you're dead, you can do nothing if they even associate you with ETA. Something that is consistently used in the political arena. Someone would say 'you're not critical enough with ETA': If someone says that, you're political career is over. So these people were arrested and the way it was presented in the media was exactly the same as they

present the arrests of people from ETA. And this shows us to what extent this was a case for the media to portray us as eco-terrorists and for it to be the presentation of eco-terrorism in Spain and to have a judge associating himself with eco-terrorism and wanting to end it. And also the police in the Basque country they were wearing balaclavas, which I think is important too, because again you see the photos of the arrests in the Basque country it's very very dramatic, these police men with rifles and balaclavas arresting activists'.

This was clearly to meet the discourse the police was feeding to the media. Indeed, the police presented the operation through a press release as the arrests of 'eco-terrorists'. Even the judge in charge of the investigation used that phrasing. The media almost entirely used the same phrasing as the press release (SNI, JMI).

One element tends to show that the threat was voluntarily exaggerated to fit into the narrative of authorities. Javier Moreno was one of the twelve people that were supposed to be arrested on the day, but he was not at home at the time, as he was on holiday in Ibiza. When he was made aware of the situation and learned that he was one of the 12 indicted, he went to the police station to hand himself in, after sending a press release to say so. At the station, the police officers told him that there was no order to look and arrest him and that he should go to Santiago de Compostella, on the other side of the country, to deal with it (JMI). Far from being anecdotal, this shows the discrepancy between what authorities wanted to convey to the media as the level of threat the activists represented and their actual perception of this threat.

Adding to this, the press release of the police and the judge in charge of the investigation when he spoke to the press, resorted to crime attribution, asserting the activists were responsible for a series of crimes, including animal liberation or arson and were part of the ALF, violating the presumption of innocence. This was all the more questionable that the judge, in the meantime, declared the procedure secret, preventing the divulgation of the actual accusations. Nuñez (SNI) remarked: 'the funny thing about this is that not only is it very inappropriate for a judge to blame someone for being guilty before there is

a trial, but also none of the reasons we were arrested mentioned the word terrorism. So there were just using the word as a media stunt, as a way of making a story'. After the period of the arrests, authorities stopped using this eco-terrorism rhetoric.

3.2.4 Italy

Animal advocates are mentioned in reports from the Italian Ministry of the Interior (Italian Ministry of the Interior, 2006) but were not particularly criminalised in Italy. A 2006 report is, for example, mostly factual and authorities appear more concerned about the development of links between anarchists and radical leftists and activists involved in animal protection. This corresponds to the feeling of the interviewees who thought authorities were more interested in animal advocates with ties to radical leftist and deep ecology activists.

Politicians and authorities have generally not sought to criminalise animal advocates. Speaking about Brambilla supporting the people arrested at Green Hill, Reggio (MRI) highlighted that it illustrated how politically easy this was, because the general feeling of the population was very supportive of them and they were not perceived as radicals, let alone violent. Animalisti Italiani activists (AI1; AI2) attested that most politicians did not want to appear as anti-animal to attract votes.

Some politicians however clearly sought to criminalise the movement, amongst which Carlo Giovanardi was cited by all interviewees as the keenest to do so. Bennati (RBI) and Ferri (IFI) also spoke of Lega Norde as a party, which strongly supported traditions and hunting and would tend to present the animal advocacy movement as a violent movement. This was, to them, especially true among politicians from the North of Italy, in regions such as Lombardia or Veneto. Bennatti (RBI) said among the animal industrial complex, hunters and farmers would be the ones generally trying to depict animal advocates as 'violent and terrorists'.

Counter-movements

A particularity of the Italian and UK cases is that certain opponents of the animal

advocacy movement counter-mobilised through the creation of ad hoc groups. Among them, two particularly stand out: Pro-Test Italia, created on the model of the original organisation in the UK, and Federfauna, which claims to represent all kind of animal industries such as farmers, hunters, zoos or circuses. Pro-Test is remarkable because of the credit it has to the media, while Federfauna is so because of its extremely aggressive rhetoric and provocative statements, such as giving a 'Hitler Prize' to animal advocates—in 2013, it was given to Michela Brambilla, then a Minister (Motti, 2013).

Counter-mobilisation by the vivisection industry was fuelled by the success of the Green Hill campaign (CPI; Contardi, 2014). Pro-Test Italia was founded in 2012. Originally, a Facebook page was created in 2008, called *A favore della sperimentazione animale* (AFSA - In Favour of Animal Experimentation). Documents published on this page were signed as *Resistenza Razionalista* (Rationalist Resistance). The page displayed, alongside commentary defending animal experimentation, many attacks against animal advocates, vegetarians and vegans, often violent and misogynistic. Many people on the page were not researchers or students but simply opposed to animal rights supporters. Pro-Test was created in order to better organise and formalise their actions, but also to give a more polished image, although both were and remained linked, involving in part the same persons. Events such as demonstrations are organised through the page, while Pro-Test organises, as such, more institutionalised events, or communicates to the press via press releases (Contardi, 2014). Pomo (CPI) stressed that 'they are doing their own press release for even the smallest action [of animal activists]. They are trying to push it of course with a negative vision on the media' (CPI).

Even though Pro-Test seeks to appear as more institutionalised, serious, and legitimate (through its members being researchers or students), it is linked—more or less loosely—both to Rationalist Resistance and to Federfauna, with whom, for example, it organised their first demonstration: a flash counter-demonstration while 5 activists of Fermare Green Hill were occupying the department of pharmacology of the University of Milan to protest against the use of animals for experimentation. The demonstration was heavily mediated. Also, Federfauna's general secretary and Pro-Test vice-president appeared together on

pictures to present the Hitler prize (Contardi, 2014).

Contardi (2014, p. 37) notes that Pro-Test keeps a complementarity between its communication and the one of the page In Favour of Animal Experimentation. The former would generally speak of activists as ‘vandals’, while the latter would take on the same arguments and stereotypes with stronger language, going as far as to call them ‘terrorists’. Like in the UK, one of their rhetorical tools is to present animal advocates as non-experts who act merely upon emotions and do animals more wrong than good. For example, following the occupation in the University of Milan, AFSA shared pictures of an activist of Fermare Green Hill showing liberated mice in a bathroom with the false claim that it was their definitive housing, whereas the original post clearly said that it was just for a short time before adopters would take them. Pro-Test did a press release and many media including national newspapers disseminated the false information.

One of Pro-Test’s major stunts involved a teenager called Caterina Simonsen, who had four rare illnesses. In response to the organisations’ call for videos of ill people defending animal experimentation, she posted a vibrant plea and received offensive comments by animal advocates—although interviewees (AI1, AI2, MRI) stated that many were posted by fake profiles, a common practice of their opponents. Pro-Test made a press release that was widely taken on in the media and created outrage. Following this, the organisation tried to build momentum around the case, although Simonsen eventually came away from them, stating that although she supported animal experimentation, she did not want to be used to attack animal advocates as a whole, being a supporter of animal protection herself (Contardi, 2014).

Interviewees (AI1, AI2, CPI, MRI) said terms such as ‘terrorists’ and ‘extremists’ were particularly used by the media as a result of Pro-Test press releases. After Pro-Test’s campaign against the occupation by animal advocates in the University of Milan, the media inaccurately gave the impression when covering the action that activists were behaving violently and created damage.

Pro-Test also conducts lobbying activities and aims to prevent legislation restricting animal experimentation. Interviewees noted that most of their

campaigns, such as the ones involving Simonsen and the Milan occupation, took place as such legislations were being discussed in Italy or in the European parliament.

Federfauna, contrary to Pro-Test, did rarely generate media interest because of the excessiveness of its discourse, all interviewees stating that they were not perceived, either by politicians or the media, as a serious organisation. More generally, hunters and animal farmers appear to be particularly aggressive in Italy when they exchange with, or speak about animal advocates in public. The main organisations of farmers, such as Asso Carni or Associazione Italiana Alevatori, would sometimes use language revolving around violence and terrorism when speaking about animal advocates, according to Bennati (RBI).

3.3 IDEOLOGICAL CRIMINALISATION

Sorenson (2011) shows, in the context of the US, that politicians and industries have taken on the discourse of right-wing and radical Christian currents of thoughts to present the ideology of animal rights, understood as abolitionism, itself as a societal threat. Most importantly, what he and others (Potter, 2011; Girgen, 2008) show is that this ideology is presented as inherently violent and thus conducive to extremism or terrorism. This is also something found in the countries studied.

As Aaltola (2004, 2012) shows, the UK government, like animal industries, has been keen to draw a line between welfarism, portrayed as the reasonable option and one that they claim to endorse, and animal rights, associated with violence, fundamentalism and extremism. The title of the 2004 Home office report 'Animal Welfare: Human Rights – Protecting People from Animal Rights Extremists' itself shows this dichotomy. Lyons (RLI) stressed that one of the Countryside Alliance's tactics consisted in demonising the animal rights position, then arguing that mainstream welfarist organisations such as the RSPCA in fact adhered to this position, while trying to 'grab the term animal welfare for themselves'.

Similarly, in Austria, authorities came to associate the term 'animal rights' with extremism. Balluch said:

'they all adopted this policy of using animal protection for the goodies and animal rights for the badies. And activism and militancy. They claimed an animal rights evolution. When we say we do animal protection, they say it's called animal rights. So they renamed everything to animal rights so that it is recognisable as an evil thing. But we say "animal protection", deliberately for that reason. I say we are all animal protection and it's the same thing. Animal protection thought to its end is animal rights'.

In Italy, Federfauna, by handing the 'Hitler prize' to animal advocates, implies that an equal consideration of animal interests leads to abuse against humans, referring to the supposed interest of the dictator for animal protection. The 2013 illustration of the prize (see Figure 2) shows an edited picture of Hitler feeding an animal in front of Auschwitz, with the word 'animal rights' barred and replaced by 'animal Reich'. In the same line of argument, the MP and former Minister Carlo Giovanardi has appeared on several occasions as being associated with Pro-Test Italia. He was, for example, invited to a conference titled 'There is no future without research', also organised with Federfauna, in September 2013. Contardi (2014) notes that in his speech, he also made a parallel between activists and the Nazi regime.



Figure 2. Federfauna (2013), illustration of the Hitler Prize, available at: <https://www.algemeiner.com/2013/11/12/italian-trade-unions-hitler-prize-ignites-controversy/> (Accessed: 11 March 2014)

CONCLUSION

Among the countries studied, the UK, just as it is the country where the animal advocacy movement has originated from and in which it developed the most, has seen the most significant level of repression. The latter has been undertaken by both authorities and animal industries and all three forms identified have been heavily resorted to in this country. In Austria and Spain, mainly coercive repression and discursive criminalisation have been undertaken by authorities, especially centred around one particular repressive episode, while the political opponents of animal advocates have counter-mobilised less, and have not resorted to counter-movements, although Austrian activists have suffered physical assaults and threats. In Italy, little repression by authorities has occurred and it has been decreasing as the movement was gaining momentum. As a result, opponents have counter-mobilised to a far greater level.

In terms of coercive repression, the chapter has identified a range of tactics that, I argue, can be categorised as reactive measures aimed at containing activists

or proactive measures aimed at suppressing them. Several tactics of discursive criminalisation, further to the mere labelling of activists as extremists and terrorists, have been identified.

What stands out in the present analysis, is the interaction between the three overarching forms of repression looked at here. Discursive criminalisation is central to justifying coercive repression when it is observable by the public and the media (e.g. leadership decapitation in Spain, Austria and the UK). It is also needed to justify new legislation: the State in the UK resorted heavily on discursive criminalisation before introducing new legislation against antivivisection campaigners and this relationship is evident in the documents analysed in section 3. In Italy, politicians like Giovanardi who sought new legislation heavily resorted to discursive criminalisation.

Legislative criminalisation (or the attempt at it) appears as complementary to coercive repression. That is, if coercive repression is not efficient enough, then authorities envisage new ways to deal with activists. This is chronologically evident in the UK, as it is in the US (e.g. Glasser, 2011, provides a chronological account of the repression of the US animal advocacy movement).

Finally, some elements of coercive repression tend to predate discursive criminalisation. For example, surveillance and infiltration were undertaken in Austria, Spain (albeit just surveillance) and especially the UK well before the State took on a criminalising rhetoric. One way of looking at it would be to consider that to criminalise an adversary, one needs to learn about them. Another way pertains to Monaghan and Walby's (2012) notion of knowledge construction and 'mission creep', as developed in the first section of this chapter. This is something we will come back to in the next chapter when dealing with the authorities' perception of animal advocates as a security threat.

CHAPTER 4: EXPLANATION OF REPRESSION: THREAT

INTRODUCTION

This chapter and the following one aim to explain the occurrence of repression in the countries studied, as well as the reasons for which specific groups were repressed, rather than others. The present chapter focuses on the 'threat' model of repression explanation identified in chapter 1 as the one having found the most empirical confirmation. This model hypothesises that the more threatening a group or movement appears to repressive agents, the more it will be repressed. We will test here several propositions put forth by scholars defending the threat model.

The first maintains that groups or movements operating outside of institutional avenues and with a high level of confrontationality are more likely to be repressed (McAdam, 1982). This because of the threat itself, but also because the repression of groups perceived by the population as threatening will appear more legitimate (Davenport, 1995, p. 687). Thus, the first part of this chapter assesses the level of confrontation and institutionalisation presented by the movement in general and the groups repressed more specifically. It does so by looking at: 1) the history of underground direct action for animals and its saliency in the countries studied. 2) The attitudes of the repressed aboveground activists and of the wider movement regarding such actions, which might be thought by repressive agents to offer perspectives for the spread of underground radical direct action, or alter their perception of the threat represented by these aboveground groups. 3) The degree of confrontationality and institutionalisation of repressed aboveground groups and the wider aboveground movement. In the course of doing so, it also considers other elements of explanation put forth by scholars as constituting 'threat', including mobilisation size (Tilly, 1978) and frequency (Davenport, 1995).

The second part looks at another element of threat identified in the literature: ideology. Indeed some, like Bromley and Shupe (1983) have proposed that the level of ideological radicalism could be an explaining factor of repression.

Then the third part takes on the question of elements that might have altered authorities' perception of the actual threat. Finally, a last section looks at the question of the economic threat represented by animal advocates, that is of an altogether different nature, but that in the cases studied here shines additional light on the occurrence of repression. Davenport (1995, p. 692) notes, in the context of comparing different types of regimes, that 'a major premise in the literature is that domestic penetration by the global economy increases the need (and desire) for protection of certain political-economic relationships within the state' and the four countries studied here are all fairly integrated in the global economy.

1. CONFRONTATIONALITY

1.1 UNDERGROUND DIRECT ACTION

The object of this thesis is not to examine, per se, the response of authorities to underground direct actions, but rather to activists resorting to either lawful, or non-violent, aboveground activities such as civil disobedience. Nevertheless, it is necessary to look at the history and impact of the ALF and other more or less structured underground, illegal organisations on the wider animal advocacy movement. Indeed, this impact was such in the UK and to some extent in Italy—contrary to Spain and Austria, where there were far less actions conducted, with far less damage inflicted and media coverage—that it cannot be disconnected from an analysis of these dynamics. Munro (2005, p. 80) notes: 'in the public mind the animal rights movement is often associated with violence, especially in the UK where the ALF has been most active'. Thus, the present section first introduces the history of underground direct actions for animals, inextricably tied to the UK, before attempting to assess and compare the frequency and severity of these actions in the countries studied. The media coverage and public perception of these actions in those countries will be dealt with in the next chapter, dedicated to the 'weakness' model of repression explanation.

1.1.1 The UK: the cradle of clandestine direct action for animals

The ideological radicalisation observed at the turn of the 1970s was met with some activists adopting more radical strategies in parallel. As we have seen, this begun with the HSA and direct, aboveground opposition to hunters. A hunt saboteur, Ronnie Lee, with at first five other activists, founded the Band of Mercy in 1973. Their *modus operandi* was based on property damage, of which targets have included fox hunts as well as companies involved in animal experimentation, factory farming and seal hunting. After a brief period in jail, Lee formed a new group, initially composed of thirty members, that would become the most famous example of the tactical radicalisation of the movement: the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) (Stallwood, 2004; Monaghan, 2013b; Poszlusna, 2015). This organisation advocates direct action methods such as sabotage and the liberation of animals. The expressed goal of the ALF is not only to save animal lives directly through the latter but also to inflict economic damage on animal exploiters through sabotage. However, the guidelines of the ALF make it clear that people claiming to act on behalf of it must make all necessary efforts to avoid physically harming any animal, human and non-human alike (the ALF is not a formal structure, it is decentralised and anybody acting according to its guidelines can claim to act on behalf of it) (Animal Liberation Front, n.d.; Stallwood, 2004). In the first years, as noted by Poszlusna (2015, p. 77), most ALF actions involved liberating animals used by different industries and inflicting small amounts of damage to facilities, categorised by the police as ‘minor vandalism’, such as ‘sealing door locks, damaging equipment, and scratching and breaking windows’. However, she underlines that ‘despite the modest scope of methods, the damages (mainly resulting from the loss of animals) suffered by companies and institutions were quite significant—already in the first year of its activity, the ALF caused damages estimated at £250,000, and later that amount steadily grew’. A few years after the creation of the ALF, regional Animal Liberation Leagues (ALL) appeared, the first of which was the Northern League. They noticeably organised daylight mass invasions and overt liberations, aimed at releasing animals and informing the public about their condition. Stallwood (2004, 2014) sees the Leagues as the

precursors to contemporary 'open rescues', by which activists liberate animals while documenting their conditions overtly and unmasked—a movement initiated by Patty Mark in 1993 in Australia and which rapidly spread to other countries (Villanueva, 2018), amongst which Spain and Austria, as will be discussed in this chapter.

In the early 1980s, a shift in tactics occurred, with more large-scale actions of sabotage involving the use of incendiary and explosive devices, or the targeting of consumers, via a series of hoaxes. A notorious example involved the alleged poisoning of Mars Bars with rat poison in 1984 (Poszlusna, 2015; Monaghan, 2013a). This prompted a state response through the creation of the Animal Rights National Index (ARNI), a police department working closely with the security services (Webb, 2004; Poszlusna, 2015). This shift in tactics is explained by Stallwood (2004, pp. 83–84) by the fact that a new kind of activists took on actions on behalf of the ALF, that he describes as 'younger, unemployed and anarchist (...)' They placed animal liberation within a larger context of opposition to the state, the military-industrial complex, capitalism and socialism. They did not embrace nonviolence'. This was a view echoed by Richard Course, director of LACS in the 1980s (Davidson Smith, 1985). Whereas earlier militants had been committed to rescuing animals, and destroyed property only where it contributed to the former, by the mid-1980s, Stallwood (2004, p. 87) believes the ALF had lost its ethical foundation, and had become an opportunity 'for misfits and misanthropes to seek personal revenge for some perceived social injustice'. He asks: 'Where was the intelligent debate about tactics and strategies that went beyond the mindless rhetoric and emotional elitism pervading much of the self-produced direct action literature? In short, what had happened to the animals' interests?'

This period also saw the launch of the Animal Rights Militia (ARM) which, contrary to the ALF, does not exclude harming persons. This marked the beginning of the use of letter bombs, with the leaders of the four main political parties being targeted in 1982 (Monaghan, 2013a; Poszlusna, 2015). However, Poszlusna (2015, p. 79) notes that 'contrary to the actions of the ALF, which admits to carrying out 15–20 attacks per night, ARM's activities have never had a serial character'. Indeed, ARM actions were scarce, although memorable because of their violence

and their coverage in the media. Another group appeared in 1993, called the Justice Department (JD), that also claimed to be ready to harm persons and directed a (small) number of attacks involving explosive devices. Some, like Henshaw (1989) and Geldard (1989) have hypothesised that the same people were claiming responsibility for actions carried out in the name of ARM, JD or ALF, according to different aims, but this has never been verified. However, Ronnie Lee, although he had previously always consistently reaffirmed the commitment of the ALF to non-violence, wrote in 1984 that activists should set up 'fresh groups ... under new names whose policies do not preclude the use of violence towards animal abusers' (quoted in Stallwood, 2004, p. 84).

At its peak in the 1980s, the ALF counted around 2500 active individuals (Poszluna, 2015), but with public opinion turning its back on violent direct action and, as a result, mainstream animal protection organisations ceasing to help, or publicise the activity of the ALF, the number and intensity of actions decreased towards the end of the 1990s in the UK. According to the ALF Press Officer at the time, Robin Webb, this was also linked to the Labour party coming into office, after its commitment during the campaign to ban hunting with hounds, fur farming and setting up a Royal commission on animal experimentation (Monaghan, 2013a).

1.1.2 Comparative analysis of the frequency and severity of underground direct action in the countries studied

Taking a wide, quantitative look at the movement's reliance on underground direct actions in each country, enables to understand the environment in which the dynamics of contention studied here took place. Liddick, reviewing animal rights-related criminality in 2006 (pp. 74-75), concluded that 'animal rights criminality has been more frequent in the United Kingdom than anywhere else (and ... more willing to target human beings).' He found that 'Great Britain also suffers a greater proportion of threats, physical attacks, and fire-bombings directed at humans'. Behind the United Kingdom was the United States and he noted that 'a heavy concentration of animal rights activity was located in the Scandinavian countries, with Sweden leading with 9.5% of all records in the

database'. Austria, Spain and Italy were represented in the database, among many other European countries, but less significantly. A decade later, Loadenthal (2017) provides the most comprehensive database of illegal acts by animal rights and environmental advocates. It appears that between both publications, the gap between the UK and the rest of Europe somewhat tightened, although the UK is still considerably ahead. Loadenthal (2017, p. 10) refers to the United Kingdom, the United States, Sweden, Mexico and Italy as the 'most active countries'. The data (Table 3.1 pp. 51-64) shows that the ALF conducted 2140 actions in the UK, 342 in Italy (under two different names), 161 in Spain and 65 in Austria. The UK saw a substantial, although far smaller, amount of illegal actions by other groups, Italy and Spain saw very few actions by other groups, while there were none in Austria³. Comparing Loadenthal's data (table 3.1 vs table 3.11) also allows to conclude (although not with a high precision due to certain categories being global instead of country-specific) that the proportion of animal rights illegal actions compared to environmental ones is a lot more important in the UK compared to the three other countries (there were about four times more animal-related actions than environmental ones in the UK, but two to three times less animal-related actions than environmental ones in the three other countries).

