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Contested streets.

Political marches in Stockholm, 1887–1920.

Olofsson, Magnus

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PO Box 117
221 00 Lund
+46 46-222 00 00

Title. Contested streets. Political marches in Stockholm, 1887–1920.

Abstract. Repertoires of contention change. It is clear that during the 19th and early 20th century, swedes learned to stage marches to make political claims, something that was virtually unknown in Sweden before the mid-19th century. At first, the oligarchy that held power in Sweden mostly accepted political marching in the streets, but when in the mid-1880s the social democratic worker's movement started to hold demonstrations in Stockholm they took issue with this way of politizing the public spaces of the capital. A bylaw in 1886 decreed that all public marching in the capital henceforth needed the approval of the authorities. The bylaw remained in force up to and beyond the years of the “democratic breakthrough” (1917-1921), giving the authorities control over political marching in the capital. This paper analyses political marching in Stockholm in the years 1887-1920, focussing on which groups that applied to stage political marches, which were allowed to do so by the authorities, and how this changed during the period, thus adding to our knowledge of the development of a democratic repertoire of contention in Sweden.

Short bio. Magnus Olofsson, PhD, is a researcher at the Department of History, Lund university and an affiliated researcher at the Department of Economic History Lund university. His research interests are Contentious Politics Studies, political radicalism, democratization and labour history, focussing on Swedish 19th and early 20th century history.

Contact details. E-mail magnus.olofsson@hist.lu.se | **Visiting address** Helgonavägen 3, Lund | **Postal address** Box 192, 221 00 Lund, Sweden

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Contested streets. Political marches in Stockholm, 1887–1920.

By Magnus Olofsson, PhD.¹

How and when did a democratic, participatory way of doing politics become established in Sweden? Or, to put it in a more theoretical way, how and when did swedes adopt a democratic repertoire of contention? In the early 19th century formal (national) politics in Sweden was limited to a small group of elite men in government and parliament; there were no political parties or other organizations, and the franchise was limited. For most people, petitions and riots were the major ways of making politics. This would change up to the democratic breakthrough during 1917–1920, the old oligarchy would slowly give way to democracy, and the repertoire of contention would change; swedes would learn how organize (mass) political parties and voter organizations, clubs and unions, mass meetings (*folkmöten*) and political marches (while they continued to petition and riot). That the repertoire changed is quite clear, but how and when (and why), is questions that needs to be answered if we are to fully understand Sweden's, in a European perspective late, democratization.²

This paper is part of larger project in which I try to answer a part of these, very encompassing questions (see also Erik Bengtsson's paper in this session): the use of political meetings (stationary and moving) in Stockholm c 1830 to c 1920. Here, I focus on the latter part of that time frame and on political marches (demonstrations). Why just Stockholm, those years, and marches? One reason is that there is a useful source material for Stockholm for these years (see below). Another is that the right to hold assemblies such as political marches were limited by the authorities in Stockholm, seemingly more limited than in other part of the country (see below).³ The reason for this seems to have been that Stockholm was the political centre of Sweden, the home of the royals, the seat of government and the parliament. Hence, both those that fought against and for democratization (and other changes) were active there, both the old oligarchy and the new mass parties and the popular movements. Looking at the repertoire of contention in Stockholm can reveal how the most important political actors in Sweden used and didn't use political marches to make claims and shape public opinion during the country's birth as a democracy. This includes a look at the local authorities, which through their interpretation of the laws and local ordinances wielded great power over whom could march where and when in the capital, and hence shaped the local repertoire of contention.⁴

Public meetings, political marches, contested streets⁵

A couple of years ago, I tried to sum up the present knowledge on political marches in Sweden's past a book chapter. Not much is known, and when it comes to Stockholm even less so. To start with the legal framework, until 1849 public meetings were (with some minor exceptions) forbidden in Sweden. That year public meetings were allowed, though the only if the authorities were notified. In 1864 a very far-reaching freedom of assembly was granted, but an ordinance in 1868 that right was rolled back again as far as cities were concerned: any public assembly needed the approval of the

¹ I would like to thank Erik Bengtsson, Andrés Brink Pinto, Martin Ericsson, Johan A. Lundin and Stefan Nyzell for help and support during the work this project.

² For Sweden's late democratization, see Bengtsson 2019; Bengtsson 2020; Åmark 1988.

³ For the full argument, see Olofsson 2018.

⁴ See furthermore Olofsson 2018, p 65–68.

