DEMONSTRATIONS

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FERNWOOD PUBLISHING
HALIFAX & WINNIPEG

Translated by Phyllis Aronoff and Howard Scott
Cover design: John van der Woude
Printed and bound in Canada by Hignell Book Printing

Published in Canada by Fernwood Publishing
32 Oceanvista Lane, Black Point, Nova Scotia, B0J 1B0
and 748 Broadway Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3G 0X3
www.fernwoodpublishing.ca

Fernwood Publishing Company Limited gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Book Fund and the Canada Council for the Arts, the Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage, the Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage and Tourism under the Manitoba Book Publishers Marketing Assistance Program and the Province of Manitoba, through the Book Publishing Tax Credit, for our publishing program.

Canadian Heritage Patrimoine canadien
The Canada Council for the Arts / Le Conseil des Arts du Canada
NOVA SCOTIA
Manitoba

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Tartakowsky, Danielle
Demonstrations / Danielle Tartakowsky and Olivier Fillieule.

(Protest series)
Co-published by: ASPP.
Translation of: La manifestation.
Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN 978-1-55266-558-9

1. Demonstrations. I. Fillieule, Olivier II. Title.

HM881.T37 2013 303.48'4 C2012-908107-8

INTRODUCTION

Every year for the past eight decades, *Time* magazine has chosen its Person of the Year; in 2011 it was "The Protester." The Person of the Year is the man or woman (or sometimes the group or idea) that the magazine's editors believe has had the greatest impact during the preceding twelve months, for good or for ill. "No one could have known that when a Tunisian fruit vendor set himself on fire in a public square, it would incite protests that would topple dictators and start a global wave of dissent," the magazine wrote. "In 2011, protesters didn't just voice their complaints; they changed the world." In the course of that year, "the protester" voiced opposition to authoritarian leaders, first in Tunisia, and then in Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen and Bahrain. The protester in Greece and in Spain, but also the Occupy Wall Street protester in the U.S., was struggling with a floundering economy. The protester expressed anger over what were believed to be rigged elections in countries as diverse as Russia, Senegal and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Street demonstrations are now a form of political action recognized by both those who take part in them and their targets: political actors, employers and public opinion. As a form of political expression, the demonstration encompasses a wide, but not infinite, range of practices that are codified and have become routine but are subject to changes, historically constituted and culturally delimited, and constantly evolving. And, like any form of political action, its history cannot be separated from the contexts that produced it and were part of its gradual institutionalization. This book aims to provide an overview of the demonstration and offer some key concepts for understanding the practice of demonstrating, and so we have opted for an approach that is both historical and sociological. This allows us to describe the increasing autonomy of the demonstration, the structural and contextual aspects of this development of autonomy and the slow crystallization of the stakes involved in its use.

The street demonstration, understood as any "temporary occupation of an open public or private place by many people that includes, directly or indirectly, the expression of political opinions,"[1] takes place in the same space as religious, commercial and festive processions, as well as the same space as insurrections, riots and mobs. It sometimes borrows elements from the former, but is clearly distinguished from the latter. According to Charles Tilly,[2] it belongs to the repertoire of collective action that emerged in the mid-nineteenth century, in a merchant society marked by the triumph of the industrial revolution, which resulted in local actions controlled by the traditional dominant elites giving way to autonomous national actions. This repertoire became established only after a period of revolts and revolutions. Insurrections, riots and mobs were marked by a direct relationship with their causes and objectives (both spatially and temporally) and frequently occurred at the site of the injustice being denounced or close to the dwelling of its authors, often involving violence. In contrast, demonstrations, which express demands while affirming the identity of the group conveying those demands, introduce a distanced relationship to political time, which ceases to be one of immediacy and urgency and becomes one of possible indirect means; the group attempts to demonstrate its strength while avoiding violence. The demonstration implies the existence of organizations that have, if not a strategy, at least some capacity to control what is no longer a mob, and authorities prepared to acknowledge its specific nature, or at least the existence of a public sphere. The demonstration favours proximity to sites of power or other sites that attract attention. For example, Occupy Wisconsin organized a demonstration and then an occupation of Capitol Square in February 2011, while Occupy Wall Street, after being ousted from the financial district, organized a march on Washington in November of the same year, which was followed by a new demonstration organized there with the support of the unions and groups of the unemployed, under the slogan "Take back capitalism!"

The demonstration is essentially an urban phenomenon related to the invention of the street as the locus of political protest. But while demonstrations are as old as the city, their contemporary configuration emerged only in the last century, through a functional and morphological change. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the street was still a living environment, in a sense a private place, a world that belonged to the lower classes, as opposed to the enclosed spaces of bourgeois homes. Little by little, however, this space became public and compartmentalized: the development of road traffic pushed pedestrians onto sidewalks, establishing a space for the circulation of "passersby." At the same time, the street in the nineteenth century was also an eminently political place. It was there that people gathered to read wall newspapers; it was there that, in the 1890s, political posters, which would soon become illustrated, first appeared; but it was above all there that the *voiceless*, those who did not have routine access to the authorities, could now make themselves heard by occupying and blocking the space reserved for traffic.

It was also in this period that the spaces for demonstrations were established, in accordance with the issues and the demonstrating groups. First of all, demonstrations entered the city. As Vincent Robert suggests with regard to Lyon, "they made a solemn or aggressive entrance into the city by one of the rare access points, a bridge or a gate, or they went out into the countryside (where they destroyed competing mechanized looms), to another city (journeymen's processions) or to another world (funeral marches), or they marched around the city or a neighbourhood in it."[3] Then, the sites of power (ministries, police headquarters, city halls, embassies) increasingly became the target of rallies and the destination of marches, delineating a symbolic geography of power.