Loadenthal's database includes all kinds of illegal actions and the vast majority are harmless, minor vandalism or civil disobedience acts, such as graffiti or open rescues. One of the categories he developed is 'antipersonnel tactics' (APTs), which he defines as attacks targeting individuals through 'the use of tactics designed to intimidate, injure, or kill'⁴ (p. 11). The presentation of the provided data does not allow definitive conclusions on how many APTs were conducted in the different countries specifically by animal rights advocates, but only four are identified in Italy and none in Austria and Spain (table 4.4, p. 75). The UK sees 15 identified as country-specific, but if one triangulates the APTs associated with groups identified as 'global', such as the Justice department or the Animal Rights Militia and the overall number of UK incidents in the database—2860 (table 3.11), as well as the fact that APTs represented 2.1% of all incidents in the UK (table 3.5,

³ It is worth noting, however, that Loadenthal's database includes open rescues as 'liberations'.

⁴ Note that 'attacks' include mere threats, which in fact represent the vast majority of APTs.

p. 67) and the overrepresentation of animal rights incidents in the UK compared to environmental ones, one can reasonably expect that a majority of the 60 APTs conducted by animal rights and environmental advocates were so by the former, according to Loadenthal's database.

Overall, Loadenthal (2017, p. 12) shows that: 'regardless of how the data is analyzed—globally, nation specific, MACs [Most Active Countries]—the most common tactic is always vandalism and the least common APT'. This echoes Aaltola's (2004) opposition between UK authorities' discourse on direct action and the reality of these:

'the tactics have not been quite as violent as claimed. On the illegal side, illegal demonstrations, spray-painting, and certain types of phone blockades remain the most common methods'.

Furthermore, Loadenthal (pp. 15-16) concludes:

'Based on the aforementioned data, one could expect the average "eco-terrorist" incident to occur in the United States or United Kingdom, be carried out by either a cell of the ALF or claimed anonymously and use graffiti, targeting a retail location selling either fur/leather or foodstuffs. The attack would not be part of a formal campaign, would cause no injury, and would be claimed by a communiqué. This historically informed characterization stands in stark contrast to portrayals of the movement as relying on explosives, arson, and threats to target besieged universities and the personal property of animal-industry employees.'

In terms of campaigns, as far as the countries studied here are concerned, (Loadenthal, 2017, table 3.12, p. 72) 1213 actions concerned HLS, and one can reasonably guess that the vast majority happened in the US and UK. Oxford University saw 67 incidents and Newchurch farms saw 50. In Italy, Morini saw 43. Max Mara saw 24 in Italy and Spain. In Austria, Kleider Bauer saw 17. Finally, a late 2000s campaign against the selling of fur by Escada (Escada Campaign, 2010) was accompanied by 15 incidents in Spain.

This quantitative analysis echoes the interviewees' perceptions regarding clandestine direct actions in their respective countries. Austrian interviewees all

said that direct action was never an important component of animal advocacy in Austria, that very few ALF-type actions had taken place and that those were relatively insignificant in terms of severity compared to other countries. Spanish interviewees expressed similar thoughts and after stating that ‘there’s never been a strong ALF movement in Spain’, Nuñez (SNI) further added that the changes in the Spanish movement—professionalisation, institutionalisation, movement actors adopting a more strategical approach, divisions in the movement losing saliency, successes such as the 2010 ban on bullfighting in Catalonia— ‘would probably mean the end of this kind of actions’. On the contrary, Italian interviewees recognised the cultural importance of underground direct actions, especially as concerns the grassroots and more specifically the anarchist-leaning part of the movement. Indeed, Pomo (CPI) and Reggio (MRI) indicated that anarchists were attracted by the radical character of the movement and by ALF-type actions. However, these appeared to be waning in the early 2010s in Italy, as a result of activists perceiving the risk of repression for the movement and that there were more efficient means to achieve their goals (MRI). A reflection that appeared to have been infusing in the movement as a whole, given the reflection engaged by the activists behind grassroots campaigns, as we will see later in this chapter. Furthermore, this decline in underground direct action, engaged before or around the Green Hill campaign, was also reinforced by its success. Thus, it could be seen both as an element explaining the absence of repression and a consequence of it.

To triangulate this, one can look at what animal advocates’ opponents have to say on the matter. The animal experimentation lobby-led website animalextrémisme.info (Understanding Animal Research, 2012) recognises that ‘the Spanish animal rights movement has rarely resorted to criminal acts’ and that ‘violence is rarely chosen as a strategy by animals rights activists in Spain’, except for ‘some isolated actions’. The website cites three: an ‘arson attack’ on a laboratory dogs breeding facility in 2005, the releasing of 20 000 minks from a fur farm in 2007 and the releasing of 36 beagles from a breeding facility in 2011, which according to the website, ‘generated the most media coverage in Spain of any animal rights event in the history of the Spanish animal rights movement’. This leaves us with one arguably ‘violent’ attack (arson). Concerning Italy,

Understanding Animal Research (n.d.a) states that the ALF has been active since the late 1980s and accounts for nine 'major attacks' between 1988 and 1993: four liberations, two arsons, an action of 'vandalism', one involving food product adulteration, and one that is not defined. The list continues with two hoax mass-poisoning of food products and a mail hoax bomb in 1998 and 1999 and eventually two liberations and one arson in 2008 and 2009. Finally, the website does not provide an overview for Austria, probably as it does not consider it to be a country of interest as regards animal 'extremism'. There were at least four cases of arson (Balluch, 2009; see for example Huckman, 2009). For the UK, there is less need for triangulation, since most of the actions carried out in this country by what Loadenthal (2017) refers to as the 'animal and earth liberation movement' were related to animal rights and he provides a breakdown for that country: of the 2860 incidents compiled for the UK (table 3.11), 62.2% are classified as vandalism, 13.9% as sabotage, 11.3% as liberations, 9.3% as involving fire and 2.1% as APTs (table 3.5, p. 67).

Finally, Loadenthal (2017, p. 17-18) shows that no murder was ever conducted, globally, in the name of animal rights, while only two cases of severe injuries resulted from actions of animal rights *groups*. One was of the ALF in 1999 (Lashmar, 1999) and one of the Justice Department in 1994 (Fur Commission USA, 2018), both in the UK. Four attacks by JD, ALF and ARM resulted in minor injuries—although Baker (1993) stresses that the alleged responsibility of the ALF in a 1990 car bombing was seriously questioned and the ALF press office always denied it (e.g., see Archive of Animal Liberation Films on the 'Net, 2015b, 8'30)—again all in the UK, in the 1980s and 1990s. Although these actions represent a minuscule fraction of the activities of animal advocacy activists, it is important to acknowledge them, as many scholars and advocates often wrongly assert that animal advocates have never caused physical injuries (e.g., Shirley, 2012, p. 2).

From this examination, we can conclude that 1) the UK stands apart from the three other countries studied here, as clandestine direct actions and acts of vandalism have been plenty, while physically or psychologically (threats of violence) violent tactics targeting individuals were scarce, but not insignificant and some injuries occurred. 2) Italy saw a far smaller amount of clandestine direct

actions, but still meaningful, with a tiny fraction of serious criminal acts or threats to individuals and a recent waning of this type of activity. 3) Spain and all the more so Austria, saw very little clandestine activity, with close to zero serious criminal acts or threats to individuals.

1.2 ATTITUDES IN THE MOVEMENT TOWARDS UNDERGROUND DIRECT ACTION

Núñez (SNI) said Equanimal and Animal Equality, before and after their merging, never expressed support nor condemned ALF-type actions: 'We don't talk about the ALF, we don't think we're in that position'. A position regularly expressed in the media (e.g., see AnimalEquality Germany, 2013). In Austria, VGT and BaT took on precisely the same position. A BaT interviewee (Anon12) stated: 'VGT ... were not so much about militancy and the ALF and we neither, because we're not doing militant stuff and we did not want to be like "tough guys" who promote that stuff'. He said BaT would sometimes report on such actions in a neutral manner, on its website or through a show they were hosting on an anarchist radio. Amongst the main groups in both countries, none ever expressed support for underground direct action. In Italy, formalised groups never endorsed such actions (RBI, IFI, MRI), but the networks of grassroots campaigners behind the main pressure campaigns had, prior to Green Hill, been openly supportive of underground direct action. Speaking about the Morini campaign, Pomo (CPI) said:

'our campaign was really radical, it started as mainly an anarchist campaign. We didn't have contacts with the media or politicians. There were demonstrations every week and they were really loud. I wouldn't say aggressive physically but aggressive in the spirit. We didn't have much public support and the campaign was supported by a lot of direct actions. ... The campaign was openly supporting the actions. We were receiving the communiqués and printing them on our website and our paper newsletter. So we were overtly supporting them, which is also the reason why the police was trying to connect us to these actions'.

While institutionalised groups in Spain, Austria and Italy were careful not to be associated in any way to illegal direct actions, the UK, here again, stands out.

For example, the BUAV was the field of more or less regular attempts at taking control by radicals. In 1982, some activists were elected in the executive committee who wanted to redirect the NGO's resources essentially towards funding direct actions and benefiting their own groups, according to Stallwood (2004; 2014), who was actively involved in BUAV at the time. He believes that amongst them, some were agents provocateurs aiming to sabotage the group and the wider movement. These activists, according to him, believed political action to be a waste of time. This is all the more surprising because BUAV was, at the beginning of the 1980s, amongst the well-established British organisations, the only one to support the ALF in practice: they used to provide office space to the ALF Support Group, publicise the actions of liberationists and use and publicise information and material on animal suffering garnered through direct actions undertaken by ALF or ALL activists (although NAVS also did the latter). For example, information obtained by the South East ALL enabled BUAV to take legal action on the ground of animal abuse (Stallwood, 2004; 2014). These tensions, as well as the radicalisation of the ALF pushed the BUAV to expel the ALF Support Group from their offices. The group refused to go and they had to change the locks overnight (RLI). According to Roberts and Lyons (RLI) 'the BUAV realised ALF lost public support and presumably they were getting pressure from parliamentarians as well'. To Roberts and Lyons (RLI), because of this episode, 'now BUAV is one of the most hated anti-vivisection organisations amongst grassroots campaigners. It stems from this idea that they turned against the ALF'. According to Stallwood (2004), as a result, the ALF became increasingly isolated.

ALF supporters attempted and were sometimes successful in obtaining elected seats in other well-established organisations, such as NAVS or the RSPCA (RLI; Poszlusna, 2015). NAVS was, amongst other organisations, accused of complacency towards the ALF, on the ground that although they have condemned the more violent acts of militants such as threats and sabotage, they have been more reluctant to do so with actions of liberation, and that, like BUAV, they have used material obtained through direct actions (Poszlusna, 2015; Monaghan, 2013b). Clearly, the relationship organisations such as NAVS and BUAV maintained with the supporters of direct action was a complex one. On the one hand, they

wished to support it, to some extent and more or less overtly. On the other, such groups had to maintain public and political support and they were challenged internally and publicly by these activists.

While most institutionalised groups would respond, when asked by the media what their position was, by stating they did not support violence, the RSPCA was more actively critical of radical actions committed by the ALF, although influential members were more sympathetic, such as Robin Webb who left the RSPCA in 1991 to become the ALF press officer. Baker (1993, p. 233) for example analyses a 1986 advertisement of the RSPCA depicting animal liberators negatively and appealing to supporters by contrasting their approach. He notes that 'the tone of the advert may have reflected the RSPCA's concern to maintain its "moderate" image at a time when this was being challenged from within by the RSPCA Action Group, formed in 1985 in continuing attempt to radicalize the ruling council'.

In the mid-1990s, the relationship between institutionalised groups and radical underground activists was thus ambivalent and irregular, but there were still visible links between at least some of the former and the ALF, with some of its representatives being invited or allowed to speak at events. This was the case, for example, with Robin Webb—at the time the ALF press officer—during one of the first marches organised by Uncaged (RLI).

As Plows, Wall and Doherty (2004, p. 209) note, parts of the animal advocacy movement in the UK tended to condone violent tactics such as targeting individuals, which they contrast to the environmental movement in this country. As seen above, the SHAC campaign and other similar pressure campaigns of the late 1990s and 2000s were strewn with clandestine direct actions (Poszlusna, 2015; Hall, 2006)—and as some have argued (e.g. Kew, 2000, p. 44), including SHAC US coordinators themselves (Jonas, 2004), these actions made those campaigns successful. Indeed, they greatly increased the pressure capacity of the coordination of those campaigns. As Aaltola (2012, p. 168) shows, although SHAC officially stated they did not encourage illegal activities, their discourse was sometimes contradictory. Further, the coordination of the campaign sent home addresses of companies' employees to its supporters (Poszlusna, 2015).

1.3 ABOVEGROUND CONFRONTATIONAL TACTICS

In Austria, VGT was one of the main drivers of the movement as we have seen in chapter 2. The organisation relied on a mix of institutional tactics such as lobbying, public educational tactics and confrontational tactics such as hunt sabotage, open rescues and classical acts of civil disobedience such as banner droppings or sit-ins while always avoiding to appear aggressive and lose the public's sympathy, by doing it as openly as possible and in an ostensibly non-violent way (AnonI4). On the contrary, Four Paws, as the other main Austrian actor on animal issues, was eager to keep a moderate, consensual image. Thus, it never resorted to 'naming and shaming' and avoided targeting certain opponents when they felt it could harm their relationships with companies or politicians they worked with. Hence, an interviewee (AnonI1) stated that for example, the NGO more eagerly criticised hunting activities in other countries it worked in, than it did in Austria. They also generally did not organise street protests. In a nutshell, Four Paws was a particularly institutionalised NGO of which the strategies were based on partnership and the support of positive initiatives, rather than confrontation. This difference was heavily emphasised by the State prosecutor during the first trial, in an effort to, as Ellefsen (2012, p. 196) puts it, 'separate the goodies and the baddies'.

But as we have seen in chapter 2, the specificity of the Austrian case is that VGT led a very *politically* confrontational struggle, overtly and consistently challenging the conservative party ÖVP, in power throughout the 2000s. In the course of doing so, they managed to convey their message to the public that the conservatives were the one party preventing positive change for animal welfare and Balluch (2006, p. 160; MBI) and another interviewee (AnonI4) assure that in some occasions, this is what made them lose elections. Thus, the Austrian animal advocacy movement and even more so its leading campaigning organisation VGT represented a clear political threat to ÖVP. Beyond this direct threat to the party itself, it appears a number of people in the highest circles of ÖVP had all interests in seeing this repression happen. Indeed, as we have seen in chapter 2, ÖVP is constituted, at higher level, by an important proportion of farmers, Balluch (MBI)

saying he found that 29% of ÖVP MPs owned a farm, and many are hunters. Balluch (MBI) also remarked that the arrests intervened on the very day VGT planned to launch a national campaign to pressure the government to enact the inclusion of animal protection in the constitution, which had been voted unanimously in parliament four years before:

‘we had prepared all the leaflets and all the banners material. I travelled around, as I always do, to all groups and we were all set in tracks. On the 21st of May during the morning, we wanted to do our first big action. 5 hours before, the police took us out. And so maybe it wasn’t because of that but they must have known it and they chose that day instead of others because they wanted to stop it’.

Alongside these very politicised campaigns, grassroots animal rights groups also developed confrontational strategies directly aimed at certain industries. Balluch (2008) accounts for a campaign launched in 1996, aiming to end the use of wild animals in circuses. Activists constantly protested in front of circuses across the country. Quickly, the conflict took violent proportions from both sides, which resorted to justice in many cases. Activists reported any disrespect to the law they could come across, regarding the treatment of the animals kept. After six years, all circuses with wild animals in Austria had gone bankrupt. Thus, when a ban on the use of wild animals in circuses was proposed in 2002, it was passed without withstand. Balluch emphasises that campaigners did not seek to influence public opinion and that the latter and the media changed their views afterwards, increasingly reflecting a negative image of circuses using animals in other countries.

Overall, according to interviewees, compared to the movement in other countries, and especially in the UK, the Spanish movement is quite moderate in terms of tactics and it has been moderating even more in recent years. Nuñez (SNI) stated that ‘moderation is definitely becoming part of the movement in Spain. And—maybe I’d leave the UK out of that because of how particular the movement is there—but I think the movement is the strongest in countries that have moderated some of their tactics’. Berengueras (JBI) also emphasised that more radical groups had moderated their image, their way of communicating, and

expanded their tactical repertoires in recent years: 'Anima Naturalis or Animal Equality for example: they still do [undercover investigations] and stuff but they invite people for books, they translate books, I think they changed their strategies [...] they don't create a barrier like "we're radical"'. Contrary to VGT in Austria, Animal Equality had no lobbying activity or other forms of institutionalised action. Their main tactics consisted in raising awareness on the condition of animals through investigations, vegan outreach and civil disobedience acts such as jumping into catwalks or bullrings. Before its merging into Animal Equality, Equanimal also conducted similar actions, in addition to hunt sabotages (JNI, SMI).

Italian advocates relied on similar actions, with the addition of more confrontational actions such as pouring fake blood on shop fronts (IFI). Grassroots groups rarely resorted to institutional tactics such as lobbying, but as of the early 2010s increasingly developed cooperation with more institutionalised organisations who did, such as LAV (CPI, RBI). The latter, despite its institutionalised character, sometimes resorted to civil disobedience, for example occupying farming or other structures in the presence of journalists (RBI). It also came to support other civil disobedience actions (CPI) and according to Bennati (RBI): 'we support some actions of civil disobedience, (...) but always in the perspective of a transparent discussion with the media, with the police and with the court'. Legal expertise is a core activity of LAV. It resorts to legal actions to enforce the law and lobbies for improvements of it. It also carries out communication campaigns and demonstrations. Pomo (CPI) stated: 'they are very good at lobbying and that is also why we are cooperating (...) they are big, they have a lot of members, contacts in the press, and a lot of contacts in the political arena'. As regards the activists behind the Green Hill campaign, they were roughly the same as those behind previous campaigns such as SHAC Italy or the Morini campaign (CPI). For these two campaigns they had adopted, like their British SHAC counterparts, an attitude that Pomo (CPI) sums up as 'us versus them'. That is, they had no political goal, did not aim to reach the public and engaged in aggressive campaigning against their targets. With Green Hill however, having learned from previous experiences, including lack of success and repression and having seen the repression of British activists, they decided to adapt their strategy

and acted so as to appear less aggressive: appeal—successfully as will be seen in the next chapter—to the public, avoid to appeal to radical anarchist activists, generate the support of more institutionalised, well-known and respected organisations, seek political support, as to the task of closing the facility and more generally to improve the legislation as regards animal experimentation and finally to elaborate communication strategies aimed at the media (CPI, MRI).

As seen in chapter 2, the rich animal protection eco-system in the UK was made of an important number of more or less confrontational groups, as well as more institutionalised, moderate organisations—Garner (1998, p. 95) counting 30 national groups, while there were less than 10 in all three other countries a decade later. Similarly to Italy and Spain and contrary to Austria, groups relying on confrontational tactics tended not to rely on institutional ones. Just as the movement's breadth was a lot more important in the UK than in the other countries, the frequency of the use of confrontational tactics was far more important, with many groups undertaking these. Whereas few hunt sabotages were undertaken in the three other countries, with only Equanimal conducting a few of them at the end of the 2000s in Spain (JMI), only VGT doing so in Austria (MBI) and few groups in Italy (CPI), the British hunt saboteurs conducted thousands of them through half a century, in all corners of the country (Tichelar, 2017). In the same way, whereas Italian and all the more so Spanish and Austrian activists focused their oppositional campaigns against a small number of companies involved in animal exploitation, such as clothing companies selling fur in particular, their British counterparts conducted thousands of protest actions against business entities over the years. In the case of SHAC, activists frequently resorted to multiple synchronised demonstrations, Upton (2012, p. 243) for example stating that in February 2001 alone, 'at least 1000 activists co-ordinated mobile demonstrations at the homes of selected affiliates across four counties in southern England'. The fact that the Austrian, Spanish and Italian activists were less numerous than the British undoubtedly played a role in this. For example, An interviewee (Anon11) estimated there were around 300 activists involved in the animal advocacy movement in Austria in the early 2010s. Moreno (JMI) estimated that after merging with Equanimal, Animal Equality, which was one of the

organisations in Spain that could mobilise the most, counted around 100 regular participants to its demonstrations. In Italy, prior to the Green Hill campaign that mobilised beyond movement participants, major campaigns such as Morini only gathered a few hundred demonstrators at best. In the same way, while major rallies such as NAVS' could gather tens of thousands of protesters (RLI), very few demonstrations in Spain could gather more than a thousand—and only on the culturally and politically very salient bullfighting issue (JMI)—and even less so in Austria (Anon11). In Italy, only demonstrations against Green Hill gathered several thousands and up to 10 000 in Rome (CPI).