⁵ This section is based on Olofsson 2016 and Olofsson 2018.

authorities. This ordinance was further clarified in 1887, which was the last change legal regarding the freedom of assembly during the years covered in this paper.

As for political marching in Stockholm before and during the years covered in this paper, not much is known.⁶ The first instances I have found in previous research are the so called "goose marches" (*gåsamarcher*) of 1851 and 1852, during which long lines of people moved through the streets in wordless displays of political discontent. More recognizable political marches for a modern observer came in the summer of 1869.⁷ During a strike the construction workers of Stockholm staged two well organized marches to back their claims, i.e. modern demonstrations. I have found no marches in the following 15 years in the capital. In the first of 1886 the nascent labour movement (the social democratic party was founded in 1889) staged two marches.

However, this open display by socialists made those in higher places nervous. June 10th 1886, the Lord Governor of Stockholm (Överståthållaren) issued a local ordinance which forbade political marches and processions in the inner city (basically the built up parts of Stockholm, but not the surrounding countryside that administratively belonged to the city of Stockholm).⁸ Thus, the labour movement's May Day marches, starting in 1890, were only allowed to assemble in the outskirts of the city proper and then to march away from the city, into the countryside. This ban would stay in place into the spring of 1902, when the franchise right riots finally forced the Lord Governor to accept political marches in the centre of the city. It is known that the social democrats staged a number of huge marches the following decades, of which those held in 1914, 1917 and 1918 is perhaps the most mentioned. However, evidently at late as 1908 the social democrats staged an illegal march in a protest against the authorities control over streets. Clearly, the streets of Stockholm were contested, and, as the freedom of assembly of the social democrats were curtailed at least up until 1908, the question must be posed if other groups also suffered the same fate and if so for how long.

So much about the labouring poor and the labour movement. Concerning the temperance and revivalist movement, there is no systematic knowledge, nor is there for the feminist, franchise, and peace movements. As for liberal and conservative use of political marches – who knows? I have shown that the conservative press as late as 1902 dismissed the labour movement's marches held that spring as political illegitimate, ridiculous.⁹ Of course, Yeomen's march in 1914 shows that at least some conservatives had adopted the political march at that time, but if that was something unique or were preceded or followed by more marches is, again, unknown. This paper will at least partly rectify what we know off political marches in the repertoire of contention in Stockholm during the years of democratization.

⁶ But for the social democratic May Day parades, see for example Engman 1999.

⁷ Katarina Andersson discusses a number of marches and processions in various Swedish cities in the first half of the 1860s; some of these were sponsored by the establishment, others arranged by national liberals, but only one of these seems to have been staged in Stockholm, the Union Day of 1864, and included the royal family, and can thus hardly be seen as contentious performance. Andersson 2004, p 126.

⁸ Olofsson 2018, pp 68–69, 71.

⁹ Olofsson 2016, p 44.

Definitions, sources, complications

In this paper I will analyse political marches in Stockholm between 1887 and 1920, to try to understand their role in repertoire of contention.¹⁰ A “political march” is here defined as a contentious performance¹¹ during which an group of people march together with the purpose of 1) making collective claims for change (such as suffrage for women, or better animal rights), typically through singing, banners or placards, with bearing on some other group of people, such as employers, authorities, the parliament or the government or 2) showcase their collective worthiness, unity, numbers and commitment (WUNC) to societal change.¹²

The sources used is the archives of the Office of the Lord Governor of Stockholm (henceforth “ÖÄ”, short for Överståthållarämbetet). This archive contains applications to the ÖÄ to hold marches (processions, etc), political or not, within its jurisdiction, which all organizations and individuals were obliged to submit according to the ordinance of June 10th, 1886. The relevant documents are kept in three separate series, the journal, the acts and the registry. The journal consists of a short summary of each application, with information of the applicant including any organisational affiliation, the type of activity (apart from marches, one also had to apply to stage bazars, balls, ice skating, bicycle competitions, freak shows and to have a billiard hall or a cinema, etc), date and place, and the ÖÄs internal notes, including if the application was approved or denied. The acts contain the original application and any corresponding correspondence from police districts and other authorities to the ÖÄ. This material throws much light on the short and rather cryptic notes in the journal, but many acts have been sorted out, and the material is thus far from complete. The registry, finally, contains the full written resolution of the ÖÄ to the applications.