The etymology of the French verb *manifester* (to show, to demonstrate) highlights the connections between the demonstration and the emergence and affirmation of this public space as both a physical space and a space for debate. Formed in the thirteenth century from the verb root *defendere* (to defend) and the noun *manus* (hand), it originally expressed the ideas of defence, of demands and of physical presence. Originally, *manifester* meant to make known, to express, to promulgate and, in theological vocabulary, it involved revelation and the Epiphany. The noun *manifestation* in the sense of a public expression of a feeling or an opinion is attested in 1759, and starting in 1845–1848, it came to designate a collective assembly in opposition to something. The intransitive use of the verb became widespread twenty years later, after its present participle — *manifestant, manifestante* (demonstrating) became a noun (demonstrator) (1849, in Proudhon). The verb then acquired its modern meaning of participating in a public collective street demonstration, appearing in particular in the press and, much more rarely, in literary language. The modern meaning, however, did not become established until the beginning of the twentieth century. Indeed, both the verb and the noun have remained polysemic, coexisting enduringly with terms such as *monôme* (student end-of-term procession) and other terms for marches, parades, riots and processions, showing that a demonstration is a vague entity that forces us to constantly wonder what, beyond the word, *makes* or is considered, and not what *is,* a demonstration.

THE ACT OF DEMONSTRATING

At a minimum, a demonstration always involves four elements.

First, the temporary *occupation of an open physical space*, whether public (the street) or private (a shopping centre, a hotel lobby). This excludes many forms of meetings and assemblies. Political rallies held in halls or closed spaces, processions from workshop to workshop inside a company on strike, etc., are thus not, strictly speaking, included in the demonstration form.[4]

Next, *expression*. The primary aspect of any demonstration, both for its participants and for the public, is the expression, through the visible affirmation of a group that may or may not already exist as such, of more or less precise social demands. This second criterion permits us to exclude heterogeneous gatherings with no unifying principle (a crowd of consumers on market day or a flash mob), but also political actions intended to be discreet or even secret. It is closely linked to the first criterion insofar as the open site is a condition of external expression.

The *number of participants*. Because of its collective nature, a demonstration requires a minimum number of actors. Since there is no way of determining sociologically the smallest number of individuals that can act collectively, there is no point in setting an arbitrary threshold. This remark is only intended to draw attention to the distinction that needs to be made between demonstrations and the range of individual modes of political action, while still recognizing the porousness of the boundary between them.[5]

The *political nature of the demonstration*. This last criterion is problematic yet central. Is there a sociologically relevant criterion, or do we need to accept the meaning the participants themselves give to their action? Many events that at first glance appear non-political can be signs of a sociopolitical crisis or occasions of its expression, as has been shown in many studies of hooliganism and suburban riots[6] but also, more unexpectedly, in the politicization of festive parades. Thus, let us assume for the time being that demonstrations must *convey* or *lead to* the expression of demands of a political or social nature. From this point of view, the political nature of the demonstration can be either intentional or derived, that is, not directly perceptible to the protagonists.

It should be noted, finally, that it would be difficult, as is sometimes done, to establish a morphological criterion confining the demonstration only to street processions — first of all because contemporary street processions are the product of a long learning process, a gradual consolidation of knowledge, which is precisely what we want to examine. Secondly, while the street procession provides the pattern for the demonstration, it is generally only one element in a series of actions that includes static assemblies, barricades, blockades, roadblocks, sit-ins, die-ins, kiss-ins, etc. Finally, modes of action combine with and follow one another in a continuous movement. It is often difficult to differentiate between a march and a rally. Marches often end with rallies, and it is usually at that time that things go awry and incidents occur.

A SPACE OF STRUGGLE

Beyond these defining factors, what basically makes a demonstration is the concrete and symbolic interaction among several kinds of actors who are either present or indirectly involved, what Pierre Favre, in his introduction to a ground-breaking book on demonstrations, calls the "demonstrating moment."[7] In the physical space where they come together, the first actors we think of are the demonstrators themselves, and we should take care not to think of them as an undifferentiated entity. Demonstrations are usually presented as the expression of homogeneous views (demonstrations of students, workers, farmers, etc.), but as Tilly points out in *Contentious French* (1986), this is an illusion. In fact, a demonstration is on the one hand the product of a political construction resulting from lengthy bargaining, and on the other hand, it includes at least four dimensions: the people in the street, the objective or target, the immediate audience and the social base whose feelings the demonstrators claim to represent. More specifically, we can distinguish between mere participants in the demonstration and the organizers, whether or not they are present on the ground, and those managing it (marshals); we can identify different groups, sometimes hostile to one another beyond the cause that has brought them together at this time; there may also be counter-demonstrators, who can be as be heterogeneous as their adversaries. These demonstrators and counter-demonstrators, according to the targets they select and the sites they occupy, may be in the presence of those they are addressing, owners and heads of companies, politicians, civil servants, groups they are confronting. However, in most cases, the interaction between demonstrators and targets of the mobilization on the ground is regulated, according to procedures that vary widely according to the circumstances, by representatives of law enforcement agencies. Various municipal police forces and traffic police, park police in Washington in the vicinity of the White House, specialized police forces (mobile police units, riot police), civil guards or the regular army, but also firefighters, private militias and intelligence agents. These law enforcement agencies are usually under the control of civil and political authorities. In crisis situations, however, especially when the legitimacy of civil power is no longer entirely certain, military or private militias may act more or less autonomously, on their own initiative; the changing attitude of the armed forces in the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions is a prime example.