Finally in the UK, clandestine actions aside, SHAC and other similar campaigns sometimes involved overt harassment of individuals, most noticeably through so-called 'home demonstrations', whereby activists would not only confront those involved in animal experimentation at their place of work, but also in their private home. This is something that was not seen in other countries. Nuñez (SNI) insisted such tactics were never used in Spain (and in fact there was no campaign relating or similar to SHAC). In Austria Martin Balluch (2009, pp. 87-88), as the prominent figure of the movement, took a stand against such actions, that he considers democratically problematic. He states that it took place on one occasion in 2000, and that the police report did not deem it threatening. Furthermore, whereas VGT always sought complementarity between its confrontational tactics and more institutional ones and whereas the network behind Green Hill came, for this latter campaign, to also seek such tactics, SHAC always rejected dialogue, be it with political institutions, the police, or its opponents (Upton, 2012, p. 252).

1.3.1 Open rescues: reconciling animal liberation and civil disobedience

A civil disobedience strategy Spanish, Austrian and Italian activists relied on, to a greater extent than their British counterparts in the 1990s and 2000s, was open rescues. This was particularly indicated, in conjunction to investigations, by Nuñez (SNI) as a crucial element of Animal Equality's philosophy and work. She cited the Australian activist Patty Mark as an inspiration. The latter, founder of the NGO Animal Liberation Victoria and the Open Rescue Movement (Humane Myth, 2017),

popularised this type of action in Australia and inspired multiple groups around the World to do the same. The Open Rescue Movement indicates on its website (Open Rescue, 2017):

‘Open Rescue is based on giving aid, rescue and veterinary treatment to any animal known to be suffering and in pain, yet trapped in confined conditions where they have been neglected and/or abandoned to slowly die. The focus is primarily on factory farms, the largest area of animal abuse in the world. The immediate aim of open rescue is to save lives and secondly to document the cruel conditions ... Rescue workers openly identify themselves and work as professionally and diligently as their colleagues in other rescue areas such as fire fighters, state emergency services or ambulance personnel. Unfortunately, ... it is necessary to sometimes trespass to perform the life-saving rescue work’.

In line with the definition of civil disobedience (Tescione, 2013, p. 91), ‘activists involved in open rescue identify themselves because they are prepared to stand strong in their actions and suffer any consequences that may occur due to possible trespass’ (Open Rescue, 2017). Nuñez (SNI), insisted on ‘doing everything from a non-violent perspective, understanding non-violence as we’re not destroying anything, not breaking any locks to go into the farms, taking the animals and then bringing them to vets and letting society know their story’.

1.4 THE QUESTION OF PERCEPTION

I have analysed confrontation in objective terms. However, the question of perceptions by authorities is important. The testimony of a former Special Branch officer (Anon13), having worked on animal activists, shows that the threat of animal rights was not appreciated equally everywhere on the British territory and that police services in some central areas of the country were not so concerned by it. He constantly downplayed the seriousness and severity of the animal rights threat in the UK, compared to what he perceived as much more serious former or contemporary threats such as the IRA or Islamic terrorism ‘from 1988’. Speaking about MI5, he said: ‘I would be amazed if they did anything at all [on animal rights]

and if you look at their terms of reference there's subversion, I know things can be stretched but I would be very surprised, they have enough to do.' It should be noted however that MI5 did take an interest in animal rights and deployed undercover agents in addition to those of Special Branch (Evans and Lewis, 2013). One can speculate however, that although the Animal Rights Militia and the Justice Department conducted very few attacks, let alone ones resulting in injuries, the fact that they openly rejected the ALF guideline pertaining to not harming persons, the attitudes of ALF figures such as Ronnie Lee who encouraged this development, or the fact that the ALF press office changed its name to Animal Liberation Press Office to reflect its incorporation of the ARM and JD, and finally the ambivalent attitudes of the wider British animal advocacy movement described above, did probably make the threat appear bigger than it actually was, or at least created the perception of a potential for an increased radicalisation. It is also likely that this perception was reinforced at mid-stage (in the mid-2000s) by the discourse of famous American activists such as Steven Best or Jerry Vlasak who insisted on the moral justification of harming humans and adopted a very threatening rhetoric (Hall, 2006) (the fact that they were barred from entering the UK gives credibility to this claim) or SHAC US' leader Kevin Jonas who overtly recognised the usefulness of underground direct action to the campaign (Jonas, 2004).

Finally, certain acts by animal rights militants did probably touch upon deeply entrenched cultural values, such as the digging of a grave in the context of the Newchurch guinea pigs campaign which deeply shocked the public nationally and internationally, as will be seen in the next chapter. Although no physical harm resulted, this single event probably fuelled, as much as it legitimised to the public, the will of authorities to repress the movement.

Further, the rhetoric of UK State authorities and the animal research industry in Europe very likely motivated supra-national discursive criminalisation, such as Europol's (2008 to 2013). The British police in particular organised regular meetings with other European countries' police services and industries on the 'animal rights extremism' threat and how to tackle it (Anon14, MBI, EVI, MRI, CPI, SNI, JMI). This in turn influenced the perception of threat by these countries' authorities, even in places where, like in Austria or Spain, there was little radical

confrontational activity, let alone underground. Indeed, Spanish, Italian and Austrian police agents attended meetings on the matter organised by Europol and Britain's NETCU (SNI, JMI, CPI, MRI, MBI, AnonI4, AnonI2). This was also acknowledged by the Austrian police in court⁵ and a NETCU chief officer, John Madigan, actually testified in court during the first Austrian trial. Völk (EVI) said:

'The only role of this guy was to illustrate that organisational people from SHAC, he said so, were involved in criminal activities, so his role was to draw a parallel between the SHAC case, which was always the worst case in the eyes of the judge at that time, that what's happening in Austria with us is the same as in the UK.'

In the Spanish case, as seen in the previous chapter, a publication by a recognised police officer about a so-called spread of 'eco-terrorism' apparently was very influential to the police and the investigative judge's apprehension of the case. This echoes the findings of Kriesi *et al.*, cited in Earl (2003, p. 58), who:

'found an increase in repression directed toward confrontational groups in Germany in the period between 1975 and 1989, which they attribute to a publication by a well-known police theorist on the need for harsher treatment of militant protesters'.

Industry actors, through discursive criminalisation, also played a role in the amplification of the perception of animal advocates by authorities as a (security) threat. For example, interviewees cited an op-ed in an Austrian newspaper by Steve Solley, a former British police officer and 'security expert' working for the fur industry (Radio Sweden, 2015), who greatly exaggerated the threat represented by activists in Austria and recommended, as cited in a parliamentary question (Austrian Parliament, 2017), that 'under no circumstances should any attempt be made to negotiate with activists. The police must be involved at the first sign of a campaign'. In the article, Solley said he had been advising Austrian authorities and businesses for 6 years, bringing members of parliament to question the government on his role in the repression of the activists.

⁵ Court case files accessed by the author.

Thus, to some extent, we can draw a parallel with the situation in the USA, whereby intentional discursive criminalisation degenerated to genuine fears, according to Potter (2011, p. 103). This is something that Stallwood (KSI) also echoes in the context of the US:

‘There is almost an industry, ... since the 80’s to counter animal rights ... where you had right wing think-tanks writing speculative works that got reused and re-referenced by other right-wing think-tanks so they were basically probably mostly fictional. They got published by one right-wing think-tank and then another think-tank writer referred to that think-tank writer to recycle the same material and create almost a mythology of what was going on. And now you have an industry, with Marc Burman in Washington D.C., the Consumer Freedom Centre. There is him and others who created their own industry of activity to self-perpetuate, self-refer to each other inaccurately about the threat of the animal rights movement.’

2. IDEOLOGY

In chapter 2, I drew on several characteristics for each national movement. In all countries, the grassroots part of the movement is essentially abolitionist. The UK sees big and institutionalised groups in both the welfarist and abolitionist categories, with the specificity of presenting a very sectorised movement. Indeed, many organisations specialise in particular areas of animal exploitation, hence not necessarily publicly endorsing a comprehensive welfarist or abolitionist position. This is less true of the other countries studied. Spain sees institutionalised groups mostly in the welfarist category. Austria is peculiar in that only VGT would qualify as an important and institutionalised abolitionist group, although it remains at the same time very grassroots-oriented and confrontational. Furthermore, it managed to acquire a leading position in the movement, important and institutionalised welfarist groups following it and coming closer to its positions. Italy also stands out in that the most important and institutionalised organisations, such as ENPA, OIPA and even more so LAV, have always had, or came to lean towards, a wide sectoral or comprehensive abolitionist stance.

The Spanish case deserves particular attention in that ideology was particularly salient in the movement's history. The Spanish movement as a whole and its animal rights strand is a lot more recent than in other countries and early abolitionist activists were influenced by certain debates ongoing in other countries at the time. Thus, these debates informed to a greater extent the development of their activism. Nuñez (SNI) in particular insisted on the fact that ideology was crucial in Animal Equality's foundation. She was, at the moment of the interview, working for an animal protection NGO in the United States and contrasted the saliency of ideology and ideological concepts such as anti-speciesism in the contemporary Spanish animal rights movement, compared to the American or British movements. She emphasised the distinction between animal welfare and animal rights organisations and asked about important NGOs in 'the animal advocacy movement', she kept excluding animal welfare organisations. Regarding the importance of ANDA in the movement for example, she said: 'they are not an organisation that would be considered to be part of the animal rights movement. Just like Greenpeace. I mean if you ask me about Greenpeace, I wouldn't know what they're doing, because I don't think they're considered part of the animal rights movement'. Further asked whether ANDA was then, according to her, more of an environmentalist organisation, rather than an animal NGO, she said: 'no, but I would say that ANDA is not considered an animal rights organisation, but an animal welfare organisation, they're not an organisation that is part of the animal rights movement'. She attributed the saliency of ideology in the Spanish movement to ALA:

'It was always an organisation that was moving towards animal rights—I mean you can see that in its name: Alternative for Animal Liberation. But I would say in 2000 it clearly became animal rights and due to the strong ideological component of ALA and the people who were part at that time I would say the movement is very ideological and that means that there is quite a split between animal welfare and animal rights but it's not an open conflict at all'.

With Animal Equality, Nuñez (SNI) said the goal was to create an organisation that 'better reflected what we thought, at that time, was more important to focus on, when defending animals'. That is:

'We considered that there should be a better understanding and more focus on speciesism and on the ideology of animal rights, so our focus with Animal Equality at the beginning was definitely a more speciesism-oriented ideological focus, than there was in the movement, I would say not only in Spain, but also in some other countries—maybe except for France that has always been a very ideological movement too and perhaps Italy. I would say that in many other countries, we saw that the focus on ideology or the focus on the concepts of what animal rights were, wasn't very strong. And I can put England as an example: we saw that there were a lot of activists in England, and also in Spain, that were talking about 'living beings' instead of 'sentient beings'. We considered there was a confusion between what animal rights were, in opposition to environmentalism, or even to what animal welfare was, and at the same time there wasn't a focus on equality and anti-speciesism'.

Further, speaking about the tactics relied upon by Animal Equality, she stated: 'of course there was an abolitionist movement, but we thought what we could bring ... was to link activism with [this] ideology ... doing strong civil disobedience, shocking protests'. Animal Equality was one of the only organisations among those studied, with BaT in Austria, with a clear-cut fundamentalist abolitionist position. Nuñez (SNI) stated: 'we have never supported reforms, I think that's a very difficult debate that would need further analysis on our part before we engage in a welfare reform'. She explained that these strategical-ideological considerations caused tensions between what were originally two separate organisations, both originating from ALA: Animal Equality and Equanimal. The former was more uncompromising, although many interviewees stated that both organisations were very similar in terms of ideology and methods (ADMI, JBI, CRI). Nuñez (SNI) stated that Animal Equality had, around and since their merging, evolved as regards their strategical-ideological approach. She insisted that the organisation

kept on 'always stating that animal rights is what we want and promoting veganism openly 100% of the time' but came to consider certain pragmatic levers:

'when we present an investigation *now*, we do press charges against all the farms and that may be considered as a way of working inside the system, because of course when we present charges, we do it taking into account the laws that currently exist and they are of course not animal rights laws, they are laws that tell the industry how they should and how they shouldn't exploit animals. So we press charges against the industry—I don't know if that could be considered a welfare reform, something we didn't do before. I would say a lot of it had to do with learning and dedicating a lot of time to educating ourselves on how to be more effective, and doing more effective campaigns. When we promote veganism, we always take into account the audience we are reaching, so maybe if we are reaching the general public we wouldn't maybe say the word vegan, we would tell people to substitute meat, or become vegetarian, just because we think it's more effective. That is definitely a perspective of the organisation that has changed over the years'.

Díez Michelena (ADMI) gave an example pertaining to Animal Equality's original position: the latter had released an investigation into a Spanish farm and he contacted them for ANDA in order to pressure authorities to close it down: 'they said "we are not against this farm, but the whole system"'. He insisted: 'if you give me the details of this farm we can claim against it and close it', but they replied: 'we don't want to close it, we want to close all of them'.

The positioning of Animal Equality starkly contrasts with VGT's pragmatism. There is no doubt that the success of the latter to bring the rest of the Austrian animal advocacy movement to follow and support its campaigns, as we saw in chapter 2, was made possible by its unapologetic *reformist* abolitionist approach, which is made clear by Balluch in an article on the NGO's website (Balluch, 2008). In Italy, institutionalised abolitionist groups such as LAV also endorse such an approach. Grassroots campaigners are found in both categories of abolitionism, which is less visible since they mainly focused on sectoral

campaigns, particularly against fur and animal experimentation. The same can be said in the UK as regards the grassroots campaigns that were repressed, such as the hunt saboteurs or SHAC and similar campaigns. Roberts and Lyons (RLI) stated that in the 1990s and 2000s, there was little debate in the UK over reformist abolitionism versus fundamentalist abolitionism in a *comprehensive* understanding—of course, and as Stallwood (KSI) emphasised, this debate had always existed *sectorally*, especially in the animal experimentation field. Garner (1998) confirms this view, acknowledging ideological tensions between anti-vivisection groups but noting that the (comprehensive) reformism versus abolitionism debate was less strong in the UK than it was in the US. Roberts and Lyons (RLI) emphasised that the split in the movement was more about tactics: ‘aggressive, direct action campaigns versus going for political change’. To them, it was only after the 2000s and the repression suffered by those campaigns, that the debate shifted in the movement towards comprehensive abolitionism strategies.

3. ECONOMIC THREAT

The Austrian animal advocacy movement and especially VGT, as we have seen in chapter 2, had been very effective, throughout the early and mid-2000s, in pursuing rapid and substantial political change in all fields of animal exploitation. Their campaigns had massive consequences for economic actors such as farmers (and especially fur farmers), circuses and hunters, and their growing political influence as well as the recognition of animal protection in the constitution, announced further victories. Thus, they clearly represented an economic threat. In the Austrian case, this explanatory factor finds clear grounding. Indeed, and as Ellefsen (2012, p. 192) notes, the former head of the SOKO unit testified in court that the ad hoc squad was created immediately after and as a result of a meeting Kleider Bauer’s CEO obtained with the Ministry of internal affairs and chiefs of police. According to the court testimony, the reason for the meeting was a paint attack on his car. The CEO demanded police action against attacks on Kleider Bauer. To Ellefsen: ‘these incidents seem to support the idea that repression is a

response to illegal activity', although he notes that the breadth of later accusations made against the activists went far beyond the Kleider Bauer case. It should be remarked however, that the stated aim of the SOKO unit was not only to stop criminal damage (of a very minor nature). Indeed, in a court case document cited by Balluch (2009, p. 116), it is very clearly laid out that the role of SOKO was also to stop the legal demonstrations in front of Kleiderbauer and even to undertake media work against the demonstrators. Balluch (2009, p. 116) gives an example of police media work, through the creation of a dedicated website presenting pictures such as of broken windows, so as to give a radical image of animal advocates. Further citing the files, Balluch states that the head of SOKO ordered that several agents be deployed to all demonstrations, including information stalls, by animal advocates to convey the impression to public opinion that demonstrators were dangerous. This focus on stopping the demonstrations against Kleider Bauer explained, to the eyes of a BaT interviewee (Anon12), why his 'little local group of 10 to 15 self-organised people' was targeted alongside 'a big organisation like VGT'. As he put it: 'it was quite logical, if you are going against the demonstrations, you're going against all the people doing them'.

Going back to the inconsistency between the original goal of the SOKO unit and the breadth of surveillance and accusations, Ellefsen (2012, p. 192) asks:

'what happened after the SOKO unit was set up to tackle crimes targeting KB, to widen its scope and direct its attention towards such large parts of the movement? Were more companies, industries or targets of illegal protest actions brought in to present problems with animal activists and to affect SOKO's efforts?'

Two interviewees (MBI, Anon14) had a clear idea of it and spoke of Christian Konrad, the then CEO of the biggest Austrian Bank, Raiffeisen, as being very influential in their repression. He was also the head of the Lower Austrian Hunting association, before Josef Pröll (who was ÖVP's chairman and the Minister of Finance at the time of repression and commissioned three fiscal investigations on VGT) succeeded him in that position (Österreichischer Rundfunk, 2012). Balluch (MBI) stated that:

‘He was probably the most instrumental behind all this because we were sabbing his hunt just a week before this special police force was formed and just a few days before the police [raids] we had bought [shares] in one of his companies, UNICA, and we were able to give a speech and criticise his hunting on their general assembly’.

Further demonstrating the will of authorities to defend (hunting) special interests, Balluch (2009, p. 116) also states that the SOKO unit took advantage of the phone taps of activists to warn hunters that animal advocates were about to denounce certain illegal activities to authorities, so that they could remove the evidence before inspections. This echoes Lyons (RLI), who highlighted that after the ban on hunting with hounds, British authorities ‘ignored the criminality of the hunt’ and were ‘still more interested in arresting moniters’⁶. To him it was a question of ‘class and status’. Interviewees (MBI, EVI, Anon14) shared the same view as regards the Austrian case. In fact, to them the whole case, beyond Kleider Bauer’s CEO’s initial intervention, came down to a ‘few powerful hunters’, with high positions in or strong influence on ÖVP, who ‘sat on a table ... and said “now enough’s enough, we are going to lock them up”’ (MBI).

Further similarity with Austria is to be found in the UK case, as regards the economic motivations of authorities in repressing activists. SHAC was extremely successful: the pressure campaign was so effective in getting businesses to sever their ties with HLS, that a year and a half after the beginning of the campaign, already ‘the value of HLS stock fell from 300 pence ... to only three pence’ (Lovitz, 2010, p. 55). HLS was on the brink of collapse and the UK Department of Trade and Industry had to intervene and ‘provide banking services to HLS as “a lender of last resort” after commercial banks refused to provide facilities’ to the company and had to step in a second time in late 2002 to provide insurance to it (Lovitz, 2010, p. 56). Throughout the 2000s, around 270 companies have renounced to commerce with HLS (Upton, 2012, p. 244). Upton (2012, p. 250) states that the cost to companies such as HLS was estimated at 12.6 million pounds as of 2010,

⁶ After the passage of the ban, saboteurs came to call themselves ‘moniters’, as they framed their activity as preventing unlawful behaviour.

comprising criminal damage and pre-emptive measures. In fact, HLS' CEO himself stated that without intervention from the British and US States to financially support HLS and to repress activists, SHAC would have reached its goal (Alderson, 2009).

It is around the mid-2000s that the UK government fully realised the economic threat represented by these campaigns and decided to scale up its response. This was made possible by strong lobbying on the part of the industry, taking advantage of the avenues provided by the creation of the Pharmaceutical Industry Competitive Taskforce by ministers and drug manufacturers (Upton, 2012, p. 250). Police actors have recognised the economic impetus to repress the animal advocacy movement, as Evans and Lewis (2013, p. 203) note : 'NETCU head Steve Pearl said the unit was established by the Home Office after ministers were "getting really pressurised by big business – pharmaceuticals in particular, and the banks"'. In fact, the pharmaceutical industry made it very clear towards authorities that they would leave the country should the State not intervene (Lyll, 2004).

Furthermore, like in Austria, police bodies (NETCU, as shown in the previous chapter) and State authorities (Home Office, 2001) have overtly aimed to help and advise the industry on communicating so as to counter activists in the media, showing a clear concern for an economic threat, rather than a mere security threat. And as Aaltola (2004) shows, this is made clear through an analysis of the discourse of the government.

Finally, in Spain the animal advocacy movement was gaining pace in the early 2010s. While it was still in an early stage of its development compared to other countries studied here and far from the political successes of the Austrian movement, the abolition of bullfighting in Catalonia in 2010 must have been a wakeup call to the then in power conservative party (Partido Popular), which as shown in the next chapter, was very attached to this and other traditions. If the movement did not represent an important threat to most animal industries, they increasingly did to the fur industry. Equanimal and Animal Equality in particular were becoming very successful in getting images to the public via the mass media (see the next chapter). They had not only released investigations into mink farms, but also slaughterhouses and more than a hundred pig farms (SNI, JMI). As Nuñez

stated, 'our name was pretty much in the media in Spain and I think a lot of animal industries were beginning to be aware that they were being exposed for the first time'. Among these however, the fur industry, although strong in Spain relatively to other countries, must have perceived a greater threat in a context in which more and more countries were banning the production of fur. Furthermore, the investigative judge responsible for the arrests showed a clear conflict of interests, stating that his family lived thanks to mink farming. To Nuñez (SNI), a core factor in the case was his will to 'become the judge that ends eco-terrorism in Spain than anything else' and indeed, the closing of the case was interpreted by the press as a personal setback for him, the major newspaper El País (Pontevedra, 2015) for example stating that the 'star judge was reprimanded by the Court of A Coruña for the "patently weak and inconsistent evidence" that led to the prolongation in time of one of the biggest cases against animal protection groups in Spain' (translation mine). To add to this, the same article underlines that the judge received, just before this setback, a 'Golden Rabbit' award from the hunting federation for 'delivering justice against those who attack the environment', referring to the accused supposedly being responsible for the release of thousands of minks in the wild. Finally, the article underlines that the National Association of Mink Producers (Asociación Nacional de Productores de Visón) appealed the decision of the court, the appeal being dismissed. To Nuñez (SNI), fur farmers were:

'actively working against the movement for sure ... talking to judges, the police, coming to our court cases, setting up press releases, criminalising us ... Other industries we've investigated, they don't go so far. For example we've investigated foie gras, pig farms and they don't go any further than saying "these people are lying, they're inventing stuff" ... they don't call us terrorists or anything similar. It's just the fur farmers'.