To date, I have gone through the journal and the acts for the years 1887, 1890, 1893, 1896, 1899, 1901, 1902, 1905, 1908, 1911, 1914, 1917 and 1920, i.e., every third year starting in 1887 plus 1901. This material is analysed below. As slightly more than a third of the years for the period 1887–1920 are included, this sample that should be representative, and should capture overall and broader trends. In due time I want to include all the relevant sources – journal, acts and registry – for all the years to give a complete picture.

This material comes with a couple of complications which need to be kept in mind regarding what conclusions it allows. One is that we know that groups could and did stage political marches without applying to ÖÄ – two such cases, both by social democrats, are known.¹³ The number of such unlawful marches were likely small, but to give a complete picture of political marches in Stockholm

¹⁰ I define “repertoires of contention” as “the established ways in which pairs of actors make and receive claims bearing on each other’s interests”, see Tilly 2005, p 43; Tilly & Tarrow 2007, p 202.

¹¹ I define “contentious performance” as “relatively familiar and standardized ways on which one set of political actors makes collective claims on some other set of political actors”, Tilly & Tarrow 2007, p 202. At any given time, a given repertoire of contention consists of an array of contentious performances. See also Kriesi 2009, p 341–349.

¹² For claim making and popular politics, see Tilly 2005, p xx, 16-17, 43; for WUNC see Tarrow & Tilly 2007, p 119-120; Tilly 2004, p 4–5. The idea here is by manifesting its WUNC in a march, even if no explicit claims are made, an organization nevertheless shows that it is a political actor that needs to be considered by other actor, including those in power. For example, a funeral procession for a left-wing politician (or member of the Salvation army) is a show of force for that politician’s cause, even if no open claims are made during the march through the city. Cf. Tilly 2004, p 4–5, passim; Brink Pinto & Ericsson 2019, p 11–17.

¹³ In 1887 and 1908, see Olofsson 2018, p 74, 76.

they need to be found (newspaper are probably the most accessible source).¹⁴ Reversely, it cannot be ruled out that some of the marches in the journal were cancelled by the organizers; thus the true number of marches could be both lower and higher than the number of applications.

Another complication is that the purpose of a given march is not always given in the journal and that most of the acts, which generally contains more information, are lost. For the larger marches, the purpose – the political claims made – will likely be available in the newspapers, but for now I will base the analysis on the assumption that all marches organized by any overtly political organization or popular movement (*folkrörelse*) organization set on broader societal change were political, even if they in some cases rather was about showcase WUNC than making open claims. I should also be remembered, lastly, that the material in the ÖÄ do not give the number of participants in these marches. Some of the marches were probably made by just a dozen or a few dozen people, others by tens of thousands. Again, here the newspapers will be needed if one wants to discuss the number of people participating in these marches.

Applications¹⁵

What actors then did apply for the right stage political marches in Stockholm during the period 1887–1920? And how did marching change throughout this period? What does the data tell of the growth of a democratic repertoire of contention in the Swedish capital?

Table 1 shows the number of applications for the selected years. As can be seen, the number was high in 1887 compared to the following years with a peak of 16 applications, followed by between 6 and 14 applications per year up to and including 1901. After a drop in 1902, the number of applications rose steadily in 1905, again in 1908 and 1911, rising sharply to 43 in 1914, a year which saw more applications than 1887, 1893, 1896 and 1899 combined. The numbers then dropped off in 1917 and again in 1920, but that drop do not tell the whole story.

Up to 1914 every application was for exactly one march each. But by 1917 ÖÄ's praxis had changed: one application could include two or more marches. There are eight such applications in 1917 and eight in 1920. In some of these cases it is clear from the journal or the registry that these applications were for two or three marches each. These applications alone add four marches in 1917 and eight marches in 1920.¹⁶ To this, there comes one application for eight marches in 1917 and one very sweeping application for potentially a whopping 43 marches in 1920.¹⁷ The rest of these large applications are unclearly worded, for example an application to organize marches "during this year's summer on Sundays" (application 1039 in 1917), making it impossible to pin down how many marches each application concerned.¹⁸ Due these issues (which, hopefully, the registry can throw some more light on), the exact number of marches applied for in 1917 and 1920 cannot be determined. Nevertheless, it is clear that the drop in the number of applications in Figure 1 for the

¹⁴ It should also be noted that the military did not apply for its marches.

¹⁵ The text and tables that follows are based on the sources listed towards the end of the paper.