Finally, demonstrations take place in the presence of publics and *for* publics that demonstrators want to reach, in two senses of the word: to make themselves known to them, and to convince them. These publics are the curious who have come to see the demonstration, but also, through the presence of journalists from agencies, newspapers, radio and television, the clientele of those media, who experience the "paper demonstration"[8] that provides its description of the events, gathering, selecting and conveying the positions and interpretations of the actors present along with those of others, usually people authorized to issue an opinion — intellectuals, scientists, national or international political or religious authorities, economic actors, pressure groups and, finally, pollsters, who survey "public opinion" before or after the event or even during it. We should also note the emergence in the past few years of new information and communication technologies such as the Internet — especially in the form of video and sound (e.g., YouTube) but also that of social media such as Facebook and Twitter — a major phenomenon, which we will come back to in more detail in Chapter 5. These were first used in 1994 by the Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico, when they declared war on the Mexican government after the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

While stressing the multiplicity of actors involved and the complexity of the struggles for meaning that are played out at many levels in the interaction itself and its interpretation, we should not forget that all this is possible only once there is more or less general agreement on the meaning of the situation. This shared meaning is the best indicator of the *relative stabilization* of this form of political struggle, and thus of the explicit and implicit rules of the game (legal framework, practices), based on the history of demonstrations and protest cultures, with the expected actions and predictable moves and the surprises and deviations that are always possible. The use of demonstrations, like other forms of political action such as strikes and boycotts, is thus part of what Érik Neveu calls "the arena of social conflicts," that is, "an organized system of *institutions*, *processes* and *actors* that has the property of functioning as a space of appeal, in both the sense of a demand for a response to a problem and that of legal recourse."[9] It is to this system of institutions, processes and actors as it operates in the interaction of demonstrations that we are devoting this book, keeping in mind two essential elements that are too often forgotten.

The demonstration, like any form of protest action, is by nature a non-contractual relationship. If one of the actors decides to unilaterally change the rules of the game, the status or legitimacy of the demonstration may be denied, even when they seemed to have been established. This occurred on October 17, 1961, when the French government decreed that a demonstration, though clearly organized according to commonly accepted norms, was an "act of war by the French federation of the Algerian Front de libération nationale," and dealt with it accordingly. What is true for the government is also true for the demonstrators when they cease, in whole or in part, to exercise self-restraint, as occurred in the case of actions by "rioters" in 1952 during a demonstration organized by the French Communist Party against General Ridgway of the U.S., who was on a state visit, and, beginning in the 1970s, when demonstrators invoked codes outside the consensus-based system. Conversely, when demonstrations are prohibited by a country's constitution, they may be permitted by the authorities after being described in different terms. For example, in

2009, in Cuba, the minister of culture chose to approve the description by an artists' collective of an "art happening in favour of the environment," thus tolerating an event in the public space that would normally have been prohibited.[10] In other words, in the arena of social conflicts, institutions and procedures are more unstable and less solidly established than in most other political spheres (justice, media, etc.).

While the demonstration historically belongs to a dominated realm of action, that is, one involving actors on the weaker side of power relationships, it is not as easy to say this of the contemporary period, especially if we adopt a comparative perspective. Without doubt, the clearest effect of the gradual institutionalization of the street demonstration, along with the dissemination and diversification of the repertoire of action, was to make this mode of action legitimately available — albeit to varying degrees in different political regimes — for a whole range of groups that would have not wanted or would not have been able to use it before. While the various actors need and use the quantity and quality of resources produced in the arena of social conflicts, they draw on these resources regardless of their positions in other arenas and their access to other resources. This is obviously what happens when those in government use mass demonstrations to make visible the popular support they claim to enjoy when they are rejected in fraudulent, non-competitive elections, or even in the absence of elections.

A similar case, but with a different logic, occurs when actors who do not lack access to institutional arenas are successfully opposed by groups in the arena of social conflicts, who rely on numbers or arousing public indignation, and those actors are forced to take up the fight on the same terrain. Thus the defenders of the right to abortion, after obtaining legislation in their favour in the developed world, had to take to the streets again against the opponents of freedom of choice. We find a similar logic in a very different context in the demonstrations by French colonists and Muslims in May 1958 in Algiers, when thousands of Muslims were forced to participate in "friendship chains" in response to mounting street demonstrations by the FLN, which was becoming the only valid negotiating partner with the French government.

More generally, in a political climate in which the dominant discourse is that of a crisis of representation and a failure of elites (whether the discourse of the "depoliticization" of the late 1960s or that of the current period), strength in numbers and the horizontal participation by all in their shared destiny are clearly valuable weapons which the actors with the most resources have the best chance of obtaining.

All these elements are central for understanding how and why the street demonstration is at the heart of many contemporary political conflicts in many regions of the world. The following are three examples, as striking as they are varied.

On September 19, 2006, the Thai military junta, commanded by General Sonthi Boonyaratglin led a coup d'état against Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. Backed by the king, the coup led to a new constitution that was supposed to ensure a return to democracy. The constitution was approved by a referendum on August 19, 2007, and in the winter, legislative elections brought the supporters of Thaksin Shinawatra back to power. A period of turmoil followed, with the junta working to discredit successive prime ministers, until December 15, 2008, when the assembly, under pressure from demonstrations organized and funded by the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) chose a Thaksin opponent as prime minister. This was the beginning of a period of intense conflict, with street clashes between the supporters of the junta (the "yellow shirts" of the PAD) and those of Thaksin (the "red shirts" of the UDD, the United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship). On March 14, 2010, following a huge demonstration in Bangkok, an occupation of the centre of the city (Siam Square, the trade centre) began, which quickly became an entrenched encampment. This situation continued until May 19, 2010, when the army launched an attack that left at least sixteen dead. The series of street processions, occupations and riots in Bangkok and several other Thai cities resulted in at least eighty-five dead and more than 2000 injured. The legislative elections of July 2011, after the dissolution of the assembly by the king, saw the victory of the Pheu Thai (For Thais Party), led by the sister of Thaksin Shinawatra.