CONCLUSION

We have seen that the UK: 1) saw by far the most underground direct actions of the four countries studied and that among these, there were serious criminal acts,

including ones resulting in—although very few—injuries. 2) The British movement, including institutionalised organisations, appeared largely ambivalent in its attitude towards the ALF and—although only early on—the BUAV even materially supported it. Institutionalised groups evolved along time, to express less and less support for the ALF in the 1990s, but one can hypothesise that this led authorities to believe that the movement as a whole was imbued by these ideas and thus presented a threat. 3) The repressed grassroots campaigns were largely strewn by, and benefitted from, underground direct actions, although the coordinators of the campaigns did not encourage them, at least formally, but adopted an inconsistent attitude towards the issue. 4) The UK movement as a whole presented a substantial amount of organisations relying on institutional tactics, with at the same time an important grassroots strand, very confrontational and ignoring institutional avenues, to focus on directly confronting their opponents. 5) The size and frequency of mobilisation in the UK was far higher than in any other country studied. 6) The perception by authorities of the threat represented by activists in terms of security may have been altered by endogenous and exogenous factors. 7) Concentrating on the 1990s and 2000s, the British movement was, relatively to other countries, not particularly ideologically radical as a whole, while repressed groups defended an abolitionist ideology, but not a fundamentalist approach. 8) The movement and in particular grassroots pressure campaigns, and even more so SHAC, represented a clear economic threat.

As concerns Austria: 1) Underground direct actions were insignificant, let alone violent. 2) All groups had a clear stand on the issue, and never supported it. 3) VGT and, because of the leadership it acquired, a large part of the movement were very *politically* confrontational towards the ruling party and represented a direct threat to it. 4) There were few fully grassroots groups in Austria, a few institutionalised organisations, and VGT both relied on institutional and confrontational tactics, but with a clear stance on not targeting individuals and not resorting to any kind of violence. 5) The movement as a whole is neither very moderate nor radical, VGT having to some extent brought every group to meet in the middle, around the notion of reforms compatible with abolitionist views. Even the small repressed group BaT, which leaned more towards fundamentalist

abolitionism, took part in some of VGT's campaigns. 6) The perception of a security threat by authorities may have been altered by exogenous influences. 7) VGT represented a clear economic threat to many sectors and businesses that, moreover, had close links with the ruling party.

Regarding Spain: 1) Underground direct actions were of very little significance and overwhelmingly non-violent. 2) All groups were clear that they did not support it. 3) The movement was made of several institutionalised organisations, several more grassroots oriented organisations and relatively few grassroots unstructured campaigns. 4) Animal Equality and Equanimal before their merging resorted to few confrontational tactics, but like the Austrians, with clear limits as to acceptable forms. 5) The perception of an economic threat by State repressive agents may have been altered by exogenous factors. 6) The overall movement was relatively moderate ideologically, while Animal Equality, more than Equanimal, was very radical. 7) The movement as a whole and the repressed groups were not yet in a position to substantially threaten economic interests, but the fur industry appears to have perceived such a threat.

Finally, as regards Italy: 1) Underground direct actions were far less important than in the UK, but substantially more than in the other two countries, with also more violent tactics, although there were never injuries. 2) Institutionalised organisations were clear that they did not support it, while grassroots groups did overtly support it in the period where repression occurred and stopped doing so afterwards. 3) The movement was made of several big, institutionalised organisations, a few more grassroots formal organisations relying on some level of confrontation and less on institutional tactics and substantial networks of grassroots activists involved in different sets of campaigns. The major one, in the first period, entirely ignored institutional avenues and was very confrontational and drastically changed its strategies in the second period, around the Green Hill campaign. 4) The SHAC Italy and Morini campaigns were strewn with illegal acts, similarly to the UK, although to a far lesser extent, and involved certain networks of activists akin to anarchism, whereas the Green Hill campaign, organised by the same network and which did not suffer repression, avoided all of that. 5) The overall movement was relatively radical ideologically, with big

institutionalised welfarist organisations radicalising in recent years and some grassroots activists adopting a fundamentalist abolitionist stance, but at the same time focusing on sectorised campaigns, making this less salient. 6) The movement clearly did represent a threat to economic interests, as illustrated by counter-mobilisation and the passing of a very strong law regulating animal research as a result of the Green Hill campaign.

So what does the above analysis tell us about the validity of the threat hypothesis? As to (aboveground) group-specific explanation of repression, there is: 1) A strong correlation in the UK: repression mainly targeted the most confrontational and more successful (economically threatening) groups, although they were not, relatively to other groups, especially ideologically radical. 2) A strong correlation in Austria: the main targets were VGT, which was especially politically threatening to the Conservative party and more confrontational than other groups, but ideologically neither moderate nor particularly radical, and BaT, which was not particularly confrontational, but ideologically more radical. VGT was very successful and threatened a large set of economic interests. 3) More limited correlation in Spain: Equanimal and especially Animal Equality were rarely confrontational but more so than other groups in the movement, and were ideologically very radical. They were not yet in a position to substantially challenge economic interests, although the mink farming industry may have felt the potential for it. 4) Limited correlation in Italy: the Morini, SHAC, AIP and Green Hill campaigns were all confrontational in nature, although with the latter, activists adopted a less threatening attitude and resorted to institutionalised tactics, relying on politicians or the mass media. However, the ideology was the same, as the same network of activists was coordinating these campaigns and the Green Hill campaign was more economically threatening than previous campaigns were.

At country-level however, things are less clear. There is: 1) a strong correlation in the UK: the movement seen as a whole (including the underground), was relatively to other countries very confrontational (i.e. even violent), although also displaying an important level of institutionalisation. Furthermore, the intensity (i.e size and frequency) of mobilisation was much higher than any other country studied and the movement had a greater impact on the economic sector.

Ideologically the movement was not, however, particularly radical. 2) A strong correlation in Austria *solely on two aspects*: the fact that VGT and the wider movement represented a strong political threat to ÖVP and economic threat to a number of industries (the two threats overlapping to some extent given the ties of ÖVP and certain industries). Other than that, the movement was not particularly ideologically radical, nor particularly confrontational (with substantial confrontational tactics, but an absence of violence or underground tactics) and very institutionalised. 3) Only weak correlation in Spain: the movement was the least confrontational of all countries studied (with very little underground actions and outside of a few groups such as Equanimal and Animal Equality, no confrontational tactics), with most campaigning carried out by formal organisations (and thus contained) and many groups relying on institutional tactics. Ideologically, it was overall, average, among the four countries and the movement was far less economically threatening. 4) Only weak correlation in Italy: the movement's overall level of confrontationality decreased along time (in terms of underground action and confrontational aboveground tactics), just like repression by authorities, which is in line with the expectations of threat theorists. Yet, the level of ideological radicalism increased. Also, relatively to other countries, the Italian movement always was more confrontational than the Spanish and Austrian movements and more ideologically radical. Furthermore, it managed to push for new legislations on hunting (see chapter 2) and animal research. Thus, the threat hypothesis would make one expect repression in the second period (the early 2010s) and more repression in the first period (the 2000s).

The threat hypothesis thus finds only partial validation in the present study: it works as a relative prediction factor of group-specific repression in each country but fails to explain why repression occurred in certain countries rather than others.

CHAPTER 5: EXPLANATION OF REPRESSION: WEAKNESS

In the preceding chapter, we have considered explanation factors of the occurrence of repression in the countries studied here following the hypothesis most often formulated and tested in the literature on repression (Earl, 2003): the more threatening a movement is, the more repressed it will get. Yet, another strand of argument has been developed by repression scholars, among whom most noticeably Gamson (1990), pertaining to a movement's weakness. They argue that authorities 'would prefer to suppress all challengers' and thus will tend to seize opportunities and be more likely to repress movements (even when they are not particularly threatening) that are weak because it is less likely to backfire against them (Earl, 2013, p. 1085). Weakness is understood in terms of endogenous and exogenous factors that we will consider in this chapter: lack of media coverage or negative media coverage, lack of public support, lack of institutional support, lack of cohesion in the movement or lack of external support such as from other social movements. Russell (2020, pp. 13-14), in her review of the literature on repression, notes that 'there is a need for new research theorizing how dissent and dissenters are understood by public. Public attitudes have received minimal attention, and rarely from a critical theoretical perspective, surrounding the criminalisation of dissent in a neoliberal society'. She adds that 'this is especially pertinent, given recent psychological research indicates the public may resist social change due to negative stereotypes of activists'. Finally, we will consider the relationships between threat and weakness at the end of the chapter, as other scholars defend such a model, arguing that repression is often better understood as the result of movements being perceived by authorities as weak and threatening (Earl, 2003).

As noted in chapter 1, both the 'threat' and 'weakness' approaches overlap several other schools of repression explanation identified by Earl (2003) and in particular those focusing on political opportunities, as Davenport (2005) emphasises. Indeed, in particular in the present chapter, many factors considered could be framed in terms of political opportunities, such as public or institutional

support. However, one of the aims of the present work being to offer perspectives as to what the movement could do to avoid repression, the ‘threat’ and ‘weakness’ frames are thought to be more adapted to the task as they look at repression explanation through the prism of the characteristics on which activists largely have agency. This is less true of political opportunities and especially of *stable* political opportunities, as understood in political opportunity structures, by opposition to volatile political opportunities, as Earl (2003) underlines.

1. PUBLIC SUPPORT AND MEDIA COVERAGE

1.1. ATTITUDES TOWARDS ANIMAL PROTECTION AND THE GENERAL MOVEMENT

It appears from the interviews that media coverage and public opinion were largely favourable to the movement in Spain and Austria before the main events of repression in those countries. In terms of the breadth of media coverage, in Austria, Balluch (2006) attests to a growing positive media coverage and support from public opinion in the mid-2000s, as the movement and VGT in particular were gaining momentum, which is evidenced by a quantitative analysis of the two main Austrian newspapers, *Der Standard* and *Die Presse*. Spanish interviewees indicated a still timid awareness and interest in Spain for animal advocacy and in particular animal rights, both in the media and public opinion, but that it was rapidly growing in the early 2010s. Riverola (CRI) for example stated that a few years before the interview, concepts such as animal rights or veganism would not be known or understood by the general population and that awareness of these had considerably grown since. Nuñez (SNI) however put this into perspective, stating that although awareness was growing, most of the population would still have ‘no idea’ of the difference between animal welfare and animal rights:

‘they just see it as people who defend animals ... and I would say [most people] are not aware at all that one of the core fundamentals of the animal rights movement is veganism. I would say they don’t even know the difference between [animal advocacy] and the environmental movement’.

The lack of interest of the Spanish population for animal advocacy *per se* at the time is reflected in polls such as the 2007 Eurobarometer on farm animal welfare (European Commission, 2007): whereas Austria, Italy and the UK present average scores among European countries, Spain was the country that showed the lowest score of importance given by citizens to animal welfare.

Yet, Nuñez (SNI) considered that despite this lack of concern for the cause and knowledge of the movement, ‘people have an idea of those who defend animals, they may just see like a broad group of people who defend animals, but they have very positive views’. This finds confirmation in a survey of the Spanish Centre for Sociological Investigation (Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 2010, p. 7), undertaken a year before the arrests of Equanimal and Animal Equality activists. Respondents were given a list of 12 categories of organisations such as the human rights movement, the feminist movement, the gay rights movement, the environmental movement or religious organisations and were asked to assess their level of sympathy towards these. The ‘animal protection’ movement obtained the second-best score, just after human rights organisations. Both categories showed consensual support, being the only ones with very few respondents attributing them less than 4 on a scale from 0 to 10 (6.5% as regards animal protection).

Just like the awareness of the animal issue was increasing, although still weak compared to other countries, the interviewees attested that media coverage was growing as of the early 2010s. Animal Equality in particular enjoyed wide coverage and became widely known with a 2009 hidden camera investigation into Spanish mink farms. According to Moreno (JMI), ‘it was the first time that images from this industry were shown in the media ... we got to see how they skin the minks on one of the main news channels in Spain. It had a high impact’. Following this, Animal Equality undertook an anti-fur campaign, during which they noticeably disrupted a fashion show in Figueres to denounce the mink industry. ‘It was one of the most important catwalks in the world ... so the action had a high [media] impact, internationally. This action and the images of the minks in the media raised a lot of awareness for the first time in Spain’ (JMI). The association repeated this action in 2010, releasing a second part to this investigation (they,

according to Nuñez (SNI) and Moreno (JMI), ultimately documented all mink farms in Spain): ‘again, it was on the main channels ... and that year we jumped for the second time in [the same] catwalk and again got international media coverage’ (JMI). At the same time Equanimal also released an investigation into a mink farm in *El Mundo*, one of the major Spanish newspapers. All in all, Moreno (JMI) stated, compiling the audience of the media that broadcasted the images, that they had estimated the number of people reached in Spain to about 10 million.

In Italy, the history of the media’s and the public’s perception of animal advocacy appears to be that of an incremental interest, with a first wave in the 1990s and a second with the Green Hill campaign in the early 2010s. Speaking about the 1980s, Bennatti (RBI) said:

‘our credibility in society or the attention on our issues and ideas was really poor, so it was really difficult for us... After the 1980s, the situation changed and ... we developed strong campaigns against the transport of animals, factory farming, veal crates, [battery caged hens]... So we grew a lot and ... [got the public’s] attention’.

Ferri (IFI), recounting the same developments, stated that this triggered the first instances of political support, as we will see later in this chapter. Bennatti (RBI) said that while in the 1990s, public opinion would still be rather hostile to abolitionist ideas, ‘the situation is now totally different and we are considered very positively’. He gave as an indication the fact that the abolitionist LAV is the first ‘environmental’ NGO chosen by people in the Cinque per mille (Five per Thousand) scheme, through which people can choose to give part of their taxes. ENPA is second. Big environmental organisations like WWF follow.

Furthermore, surveys on people’s opposition to various types of animal exploitation show exceptionally high support for the movement’s ideas (Eurispes, 2015) and all interviewees agreed that recent years had seen a rise in public support, especially on, but not limited to, animal experimentation. Pomo (CPI) cited a poll indicating that 86% of Italians opposed the latter in 2012, comforted by a figure of 87% in 2013 at the time of the Green Hill campaign. Reflecting on this, he stated that the Green Hill campaign had been instrumental because ‘if people were asked about vivisection, they had these puppies in their mind’. As

regards media coverage, Pomo (CPI) noted that 'all newspapers were giving space to the hype or to animal rights activists'. He underlined that 'the biggest newspapers now all have their blogs on it, like vegan blogs or animal rights blogs'.

1.2. ATTITUDES TOWARDS CONFRONTATIONALITY AND UNDERGROUND DIRECT ACTIONS

From the interviews, it appears that confrontational tactics were better accepted in Italy than in the other countries. One of several pieces of anecdotal evidence of this in interviews was given by Ferri (IFI): she recalled participating in an unauthorised demonstration in front of a fur store in Rome, involving fake-blood dropping and activists chaining themselves. The activists got arrested and this infuriated many passers-by who called out to the police, taking the defence of activists. The scene was filmed and appeared on a tv program. Two aspects emerge from what Ferri says of this episode, that resonate with the content of the other interviews: the crowd expressed support for the object and methods of the activists' action, but also felt this illegal action did not justify police response of this nature, Ferri (IFI) stating that people shouted 'don't you have more important things to do?'. This reflects the perception of all Italian interviewees that given the Italian tradition of radical political contention (della Porta, 1995) the radical actions of some Italian activists were not perceived by Italians in general, and authorities, as a serious threat. Another illustration of this was given by Reggio (MRI), who recounted a surprisingly passionate media debate around the case of a woman who was arrested after she stole live lobsters from a supermarket and claimed in court that she did so in the name of the ALF. This spurred media debate about the moral justification of her act, many op-eds in newspapers taking her defence and more generally of those who 'liberate animals even in an illegal way'.

As regards (overt) liberations of animals, as we have seen, VGT in Austria and Animal Equality in Spain largely relied on open rescues to advertise their cause in the media. The Open Rescue website (2017) states that:

'In Australia, the Animal Liberation Victoria (ALV) Rescue Team has been conducting investigations and "open rescues" at factory farms

for nearly 20 years. Contrary to the typical mainstream media coverage of clandestine liberations, the stories of investigations and the subsequent open rescues in Australia have been overwhelmingly positive. Because no property is destroyed and no one conceals his or her identity, no claims of the activists being "terrorists" are lodged. In fact, this tactic has become so well received in Australia that a member of the Australian Parliament joined ALV activists in openly rescuing factory-farmed piglets'.

Nuñez (SNI) and Moreno (JMI) confirmed that reactions to Animal Equality's open rescues were also very positive in Spain and VGT similarly received very positive reactions from the media and the public for the same type of actions (MBI, Anon14, Balluch, 2006), to the point where a high court ruling legitimated this practice, stating about VGT's founder 'that the new animal protection law underlines that battery farms are animal abuse, that society at large agrees with [his] activity, and that, in liberating hens, [he] acted rightly and with good intentions' (Balluch, 2006 p. 153).

As regards media coverage of underground direct actions, which as we have seen in the preceding chapter were more frequent in Italy than in Spain and Austria, Pomo (CPI) said they very intermittently attracted media attention: 'small events sometimes go on national media and there are periods when the biggest stuff is not even reported'. Ferri (IFI) and Bennatti (RBI) stated that most people in Italy would have heard of ALF actions through the media, although Barbon (PBI) did not agree and found that the media did not speak much about these actions and that most people would find about it through the internet. Ferri (IFI) said the release of minks from a fur farm in 2008 (Understanding Animal Research, n.d.a) was largely advertised in the media and had, temporarily, a negative impact on the image of the movement. In Spain, the very limited underground activity generated very little mediatisation and interviewees all agreed that most Spanish people would not know about it. Díez Michelena (ADMI) stated: 'It's seen as something from abroad. Especially when you are thinking about eco-terrorism [...] It's seen as something more from the Anglo-Saxon world'. Only Nuñez (SNI) could think of ALF-type actions that attracted some level of (negative) media attention, such as the

mink liberations of which Equanimal and Animal Equality were accused. Yet, Understanding Animal Research (2012) noted that the liberation of 36 beagles from a breeding facility in 2011 'generated the most media coverage in Spain of any animal rights event in the history of the Spanish animal rights movement'. Finally, as we have seen previously, very few underground direct actions took place in Austria and those few were relatively insignificant compared to those in other countries. Nor were they particularly covered in the media, which brought all respondents to assess that the vast majority of Austrians would have never associated this kind of actions to animal advocates prior to the repression of the movement in 2008.

1.3 THE CASE OF THE GREEN HILL CAMPAIGN

The same network of activists was behind the SHAC Italy, Morini, AIP and Green Hill campaigns (in chronological order). As we have seen in chapter 3, the three former, and especially the Morini campaign, suffered from repression, whereas there was none for Green Hill. Interviewees agreed that the Morini campaign set off very little and overwhelmingly negative media coverage and that the few Italians who would have heard of it would have had a poor image of that campaign (although the lack of media coverage would imply that this particular campaign did not significantly alter the public's perception of the wider movement). As we have begun to show in chapter 4, after what they perceived, according to Pomo (CPI), as the former campaigns' failure—although he recognises that the Morini facility did close as a result of that campaign, for Green Hill the organisers thus re-evaluated their tactical repertoires and strategies, going for less confrontational and, in the words of Pomo (CPI), a less 'us versus them' approach:

'I think it is important that we never forget we are in the middle of this society whether we like it or not ...And be these lunatics, these crazy animal rights people against vivisectors, we always need society to be involved in the discussion'.

To all interviewees, the campaign thoroughly succeeded in generating public interest, sympathy, and as seen in the preceding chapter, even involvement, as for

the first time, a substantial portion of demonstrators were non-activists. This enabled and at the same time was made possible by the overt support and involvement of institutionalised and recognised organisations such as LAV, OIPA, ENPA and even the biggest domestic environmental NGO Legambiente (RBI). The support of Legambiente was critical, given the size and legitimacy of this NGO, that is officially recognised by the United Nations (Hasler, Walters and White, 2020, p. 527). Again, this allowed for and was reinforced by the support of sometimes well-known politicians such as Michela Brambilla.

For example, trying to make sense of the absence of reaction of the police, at first, to demonstrators breaking in the Green Hill facility to take dogs out in April 2012, Pomo (CPI) said the police had orders not to behave violently and thus some activists theorised that the police 'wanted the campaign to win because they were tired of it'. He said he did not believe in this theory. To him, the public and the media were so sympathetic to the demonstrators that the police could not allow to be seen as repressive against them. He told an anecdote that he thought was revealing: the police coordinator in charge of the demonstrations jokingly told organisers on several occasions that he 'had to behave' because his wife supported the campaign and did not want him to be too tough on demonstrators. Pomo said: 'this [anecdote] tells you what public support we were getting even in the house of the police coordinator'. To him, this is why 'they had a really soft hand with us'. Further to this anecdote, he said 'there were cameras and [journalists] everywhere and most of the people in the front were women, elderly women, no one was masked, no one was behaving violently so you could not even criminalise these people'. Regarding the public's perception and media coverage of this particular episode, he stated:

'Everyone in Italy was supporting that action. It was an illegal action and vivisectionists called it a violent action because you break doors and fences. But television was asking people in the street "what do you think of people liberating these beagles" and people were [unanimously] saying, "it's great, they did the best thing they could do"'.