¹⁶ 1917, application 275 (2 in total), 1134 (2 in total), 1317 (2 in total), 1555 (2 in total). 1920, application 1125 (3 in total), 1212 (3 in total), 1379 (3 in total), 1551 (2 in total), 1561 (2 in total).

¹⁷ 1917, application 1502. 1920, application 756.

¹⁸ 1917, application 1039, 1148, 1298. 1920 application 618, 629, 756.

years 1917 and 1920 did not correspond with a drop in the number of marches applied for – both years saw an increase from 1914.

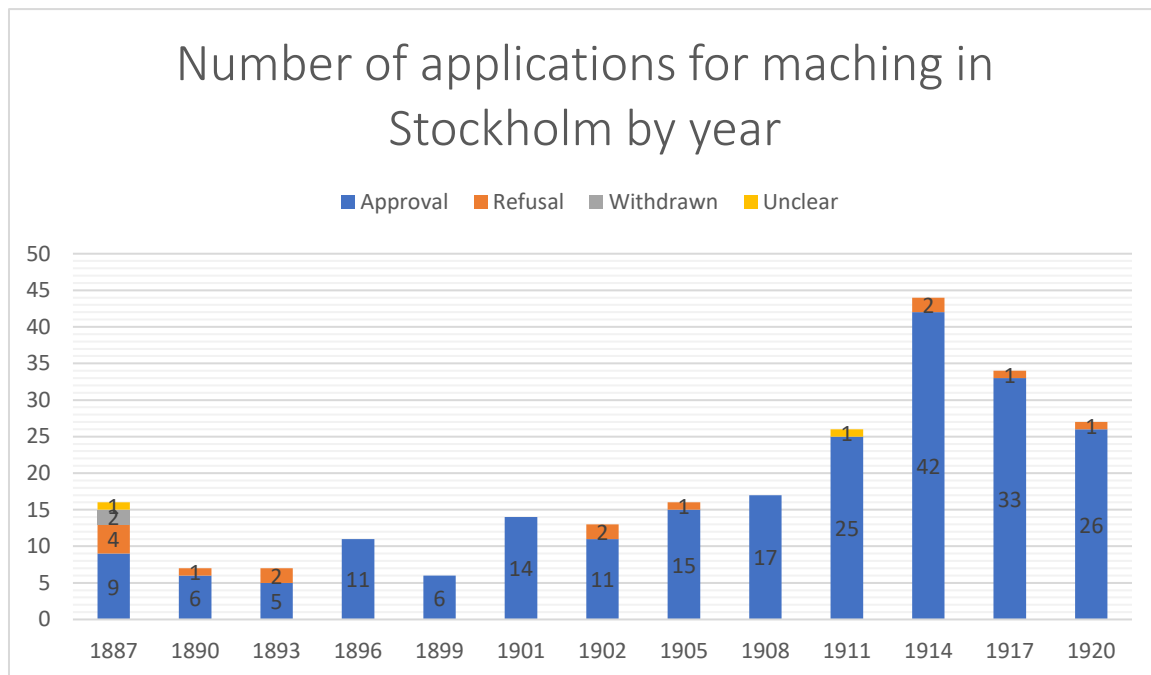


Table 1. Source: See Sources.

To sum up, from the early peak in 1887, the interest for marching in Stockholm fell to a lower level during the 1890s, followed by an increase in the 1900s and again in 1910s. Clearly, more and more organizations and individuals wanted to march in Stockholm as time went by. This increase by itself need not, however, necessarily mean that organizations and individuals in Stockholm embraced the political march in its repertoire of contention: to find out in so what the case, it is necessary to look at which groups it was that organized and participated in the growing number of marches in the Swedish capital.

The applications came from a wide variety of organizations. Some of them were clearly political, such as Stockholms' arbetarekommun (Labour Commune) or Liberala valmansföreningen (Liberal Voters Union, a predecessor of today's Liberal Party). Others were clearly not very political, such as Stockholms bicycleklubb (Stockholm's Bicycle Club) or Sällskapet barnvännernas julflaggestyrelse (Society Friends of the Childrens Christmas Flag Board). Some fell in between, such as Stockholms allmänna sångförening (Stockholms' General Singers Union) or Stockholms flickors socutkår (Stockholm's Girls Scout Corps), organizations which did not make any open demands for political change but embraced a conservative patriotism.¹⁹

The analysis here will first focus on organizations that had an open political agenda: conservative, liberal or social democratic party organizations and affiliated organizations and the three popular movements: the labour movement (including unions and People's House), the temperance movement and the revivalist movement. Marches by these organizations must in many cases have been openly political, demanding for example universal suffrage or larger naval budget, and in the

¹⁹ Lundberg 2018, pp 55–64.

cases where such demands were not present, can be seen as a show of WUNC in a larger project bent on societal change. Their applications are summed up in Table 2.