In Senegal, President Abdoulaye Wade, who had been in power since 2000, attempted in June 2011 to pass a constitutional reform that would permit him to be re-elected for a third term and make his unpopular son the head of state in the 2012 election. A huge demonstration took place in Dakar against the president's plans, organized by the collective "Y'en a marre" [That's enough], which was formed in March 2011 by some activist journalists and a rap group from Kaolac. The coalition, which first became known during the World Social Forum held in Dakar in February 2011, led to the creation of the June 23 Movement (M23), which brought together the many demands of the population regarding widespread corruption, increasingly frequent electricity cuts and flooding. Wade backed down and abandoned his plans. A few months later, he made another attempt to run in the presidential election, although the constitution prohibited him from serving a third term. The demonstrations resumed with renewed vigour in spite of harsh repression, especially in the suburbs of Dakar. It is not uncommon for actors and commentators to make reference to the Occupy Movement in Europe and the U.S., the Greek situation or, of course, the Arab revolutions. The slogan "Y'en a marre" resonated with "Dégage!" [Get out!], the slogan in Tunisia and Egypt, and the name of the opposition movement (M23) itself was based on the February 20 Movement (M20) in Morocco. The elections in late February and early March 2012 resulted in the defeat of the president by one of his former supporters, and in spite of massive fraud, brought an end to street agitation.

In Russia as well, also in the context of an election marked by fraud and corruption, street demonstrations appeared to be the most effective weapon of the opponents of the government. Three weeks after the legislative elections of December 4, 2011, which gave a disappointing victory to the Putin party, in order to mobilize opposition for the presidential election in early March 2012, Muscovites took to the streets in the thousands to express their rejection of a return to power by Putin and demand free elections. On December 24, 2012, some 100,000 people (120,000 according to the organizers, 30,000 according to the police) gathered in the streets of Moscow. Such a protest rally was so unprecedented that its importance was recognized even by the most timid newspapers, such as the daily *Moskovski Komsomolets*, which discreetly spoke of the "awakening of civil society." In the minds of the participants as well as in press analyses, this followed the model of the "Orange Revolution" in Ukraine in 2004. In order to understand this mobilization, we need to recall that President Medvedev had, on December 22, in his final speech on the state of the nation, announced plans to have regional governors chosen by direct election, to facilitate the formation of new political parties, to grant increased freedom of the press and to fight corruption. In addition, the police were very prudent in dealing with the repeated demonstrations, carefully avoiding overly direct and visible repression. At the beginning of the year, the movement expanded to other cities, such as Magadan, Khabarovsk, in far eastern Russian, Ekaterinburg and several cities in Siberia, which was unprecedented. After first belittling and making fun of this protest movement, Putin and the leaders of the United Russia Party changed their strategy and tried to counter the protesters on their own terms, organizing assemblies with free concerts and counter-demonstrations in support of the government. According to accounts by many journalists, many of the pro-Putin demonstrators who took to the streets in February 2012 were drafted or strongly encouraged by their employers or department heads. The opposition immediately denounced this sham, pointing out that teachers in the region and civil servants had been ordered to take part.

DEALING WITH A COMPLEX SUBJECT

Finally, it is important to note that demonstrations can be studied using many scales of observation and widely varied methods of data collection and analysis. While it is true that until the end of the 1980s, "the demonstration [was] ill-defined and treated as insignificant in comparison with legitimate forms of political competition,"[11] the research has since developed significantly, and we now have sufficiently extensive and varied data to attempt a synthesis.

The long-term perspective of the historian makes it possible to think of demonstrations in terms of political culture and to ask questions about its capacity to circulate and transmit history in the living memory of the participants and the historical memory of organizations. Charles Tilly is unquestionably the leading figure in this approach, and his 2008 book, *Contentious Performances*, is the distillation of thirty years of fascinating research. This approach does not permit the construction of continuous statistical series on a temporal scale, since the sources are extremely disparate and the establishment of quantitative indicators by governments is a relatively recent phenomenon (post-1968 in most European countries). For the contemporary period, however, the construction of more or less homogeneous and continuous series of demonstrations in several countries of continental Europe and the United States by both historians and political scientists — including the authors of this book — has made it possible to begin to think comparatively about how this form of action emerged and gradually became established, the extent of its use and the forms it may take in different places, its supposed effects in institutional contexts and particular circumstances and, finally, the nationalization and internationalization of repertoires of action.

Other authors have looked instead at the place of the demonstration in the repertoires of actions and strategies of professional or social groups in relation to governments.[12] Still others have examined how governments and police forces have historically developed bodies of doctrines, practical rules and ways of doing things that have contributed to the co-construction of this mode of action.[13]

As for monographic approaches, they permit questions and answers of a completely different nature. The demonstration's inscription in the city and its evolution make it possible to analyze it as a mode of construction of social space and examine its relationships to the symbolic order and its capacity to transform places into spaces, in the sense in which Michel de Certeau uses the term *space*: "a practiced place," indissociable from a "direction of existence" and specified by the action of "historical subjects," since "a movement always seems to condition the production of a space and associate it with a history."[14] Monographs such as those devoted to February 6, 1934,[15] the anti-Ridgway demonstration,[16] October 17, 1961,[17] and February 8, 1962,[18] contribute to a history of governments and political groups. Monographic studies are also the only ones that permit an anthropological approach to demonstrations, one that has been largely abandoned in favour of a few rare attempts at the ethnographic analysis of emblems and scenographies.

Finally, many studies from the perspective of political participation, usually based on surveys and, in recent years, more sophisticated methods of gathering opinions during actual demonstrations, have sought to gain better knowledge of the sociography of people who demonstrate, their motivations and their relationship to politics, and verify whether practices of direct participation excluded or, on the contrary, reinforced more traditional forms of participation such as voting or activism in a trade union or political party.[19]

While it is not possible within the confines of this book to provide a detailed or even a complete description of all these approaches, we attempt to offer a meaningful overview combining an event-based approach through the observation of practices with an actor-based approach.