Pomo (CPI) recalled being invited to a major 'housewife' show on the national television channel RAI 1: 'they showed the images of people storming the place and liberating the animals. People were applauding and saying "you are heroes" in the studio'. Reflecting on these developments, he said 'a few years ago, it would not have happened. We managed to create the support of people, [getting them to] hate this place and think these animals should be free'.

After this episode and the closure of the breeding centre, (positive) media coverage remained constant, with the ensuing trial of managers and veterinarians of the Green Hill facility, who were convicted for animal cruelty (One voice, 2016), followed by the movement moving on, successfully, to seeking a law reforming animal experimentation. This constant coverage—if one is to follow the arguments of the contenders of the weakness model of repression explanation—likely constituted a protection against State repression in reaction to the movement's success.

1.4 THE UK CASE

The United Kingdom, as we have largely begun to draw in previous chapters, stands apart among the countries studied here in many regards. Animal protection has been an important issue in British political and wider culture for far longer and, as we have seen, whereas most people would not associate animal advocates with underground direct action in Italy and especially in Spain and Austria, British underground direct actionists received far more media attention and the ALF can be said to be an important cultural item in the UK.

Kew (2000, p. 30) and Baker (1993, pp. 195-211) note that the media got an early, substantive and sympathetic interest in the renewed animal advocacy movement of the 1970s, not least because of illegal direct actions, Kew highlighting for example the Animal Liberation Leagues' 'mass break-ins and occupations'. Baker (p. 209), speaking about the ALF, states that 'in the early 1980s, the tabloids more than once used supportive headlines such as "Rescued!"'. Roberts (RLI) recalls that at the beginning of the 1980s, there was 'massive public support' for the ALF, to the point where major music artists such

as The Jam were overtly raising funds at their concerts in favour of the ALF. However, this media coverage and sympathy waned as certain actions shocked public opinion, such as the 1984 Mars bars poisoning hoax. Baker (1993), Roberts and Lyons (RLI) and Webb (2004) note that this created a first dent in ALF popularity in the UK, both attested and reinforced by a shift in the way the media treated the issue, becoming strongly critical. Kew (2000, p. 30) states that 'following this period, the media increasingly ignored the militants or castigated them as terrorists'. He also notes that it led the media to 'recoil from the movement's abolitionism'. According to Baker (1993, p. 198), the parallel with the IRA, which was frightening and repulsive to most, was often made and by 1986, the image painted of the ALF militant was one of the 'bad guy', who, 'when he wasn't cutting through perimeter fences', 'was doubtless super-gluing butcher's doors or hoaxing the innocent consumers of Mars bars'. Baker (1993, p. 199) states that the press then lost interest in animal rights radical actions and a more favourable media treatment of the animal rights issue came back towards the end of the decade, with new and more image-conscious groups such as Lynx, establishing 'a high level of public awareness and support'. Furthermore, the movement as a whole appeared to take a step back and 'hooded liberators ... were much less in evidence in the communication material' of animal rights groups. However, Ryder, as of 1989 (p.275), stated: 'public sympathy for the Front continues to be widespread in Britain'. Monaghan (2013b) also notes that support for the ALF was strong amongst most categories of society.

Yet, this situation reversed again in 1990, when two car bombings happened in consecutive days, one of which injured a toddler. Although no claim was made as to the responsibility of these bombings and the ALF denied responsibility, and although many questioned the fact that this would be the work of animal rights militants given the *modus operandi* (Mann, 2007; Poszlusna, 2015), an extremely negative media coverage ensued and the image of the ALF and animal rights activists more generally was considerably affected. As Roberts (RLI) recalls, 'When I got involved [in 1993], the popularity of ALF had gone and people had turned against that type of extreme campaigning. The fire bombings and that kind of things were very unpopular'. To Baker (1993, p. 209), at the time

the press and especially tabloids remained very supportive of animal welfare, but had turned against animal rights. Nonetheless, welfarist campaigns such as the one against live exports in the 1990s were also impacted, as Munro (2005, p. 79) notes: 'a single incident involving a brick through a lorry window provoked a moral panic about "the loopy and violent Animal Rights Militia" (The Economist, 1995), IRA-style urban terrorists and the like'. More generally, he says (Munro, 2005, p. 75), 'the quality media were overwhelmingly hostile to the movement'. Finally, as of 2005, Munro (p. 79) noted that there was, wrongly (see also Monaghan, 2013a), 'a perception in some sections of the media that violence has been increasing in the last decade or so'. To him, this followed 'an admission from an animal rights extremist in 1994 that he had sent six letter bombs to companies involved in the live animal export trade in the UK'. One could reasonably think, however, that at the time Munro was writing, discursive criminalisation by the animal industrial complex and State authorities had, at that stage, begun to impact on media coverage.

Looking at specific radical aboveground activist groups, (Tichelar, 2017, pp. 159-160) states that hunt saboteurs enjoyed a wide and positive media coverage and public support, with a peak in coverage in the early to mid-1980s. To him, the public and media perception of the opponents to hunting was not altered by the developments regarding the ALF. In fact, he states, 'by the end of the twentieth century, hunt saboteurs were widely viewed as members of an honourable tradition of civil disobedience'. When it comes to the ad hoc campaigns aimed at specific animal experimentation targets of the late 1990s and particularly SHAC, however, Kew (2000, p. 44) notes that the media quickly spoke of 'terrorist tactics'. Thus, from the beginning, these activists were weak in that regard and this situation amplified with time (Aaltola, 2012), in parallel to a growing discursive criminalisation by the animal experimentation industry and authorities. Further, in 2004, the desecration of a relative of the owners of the farm targeted by the Save the Newchurch Guinea Pigs campaign, allegedly by the ARM, was probably the one action that scandalised public opinion the most and generated considerable negative media coverage (i.e see Archive of Animal Liberations Films on the 'Net, 2005). Upton (2012, p. 249) states that 'the research community has

since termed it one of the movement's most "significant" PR mistakes'. After this incident, a survey cited by Upton (2012, p. 249) showed overwhelming opposition among the British public for the most radical actions conducted in relation to SHAC and similar campaigns. Finally, Roberts and Lyons (RLI) complained about the overrepresentation of 'radicals' in the media in the 2000s, stating that it had become extremely difficult for more moderate groups to attract media attention and that the media mainly sought spectacular, negative coverage.

2. INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

2.1 UNITED KINGDOM

As concerns the positioning of the main political parties on animal issues at the time, it is difficult to draw a clear line, although the Conservatives appeared less keen on acknowledging the concerns of animal advocates than were the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats. The Green Party, on the other hand, has always been clearly keener on defending animals' interests, although it had little weight in the political arena. One particular area saw a clear opposition however: hunting, with the Conservatives uncompromisingly defending the positions of hunters whereas Labour had a more balanced stance and opposed certain forms of hunting, noticeably hunting with hounds, which led to the 2004 ban (Garner, 1998; Tichelar, 2017; RLI; KSI). The Labour Party had nonetheless displayed a will to deal with animal issues before the 1997 general election, after a remarkable 1 million pounds donation by the Political Animal Lobby (Ryder, 2000). It had promised, further to a law on hunting with hounds, a royal commission on vivisection, although the latter never saw the light of day, despite renowned activist Barry Horne's fatal hunger strikes to demand precisely that after Tony Blair took office.

Roberts and Lyons (RLI) indicated that in the mid to the end of the 1990s, Uncaged and other institutionalised groups such as Animal Aids, NAVS and the Dr Hadwen Trust⁷ were working efficiently with 'at least half a dozen MPs' who would table parliamentary questions or EDMs, give them access to ministers and hand in petitions to the government on their behalf. Garner (1998, p. 171) remarked that

⁷ Since 2017 Animal Free Research UK.

the period was seeing a better access to government for animal advocates. Citing the RSPCA, he highlighted that 'even CIWF, a much smaller—and more radical—organisation ha[d] occasional meetings with senior civil servants and ministers'. Garner (1998) also remarks that the 1990s were seeing increased pressure on decision-makers to take animal protection into account, through a series of crises (salmonella, BSE and live exports), public opinion (he underlines that MPs were receiving more mails on animal welfare than any other issue) and large retailers positioning themselves favourably. Roberts and Lyons (RLI) also emphasise that it was very easy for animal advocates to attract media attention in the mid-1990s, because of the significance of this issue in public debate.

2.2 AUSTRIA

Among parliamentary parties, the Greens have been the closest to the animal advocacy movement. While the party kept a rather moderate stance on this issue, a number of their MPs regularly echoed animal advocates' demands in parliament and VGT was in regular contact with them (MBI, EVI, AnonI4). The Greens even offered Martin Balluch and one of his colleagues the opportunity to run as candidates for them in 2008 when they were arrested, as a show of support. The SPÖ, the Social Democratic Party, has been mostly neutral and opportunistic on this issue, although a former animal welfare speaker of the party kept close contact and showed affinity with VGT, providing them with inside information (AnonI1) and a few of the party's MPs accepted to table questions on their behalf. Eventually, the two far-right parties, FPÖ and BZÖ have alternatively opposed and supported animal advocates.

As we have seen in chapter 2, the conservative party ÖVP, in power throughout the 2000s and beyond, alternatively in coalitions with the social democrats or with the far-right party FPÖ, was on the other hand strongly opposed to any legislation regulating animal use. At the height of VGT's political campaign against battery cages in the mid-2000s, animal advocates benefited from the active support of all other parliamentary parties in opposing the conservatives (Balluch, 2006).

2.3 ITALY

Ferri (IFI) indicated that early political interest for animal advocacy dated back to around 1995, when the movement began to create societal discussion around animal issues. These were then perceived as potentially attracting votes. All interviewees agreed on the fact that, when it came to parties represented in parliament, more than parties, there were individuals clearly working for or against animals. Bennati (RBI) underlined that there were more and more supportive members of parliament inside every party, especially for 5 to 10 years. Pomo (CPI) reflected that:

‘it’s strange to see a lot of people in the right wing, not far-right, but populists supporting some animal rights issues. And I think there are a few reasons and one of them is that they are trying to follow the stream. Freeing dogs from vivisection is populist so they follow it. It’s sad to see a lot of the left wing is not really getting along. There are really some good politicians in the left wing, some are for animal rights, some are vegetarians or vegans’.

Nevertheless, Bennati (RBI) stated that one major party stood out as a clear opponent: the far-right Lega Norde, which tended to defend traditions such as hunting and ‘any kind of rural culture, especially in the northern part of the country’. He said they also framed it as a religious issue, ‘recognising the supremacy of Mankind over animals’. Thus, Lega Norde was the only party that sometimes criminalised animal advocates: ‘a lot of their politicians speak about us saying we are a violent movement’.

One (then) new parliamentary party did nevertheless stand out in interviews (MMI; CPI; MRI) as rather favourable to animals: Muvimento 5 Stelle (5 Stars Movement). Pomo (CPI) attested that Essere Animali and other NGOs sustained good links with them:

‘Most of them are supporting the movement. The M5S are openly against vivisection. In their manifesto, there is also the end of fur farming and other issues. They are not openly for animal rights but

they are against some forms of exploitation. Three of them in the Parliament are vegans—which is the first time in parliament—and some of them are in contact with us. ... [Some are] young people who are not the usual politicians but entering politics and wanting to change things. It is easier to get in touch with them. ... A person from this party gave a speech in Parliament with our T-shirt [to support us]. It was a young guy who was coming to our demos before joining the parliament. It's important for us to have these people'.

Reggio (MRI) furthered this, stating that many animal rights activists resorted to entryism to try to seize the opportunity of the creation of this new iconoclast party to steer it towards their cause. He said they sometimes succeeded at local level: 'Some years ago in the program for the elections in Lombardia, there were some proposals, for example the abolition of mink farming in Lombardia. But I think [it is because] they know they cannot win so... It's just for the elections. They are more radical where they cannot win'. An example of this entryism is to be found in a group inside M5S called Coordinamento Nazionale Antispecismo (National Anti-speciesist Coordination), with which Animalisti Italiani sustained good relations (MMI).

The Green party in Italy had been supportive of the movement for a long time, but in the mid-2010s, the party suffered huge losses and was no longer in parliament at the time of the interviews. Interviewees emphasised that the party's support did not impact much anymore, given that it was 'almost dead' (IFI) or 'almost non-existent' (CPI). Reggio (MRI) was more balanced regarding the historical support of the Green party for animal protection: 'yes, historically there are members of the Greens which have been more animal-friendly, but there are also some that are part of the hunting lobby'.

Yet by far the most important political actor supporting the movement was Michela Brambilla. As we have seen in chapter 2, this member of parliament and former minister was instrumental in bringing together institutionalised groups to lobby more efficiently. Most interviewees attested to what they perceived as her sincere involvement (MMI, IFI, RBI, MRI). Ferri (IFI) said she was 'on the field all the time, she invested a lot of money to save animals, she's vegetarian, she wrote

a book on animals...'. Only Pomo (CPI) was critical of her attitude. Speaking about the Nel Cuore coalition, he stated:

'I don't think it's the best thing. It's good if big organisations unite to lobby sometimes but the problem with the coalition is the spokeswoman is a right-wing politician from Berlusconi's party. I think it is counterproductive for the movement to have a politician leading them. Not only because it is a right-wing politician. It's good when politicians propose stuff for animals, [but] they have to do their work in parliament'.

He said he felt Brambilla wanted to 'highjack' the Green Hill campaign:

'She wanted to use it for her visibility and she managed to do that. I think it's a problem, she is a politician and the only good thing she did for the Green Hill campaign was to propose some stuff in parliament. She didn't have to come to demonstrations and get on camera and to have all journalists for her. We [felt] she was there for propaganda, not animals'.

Marco Reggio (MRI), although he did recognise Brambilla as a sincere animal advocate and acknowledged that 'her actions were definitely good', also expressed some reservations as to what he perceived as her promoting her party and 'some reactionary ideas' through animals, for example on issues such as ritual slaughter.

Yet Pomo (CPI) recognised the importance of Brambilla's support in avoiding repression, stating that when demonstrators were arrested for having liberated dogs from Green Hill, she conspicuously attended the demonstrations in front of the police station and addressed the media to show solidarity. Then, following the Green Hill campaign and a demonstration in Rome gathering more than 10 000 protesters against animal experimentation, she proposed a law to outlaw experimentation on dogs, cats and primates, which was eventually voted and came to be known as the 'Brambilla law' (CPI; IFI). Furthermore, Brambilla was influential in bringing politicians from the Italian Right to get involved with animal welfare. Probably the most telling example being Silvio Berlusconi while he was

the Prime minister, as Ferri (IFI) attested, and who then created a party in 2017 called Movement for Animals (Kington, 2017).

As regards major politicians opposing animal protection, interviewees all mentioned Carlo Giovanardi, then a member of parliament, who had been a minister in several governments, including the same as Brambilla. As seen in chapter 3, he actively sought to criminalise activists, both discursively and legislatively. Reggio (MRI) stated that Giovanardi was a 'strong catholic', to which the most important topics were: 'drugs, homosexuals and animal rights'. A former member of the Christian Democrats, he was at the time of the interviews in Scelta Civica, a centrist party. Reggio (MRI) defined him as 'the voice of the lobbies: farmers, research, all animal industries'. An activist in Animalisti Italiani (AI2) and Bennati (RBI) also strongly stressed the role of Giovanardi in opposing animal protection, stating that he may be the only mainstream politician to openly and consistently do so, when 'most politicians want to be seen as "pro-animal" to attract votes: even Berlusconi!' (AI2).

2.4 SPAIN

Following media attention and public opinion, political interest for animal protection appeared to be relatively low but growing in the early 2010s in Spain. A parliamentary group on animal welfare, APPDA (Asociación Parlamentaria en Defensa de los Animales – Parliamentary Group for the Protection of Animals), created in 2007 by 6 members of parliament, counted 40 members as of 2014 (Yuste, 2014). Yet, Díez Michelena (ADMI) stated that the group had very little influence. Quite similarly to the situation in Austria, the interviewees all indicated a split between left and right on animal issues, although the main leftist party, the Socialist party (PSOE) showed very limited interest and adopted a rather opportunistic approach to these issues. The main radical leftist party, Izquierda Unida (United Left), some leftist independence parties noticeably in Catalonia and all the more so the Green party (Equo) were however supportive of the movement, although they had, at the time, little political weight in parliament (ADMI, JBI, CRI). As of 2014, the newly founded party Podemos appeared to all

interviewees as a political opportunity, Riverola (CRI) stating that their openness to animal advocacy and their very horizontal structure allowed for entryism by animal advocates. On the right, the main conservative party (Partido Popular), in power at the time, strongly supported traditional activities such as hunting and bullfighting and did not show any openness on other issues, except very occasionally for the protection of pet animals, similarly to the centre-right party Ciudadanos (ADMI, JBI, CRI). The interviews revealed that political debate around animal issues tended to centre around bullfighting, also explaining the support of Catalanian, Basque or Galician independence parties, seeing bullfighting as being part of the Spanish culture rather than theirs. Finally, Diez Michelena (ADMI) noted that animal advocates were getting better access to institutions, stressing that ANDA was now part of several working groups and ethical committees in the administration.

3. MOVEMENT COHESION

3.1 UNITED KINGDOM

From the 1970s to the turn of the century, the UK animal advocacy movement has seen alternating periods of strong cooperation between groups, of inside struggles or of scattered action. The end of the 1970s has been rather unique in that sense, with the Animal Welfare Year campaign seeing the creation of five joint committees, followed by a sustained unity until the 1979 elections and the creation of GECCAP, uniting the 5 committees and LACS, although Garner (1998, p. 104) notes that serious divisions remained, only 42 out of 79 organisations contacted for Animal Welfare Year having responded positively. Others, mostly on ideological grounds, refused. Furthermore, it proved impossible to keep abolitionist organisations such as NAVS and BUAV in the Committee for the Reform of Animal Experimentation (CRAE). These organisations, during the passing of the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, formed an alliance with Animal Aid against the legislation. According to Garner (1998, p. 105): 'Before and since, most organisational alliances have tended to be much more informal than

the CRAE alliance, more concerned with information sharing than the creation of a common policy position and joint lobbying'. Meanwhile, the RSPCA on several occasions favoured the promotion of its brand name, in detriment to the unity of the movement. For example, before the 1986 Act, CRAE and the RSPCA couldn't reach a consensus. Garner (1998) believes the government might have accepted more if they had. He stresses, however, that the group did cooperate on farming with CIWF or with LACS and conservation organisations in the Coalition for Badgers in the early 1990s. Another period of (sectorised) unity took place at the end of the 1990s, around the issue of bloodsports, with the Campaign to Protect Hunted Animals (CPHA), established by IFAW, the RSPCA and LACS to co-ordinate the campaign to ban hunting (Stallwood, 2014). Big organisations such as BUAV, the RSPCA, LACS or CIWF generally worked rather well together when they decided to do so, while in the mid-1990s, smaller professionalised groups such as Animal Aid and Uncaged and bigger ones like BUAV or NAVS cooperated efficiently, including on lobbying, for a time (KSI; RLI). Roberts and Lyons (RLI) recall that when Uncaged was set up, they quickly understood that organisations were quite 'territorial': 'some groups considered they had these areas covered and did not need another group doing what they were doing. But there was some effort in the early days to work together'. They worked well with NAVS, Animal Aid, BUAV, and 'maybe one or two of the other smaller groups like Europeans for Medical Advancement, Safer Medicines, a science-based antivivisection group'. They recount that they used to coordinate and try to 'present an image of unity to the government', which eventually fell apart due to 'personality clashes', especially between the leaders of BUAV and NAVS. 'We sat in groups in front of the ministers and MPs and they were having arguments, it was very embarrassing. One of the ministers [...] was literally laughing at us. And so there's been less and less coordination'. According to Roberts and Lyons (RLI), the fact that resources were scarcer for smaller professional groups, created a stronger sense of competition, which explained the better coordination between bigger groups, that had to worry less about their ability to sustain their activities.

Tensions between grassroots and more institutionalised groups have been consistently strong and it appears there were generally weak links between them,

although some institutionalised groups, at certain times, did work rather well with local grassroots groups, such as Uncaged in the 1990s or the BUAV in the 1980s (RLI, KSI). Stallwood (KSI) emphasised that when he worked at BUAV, at the beginning and in the mid-1980s, they 'had a close relationship with grassroots groups and fostered that relationship and reported up on their activities, held demonstrations nationally and locally'. However, he regretted that:

'when you compare BUAV then and today, now it doesn't have much involvement in grassroots activism. It's also because it is now the age we live in, there has been a disenfranchisement if you like, because of the Internet and web organising of local activism. People have become web armchair activists'.

He also stated that 'some of the groups just never bothered with the local groups, and if they did, they didn't do it very much and they just sort of dropped out of it' in the 2000s. To him, they looked upon individuals as their supporters and did not seek to organise them, instead they simply encouraged them to donate and do actions when they needed it.

Roberts and Lyons (RLI) and Stallwood (KSI), stressed that one source of hostility of grassroots activists towards more professional groups was that the latter had employees. They thought all the funds should go directly to animals. The former recalled having difficult relationships with many grassroots groups, although also receiving 'a lot of support from more moderate local groups'. They emphasised that many institutionalised groups suffered aggressive criticisms and communications from grassroots activists who disagreed with their actions and strategies. Many, like Uncaged, were 'not interested in winning them over' and did not seek to sustain links with part of the movement's base. These tensions were also displayed publicly, as exemplified by the 1992 national march organised by NAVS in London for the World Day for Laboratory Animals (the biggest in the movement's history, with 23 000 people attending), where the organisers ejected ALF supporters asking for their spokesperson Robin Webb to be allowed to speak. The ALF Support Group was not allowed to hold a stall at the associated fair and resentment led them and other radical grassroots activists to organise another fair on the same day. In the NGO's magazine 'The Campaigner', NAVS criticised radical

activists and depicted them as ‘money grabbers’ for willing to use their event to raise funds. In response, in its magazine, Neil Lea of the Animal Rights Coalition, said ‘I am not against national groups in principle but against the way our three major national groups are presently run. Talking to other activists ... I feel this is the general feeling of the movement’ (Red Black Green, 2015). These tensions, combined with the fact that authorities rendered these annual marches more difficult, as seen in chapter 3, may have played a role in the fact that these annual marches saw the following two years a substantial decrease in turnout, to the point where NAVS decided to halt them (RLI).