The Labour party and the three popular movements taken together applied for a majority of all marches during the years covered in this analysis. These actors organized political marches in 1887 and in 1920 and in all the years in between. The Labour party or labour movement applied for at least two marches every year, while organizations or members of the temperance movement and the revivalist movement applied for a least one march per year in almost all of the covered years. In terms of the establishment of a democratic, participatory repertoire of contention, it is striking that all these actors wanted to make political marches already in 1887.

Looking at the three clusters over time, the Labour party and labour movement show a great variance in the number of applications per year, with eight and seven during the politically contentious years 1902 and 1917. The temperance movement applied for almost as many marches as the Labour party and labour movement and the revivalist movement combined in 1887, but its share fell dramatically over the years: in the 1890s its organizations applied for seven marches, but just three in the 1910s. If the temperance movement made fewer political marches as time went by, the revivalist movement increased steadily after the turn of the century. The Salvation Army made a couple of the abovementioned mass applications in 1917 and 1920, which means that the number of marches they wanted to hold was far larger than Table 1 shows.

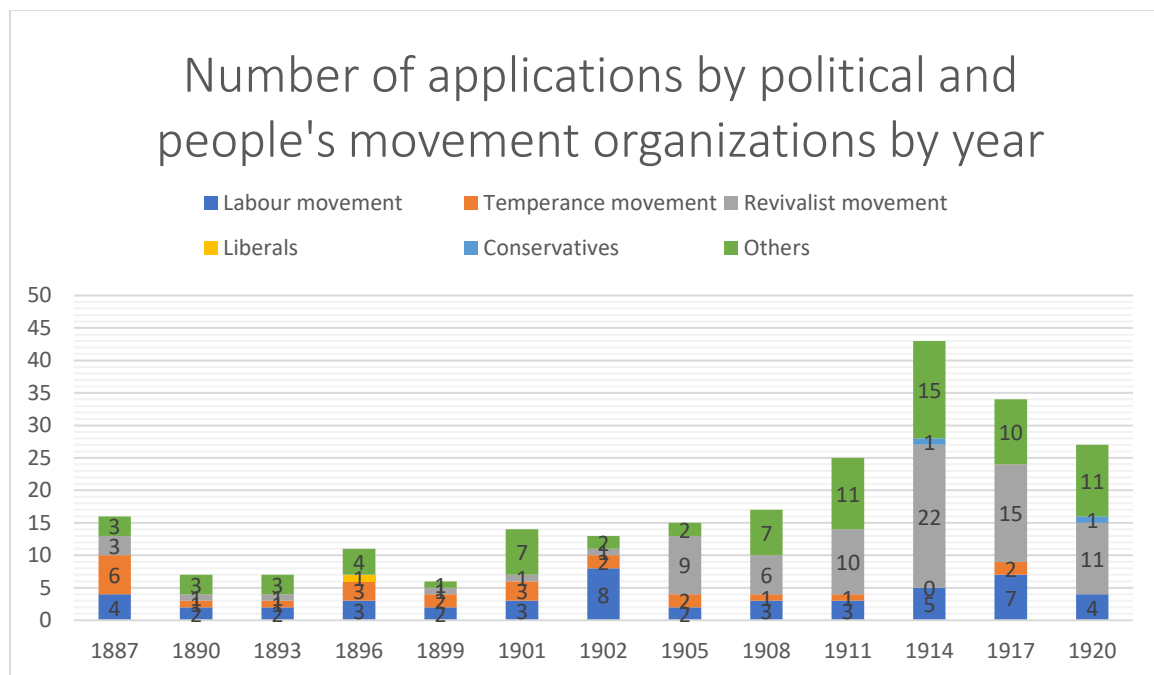


Table 2. Source: See Sources.

Taking this line of investigation one step further, the data allows a look at individual organizations. This gives a striking illustration of political marching in the Swedish capital. The most active organization was the Salvation army. Revivalist organizations made a total of 81 applications during the years analysed, and of those the Salvation Army alone made 77. Indeed, it was only in 1911 that another revivalist organizations (Stockholms fria missionsförening, Stockholms' Free Missonary

Union) applied for a march. Among the temperance organizations, no single organization was that dominant, but the Good Templars made many applications during the 19th century.