NOTES

1. Fillieule 1997: 44; trans.
2. Tilly 1986.
3. Robert 1996: 372; trans.
4. Cossart 2010.
5. Bennani-Chraibi and Fillieule (eds.) 2003.
6. Waddington, Jobard and King (eds.) 2009.
7. Favre (ed.) 1990.
8. Champagne 1990; trans.
9. Neveu 2000 (emphasis added): 17; trans.
10. Geoffray 2011: 29–46.
11. Offerlé 1990: 93; trans.
12. Duclos 1998; Lynch 2011; " Isabelle Sommier 1996.
13. See Fillieule and Della Porta (eds.) 2006 for a summary of this research. See also Della Porta and Fillieule 2004: 217–241.
14. de Certeau 1984: 117–118.
15. Berstein 1975.
16. Pigenet 1992.
17. Brunet 1999; House and MacMaster 2006.
18. Dewerpe 2006.
19. Favre, Fillieule and Mayer 1997: 3–28.

CHAPTER 1

A NEW REPERTOIRE OF ACTION

The date of 1850, put forward by Charles Tilly as the turning point in the emergence of the new repertoire of action, is theoretical. Thus any historical approach to national cases requires placing them in context. For the Americas, the question of the transition between the repertoire of the old order and the modern repertoire has little relevance. In Europe, the Napoleonic Wars and the French revolutions of the first half of the nineteenth century sent shockwaves throughout the continent, and even beyond. In many countries, these periods of upheaval, crisis and sometimes revolution were accompanied by "street movements" using the repertoire of the old order supplemented for some time with peaceful processions.

These processions may be considered similar to contemporary demonstrations, but they differed from them in various ways. They were frequently connected, sometimes rather tenuously, with independence celebrations, traditional festivals[1] or burials,[2] or organized under cover of such events. They were not seen by the authorities as accepted political tools, were used only occasionally, and drew attention and were sometimes suppressed. Vincent Robert sees them as the "tail ends of revolutionary crises"[3] that disappeared as soon as the regimes entered a phase of stabilization.

THE BRITISH PATTERN

The first processions took place in the United States and England in the first third of the nineteenth century, but they did not have the same functions. In the United States in the first decades of the nineteenth century, the cities were inhabited by a heterogeneous population of new arrivals of various origins. Many of the civic ceremonies organized in these cities involved parades, which brought together organizations representing the trades, and social, political or ethnic groups. These parades increased in number in the years 1830–1850, permitting the population to present and represent its diversity publicly, while assigning a place to each group. The democratic republic was embodied in countless civic festivals, marking events considered worthy of celebration (e.g., the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825), regional or local anniversaries, and national festivals (e.g., Admission Day in San Francisco, St. Patrick's Day in New York City, July 4, Washington's birthday).[4] Similar phenomena had an enduring presence in various countries in Latin America, such as Mexico.[5]

In Europe, the first of the emerging demonstrations were protests. In Bohemia, in 1848, the national movement called the outdoor rallies it organized north of Prague during the "peoples' spring" *meetingki*, before opting for the term *tàbory* in order to root them in the national culture (using the model of the *tàbor*, military camps, symbols of Czech national history). In 1883, in Paris, the executive commission of "jobless workers" that attempted to mobilize the victims of the economic crisis, also borrowed British forms and vocabulary, calling for public *meetings*. Such borrowings, which were perhaps more numerous than is suggested by these examples, say a lot about the strength of the English model, and suggest we should examine the place of the demonstration in England in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Great Britain seems to be where the demonstration — understood as an autonomous orderly procession enjoying a certain, though not unlimited, degree of tolerance — first developed.[6] In *Contentious Performances*, Tilly identifies three key points in the history of the demonstration in Great Britain. The first one is the Wilkite demonstrations of 1768 and 1769, which "incorporated elements of older public celebrations of momentous events such as coronations and military victories, non-voters' participation in contested elections and workers' marches on behalf of threatened rights. But their attachment to a program of popular rights and their identification of a formidable popular force distinguished them as a sort of performance"[7] — a subtle comment that suggests that it is less the form of the protests than their meaning and interpretation that changed, which would in turn contribute to changing their very morphology. The investment of a given form with new meanings led to other types of reactions by the actors involved, whether it be those in power, those targeted or the public.[8]

Moreover, the Peterloo Massacre of August 16, 1819, had the effect of making demonstrating more legitimate and, especially, making it more costly to repress demonstrations: "By ricochet, it reinforced the right of citizens to march and assemble peaceably on behalf of such controversial programs as parliamentary reform. The demonstration was becoming available for a wide range of public claim making."[9] Finally, the big political demonstrations of 1820 in favour of Queen Caroline of Brunswick and against the king culminated with the political funeral of the queen in August 1821.

The modes of action used were borrowed from the Primitive Methodists' camp meetings and millenarian rhetoric, the ceremonies of the guilds, and the more recent culture of the veterans of the anti-Napoleonic wars and from unions and mutual aid societies, in complex combinations. They were often based on a perspective of radical, even eschatological, change. They also aspired to build public opinion at the national level, as shown in the marches on London starting in 1816, and then internationally, through political movements,[10] assembling at various times more than a hundred thousand demonstrators. All in all, taking into account the increasingly frequent use of demonstrations by striking workers in the 1820s,[11] the demonstration was by the 1830s unquestionably central to the British repertoire of protest.