A strong source of conflict were ideological-strategical positions. Roberts and Lyons (RLI) recount that the ‘most successful campaign’ of Uncaged was also the least popular amongst grassroots groups. After launching an anti-vivisection boycott of Procter & Gamble, they realised it was too difficult for people to avoid buying such a large range of products. They decided instead to go for a particular product that the company was heavily advertising:

‘The campaign went through the roof in terms of public interest and the number of people contacting us. We got Lush supporting us, it was going really well and yet nearly all the grassroots people who were a bit more anarchist hated it, because “in terms of boycott of herbal essences, they’ll just buy Pantene instead”. They didn’t understand that you can’t ask people to change everything immediately but that if you get them hooked on one thing, you then can educate them further and eventually have them do what you wanted them to do in the first place’.

They explain that they were reluctant to engage in this campaign at first because they were wary of the reactions in the grassroots movement and that a businessman who funded the campaign pushed them to get over this apprehension.

It appears a source of division is to be found in disagreements over political ideology. Roberts and Lyons (RLI) in fact pointed out several times to anarchism as a dividing line in the movement, be it as an ideology (and the refusal to work within the system or for others to do so), or as an identity and attitude they perceived as

‘nihilistic’, ‘aggressive’ and ‘undemocratic’. Stallwood (2004, pp. 83–84) develops a similar argument and points to anarchists challenging the principle of non-violence he argued dominated direct action for animals in the late 1970s and early 1980s. He claims that ‘they saw illegal direct action for animals as opportunities to confront the society they rejected’.

Some groups also suffered regular inside struggles. The RSPCA in the last two decades of the century has seen tensions between the advocates of a more conservative and less political position involving more rescuing of animals and less campaigning, especially on issues other than pets—and even more so blood sports—and the upholders of a more politically engaged and radical stance (Ryder, 2000). Interestingly, another struggle involved around five thousand people infiltrating the society in the 1990s in order to prevent a ban on hunting with hounds by the government. A High Court ruling resulted in the ejection of several hundred members (Ryder, 2009). This does not amount to coercive repression and thus was not dealt with in chapter 3, but can be understood as repression and more precisely as what repression scholars have termed channelling (Earl, 2003).

3.2 ITALY

Italian institutionalised organisations worked remarkably well together, as of the early 2010s. As seen in chapter 2, Michela Brambilla had used her recognition as a former minister to bring all of them together in the Nel Cuore coalition in order to gain political influence.

In the past, relations between the grassroots radical movement and more established organisations were poor. Bennati (RBI) and Reggio (MRI) gave the example of the Morini campaign, that saw important divisions between these. The former, speaking about parts of the grassroots movement, stated: ‘there are people who hate us’. He said:

‘some radicals in the movement do not want to know us, they never had the opportunity to know us. And the difference on what we wear is not a serious approach regarding our final objectives for the animals. They opened windows of discussion and exchange of ideas

and what we found: they collect information on LAV on the web but never had a relationship directly with us ... we found some difficult approach or some defiance’.

Further, he underlined the difficulty of sustaining links with grassroots groups as they changed all the time: ‘there are a lot of new groups, small groups, and more militant ones in the last 5 years. So it is a very dynamic situation and it is very difficult to create a relationship with them’.

Whereas important institutionalised groups did not support former radical grassroots pressure campaigns, the renewed strategy of the network organising the Green Hill campaign and the resulting political, media and public support enabled these organisations to officially and practically support that campaign. Hence, Ferri (IFI) and Bennati (RBI) stressed that local ENPA and LAV groups joined the demonstrations from the onset. Then, these organisations, as well as OIPA and even the biggest Italian environmental organisation Legambiente, officially supported the campaign. To Bennatti (RBI), the decisive event was the spontaneous mass liberation of dogs during a demonstration in 2012. He says LAV decided to create a common fence:

‘saying they are not criminal people, they are working for the liberation of sentient beings. So we decided to go this way and we took strong position in favour of this act. Not like a violent act ... but a transparent liberation of animals. So we brought media attention and legal support for these people’.

He said a deciding factor was that two of the people arrested were LAV members. Following this, LAV and Legambiente, after Fermare Green Hill leaked information that proved illegal acts of animal cruelty inside Green Hill, undertook legal action against the facility and obtained a public investigation into the condition of the animals that confirmed this information. This resulted in the seizing of all 2736 dogs, both organisations becoming their legal caretakers. ENPA and these organisations finally worked together to organise the veterinarian care and the placement of the dogs. To Bennatti (RBI), before these organisations stepped in, the attention of authorities was ‘very high’ and he believes this enabled to ‘stabilise’ the situation and avoid the repression of the campaign.

The Green Hill campaign, thanks to the absence of repression, opened new opportunities for cooperation between institutionalised groups and parts of the grassroots movement, especially the network involved in the SHAC Italy, Morini, AIP and Green Hill campaigns. In the few years before the interviews, Essere Animali (of which the founders were involved in this network) and LAV in particular have been cooperating efficiently and in good mutual understanding (CPI; RBI). Pomo (CPI) said LAV could bring inside information from parliament and then Essere Animali could adapt its strategies accordingly. They would consult each other and set coherent agendas, while not 'coming out together' publicly, 'like doing demonstrations together'. He said: 'Even among groups that are not sharing the same tactics, you have to share information if you have the same goal, this is our idea'. Him and Bennatti (RBI) stressed both organisations' complementarity in that Essere Animali could mobilise more protesters and attract more media attention through disruptive forms of protest, while LAV's institutional image gave it access to decision-makers that Essere Animali could not reach and could lead more institutional undertakings, such as judicial actions or producing technical expertise. Pomo (CPI) said: 'It is a new thing for us, a new way ... it is really good for the movement'. He also indicated that this collaboration was beneficial in terms of learning and mutual understanding: 'these organisations learn how we do things in the grassroots movement, learn on civil disobedience, they are supporting actions that they were not before'.

Pomo (CPI) and Bennatti (RBI) clearly identified the Green Hill campaign as the decisive factor in these new relationships. To Pomo (CPI), the campaign was:

'so big it was breaking barriers: everybody was following us, the big groups were losing a lot of credibility because everybody was saying "these small groups are moving thousands of people and they are closing down the place". They knew our way was the winning way. So they decided they had to adapt to the new movement. In the last 3 years there has been such a big change in Italy: the public, how it is accepting our ideas. The beagles of Green Hill have opened a lot of doors with the people. Now we can talk a lot more about animal rights and these big organisations understood they have to either

follow the stream and evolve or be left behind. Some groups have been left behind actually’.

Bennatti (RBI) echoed this in saying:

‘This is an opportunity, especially with Green Hill, we try to manage, not in our favour, but to find a new way of cooperation. Trying to put all these different categories of energies and resources into a common field, common objectives. Green Hill has been a really *really* positive opportunity.’

He emphasised that it was no easy task, as both strands of the movement had very different cultures of activism, but he insisted there would certainly be more cooperation in the following years than there were in the 2000s:

‘sometimes we move forward, sometimes backwards, but [all in all], we developed a better relationship and more importantly we created the conditions for [discussing] the main topics on the agenda ... trying to understand what we can do together’.

This in turn had repercussions for other formal grassroots organisations. For example, an Animalisti Italiani activist (AI1) also indicated the organisation had recently worked successfully with LAV on a campaign against the closure of a public kennel. Both members of Animalisti Italiani (AI1; AI2) emphasised that, although there was no common platform uniting small grassroots organisations and big institutionalised ones, they were able to cooperate on some occasions with several, especially on common press releases and that big organisations did not tend to try to take all the credit. Bennatti (RBI) confirmed he felt there was more consideration between fundamentally different groups. Illustrating the new links created, he gave the example of a grassroots animal rights group that came to visit LAV the day before: ‘I had a meeting on a sensitive area with an organisation more radical, more closed to cooperation. They came here to discuss what we can do in a “shock way” against farming and the possibility to cooperate in a crucial area for 2015, which has never been before’. He stated they led a common demonstration against dolphinarium a few weeks before. He said this would have never happened before the Green Hill campaign. Also recognising some difficulties with some grassroots radical groups, Ferri (IFI) however also

noted that ENPA and other major organisations had come to realise their shortcomings in terms of mobilisation capacity and that cooperation with more radical, grassroots groups was beneficial.

While, since Green Hill, cooperation had greatly improved between some grassroots groups and the more established organisations, the radical grassroots movement stayed rather divided, with many small groups acting independently, generally with a regional focus. There were several attempts at building networks and coalitions of grassroots organisations that all failed because of frictions between groups (CPI). There were talks and frictions in the AIP campaign, between the more anarchist, politicised activists and the more strictly animal rights oriented, less politicised ones. Thus, when launching the Green Hill campaign, the organisers sought to appeal to another public entirely. Pomo (CPI), although reaffirming his attachment to libertarian and anarchist ideals, said he did not appreciate the attitudes of anarchist activists. He found them too ideological and even 'dogmatic':

'So we had to split with the more radical movement and we created this campaign which was reaching to the more "welfarist" and [traditional] organisations of "normal" people, animal lovers, and tried to put them on this campaign, which was radical ... The funny thing is, at the peak of the Green Hill campaign, when we could get thousands of people at demos, I would say the anti-speciesist movement or the grassroots movement was really fractioned, as bad as never before. Our campaign group was strong but not big—we were 10 to 15 people coordinating the campaign, we were good at doing our campaign and getting people to come along. But with other local groups and small organisations, we were not cooperating. There were frictions for many things and we did not get along. And in the end, what we are doing with Essere Animali is going our own way and we have some groups we like to cooperate with and that's it. We are tired of trying to create a national network: we end up fighting and discussing. We have discussed those issues for years and years, we know this group and that group have their views. We do not fight

each other openly, we do not create tensions, but we want to do our own stuff. Although for sure sometimes we would need more cohesion’.

Reggio (MRI) confirmed this view of the relations among grassroots groups as conflictual, but acknowledged there were some strategical exchanges between groups, informal and temporary coalitions around grassroots campaigns, citing the Gateway to Hell campaign on the transport of animals for experimentation by airlines. Furthermore, some events did offer opportunities for discussion, like the Veganchio festival, where for example the goals of the AIP campaign or why the Morini campaign failed were discussed. The main event where grassroots activists would exchange was In Contro di Liberazione, occurring yearly since 2002 and focusing on theoretical discussions and anarchist activism for animal rights. Reggio (MRI) noted however that for the first time in 2013 and 2014, several groups did not come because they had ‘changed’. Essere Animali was one of them. Reggio said OLS was trying to ‘put everyone together’ but that it was ‘difficult’.

Reggio (MRI) also emphasised the conflictual relationships anarchists entertained with other activists in the movement:

‘There was a first period, around the Morini campaign, with radical activism, liberations and stuff, with [opposition to] big associations like LAV. There was a relation with the anarchist movement. ... In a second period, around the end of the Morini campaign, we had more conflicts between radical groups. The groups involved in Morini, SHAC and AIP campaigns wanted to have more low-profile, more media-friendly communication strategies, because of repression for example. More similar to Animal Equality for example. And the part of the movement which was more anarchist didn’t accept this change. So for example the Green Hill campaign was a continuation of the Morini campaign but was also very different. In terms of numbers: there were less people demonstrating for Morini, a few hundreds, while there were a few thousands for Green Hill. Morini would be only “real” activists, Green Hill was larger. With the rise of

organisations like Essere Animali [things are becoming] very different from Morini: communication, mass media, etc. OLS doesn't completely agree on this, we criticise some dangers in this change, when you have to give a simple message in the media. But we don't agree at all with the total refusal of the anarchists to speak with journalists. It's a traditional position of the anarchist movement in Italy. Journalists are the instrument of power'.

3.3 SPAIN

As of the early 2010s, the Spanish movement appeared more fragmented than in the other countries, although with less internal conflicts than in Italy or the UK. Asked if she thought there was cooperation between animal rights and animal welfare NGOs or if there was a clear scission in the movement, Nuñez (SNI) stated:

'I would say there is a scission, but it's not an open conflict at all. Spain is ... a country where the distinction between animal rights and animal welfare is quite strong and mainly animal rights organisations work with animal rights organisations'

Nonetheless, she went on to state enthusiastically, despite the fundamental delineation she drew between the different strands of the movement as touched upon in the previous chapter, that it was beginning to change, and that animal welfare and animal rights groups were more often found in coalitions for the abolition of certain practices: 'I think this is very clear with the banning of bullfighting in Catalonia when all movements—animal protection [to be understood here as NGOs with a shelter activity], Animal welfare and animal rights—came together to ban bullfighting'. Indeed, most animal advocacy organisations took part in the fight to ban bullfighting in Catalonia, even though not all of them were officially part of the *Prou* Platform, that was set up with this aim. This campaign and its success brought both animal welfare and animal rights organisations to renew cooperation, even for reformist campaigns such as the *Pan y Toros* (Bread and Bulls) initiative. The latter aims, among other things, at cutting

all public fundings to bullfighting (SNI, JBI). PACMA, as a reformist abolitionist party, also collaborated with animal welfare organisations to work on specific political demands and, as such, was helping to create bridges between welfarists and abolitionists (SNI, CRI, ADMI).

Regarding cooperation between animal welfare and animal rights groups in Spain, Díez Michelena (ADMI) stated: 'There is a limit, but I think it's been solved, the image from [authorities] that we are split. We understand what they are doing and why and vice versa. We don't cross ... we are parallel ... I think what we need is to improve communication'. There were no forums in Spain for the different actors of the movement to exchange and Díez Michelena (ADMI) stated that when attempts were made, 'it ended in philosophical querel'. Thus, he said, 'with Libera! for example we are working on a day by day basis, we don't have a big agenda'. He also cited a generational gap as an obstacle ('we have older people than these associations'), but also deontological differences with groups like Animal Equality, for example as regards the procedure they followed when carrying out investigations:

'what we do is we file a complaint, ask parliamentary questions etc and if it doesn't work, then we release images. Animal Equality does the contrary: they go directly to the media, like PETA. More shocking images. It's just one day, or three days. For us the images of one truck means 6 months of work'.

Díez Michelena (ADMI) emphasised on the credibility ANDA was trying to maintain so as to remain a legitimate actor towards decision-makers. Yet he gave examples of cooperation between animal welfare and animal rights groups, such as when ANDA denounced the condition of animals in a slaughterhouse and the authorities ordered an inspection of it. Being announced, this visit did not show any particular problems. He thus passed on the information to more radical groups, so that they could document the condition of animals through other means. He insisted on the complementarity between organisations such as ANDA, who strictly respect the law and work to maintain high levels of credibility and legitimacy towards actors such as the media and political actors (through, for example, ensuring the veracity

and the proofing of their claims against industry actors and avoiding ‘exaggerations’), and more radical actors like Animal Equality that, not having to sustain the same level of legitimacy, were more free to undertake other types of actions, that ultimately helped the former in their work. He concluded: ‘I do believe that the two ways are needed and I think it’s good to have different people doing that’.

Riverola (CRI), from the reformist abolitionist organisation Libera!, that focuses on lobbying, also seemed to adhere to this idea of *ad hoc* cooperation, rather than concertation:

‘we can get support from the public or promote our campaigns into the public but our main idea is to really change the law. So we are complementing [NGOs like] Animal Equality so they do all the stuff with society and we collaborate with their work and bring that knowledge to the politicians. It’s not an agreed collaboration but *de facto*’.

Generally, what was striking in Spain was the number of coalitions existing, indicating some level of concertation and cooperation, despite these interviewees’ statements. Hence, interviewees gave multiple examples of coalitions they were part of, such as SOS Delphines (SOS Dolphins), of which animal welfare groups such as ANDA and FAADA are members, as well as animal rights groups such as Anima Naturalis. Others included coalitions on the issue of bullfighting (Prou, Pan y Toros, La Tortura es no Cultura–Torture is not Culture) or lobbying coalitions at regional level. Reconciling these seemingly contradictory elements, however, interviews revealed that apart from these coalitions on specific campaigns, there were no forums, conferences or meetings where the main NGOs could exchange about their strategies, such as exists in Austria or the Netherlands (Josse, 2013a).

Finally, all interviewees, including Diez Michelena (ADMI), despite him being frustrated at some aspects of it, stated that they, and the wider movement, recognised the work of Animal Equality (understanding Equanimal and Animal Equality before and after their merging) as positive for the movement.

3.4 AUSTRIA

The movement in Austria was by far the one with the most cooperation and the least tensions between all strands and groups. As we have seen in chapter 2, VGT had managed, throughout the 2000s, to garner support from, and cooperate with the bigger traditional welfarist organisations, as well as very grassroots and ideologically more radical groups such as BaT. Indeed, a BaT interviewee (AnonI2) stated that, as far as grassroots activism went, VGT played the role of an opinion leader, or agenda-setter, in the movement: thus, in the absence of other important groups in this strand of animal advocacy, local groups would simply take on campaigns set by VGT or plan their actions in light of the priorities set out by them. Of course, these groups were not always entirely satisfied with this state of affairs, as the interviewee himself, but this did not create open tensions. In the same way, Balluch (MBI) indicated a certain level of competition between organisations, recalling that Vier Pfoten (Four Paws) regularly commissioned a survey in order to assess its reputation compared to other groups and the renown of its president compared to Balluch's.

This remarkable feature of the Austrian movement finds its roots, according to Balluch (2006, p. 157), in a first of its kind conference organised by VGT in 2002, that 'unified the movement here in an unprecedented way and laid the ground for a new type of campaigns'. An interviewee (AnonI1) explained that, in the mid-2000s, when VGT campaigned against battery cages, this solidarity was crucial in the success of the campaign, as they were able to put forth the official support of many renowned groups: 'the organisation of the demonstrations, the information stalls, the media, civil disobedience, we did it alone. But it was really important to have big, familiar names behind us to appear more trustworthy'. According to him, the success of VGT and the bounds created with welfarist organisations enabled the latter to endorse slightly more radical views. For example, Vier Pfoten and WTV participated several times in the Veganmania festival organised by VGT and the Austrian Vegan Society, held in up to 14 different cities and aimed at educating people about veganism. These organisations

produced specific communication material for the occasion, adapting their discourse.

Finally, an illustration of the cohesion in the Austrian movement is to be found in the Pro-Tier (Pro-Animal) coalition, composed, as of 2018, of 24 animal advocacy organisations (Pro-Tier, 2018) and aimed at lobbying on consensual demands.

4. LINKS WITH OTHER SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Before repression, in the UK, Austria and Spain, the movement did not particularly seek, or benefit from, alliances and support from other social movements, although the repressed activists in Austria and Spain did seek these during repression. Concerning the UK, Lyons (RLI) attributed this to the fact that the base of the animal advocacy movement was, at the time, 'fairly working class', contrary to other movements such as the environmental movement. Stallwood (KSI) regretted that the British movement did not seek such alliances, giving the Countryside alliance as a counter example:

'What [they did], without I think much sincerity ... is what the animal groups should do, in pursuing their strategy whereby we would reposition the animal issue within the context of a human related issue so that we would not just be compartmentalising the animal issue within an animal only agenda. We should be forming alliances ... the Countryside alliance is a rather cynical attempt to try and keep the argument against the hunting act going by packaging it as part of a broader issue, a countryside related issue'.

He noted however, that this began changing in the 2010s, with organisations such as CIWF seeking alliances with groups such as Friends of the Earth or the Soil association, getting them to not only support organic farming but also oppose factory farming. 'They do that with sincerity because they understand the relationship' between factory farming and soil depletion or environmental externalities.

The Italian case is peculiar in that at least the grassroots strand of the movement was always linked to other movements, especially in the left-wing, as

we have seen in this chapter and the preceding. In fact, as all interviewees emphasised, many grassroots animal rights activists were themselves anarchists and involved in other struggles. Strong links existed with the squat movement, Reggio (MRI) stating:

‘historically the opposition to capitalism in Italy, especially in the 1990s, was really done by the squat movement. It was a real social opposition. And so it was natural that for the most radical animal rights activists it would be the first places where you can discuss this ... So now we have a good dialogue and a good influence in the squats’.

Concerning anarchists however, Reggio (MRI) remarked that only ‘the radical, insurrectionist anarchist movement’ had shown active solidarity with animal rights campaigners, in cases of repression such as with the Morini campaign—he noted that their interest in animal rights was due more to (underground) direct action methods than to a real adherence to animal rights values. Yet, as we have seen in earlier chapters, the support of this particular movement to campaigns such as Morini was not helpful for these to avoid repression and in fact may have been a factor of repression, as Italian authorities appear more concerned by left-wing insurrectionists than by animal advocates. Hence, anarchists may have both reinforced the weakness of these campaigns and their perception by authorities as a threat, echoing findings such as Stockdill’s (1996) that indicate that threatening protests attended by marginalised groups are more likely to be repressed. Reggio (MRI) also nuanced the support of the anarchist movement as a whole, stating that another stream of the movement, represented by the Italian Anarchist Federation, was historically more critical of violence and direct action and ‘until some years ago it was not interested in animal rights’. He said however that this had changed with more recent developments: ‘Now they are interested’.

Pomo (CPI), speaking about the circles of activists behind the Morini, SHAC Italy, AIP and Green Hill campaigns, also mentioned these links, stating: ‘we started as an anarchist movement very linked to the squats and this kind of movements’. But, as developed earlier in this section, they decided to distance

themselves from these, 'because of many differences on the strategies and tactics and also some political differences'.