The Labour party and labour movement made 48 applications. Of these, ten was from unions, one from the party and the union together, and 29 from the Social democratic party. During the 19th century the party applications were made in the name of the (national) party or the northern district of the party but starting in 1901 the applications invariably came from the Labour Commune of Stockholm (founded in 1900), which from then on made a total of 22 applications for political marches.

During the thirteen individual years covered by this paper liberals made a total of one application for a political march: a celebration of the old popular tribune Adolf Hedin on his 62nd birthday, April 23rd, 1896.²⁰ Given that Swedish liberals was fiercely pro freedom of assembly,²¹ this is rather noteworthy: liberalism here appears as a political movement which was all for the freedom of assembly but was rather uninterested in using that right on the streets for themselves.²²

There are two applications from conservatives in Table 1. In 1914 the Committee for the Reception of the Yeomen's march made the application that enabled the famous Yeomen's march in support of naval armament. Six years later a B Mollvig made an application for a march in conjunction with the Swedish Flag Day, i.e. the unofficial national day. While conservatives clearly were far less interested in political marches than the social democrats and their affiliated organizations, the fact that they did organize a march in 1914 is still important in the context of the establishment of a democratic repertoire of contention. In 1902 the conservative press mocked the labour party's political marches as empty, pointless shenanigans by people who were not political subjects;²³ twelve years later conservative forces arranged one of the largest political marches in the history of the capital; this indicate that there had been a shift in how Swedish conservatives views the political march. It seems as if conservatives were adopting the weapons of the democratic repertoire of contention, if far later than Swedish liberals and socialist.

As for applications from organizations or individuals which were not openly political in the way the organizations above were they are summed up in Table 4. In some cases, these marches certainly can be seen as a way for these groups to showcase their WUNC, and that political demands were made during these marches cannot be ruled out, but this will need further investigation. For what's it's worth, while Sunday school children and Stockholm's General Singers Union were keen marchers already at the start of the period covered here, new groups started to march as time went by: sports organizations (from 1893), students (from 1908), scouts (from 1914). The year 1920 saw the Church of Sweden apply for a march. Clearly, more and more organizations wanted to showcase their WUNC (or just walk together) in the streets of Stockholm as time went by.

²⁰ In 1893, Sven Johan Johansson applied for "workers" to march in a celebration of the libera democrat Anton Nyström, but the application was made by an individual this have been coded as an "Other" application. Given Nyströms politics this could possibly qualify as a liberal event.

²¹ Cf Olofsson 2016; Olofsson 2018.

²² It should be noted thought, that liberals took part in the huge social democratic demonstration 27th April 1902, and other such participation cannot be ruled out. See Olofsson 2016, p 43.

²³ Olofsson 2016, p 44.