The change Tilly feels he has been able to identify in Great Britain in the years from 1801 to 1820, and which he believes culminated in the thirties, came a little later in France, he feels[12]; in *The Contentious French*,[13] he places it around 1850. In *Contentious*

Performances, he returns to this pivotal period to state, on the basis of the work of Vincent Robert,[14] that 1848 undoubtedly marked the birth of the modern demonstration in France, but adds that it was short-lived because of the authoritarian interlude of the Second Empire (1850–1860) and only really became established in 1890. For Robert, more specifically, there were proto-demonstrations in Lyon as early as 1831, which disappeared because of repression and then reappeared under the Third Republic, but remained confined to the appropriation of older forms (anti-clerical funerals, local celebrations of the storming of the Bastille, official ceremonies, religious processions, delegations of workers to the municipal or national government). It was only with the expansion of voluntary associations at the end of the 1880s that demonstrations acquired some degree of prominence in the public life of Lyon. It should be added that the Fourmies massacre in 1891, which was in a way similar to Peterloo in Great Britain, played a role in this.[15]

WORKERS' MOVEMENTS AND DEMONSTRATIONS

Strikes and marches frequently went hand-in-hand.[16] In fact, marches were an indispensable part of certain strikes. Their objectives might differ from one trade to another: columns of marchers to incite workers to walk out (mines, worksites), marches following the closing of a company by the owner (lockouts), marches to affirm the cohesiveness of the workers (particularly in one-industry towns), to express solidarity or show continued strength in conflicts that drag on, such as those in the textile industry, celebratory processions at the end of strikes, etc. In New England, striking textile and shoe workers organized parades starting in the first third of the century (in Lowell, 1834, 1836; in Lynn, 1860). In Europe, in the second half of the nineteenth century, demonstrations developed out of local conflicts, with similarities within certain trades more than common national features. They were based on no unifying principle, but early on they contributed to establishing the demonstration, or at least the procession, as the best representation of the strike (consider *Germinal,* by Émile Zola). The economic depression in Europe, with its lowest point in 1885–1886, provided the first opportunity since 1848 for coordinated action, however limited. Demonstrations of the jobless were organized in various European countries.

In Great Britain, the waning of Chartism in favour of trade unions meant a shift to strategies that eschewed mobilization around broad issues in the forms borrowed during the first half of the nineteenth century. The Social Democratic Federation organized huge demonstrations of the jobless. In London, these turned into riots (1886), which were met with violent repression (e.g., Bloody Sunday, November 1887), leading to reduced tolerance of them and increased defiance on the part of the trade unions. Demonstrations on public thoroughfares thus declined precisely when they were beginning to be used in other countries of western Europe. In France and Belgium, the workers' movements adopted the new repertoire of action in the 1880s. In Paris, the meetings of jobless workers organized in vain by the executive commission and dangerous liaisons between the Blanquist demonstrations and those of the Boulangists for a time revived certain fantasies of 1848, but they in fact constituted a "farewell to the barricades."[17] Similarly in Belgium, the industrial Jacquerie of March 1886 around Liège and Charleroi, which resulted in the death of twenty-eight workers, was their swan song. Their disappearance coincided with the adoption of new types of demonstrations, on the initiative of either the Guesdists or the Belgian Workers' Party (which was a socialist party). Similar phenomena occurred in Finland. In the United States, "armies" of the unemployed led by leaders acting as generals organized big marches across the country in 1893 and 1894 (under the direction of Kelly, Fry, Coxey or Galvin).[18]

The decision to organize an international day of struggle to obtain the eight-hour day on May 1, 1890, taken a year earlier by the International Socialist Congress in Paris, was a powerful moment of symbolic unification of workers' practices, which had been disparate. The call for action, which focused primarily on simultaneous mobilization, avoided specifying the forms of action, and the resulting marches were extremely diverse. For three years, as a result of pressure from the Social Democratic Federation and policies that were much more liberal than those elsewhere in Europe, London saw major demonstrations in which political refugees from throughout Europe took part. In France, the Guesdists tried without success to issue a "summons" to the authorities, which was the form used at the time for demonstrations making demands. In Germany, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Italy and Belgium, after 1890, there were increasing numbers of ritualized and celebratory marches, often held in the countryside to avoid clashes. In most instances these marches were tolerated, except in central and eastern Europe. They provided opportunities for both demonstrators and police to learn how to conduct orderly processions such as parades of various kinds of associations, flag dedications and strike marches. But that is perhaps not the key point. Engravings from nearly all the countries involved mythologized May 1 and presented the procession as a march forward toward a better future. This contributed to giving the demonstration a symbolic meaning that would increase its capacity to mobilize.[19] The phenomenon did not have the same impact in the United States, where the adoption of this initiative was marginal except in the early 1930s (May 1, 1933, in New York City; May 1, 1936, in Chicago).

Marches were far from exclusive to the labour movement. They were used by various classes and political forces of all persuasions — socialists, but also Catholics, liberals and nationalists — and became a major means of political struggle in many countries of western Europe.

UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE AND DEMONSTRATIONS

The street demonstration only became established as an autonomous means of political action with the emergence of a public sphere and the establishment of parliamentary democracies. Hence the marked discrepancies among three geopolitical areas: North America, western Europe and Australia, where this occurred early; eastern Europe, where it came significantly later; and Asia, Africa and the Middle East, where it was a paradoxical import of colonization and Westernization and the resistance they gave rise to.

There were significant differences within the first group because of the varying degrees of legitimacy accorded to this mode of action by the dominant political systems. The demonstration was tolerated earlier in Great Britain and the United States, where the mobilization of public opinion was considered a barometer of political legitimacy. There was also some tolerance in Belgium, by virtue of the Constitution of 1830, and in some of the German states, although only for "parades" of a civic nature. All these countries were cited as models and sometimes idealized in comparison with the majority, where prohibitions were imposed.

This relative tolerance allowed demonstrations to become established as an instrument in the fight for universal suffrage in various countries of western Europe, as was the case for a time in Great Britain. Demonstrations by the elites, which were sometimes expanded to include the working classes, aimed to affirm the full capacity of those marching to become citizens. Their organizers endeavoured to present an image of order and respectability. The demonstrators marched under strict control, wearing their Sunday best.[20] In Belgium, liberals and Catholics mobilized in this way starting in 1884. So did the socialists, who also integrated their movements with the religious calendar (August 15, 1880, Pentecost 1886) and made an important contribution to the adoption of the new repertoire of action by labour organizations. Similar demonstrations developed in Finland and Sweden between 1904 and 1906, in Saxony, Hamburg and Austria in 1905 and 1906, and in Prussia between 1908 and 1910, making an impact and sometimes winning victories.