As of the early 2010s, new links were appearing, with the feminist movement and the LGBTQ movement increasingly embracing the ideology of animal rights (MRI, CPI). Pomo (CPI) said:

'Now we see the importance, especially because of right wing people trying to infiltrate the movement, we need to put more politics into the animal rights movement. We are trying to get links with social justice movements. We try to get links with [LGBTQ], anti-racist movements. ... We did some conferences on the links and connexions, on the relations of discriminations ... in gay groups and libraries ... We had Patrice Jones, an american LGBT vegan activist, we organised her tour. ... So we try to reach these people and give the animal rights message to them and the anti-discrimination message to our followers. The bad thing is, we are all interested in these issues but other people are not always interested in non-human issues, especially the Left. ... There are some links but not enough and [sporadic]'.

Reggio (MRI) also stated that the CCVU campaign against vivisection in universities featured a strong, intersectional political approach, drawing links with anarchists and activists for the rights of illegal immigrants. Links that were facilitated, according to him, by the political context at the time, under Berlusconi.

Italy is the only country among those studied where the movement had developed links with many other such social movements. It is to be noted that these links, and the will of grassroots activists not to be associated with groups such as 100% Animalisti (see chapter 2), that was perceived as linked to the far-right and displayed very aggressive and 'sexist' slogans and oppressive attitudes (CPI; Reggio–MRI–compared them to 'hooligans'), probably contributed to the success of the grassroots network behind Green Hill in reaching to institutionalised groups, the media and the wider society and reducing the sense of threat it might have inspired. In comparison, Lyons (RLI) said about the UK: 'one of the things that has concerned me about the SHAC approach is the elements [comparable to] far-

right campaigning'. His comparison pertained to the 'modus operandi' and a 'preparedness to use violence or the threat of violence to get your way' and an 'inability to listen to other people's views'. Wrenn (2015, p. 108) draws attention to the risk attached to 'the movement's tolerance for illegal tactics, harassment, and vandalism [that] may begin to alienate its largest demographic'. She contends that these 'are specifically suited to white masculinity' and may repel women and 'many people of color, who have long been discriminated against by the criminal justice system'. Hall (2006) also strongly criticised the UK grassroots pressure campaigns for what she argued to be illegitimate methods, going against the values that activists themselves preach. Her account of the developments surrounding these campaigns has been harshly criticised by UK activists as misinformed (e.g. see Best *et al.*, 2009). Her account being largely based on media reports of these events, the image she draws may indeed be biased, but beyond the question of accuracy, this reveals a fundamental point, that was highlighted by Roberts (RLI): 'People closer to us might know some of the details in the media are exaggerated, but *that was the message the public got at the time* and she based her book on that' (my emphasis).

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has analysed features of each national movement in the countries studied under the prism offered by the 'weakness' theory of repression explanation. First, we have shown that public and media attention to the movement and the issues it puts forth were very high in Austria and the UK prior to the onset of the main repression cycles and this was particularly true of the repressed groups. In Italy, media coverage of the movement in general evolved from relatively average to very strong in the early 2010s with the Green Hill campaign (and to some extent with its opponents' countermobilisation after that campaign), while earlier pressure campaigns generated very little coverage. In Spain, media coverage was relatively scarce but the repressed groups in particular were becoming successful media-wise.

In qualitative terms however, the relationship the media and the public maintained with the movement in general was ambivalent in the UK, with a strong focus in the 2000s on radicalism and underground direct action and a growing antipathy towards confrontational pressure campaigns. In Spain and Austria, perceptions of the movement were overwhelmingly positive, and this was especially true for VGT specifically, in Austria. In Italy, perceptions of the movement went from positive to extremely positive with the Green Hill campaign, while perceptions of the earlier pressure campaigns specifically were very negative.

As regards institutional support, the Austrian movement and VGT in particular were very strong, having acquired support from across the political spectrum, despite the strong opposition of the ruling conservative party. This was less true for Italy in the first period (the 2000s), but even more true in a second (the early 2010s), with even strong allies and movement participants such as Michela Brambilla in the ruling party. In group-specific terms, the major grassroots network had no political support at all and did not seek any in the first period, whereas it benefitted from direct support in the second, thanks in part to the involvement of more institutionalised organisations. In Spain, despite certain groups such as ANDA acquiring political legitimacy and although things seemed to be evolving in the 2010s (but after the onset of repression), political support was relatively weak in that only a few individual backbencher MPs were supportive. The repressed groups had no such support and did not seek any. Finally, in the UK, the movement as a whole benefited in the late 1990s from a favourable positioning of the newly elected Labour Party, and from the support of a number of MPs. Yet, the level of support greatly varied among groups and like in first period Italy or in Spain, the repressed groups did not seek any political support.

In terms of cohesion, the Austrian movement was the strongest, and VGT as a repressed group as well, in that it benefited from a central and leading position. In the United Kingdom, the movement was scattered in the late 1990s and particularly repressed groups were isolated from the more formal organisations, whether it be very moderate institutional ones, or ones closer to their positions, and tensions were strong between them. In Spain, the movement

was, again, evolving in this regard, but, prior to the onset of repression, groups generally worked in isolation, albeit with no strong tensions. This was true for the relations between institutionalised and more grassroots organisations, but also among themselves. In Italy, in the first period, relations were very conflictual between grassroots groups and more institutionalised ones, quite poor among institutional organisations and more developed but sometimes conflictual among grassroots informal networks (that are a particularly salient element of the Italian movement). In the second period, with the Green Hill campaign, the radical grassroots strand of the movement split and became even more conflictual, but part of it developed far richer relations with institutionalised groups, while these coalesced.

Finally, as regards support from other movements, Spain, Austria and the United Kingdom saw little such links at the time, while, in the first period, repressed Italian grassroots activists fostered strong links of solidarity with radical anarchists. However, it would seem, as seen in this chapter and the preceding, to have been reinforcing their weakness rather than reducing it. In the second period, they severed these links and sought to appeal to less marginalised groups such as feminists and gay rights advocates.

Now examining the explanatory value of the weakness model for the present work, we can find: 1) a limited correlation in the UK: the intensity or frequency of media coverage, combined with the relatively strong adherence of British society to the values of the movement could have been a positive feature deterring authorities from resorting to repression, yet negative media coverage of radicals legitimised the repression. Certain actors of the movement benefited from important institutional support, yet the poor relations among groups did not allow for them to share these resources like in the Italian case. 2) A very weak correlation in Austria, where the movement was strong in all aspects except for external non-institutional support. 3) A very strong correlation in Italy: a first period saw limited repression aiming at groups that were very weak in all aspects in a movement that was relatively weak as a whole, while the second period saw no repression and even facilitation by powerholders of strong campaigners in a strong movement. 4) A strong correlation in Spain: the movement was weak in

terms of media and public interest, although the repressed groups were, relatively to other groups, getting noticed and although the movement generally benefited from an excellent image. The movement as a whole lacked institutional support and the repressed groups in particular had none. Finally, the repressed groups were less likely to benefit from the solidarity of other groups given their existing relationships—and indeed, contrary to Austria, there was very little show of support from other organisations, albeit no will to distance themselves: they simply ignored it (ADMI, JMI, SNI, AI).

Finally, as we have seen, a third school of repression explanation theory considers that the phenomenon is better understood when considering the threatening and weakness features of a movement. Reflecting on both the present and the preceding chapter, this indeed seems to allow for better understanding of some of the cases studied: 1) the repression of the movement in the UK appears to have been, at first, undertaken as a result of threat rather than weakness in the 1980s and 1990s: interventionist infiltration to destabilise the ALF and its support in the movement (security threat), legislative criminalisation of hunt saboteurs (economic/special interest threat). In a second period however (the response to antivivisection pressure campaigns), repression is arguably better understood as a result of threat (security and economic threat) and weakness: had radical grassroots campaigners sought to integrate the wider movement, institutions and public opinion in their strategies and had more institutionalised organisations been willing to seize that opportunity, it would have been far more risky for authorities to undertake observable repression of such a scale. The fact that they resorted heavily on discursive criminalisation and sought to differentiate ‘respectable’ stakeholders and ‘extremists’ adds to this argument. 2) The Italian case is also better understood in this light: the first waves of grassroots pressure campaigns were very threatening in terms of security and at the same time very weak. Once they moderated their tactics and became stronger, repression stopped. It is worth noting however that these strategical changes and the absence of initial repression for the Green Hill campaign made them more threatening in economic terms. 3) Repression in Spain appears to be better explained by weakness than threat. Yet drawing on from both chapters, one can

note that the Spanish situation was rapidly evolving. The movement as a whole (e.g. the abolition of bullfighting in Catalonia) and the repressed groups in particular were becoming increasingly successful, if not yet substantially politically influential as in the other countries. They were thus becoming more threatening in economic terms. At the same time, the movement as a whole was still rather weak but becoming stronger on several aspects. Thus, repression in Spain might be better understood as the authorities willing to kill the movement 'in the egg', before it became too strong and threatening. Their perception, as seen in the previous chapter, might have been influenced by ongoing developments in other countries and the rhetoric of private and State actors and supra-national entities like Europol.

CONCLUSION

This thesis examined the response of State authorities and opposing industries to the animal advocacy movement in four European countries: the United Kingdom, Austria, Spain and Italy. It aimed at answering several research questions, pertaining to the strategies and dynamics of the animal advocacy movement in these countries, the nature of repressive undertakings and the motivations of repressive agents. I chose to employ Charles Tilly's (1978, p. 100) broad definition of repression as it allowed for a comprehensive look at a wide range of very different forms of State and private responses to the movement. The UK, Austrian and Spanish cases were selected because they displayed strong repressive events, while the movement in those countries presented different characteristics relevant to test hypotheses pertaining to repression explanation. Italy was chosen because very little repression occurred, and most interestingly, repression decreased as the movement (and in fact its more radical, grassroots strand in particular) was gaining momentum.

As I showed in chapter 1, this work adds to the existing literature in several ways. Firstly, it offers a cross-country examination of the dynamics of contention around animal advocacy and the strategies of the movement, which has rarely been done per se and never done in English with three of the countries studied here. Secondly, it considers two types of repressive agents, and the dynamic relation between their interactions. Thirdly, it considers fundamentally different types of repression at once, and how these interact. For doing so, I developed an overarching typology of repression, comprising coercive repression, legislative criminalisation and discursive criminalisation. Fourthly, it is the first academic account of the repression of the Italian and Spanish animal advocacy movements, and in fact the first political analysis of these movements, at least in English.

Chapter 2 has set the background to the dynamics presented and analysed later in the thesis. It showed that the animal protection movement in the four countries studied presented radically different dynamics. The British movement had been established long before the others, had a considerably more important breadth, in that more people were involved in it and more groups existed, whether

it be grassroots ones or more institutionalised ones. The Austrian movement was the most modest of all in this regard. However, one organisation, VGT, led other groups to radically challenge the ruling party and was so successful in doing so, building on public and political support from parties in the opposition, that it managed to accumulate an impressive series of political victories in only a few years in the course of the 2000s. This brought Austria's legislation to become one of the most animal-friendly worldwide, whereas the country was lagging behind in this regard prior to these campaigns. The Spanish movement was the youngest of all four. It was still in an early stage of its development when repression took place. It featured less informal or local grassroots groups than the other countries and was particularly moderate in terms of tactics. The two organisations targeted by repression, Equanimal and Animal Equality, were making strides in catching media and popular attention through rather unfrontational civil disobedience and all the more so through investigations, particularly in fur farms. Finally, the Italian movement resembled the UK the most, in terms of the diversity of organisations and more or less loosely coordinated networks of grassroots activists and the presence of pressure campaigns, mostly aimed at closing down facilities linked to animal experimentation. Whereas animal experimentation was the most salient issue for the movement in the UK and Italy, Spanish and Austrian animal advocates focused far less on this area and directed most of their attention to animals farmed for food and fur, hunting, or bullfighting.

Chapter 3 focused on the occurrences of repression in the countries studied. It first looked at coercive repression. That is, measures aimed at countering the movement within the existing moral (contrary to discursive criminalisation) and legislative framework (contrary to legislative criminalisation). It identified a wide range of tactics resorted to by authorities to either contain activists, or proactively counter them. These tactics have been shown to imply varying degrees of severity as regards the outcome that can be expected. They can be said to constitute containment (e.g., limiting protest in time, space and form), or be proactive (e.g. interventionist infiltration or mass arrests). It showed that the country where coercive tactics were most often resorted to was the United Kingdom, while these were mainly centred around one specific repressive episode

in Austria and Spain. Finally in Italy, such measures occurred, to a relatively small extent, early in the development of the grassroots movement and centred around pressure campaigns organised by a specific network of activists. Yet, when the very same network was making strides with its most important such campaign, Green Hill, no repression occurred. As regards surveillance and infiltration, the former was heavily relied on in Austria and the UK, but less so in Spain and Italy, as far as available data allows to conclude. There are known cases of infiltration in the UK and Austria, but these varied greatly in terms of frequency and intensity of their (direct) impact: in the UK, there were far more agents deployed and whereas in Austria, they had a non-interventionist behaviour, British agents actively sought to radicalise activists. In both cases however, they were severely intrusive in that agents developed intimate relationships with activists. In the same way, in both countries surveillance was heavily relied on. Finally, the UK is peculiar in that although the main repressive cycle took place throughout the 2000s, mostly in relation to grassroots pressure campaigns, significant elements of repression (infiltration, surveillance, legislative criminalisation) already occurred long before. The chapter then went on to focus on two forms of repression aimed at changing the moral and legislative framework within which animal advocates operate. The first is legislative criminalisation, which involves the creation of laws to specifically target animal protectionists. I showed that although there were such inclinations on the part of certain decision-makers in Spain and Italy, legislative criminalisation only occurred in Austria and the UK and that in Austria this was undertaken at the provincial level. In the United Kingdom however, national authorities resorted to it on several counts and it was one of the most impactful forms of repression in the crackdown against grassroots pressure campaigns. The second is discursive criminalisation, which was undertaken by both private agents and public authorities. I argued that it is at the same time a *tool for* repression and a *means of* repression: it serves to justify other forms of repression and in particular legislative criminalisation and to delegitimise animal advocates, hence raising the cost of collective action. I then developed a typology of discursive criminalisation, enabling a more detailed understanding of the processes involved. This typology includes an overarching process, 'labelling', that consists in depicting activists as

‘extremists’ or ‘terrorists’. Then four sub-processes follow: ‘tactical relativisation’, ‘ideological-tactical blurring’, ‘crime attribution’ and ‘ideological criminalisation’. Then I showed that discursive criminalisation was heavily relied on by authorities in the UK, Austria and Spain and showed that it had also been undertaken through performative actions such as disproportionate displays of police forces to arrest activists. Finally, we saw that in two countries, the UK and Italy, industries countermobilised through the creation of ad hoc groups in order to undertake discursive criminalisation.

The two next chapters focused on the explanation of repression and were organised so as to test models developed by scholars in this field. These are the ‘threat’ model, that contends that the most threatening a movement appears to the repressive agent, the more it will be repressed, and the ‘weakness’ model which assumes that authorities tend to be opportunistic and will try to repress movements when they feel that there is little to no risk of that undertaking resulting in a backfire.

Hence chapter 4 analysed the dynamics of the movement in the four countries in terms of confrontationality, ideology and economic threat. The first aspect looked at in terms of confrontationality was underground direct action, that might be argued to represent a security threat. I traced the history of this kind of actions, analysed their frequency and severity in the four countries studied, looked at the attitudes of the wider movement towards such acts and considered elements that might have altered the perception of authorities in these regards. Then, I looked at aboveground confrontationality. This analysis revealed, looking at group-specific explanation of repression in each country, a strong correlation in the UK and in Austria and more limited correlation in Italy and Spain. At country-level, there was a strong correlation for the UK (both as a security and economic threat) and in Austria (as an economic threat and as a political threat for the ruling party), and a weak correlation in Spain and Italy. Further, this analysis showed that a genealogy of influence could potentially be traced back for each country and that the dynamics of contention in the UK (the movement’s radicalism and discursive criminalisation) had at least some level of impact on the perception of repressive agents in other countries. Finally, it showed that countermobilisation by private

actors through ad hoc groups resulted from the perceived unwillingness of authorities to repress the movement in Italy, and the failure of the UK authorities to act rapidly enough.

Chapter 5 went on to assess the level of weakness or strength of each national movement in terms of public support and media coverage, institutional support, movement cohesion and support from other movements. The analysis showed, as to the weakness hypothesis, a limited correlation for the United Kingdom, very weak correlation in Austria, and a strong correlation in Spain and even more so in Italy. The chapter, following another strand of repression theorists, ended putting both threat and weakness hypotheses into perspective, which allowed for additional light being shined on the reasons authorities in the countries studied did or did not undertake to repress the movement. In the UK it appears early elements of repression were motivated by (economic and security) threat rather than weakness, while the 2000s crackdown targeting mainly grassroots pressure campaigns is likely to have resulted in an increased *economic* threat. This is the opposite of what Glasser (2011) found in the USA: she argues that authorities responded to an economic threat in a first period (1995-2000), then to a security threat in a second period in the early and mid-2000s. In Italy, repression targeted threatening (in terms of security) and weak elements in a weak movement and waned as the former became less threatening and stronger in a stronger movement, despite them becoming economically more threatening. Thus the 'weakness' hypothesis appears crucial as regards the absence of repression in the second period. Finally in Austria, the will of the ruling party and some of their economic allies to respond to the threat posed to their political and economic interests appears to have been stronger than the risk of a backfire due to the movement's strength.

Thus, this thesis has shown that the causes of repression in the various countries considered varied greatly. There is ground to argue that the backlash observed in the UK, Spain and Austria were primarily motivated by the success of the movement in challenging major economic interests, rather than by considerations pertaining to an actual threat that the movement would pose to

the citizen's security. This is particularly evident in the case of Spain and Austria, with movements that did overwhelmingly resort to aboveground and non-violent tactics. Yet in the UK, the history and saliency of underground direct action, while it remained marginal, made it inextricably linked to the modern movement's history and this cannot simply be swept away (this is not to say that repression was justified, let alone to the extent observed and this does not entail any judgement as to the *intrinsic* moral justification of these). Hence despite evidence that the preservation of economic interests played a major role on the crackdown on activists especially in the 2000s (stronger action following mobilisation of and threats by major economic actors to leave the country, the authorities' discourse taking on the industry's), one can recognise that UK authorities must also have had some level of legitimate democratic concerns about certain acts conducted by activists and their frequency. The same can be said of Italian authorities, who in the first period responded with far less severity than their British counterparts to equally far less serious and frequent acts. In Spain and Austria however, this does not apply and the developments recounted in the present work, as well as the analyses provided, indicate multiple factors bringing about repression, in an entanglement of political (ÖVP in Austria), personal (the investigative judge in Spain) and economic interests (Kleider Bauer and powerful hunters in Austria, the mink industry in Spain) and exogenous influences. Finally in the case of Italy, it appears that the strength of the movement was what prevented further repression. Strength that resulted also from the willingness of radical grassroots activists to water down their tactics and discourse and appeal to the rest of the movement and of society, that is, political actors, the media and public opinion. The lack of interest of radical aboveground UK activists to speak and appeal to the media clearly facilitated discursive criminalisation, as authorities and opponents' rhetoric could spread in the media without counterbalance. Where activists have actively sought to use the media to win their case, like in Austria, Spain and Italy, that has been effective. In the Italian case, the network of activists moving away from anarchists and undertaking media work was influential in them being able to gain popular and political support, which in turn was decisive to avoid repression.

1. A GENEALOGY OF REPRESSION

What can be seen in the present work is that the UK pressure campaigns of the late 1990s and 2000s had an immense impact on animal advocacy in the UK, but also internationally. Indeed, as we have seen, in the main repressive cycles in Austria and Spain and in Italy (the contermovement Pro-Test originated from the UK), authorities and animal industries built their response to the movement through learning from developments in the UK and through the actions and discourse of international actors such as Europol. The interest from the latter can reasonably be thought to stem from these pressure campaigns rather than the mere underground direct actions of the ALF, as these were already widespread in the UK and in continental Europe well before the late 2000s. These pressure campaigns considerably and *fundamentally* threatened the animal research industry. Indeed, activists in the UK benefitted from widespread societal support in challenging animal experimentation per se, and not only in asking for its reform, contrary to the issue of animal farming. Animal research was thus ontologically threatened, and seriously so, as SHAC was in a position to succeed in bringing down HLS and if it had done so, it would have set a precedent that would have likely brought the end of this industry in Western countries. Yet, the research industry was very powerful in the UK, representing a major economic asset. By coming together to pressure the government, they obtained the support of HLS and the repression of the movement. Yet, had the activists behind the pressure campaigns been able to obtain the solidarity of the rest of the UK movement and other movements and had they cultivated popular and institutional support, they may have avoided some of this repression, especially forms observable to the public. For this, they would have needed to actively create links with political actors (e.g. like Brambilla for Green Hill or the Greens in Austria), to seek to convey a positive image to the public, by avoiding association to, and facilitation of, forms of underground direct actions generally deemed violent, but also by seeking to mobilise a larger demographics like Italian grassroots activists did, seeking to appeal to non-activists and activists from other social movements deemed less threatening (e.g. LGBTQ, feminists, anti-racists, rather than radical anarchists) and

to adopt a more constructive attitude towards, and actively seek to enrol, bigger institutional animal advocacy groups (e.g. like VGT did in Austria). Instead, their actions, attitudes and discourse enabled discursive criminalisation from their opponents and subsequently from authorities to spread in the media without counterbalance, and thus to justify legislative criminalisation and coercive repression to the eyes of the public (the fact that they did not actively seek the means to have a voice in the media also made these less observable to the public). This made repression successful in stopping SHAC and similar pressure campaigns and in durably weakening the grassroots movement in this country, especially in the field of animal experimentation, and as Lyons (RLI) remarked, allowed the animal research community to sustain and justify a lack of transparency as regards experimentation, on the grounds that researchers were threatened by animal rights 'extremists'. This in turn hampered reform.