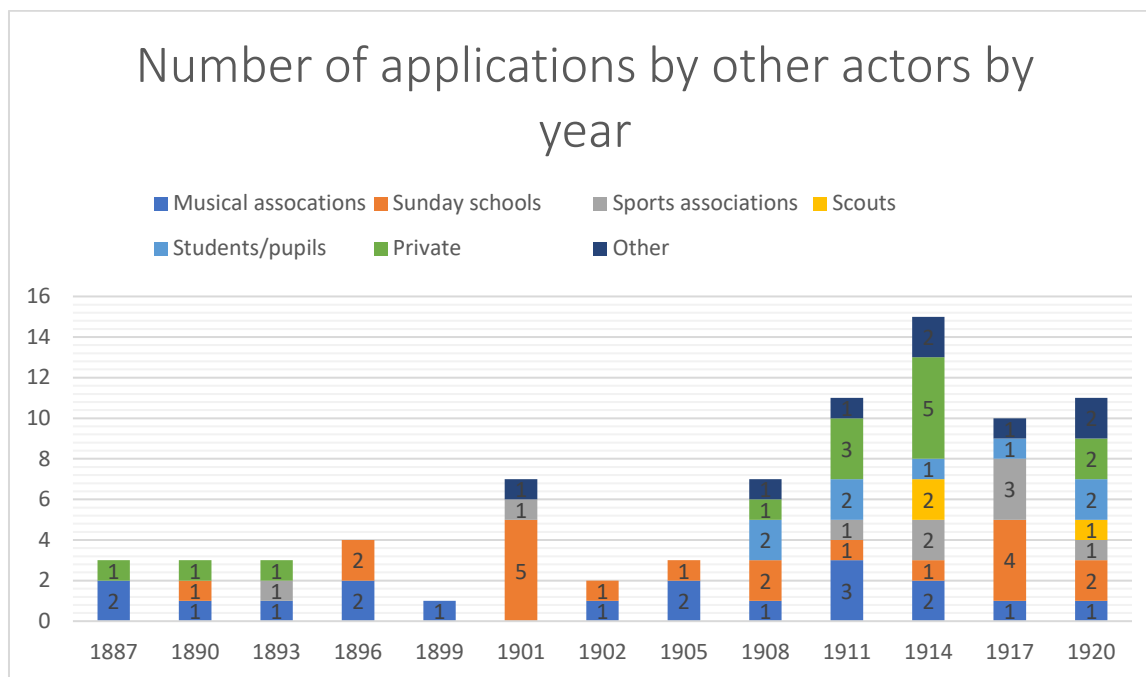


Table 3. Source: See Sources.

This analysis makes possible a couple of conclusions. Already in 1887, the political march was a given way of making politics for both the labour, the temperance, and the revivalist movement, in the guise of the Labour party, the Good templars and the Salvation army. This analysis alone cannot answer the question as to how these organizations came to adopt the political march, but a couple of reflections can be made. All three organizations had their ideological and organizational roots in larger, international movements, and they can all have learned of the political march through transnational transfer. Denmark can also have been important here: René Karpantschof has shown that there was a shift in the way Danes made politics in the year 1885 which saw the “breakthrough of mass politics”²⁴ and a leap in popular use of petitions and mass meetings, and this could have influenced the way neighbouring Swedes made politics to; that the labour movement held two marches in the first half of 1886 certainly don not gainsay such an conclusion. However, it is noteworthy that during this shift towards a democratic repertoire of contention in Denmark the conservatives organized more than a quarter of all political actions;²⁵ Swedish conservatives seems to have been far more conservative (pun intended) in this regard, at least in respect to political marches. The Danish Left (*Venstre*), i.e., liberals, were also very active during the breakthrough years. Of course, given that the Swedish urban lower classes started using political marches during the 1850s, and bourgeois national liberals in the 1860s,²⁶ there were also local traditions to be inspired by. More research is needed clarify the use of the political march before 1887.

If it can be said that the political march already was the weapon of choice for some political actors in Stockholm in 1887, what about what happened up to 1920? As can be seen, the number of applications increased rather dramatically, but it its noteworthy that most of the increase was due to

²⁴ Karpantschof 2007, p 309.

²⁵ Karpantshcof 2007.

²⁶ Olofsson 2018, p 69. Se also Andersson 2004; Cederqvist 1980; Karlbom 1967.

the growing activity of the Salvation army. It is likely that their marches, however frequent, had relatively few participants,²⁷ in contrast with the labour party/movement, which held few political marches, but with up to 50000 participants each. A significant change is of course the Yeomans march, a milestone in the development of a democratic repertoire of contention in the capital, as it shows that conservative forces had embraced the march as a valid political. The march during the celebration of the unofficial national day in 1920 confirms that conservatives were, if slowly, adopting the political march. This result implies that Swedish conservatives were much later than Danish conservatives in adopting a democratic repertoire of contention, though more research on other part of that repertoire (popular meetings, election meetings, petitions, etc) needs to be done to give a full picture of the conservative politics.

In conclusion, during in the decades before and after the turn of the century the Labour party/labour movement and the revivalist movement arranged most political marches in Stockholm; they made more applications for marches together than all other organizations did (129 out of 235, or 55 per cent). Zooming in on concrete organizations, the Labour Commune of Stockholm and the various Salvation Army Corps were the most active individual organizations, which together made 99 (42 per cent of the total) applications during the years included in this study. The temperance movement had a much smaller share of the applications, and became less interested in organization political marches after the turn of the century. As for liberals and conservatives, they stood for only one percent of all the applications, in sharp contrast with Danish liberals and conservatives which adopted mass politics already in the mid-1880s.