Suffragist demonstrations were a specific facet of this struggle. In the United States, women's marches were organized to mark Women's Day, starting on March 8, 1908.[21] They spread to certain

European countries in 1911 with the call of the Second International, defining broad objectives including the improvement of working conditions. In Great Britain, they were more exclusively focused on the struggle for universal suffrage. The suffragists first gathered in Hyde Park, a symbol of the accepted political practices they aspired to, but subsequently they opted for more spectacular demonstrations, which were often violently repressed between 1906 and 1911, before retreating to more local demonstrations. Their rally in London on the eve of the coronation of Georges V, in the presence of numerous international delegations, including one from India, helped their form of action to gain new ground, for example in Austria and Munich.[22] In the U.S., starting in 1910, there were annual parades in favour of women's suffrage in New York City, including, in May 1912, a torchlight march with women in costumes demanding equal status. While these demonstrations gradually spread to other states, there was only one national demonstration in the U.S., held March 3, 1913, on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC, organized by the Congressional Union of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), under Alice Paul, its chair. The march took the same form as the British marches. It was led by Inez Milholland, riding a horse and wearing a white cloak, with 5000 to 8000 women participating, as well as state delegations, men's associations and the usual bands playing music. As Birgitta Bader-Zaar writes, "the floats, decorated with the colours of the British militants — white, purple and green — and the yellow of the NAWSA, carried a model of Philadelphia's Liberty Bell and a display of the first American women's suffrage convention in Seneca Falls in 1848.… The procession ended with a pageant of one hundred 'white' women[23] and children on the steps of the Treasury building opposite the White House, depicting Columbia, Justice, Liberty, Charity, Peace and Hope, thus appealing to constitutional values."[24] The extremely violent reaction of the crowd of spectators, which prevented the demonstrators from circulating, and the wait-and-see policy of the police led to a veritable riot, resulting in the abandonment of the strategy of demonstrations by the movement.

In the above-mentioned countries, the demonstration, which was one of the instruments that helped win universal suffrage, did not appear to be incompatible with the vote. Once universal (male) suffrage was obtained, this issue was no longer politically central, except when it was used as part of holidays celebrating national sovereignty, primarily in the United States.

The situation was radically different in France, where universal male suffrage was proclaimed in 1848 but was very quickly eroded until it was fully restored in 1875 — long before the emergence of the demonstration in its contemporary meaning. This sequence of events contributed to the demonstration being deemed illegitimate, which for a long time was the norm.

Until 1831, the appropriation of public space in France was governed by laws put in place during the revolution (the martial law of October 21, 1789, the laws of February 23, 1790, on the use of public force and of July 27, 1791, on the requisition and actions of public force). These laws targeted extremely serious actions and made offenders liable to sanctions as severe as the death penalty. It soon became clear that they were inadequate for the kind of assemblies the authorities were dealing with, such as *charivaris* or crowds protesting tax collectors or factory owners. The result in practice was a legal void, which was filled by the law of April 10, 1831, although it was influenced by events that were closer to riots than demonstrations. Under this law, the most peaceful meeting could be deemed a riot as soon as an order to disperse was given by a police officer. Persons who continued after the first warning could be arrested and charged in police court; they were, however, liable only to light sentences. The Second Republic amended this legislation. The law of June 7, 1848, made a distinction between crowds that were armed, which were completely prohibited, and those that were unarmed, which were prohibited if they were likely to "disturb public peace." It maintained the principle of prior warning, increased the penalties established by the 1831 law and provided for the hearing of infractions by the criminal courts.

The philosophical individualism of the republicans of the 1880s led them to see intermediate bodies as buffers between citizen voters and the elected, the only legitimate expression of the sovereign people. This mistrust of any collective expression of particular interests naturally extended to "street movements," which, since 1789, had made and unmade governments. The new regime saw universal suffrage, combined with the democratic gains of the 1880s, as the only legal framework that allowed all the people to express themselves and thus to "demonstrate" their views individually — a key difference. It thus denied any legitimacy to movements that aimed to address the authorities by other means. Consequently, demonstrating was not included in the democratic freedoms it guaranteed. It limited expression to the right to petition Parliament, and relied on the existing legal arsenal, reinforced by the law of June 30, 1881, prohibiting assemblies on public thoroughfares. Subsequent republican constitutions recognized the citizen's right to "manifester sa pensée [express his thoughts]," without mentioning any right to demonstrate in the contemporary sense. Under the municipal law of 1884, tolerance of demonstrations was left to the discretion of mayors. In Paris, it was subject to the goodwill of the police department.

These policies certainly did not mean that there were no demonstrations. The crises that marked the first decades of the republic saw "street movements" give way to demonstrations, mostly organized by the Boulangists and then by the anti-Dreyfusards, that threatened on various occasions, if not the government, at least its symbols, and that made the demonstration part of the repertoire of action of the nationalist right. This means of expression, used by nationalist students particularly often in Paris, became established with the emergence of modern political parties after the Dreyfus affair with the modernization of political life. The legitimacy that was gradually being granted to parliamentary parties and groups did not, however, extend to street demonstrations, which were considered an expression of political disorder and a potential factor in violence. Progressive regulatory intervention by the central government was based on considerations of public order, not of political legitimacy.