From there, the mobilisation of the animal research industry and UK authorities, and their rhetoric, led to transnational discursive criminalisation and the training and influencing of other countries' national police and other corporate actors. This and the example set by this successful repression of UK activists can be argued to have inspired repression in Spain and Austria. Of course, this is not to say that this was the only factor at play, as I have largely demonstrated in this thesis. For example, Austrian political authorities had all reasons to be willing to stop a movement that was politically threatening to them.

2. OTHER FACTORS OF REPRESSION

There are of course other factors that could further help understanding occurrences of repression in the cases studied here, as shown in chapter 1. For example, focusing on repressive capacity (Davenport, 1995; Gurr, 1986) may explain the extent of surveillance and infiltration (and the occurrence of interventionist infiltration) in the UK, especially prior to the late 1990s pressure campaigns. Indeed, the British State had developed a strong apparatus to surveil and infiltrate social movements from the late 1960s (Evans and Lewis, 2013). While it is democratically legitimate that the State would want to keep an eye on

underground direct action, the extent of these undertakings and the will to push for radicalisation may have resulted from mission creep (see chapter 3) and the natural tendency of police agencies to seek their own preservation and expansion.

Elements of political opportunity structures may also be useful, some of which were dealt with here under the prism of threat (e.g., political threat to ÖVP in Austria) or weakness (e.g., the question of political allies, such as Brambilla in Italy). Tarrow (as cited in Kriesi, 2004, p. 75), using a PO framework, formulates a very similar argument as I do in this conclusion, stating that dissenters ‘can create political opportunities for elites: “Both in a negative sense, when their actions provide grounds for repression; and, in a positive one, when opportunistic politicians seize the opportunity created by challengers to proclaim themselves tribunes of the people.”’ Further POS analysis could, for example, point to the fact that the early 2010s saw a substantial rise of contention in Spain, with various movements challenging State authorities, while a conservative government was in place, which may have made repression more likely (and indeed these movements were often repressed—e.g. see Alonso, Barcena and Gorostidi, 2014; Oliver Olmo and Urda Lozano, 2015; Martin Garcia, 2014; Oliver and Urda, 2020). Kriesi (2004, p. 74) points to the importance of elections in changing the ‘alliance structure’ of movements and argues that social-democrats ‘tended to support the Western European new social movements when they were in opposition, whereas they were much less reliable allies when in government’. This was partly true in the UK case, Labour being supportive of animal protection before the 1997 election (see chapter 2) and the Labour government subsequently undertaking strong repression of the movement (even though progress was made on animal issues, noticeably with the ban on hunting with hounds). The legislative criminalisation of hunt saboteurs in the UK may be better understood in terms of PO, with the mobilisation of hunters together with other actors in the mid-1990s through the Countryside Alliance and the Conservatives willing to differentiate from the positions of Labour on the issue.

Davenport’s (1995, p. 688) notion of ‘cultural limits’ might also yield insight. It refers to the level of conflict that authorities will tolerate, depending on the political culture and past experiences with dissent in a given polity. For

example, this element might have played a role in the absence of repression observed in Italy in the early 2010s as authorities had to deal with more pressing areas of contention such as revolutionary anarchism. Furthermore, the country had experienced a higher level of radicalism and political violence in previous decades (della Porta, 1995). In the same way, Spain's younger democracy left less room for radical contention than in other countries and Spanish authorities might be less prone to tolerate dissent and especially as regards new forms, such as open rescues, undergird by a new and radical ideology (especially given the strong focus of Animal Equality). In many countries, the post 9/11 era of Islamic terrorism might also have played a role in altering political elites' and police agents' perception of underground direct action, thus affecting cultural limits.

3. SIMILARITIES WITH THE REPRESSION OF ENVIRONMENTALISTS

The environmental movement is an interesting one to compare to the animal advocacy movement as regards its repression. Indeed, in the same way as animal advocates, environmentalists generally do not defend their own direct interests (although of course in certain cases protestors defend the preservation of the place they live in, and more generally they all have an interest in the preservation of a liveable Earth for their descendants). Also, the environmental movement, especially in the US and UK, shares many similar tactics, and as regards direct action, to the point where the creation of the ELF (Earth Liberation Front) was directly inspired by the ALF. Furthermore, many in society would aggregate both movements under the same heading, as even researchers do (e.g., Schlembach, 2018; Loadenthal, 2017) and one could thus expect the same kind of perception and response by authorities.

Like the animal advocacy movement, the environmental movement underwent a tactical and ideological radicalisation in the 70s. In the UK and USA, new radical groups appeared in the late 1970s and early 1980s, as a result of previously radical groups institutionalising and moderating, such as Greenpeace (Sauvant, Fitzgibbon and Nurse, 2016; Berny and Rootes, 2018). Amongst these new groups was Earth First! And its 'ecosabotage' campaign targeting 'individuals

and firms regarded as causing serious ecological damage' (Vanderheiden, 2008, as cited in Sauvant, Fitzgibbon and Nurse, 2016, p. 64). To Sauvant, Fitzgibbon and Nurse (2016, p. 65), 'one of the most influential events associated with the growth of the radical environmental movement was the police response to a peaceful tree-sitting in Eugene, Oregon' in 1997. They state that this event 'encouraged leaderless groups, similar to the ELF, to rise and multiply'. The ELF functioned on the same decentralised model as the ALF, with a press office publicising anonymous actions. Like the ALF, it created substantial economic damage, such as the arson of the Vail ski resort in the USA in 1998, causing 12 million dollars of damage (Savant, Fitzgibbon and Nurse, 2016, p. 68). Sauvant, Fitzgibbon and Nurse (2016, p. 72) claim that the ELF, contrary to the ALF, abstained from harming persons, but as discussed in the present work, both organisations clearly stated in their guidelines that they avoided it.

Several similarities have been highlighted in chapter 3 as regards the repression of the animal advocacy movement and that of the environmental movement. In fact, Peterson and Wahlström (2015, p. 11), in pointing to a trend to take extraordinary measures against dissent and associating it with terrorism, cite the animal rights movement and the environmental movement as typical examples.

Many similarities are also to be found in the United States, with the term 'Green Scare' (referring to the 'red scare' of the McCarthy era), coined by Will Potter (Glasser, 2011, p. 143), being largely used in the literature to describe the State response to both movements. Furthermore, the FBI categorised both the ALF and the ELF as the number one domestic terrorist threat (Shirley, 2012). In 2004 it launched Operation Backfire, which 'marked the start of a witch-hunt aimed at tracking down and prosecuting ELF members under US eco-terrorism law' (Savant, Fitzgibbon and Nurse 2016 p. 69). US police Infiltrators in the environmental movement, similarly to UK infiltrators in the animal and environmentalist movements, sought to radicalise activists, even training them to make bombs (Savant, Fitzgibbon and Nurse, 2016, p. 74). Environmentalists' opponents and authorities often relied on discursive criminalisation to call them terrorists. This even concerned mainstream organisations like Greenpeace, as it

did their animal advocacy counterparts like PETA, both in the US and Canada, (Sauvant, Fitzgibbon and Nurse, 2016, p. 75; Monaghan and Walby, 2012). Hasler, Walters and White (2020) studied the repression of opponents to the Dakota Access Pipeline. The State 'partnered with a private security firm to meet the protestors with military-style counterterrorism measures' (Hasler, Walters and White, 2020, p. 524). The firm infiltrated the movement and recommended authorities to exploit 'native versus non-native rifts, and tribal rifts between peaceful and violent elements' in order to 'deligitimize the anti-DAPL movement'.

In Europe, environmentalists have faced discursive criminalisation in very similar ways to animal advocates, being labelled as extremists, enduring similar containment tactics as seen in chapter 3. For example being coerced to not leave their homes during international events such as climate summits (Berny and Rootes, 2018, p. 961). In the UK, environmentalists were repressed similarly to animal advocates, infiltrated sometimes by the same agents, such as Kennedy (Schlembach 2018). As seen in chapter 3, the State's apparatus set in place to deal with 'extremism' was initiated at first to target animal advocates, and then expanded to other movements, of which environmentalists. In this country, oil and gas companies have resorted to injunctions against anti-fracking protesters (Russell, 2020, p. 7), similarly to anti-vivisection protesters. In Australia, the mining industry has obtained legislative measures to prevent demonstrations (Russell, 2020 p. 7). In New Zealand, O'Brien (2015) studied the effects of infiltration on environmental activists.

Yet, as we have seen in chapter 4, environmentalist direct actionists in the UK have been more moderate tactically than animal rights ones (see also Schlembach, p. 500), which adds credit to the assertion that the repression of the latter was not mainly the result of it being perceived as a security threat. Poulos and Haddad (2016), in a quantitative study of the repression of environmental activists globally, found that violent tactics by protestors was not a determining factor in explaining their repression. The fact that they did not differentiate between democratic and other types of regimes, however, might give less strength to their conclusion. Furthermore, they focused merely on the policing of demonstrations. In the context of the US, Sauvant, Fitzgibbon and Nurse (2016,

pp. 78-79) emphasise that 'it is hard to neglect the connection between eco-terrorist legislation with the time when mainstream environmental groups started winning legal battles, and therefore increasing the number of environmental laws which constrained big corporations' and they contend that labelling of environmentalists as 'eco-terrorists' is 'a pretext to ensure protection of economic gains rather than a real threat' (p. 81), echoing the conclusions drawn here.

In the case of Italy, Falcone *et al.* (2019) provide an analysis of the repression of the waste-related environmental movement in the Campania region, that is particularly relevant to relate to my analysis of the Italian animal advocacy movement. Indeed, the national government undertook legislative and discursive criminalisation against protesters, assimilating them to the mafia. The movement suffered 'a serious blow' (p. 1), and repression was largely supported by public opinion. Yet it subsequently re-emerged and very successfully so. Falcone *et al.* (2019) attribute it to the ability of activists to appeal to the public (by reframing the issue around health concerns), but more importantly for our comparison, by appealing to other groups and moving 'from being an archipelago of isolated clusters ... to an interconnected network'. This in part parallels the situation of the grassroots network behind the repressed Morini and AIP campaigns achieving success with Green Hill by, among other elements, appealing to public opinion and winning the support of influential animal advocacy groups.

4. FUTURE RESEARCH

This thesis had a very broad focus. This feature enabled it to contribute to filling gaps in the literature on the repression of social movements and more precisely on the repression of the animal advocacy movement in the countries studied and even on the movement itself, especially in Austria, Spain and Italy, nobody having yet looked at the two latter movements, at least in English language, as discussed above. However, this broad focus also has its drawbacks in that in some instances it has implied a broad analysis and sometimes inferential conclusions. The understanding of each case studied here would benefit from future research, building on the present work, to look at a specific country and

even at only one of the specific types of repression researched here. In the UK this has been done as far as SHAC is concerned (Aaltola, 2012; Ellefsen, 2016, 2018; Donovan and Coupe, 2013).

In the case of Italy, a relational approach, such as the one used by Ellefsen (2018) for SHAC, would be useful in tracing precisely how, when and why the dynamics between the network of grassroots activists behind the SHAC Italy, Morini, AIP and Green Hil campaigns and authorities changed. Such approach may also be used to trace more precisely exogenous influences (remarkable violent events occurring in other countries, repression undertaken in other countries, demands of other countries to act upon activists—e.g. NETCU asking the Italian police to verify activists' identity at demonstrations, as seen in chapter 3—or the effect of international actors such as Europol's discourse on animal rights 'extremism') that altered the perception of authorities of the threat posed by activists. In that context, the use of Freedom of Information laws may be useful in order to access documents such as meetings minutes, to uncover precisely how, when and why the perceptions of state authorities evolved.

Finally, interview material gathered for this work offer perspectives for future research on the consequences of repression for the movement in the countries studied and on how animal advocates adapted their tactical and discursive repertoires to tackle repression or avoid further repression. It also shows that the strategies of the repressed groups in gathering support from internal (movement) and external allies and popular support through undertaking active media work, were instrumental in Austria as to the outcome of repression, as I have begun to draw through chapters 3 to 5. Spanish advocates also attempted to draw support from other movements, noticeably in organising an international congress in Madrid in 2012. Finally, it shows that the repression or absence of repression of particular groups can have long-term consequences for the wider movement. Chapter 5 showed how Italian advocates grew further in strength thanks to the success of the Green Hill campaign, enabled by the absence of repression. In Austria, in line with the findings of O'Brien (2015) on infiltrated environmentalists in New Zealand, trust appeared to have been seriously weakened on the short term, while activists recognised the importance of

sustaining openness. Balluch (MBI) regretted that VGT had, according to him, to some extent moderated as to tactics, as a result of the chilling effect of repression on activists and that some were wary of dealing with too powerful targets (although other interviewees did not think so). In the UK, the grassroots movement, especially in the field of animal experimentation, was seriously weakened. It also to some extent depoliticised, its focus partly shifting from contentious campaigns to vegan outreach, although other factors than repression may be at play, as de Moor (2020) argues in the case of the demobilisation and depoliticisation of the environmental movement in this country. In Spain on the contrary, the failed attempt at repression reinforced the repressed groups, that merged as a result, after years of conflictual relations.

The question of the legitimacy of radical tactics is not the object of this thesis, but future research could build on the present work to tackle that question. Indeed, while scholars have looked at the moral justifiability of underground and aboveground direct actions in the context of animal rights (Cooke, 2013; Hadley, 2009), it would be relevant to look at it under the prism of democracy. While underground direct action hardly fits into most definitions of civil disobedience, are every aboveground direct action democratic? Is there a (relevant) difference in this regard between the open rescues of Animal Equality and VGT, whereby activists are voluntarily clearly recognisable (and the images are intended to be spread online or via the mass media), the apparently spontaneous mass liberation of the Green Hill demonstrators, where activists knew they were likely to be arrested red-handed, and the mass liberations of the Animal Liberation Leagues of the early 1980s in the UK, for which activists had no intention of getting caught? In the same way, where should the line be drawn between opposing or pressuring people on their place of work (in the case of SHAC-like campaigns) or contentious activity (e.g., hunt sabotage) and on more private spaces (e.g., home demonstrations)? And what to make of cases where home and workplace are indistinguishable (such as the small breeders targeted by early British pressure campaigns)?

I have begun to show that, especially where more violent forms occur, underground direct actions can have a negative impact on the movement, through

a weakening of external support, of movement cohesion and a strengthening of the perception of threat by authorities. Yet, the idealised image reflected by these actions is also appealing to many (e.g., anarchists as we have seen) and could be argued to have, or to have had in the past, a mobilising effect. One would expect these positive or negative impacts of underground direct action to largely vary in space and time, depending on how it resonates with larger cultural frames (Tarrow, 2013). As we have seen in the course of this thesis, the image of masked animal liberators was far better received in the early 1980s' Britain than it was later, or than it was in post 9/11 America. A thorough investigation of these dynamics would be a welcome addition to debates around direct action.

Another way of looking at the moral justifiability of underground direct action, and in fact (arguably violent) radical tactics more broadly, is through the prism of utilitarianism. These actions should not only be considered in and of themselves, deontologically, but considered in context, consequentially. If their moral justifiability is to be evaluated in terms of their impact on animals, then one ought to consider not only their immediate result, but how they may affect the dynamics surrounding animal advocacy. In this light, a given type of direct action might be considered justified in some contexts and not in others, depending on such elements as cultural values, public opinion support, media attitudes or political opportunities and threats. Furthermore, the way these actions are framed (and thus perceived) is central in that regard. In an early 1990s televised debate (Archive of Animal Liberation Films on the 'Net, 2015a), UK direct actionist John Curtin, asked by the presenter whether violent actions could harm his own cause, replied: 'the Animal Liberation Front don't do these acts to be patted on the head by members of the public. They will do what works and if it saves lives, they will do it'. If there is a takeaway message to this thesis for activists, it is that 'what works' is often less evident than appears and that 'being patted on the back by members of the public' is often instrumental, if not indispensable, to help animals.

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LIST OF INTERVIEWS:

ADMI - Alberto Díez Michelena: Director of ANDA – *In-depth interview undertaken in July 2014 – Spain*

AI - The NGO ADDA responded to a questionnaire via email on 11 July 2014 – Spain

AI1; AI2 - Two activists in Animalisti Italiani – *In-depth interviews conducted in July 2014 – Italy*

AnonI1 - Interview with **a leading activist** – *In-depth interview undertaken in June 2012 – Austria*

AnonI2 - A long-time **member of BaT, defendant** in the trials. *In-depth interview undertaken for a previous work in July 2014 – Austria*

AnonI3 - A retired **Special Branch agent**, in duty from the 1980s to the 2000s with experience in the surveillance of the animal advocacy movement – *In-depth interview undertaken in February 2015 – United Kingdom*

AnonI4 - A defendant in the trials - *In-depth interview undertaken in July 2014 – Austria*

CPI - Claudio Pomo, one of the coordinators of the SHAC Italy, Morini and Green Hill campaigns and founder of the NGO Essere Animali – *In-depth interview conducted in July 2014 - Italy*

CRI - Carla Riverola, General coordinator for Catalonia in Libera! – *In-depth interview undertaken in July 2014 - Spain*

EVI - Elmar Völkl, employee in VGT, member since 1998, co-founder of BaT in 2002, defendant in the trial (EVI) – *In-depth interview undertaken in July 2014 - Austria*

IFI - Ilaria Ferri, Campaign director in ENPA – *In-depth interview conducted in July 2014 – Italy*

JB1 - Jennifer Berengueras, Campaign Officer in FAADA – *In-depth interview undertaken in July 2014 – Spain*

JMI - Javier Moreno, Co-founder of Igualdad Animal/Animal Equality – *In-depth interview undertaken in July 2014 – Spain*

KSI - Kim Stallwood, author and activist since the 1970s, particularly known for leading the BUAV in the 1980s – *In-depth interview undertaken in March 2015 – United Kingdom*

MBI - Martin Balluch, President of VGT, co-founder in 1992, defendant in the trials – *In-depth interview undertaken in July 2014 – Austria.*

MRI - Marco Reggio, Co-founder of Oltre la Spezie – *In-depth interview conducted in July 2014 – Italy*

PBI - Paolo Barbon, long-time grassroots activist and founder of Bike for Animals – *In-depth interview conducted in July 2014 – Italy*

RBI - Roberto Bennati, Vice-President of LAV – *In-depth interview conducted in July 2014 – Italy*

RLI - Angela Roberts and Dan Lyons, co-founders of Uncaged and the Centre for Animals and Social Justice, active in the movement since the early 1990s – *In-depth interview undertaken in March 2015 – United Kingdom*

SNI - Sharon Nuñez, Co-founder of Igualdad Animal/Animal Equality – *In-depth interview undertaken in two parts in July and August 2014 – Spain*

ABBREVIATIONS:

AFSA: A Favore della Sperimentazione Animale (In Favour of Animal Experimentation)

AIP: Attacca l'Industria della Pelliccia (Attack the Fur Industry)

ALA: Alternativa para la Liberacion Animal (Alternative for Animal Liberation)

ALF: Animal Liberation Front

ARNI: Animal Rights National Index

ARM: Animal Rights Militia

AVI: Italian Vegetarian Association

ANDA: Asociación Nacional para la Defensa de los Animales (National Association For the Protection of Animals)

BaT: Basisgruppe Tierrechte (Grassroots Group for Animal Rights)

BZÖ: Bündnis Zukunft Österreich (Alliance for the Future of Austria – Far-right)

BUAV: British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection

CCVU: Coalizione Contro la Vivisezione nelle Università (Coalition Against Vivisection in Universities)

CIWF: Compassion In World Farming

CPHA: Campaign to Protect Hunted Animals

CRAE: Committee for the Reform of Animal Experimentation

ENPA: Ente Nazionale per la Protezione Degli Animali (National Association for the Protection of Animals)

FADAA: Fundació para el Asesoramiento y Acción en Defensa de los Animales (Foundation for Assistance and Action in Favour of Animals)

FPÖ: Freiheitliche Partei Österreich (Austrian Freedom Party – Far-right)

FRAME: Fund for the Replacement of Animals in Medical Experiments

GECCAP: General Election Coordinating Committee for Animal Welfare

HSA: Hunt Saboteurs Association

HLS: Huntingdon Life Sciences

IFAW: International Fund for Animal Welfare

KPÖ: Kommunistische Partei Österreichs (Austrian Communist Party)

LACS: League Against Cruel Sports

LAV: Lega Anti Vivisectione (Anti-Vivisection League)

LDNC: Lega Nazionale Per La Difesa Del Cane (National League for the Defence of dogs)

LIDA: Lega Italiana dei Diritti dell'Animale (Italian League for Animal Rights)

LIPU: Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli (League for the Protection of Birds)

MAFF: Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

NETCU: National Extremism Tactical Coordination Unit

NFU: National farmers Union

NVAS: National Anti-Vivisection Society

OIPA: Organizzazione Internazionale Protezione Animali (International Organisation for Animal Protection)

ÖTV: Österreichischen Tierschutzverein (Austrian Society for the Protection of Animals)

ÖVP: Österreichische Volkspartei (Austrian People's Party – Conservatives)

PACMA: Partido Animalista Contra el Maltrato Animal (Animal Party Against Animal Cruelty)

PAL: Political Animal Lobby

RDS: Research Defense Society

RSPCA: Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

SHAC: Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty

SPEAC: Stop Primate Experiments at Cambridge

SPÖ: Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs (Austrian Social-Democratic Party)

VGÖ: Vegane Gesellschaft Österreich (Austrian Vegan Society)

VGT: Verein Gegen Tierfabriken (Association Against Factory Farming)

VIVA: Vegetarians' International Voice for Animals

WTV: Wiener Tierschutzverein (Viennese Society for the Protection of Animals)