Lastly in this section, a few words on organizations that do not show up in the material used here. Strikingly, the peace movement and the feminist movement, both which were important political actors in the first decades of the 20th century, did not apply for a single march. As for the peace movement, Fredrik Egefur has written about a couple of political marches held in Helsingborg in 1906, and the feminist movement did hold at least one political march in Gothenburg in 1918,²⁸ so political marches was clearly part of their repertoire of contention at the start of the century. Also noteworthy is the absence of Swedish Public Suffrage Association (Sveriges allmänna rösträttsförbund), in being 1890 to 1900, did not apply for any marches, not even during the years of their two People's parliaments (Folkriksdagar, 1893, 1896). These organizations could of course have made applications during years not included in this analysis, but the number of applications is unlikely to have been very many.

Rejections

The regulations of 1886 gave the ÖÄ the power to approve or reject of any application. We know that they used this to forbid the labour movement to hold their 1st of May marches on the streets of Stockholm; only after the victory in 1902 were the labour movement allowed to march inside the city proper. They could also use this power to reject any application, and they did so, if not very often. As

²⁷ It is unclear how many members the Salvation army had in Stockholm during the timeframe of this paper. In 1892 there were 10000 in 130 corps' in the whole of Sweden. In 1915 the 1. Corps in Stockholm had 554 members, and they were not the only corps, the 2., 3., and 6. Corps can also be found in my material. Given that many of the marches were organized by just one corps, the number of participants in these marches were likely numbered into their dozens or hundreds. For the figures given above, see Lundin 2003, p 48, 50.

²⁸ Egefur 2017; Holgersson 2018, p 108–109.

can be seen in Table 1, 14 applications were rejected during the 13 years covered in this paper. Of these, half were made during 1887, 1890 and 1893, the three first years. This could mean that the ÖA became more lenient from the mid-1890s, but it could also just mean that organizations learned to write applications (for example, applying for marches outside the built-up area of the city) that were acceptable to the ÖA. Here further research is needed.

Looking at the 14 applications ÖA rejected, we find one application from an individual, one from the Good templars, six from the Salvation army and six from the labour party/movement. Thus, 86 percent (twelve out of 14) of the marches the ÖA rejected concerned organizations that made 55 percent of the applications. Given the sheer number of applications made by labour party/movement and the Salvation army, they if anyone should have the knowledge of how to please the ÖA. It seems that the ÖA used the regulations of 1886 to harass the labour party/movement and the Salvation army specifically. Nationalistic singers, patriotic scouts, Sunday school children, sports organizations, university students were invariably allowed to march, for example, and so was liberals and conservatives in the few cases they wanted to. It should be noted that the labour party/movement had applications rejected at late as 1914 and the Salvation army as late as 1920, which could possibly mean that the ÖA continued to resist the freedom of assembly from these groups up to and during the democratic breakthrough.

The ÖA registry contains the written rejections, and I hope to be able to read through all the rejections to see how the ÖA argued for their rejections – were they rejected for formal reasons or were other arguments used? I have transcribed one rejection so far, for an application from Stockholm's Mountain Blaster union to stage a procession in the summer of 1902, and it do not include neither a reason nor an argument: ÖÖ "finds no reason to approve",²⁹ and that's that. It remains to be seen if this is how the ÖA acted in other cases too.

Final thoughts

Regarding political marching in Stockholm, there is a lot of research left to be done. Firstly, to go through all of the journals, the acts and the registry. Secondly, to see what the newspapers report on these marches (and any illegal ones), focussing on claims made, groups participating (for example, liberals in social democratic marches), and numbers partaking. This, of course, is just one piece of the large puzzle of the growth and establishment of modern mass politics and corresponding changes in the repertoire of contention. On this, there is a growing body of knowledge; Jan Christensen has studied the use of petitions between 1860 and 1899 among those pro parliamentary reform and extended franchise, Erik Bengtsson on the use of popular meetings during the same time frame,³⁰ for example. The overall picture is still fragmentary, but what can be glimpsed implies that already in the 1860s many people in Sweden were marching³¹, petitioning and meeting in their striving for political change, and by the 1890s participation in a more democratic repertoire of contention seems to have been widespread among the popular movements and left-wing political actors. The conservative actors, it would seem, would adopt popular meetings and political marching, only after the turn of the century.

²⁹ Stadsarkivet, Överståthållarämbetet, Polisärenden 1, Registratur, BI c:14, 12th June 1902, no 796.

³⁰ Christensen 1997; Bengtsson 2021. See also Bengtsson paper in this session!

³¹ See Andersson 2004 for some marches in the first half of the 1860s.

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