In a regime in which the right long associated demonstrations with "mobs," maintenance of public order was naturally the responsibility of the police and the army. However, the establishment of mandatory military service in 1872 and the regional organization of the troops after the defeat of 1870 brought the army closer to civil society and made the possibility of confrontations between demonstrators and security forces problematic, particularly during strikes. On May 1, 1891, in Fourmies, the deaths of nine demonstrators, including four women and a child, were evidence of this. But the situation did not evolve at the same pace everywhere. In Paris, the prefect of police, Lépine, used innovative methods that permitted the municipal police to firmly "hold the street."[25] In the provinces, the use of the police and the army remained the usual practice, and there were further bloody demonstrations in Narbonne, Draveil-Vigneux and Villeneuve-Saint-Georges, while violence practically disappeared from the streets of the capital until the war.

Workers' organizations, Catholics protesting the expropriation of Church property, wine growers in Champagne or the Midi, nationalist students, repeatedly, and soon the organization Action française all used this form of action, and the authorities were gradually forced to accept it. In 1907, Clemenceau accepted that certain demonstrations be tolerated, depending on the organizers and their ability to control them in cooperation with the authorities. The first demonstration of this kind was the "great protest" against the execution of Francisco Ferrer on October 17, 1909, when the first demonstration marshals made their appearance.[26] In 1921, a specialized mobile police force was created to maintain order. On October 23, 1935, a decree was issued stipulating that "all processions, marches and gatherings of persons and any demonstration on the public thoroughfare are required to make a prior declaration to the prefect of police." Designed to control political actions in the streets after the bloody demonstrations that occurred from

February 1934 to August 1935, it also gave the demonstration the status it had not previously enjoyed, and it remains in effect to this day in spite of its provisional nature and the absence of subsequent legislative ratification.

Given the complex relationship between demonstrations and electoral politics, it would be useful to look at a third case, one in another country. In Argentina, the difficult conditions under which elections took place actually lent greater legitimacy to demonstrations. In Buenos Aires, where the unrestricted right to vote had existed since 1821, people who took advantage of it in practice were rare: only a minority of immigrants chose to become citizens, and the native-born inhabitants showed little interest in elections. Campaigns were also frequently marked by violent clashes between partisan factions led by *caudillos*. The exercise of the right to vote was certainly not associated with the concept of political representation. Rather, it was the occasion of a whole series of manipulations it was supposed to legitimize. The inhabitants of Buenos Aires who were not indifferent to public life chose to express themselves through various collective actions and developed a veritable "culture of mobilization." Demonstrations and rallies in public places were considered, including by the elites, mechanisms of political intervention to be used to influence the government on specific issues. This means of representation of the collective interests of the people appears to have been a complement to, or even a substitute for, voting, and a practice that was beneficial for democratic institutions.[27] This same process of legitimization seems to have existed, even until very recently, in other countries in Latin America, such as Venezuela starting with the crisis of 1989.[28]

NATIONAL SYSTEMS AND TRANSNATIONAL MOVEMENTS

In the early twentieth century, national systems developed, each with its own rules and rituals, which often remained tacit. Their specificity was a result of the distinct laws, methods of maintaining order, and historical and cultural patterns of each country, and the relationship of its dominant political culture with the church and the army. These systems became the unifying frameworks for all kinds of demonstrations in the different countries, beyond the diversity of the actors or their objectives with respect to identity or demands. This "nationalization" tended to become still more pronounced after the First World War, when the political role of demonstrations became significantly different from country to country. In the parliamentary democracies of northern and northwestern Europe, they became established as the ritualized expressions of constituted groups or as extensions of strikes, to the exclusion of all other functions. In regimes in crisis in 1917, 1919, 1922 and 1933, "the street" again became an important factor and an instrument of struggle linked inextricably to revolutionary crises that were seen as means or attempts to effect regime change, but it now played only a secondary role in the process. In rare countries, such as France and Argentina, however, demonstrations played a decisive role in resolving major political crises within the framework of the existing regimes,[29] and the demonstration became established as a means of dealing with political crisis. It became a symptom of the limits accepted by the parties and signified that the game was being played on the terrain of hegemonic mastery and not of violence, which implied a continued acceptance of the constitutive codes of the society concerned and thus the absence of an open crisis of the regime.

The development of national systems that marked the peak phase of nation states did not exclude their borrowing international symbols such as the red flag and "La Marseillaise" and then "The Internationale" at the turn of the twentieth century. It went hand in hand with the periodic use of transnational elements in cycles that had effects on most of them, although to varying degrees. This is the case for the "war culture" of the 1920s, the "conquest of the street," the Communist International called for from 1928 to 1931 and the "hunger marches" in reaction to the economic crisis in many countries. Marches were particularly important in the United States (e.g., the Bonus March, 1932, the Ford Hunger March in Dearborn, and marches in defence of the nine Scottsboro Boys, 1932–1933, organized by the American Communist Party supported by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People).[30] The changes that marked the sixties and, later, challenges to neoliberalism led to similar transnational circulation, involving demonstrations by the so-called new social movements, alterglobalist demonstrations[31] and, more recently, although on a lesser scale, antiwar demonstrations[32] and the Occupy movements. In each of these situations, transfers of vocabulary occur and disrupt the national lexicon. The frequent substitution of the term *march* for *demonstration* in contemporary France and the recent use of the word *indignés* are examples of this kind of circulation of vocabulary.

NOTES

1. Reiss (ed.) 2007.
2. Fureix 2009.
3. Robert 1996; trans.
4. Ryan 1997.
5. Abrassart 2000: 247–264.
6. Tilly 1995.
7. Tilly 2008: 75.
8. See also Traugott 1995; and Péchu 2006.
9. Tilly 2008; see also Waddington 1998 for a similar observation.
10. Thompson 1963.
11. Steinberg 1995, 1999.
12. See Young 2002 on the case of the U.S.
13. Tilly 1986.
14. Robert 1996.
15. Pierrard and Chappat 1991.
16. Perrot 1984.
17. Pigenet 1997.
18. McMurry 1929.
19. Tartakowsky 1998.
20. Albrecht and Warneken 1986; Lindenberger 1995.