Watershed events and changes in public order management systems: Organizational adaptation as a social movement outcome

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Research on protest policing has become an important niche within social movement studies. There is widespread acknowledgement in this field that police strategies and tactics are in part an adaptation to contemporary forms of protest and that this adaption has occurred through a process of tactical interaction and gradual institutionalization of different forms of protests (Combes & Fillieule, 2011). However, thus far police organizational adaptation has not been explicitly framed as a type of social movement outcome. The argument in this chapter is that analysing police organizational change in response to protest events as a social movement outcome contributes to a better understanding of both consequences of social movements and developments in protest policing.

Research on social movement outcomes has previously focused on political, cultural, and biographical outcomes (Giugni, 2008). Outcomes regarding changes in *institutionalized organizational practices* do not fall neatly into any of these categories and have received considerably less attention (for an exception, see Zald, Morrill, & Rao, 2005). Furthermore, this type of social movement outcome is largely *unintended* (Tilly, 1999). It is related less to the substantial demands and framings of social movements than to the "repertoires of action" (Tilly, 1978) associated with movements and protest campaigns.

Historically, government interest in suppressing violent protests during the early to mid-19th century played a significant role in the development of the modern police force. In Britain, concerns about riots and social disorder were used to justify the creation of modern police forces (Reiner, 1998, 2000). Similarly, in Sweden the failure of the city guards to contain the March 1848 riots in Stockholm, which resulted in the deaths of 18 protesters, constituted a tipping point in a process that led to a modernized Stockholm city police authority (Furuhagen, 2004). Presumably,

it was not only fear of a popular uprising among the ruling class that contributed to such events. Compared to most other police tasks, large-scale public order policing is a generally far more public and direct measure of police performance. Crowd control failures are difficult to conceal and likely to lead to criticism and political pressure for reform.

Later examples of the impact of protests on police organizations include the development of a "negotiated management" approach to protest policing in response to protests during the late 1960s and early 1970s (McCarthy & McPhail, 1998). The massive wave of anti-globalization summit protests since the end of the 1990s also posed policing challenges and gave rise to potentially lasting adaptations in national protest policing styles (cf. della Porta, Peterson, & Reiter, 2006). The present analysis focuses on Denmark and Sweden, where the links between recent watershed events and subsequent reforms are clear-cut and easily traceable. These two cases are compared with three other major contemporary protest events in Italy, the UK, and the US respectively, in order to identify central factors for differences in outcomes. In all cases the police failed spectacularly and were consequently subject to considerable criticism. In Denmark, Sweden, the UK, and the US events led to identifiable changes in protest policing styles; in Italy no significant changes could be linked to the event.

The time frame of the cases is roughly the period of frequent summit protests that began with the 1999 World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in Seattle. The watershed event in the Danish case occurred earlier, but the new protest policing style developed subsequently was not put to a real test until the 2002 European Union (EU) summit in Copenhagen. Thus the cases are all in the context of the same wave of protests and are interdependent in terms of international learning processes.

This analysis is based on: a review of research on protest policing, an analysis of post-event evaluation reports, and an empirical research project on protest policing in Sweden and Denmark. The latter included observations of police training in protest policing, interviews with political activists and interviews with police officers of different ranks (Wahlström, 2011).[1] Below, the relevant literature on both protest policing and social movement outcomes is reviewed. The five empirical cases are then presented, followed by an analysis of the role of protesters and social movement activists in police organizational change.

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[1] This chapter is based in part on the introduction to the author's doctoral dissertation (Wahlström, 2011).

Theories about police organizational adaptation and movement outcomes

Protest policing: tactics, styles, and public order management systems

Just as social movements adapt to various forms of repression by authorities, police forces adjust their intervention tactics to the tactical repertoires and scale of political protests. During intensive protest periods, these two tendencies may combine into what McAdam (1983) labelled tactical interaction. From an organizational perspective, such tactical innovations are best understood as elements of police organizations' *continuous* changes in adapting to their environments. However, occasionally police organizations undergo radical *episodic* change (Weick & Quinn, 1999) as they undertake fundamental revisions of protest policing strategies. In the academic literature on protest policing, such transformations are conceptualized as changes in "protest policing styles" or, more comprehensively, as introductions of new, or modified, "public order management systems" (POMS) (McCarthy, McPhail, & Crist, 1999; Noakes & Gillham, 2006). The POMS concept includes broad organizational arrangements with five components:

> (1) civilian and/or military police organizations, (2) the public order policies of these organizations, (3) these organizations' programs for recruiting and training personnel (civilian or military) to enact these policies, (4) the actual practices of these policing personnel, and (5) the technology and equipment used while carrying out these practices. (McPhail et al., 1998: 64)

"Protest policing style" focuses attention on the fourth and, to some extent, the second and fifth components. Broadly speaking, most western democracies have developed during the latter half of the 20th century from exhibiting a more rigid "escalated force style" of protest policing to a more flexible and facilitating "negotiated management" of protests (McPhail, Schweingruber, & McCarthy, 1998). However, protest policing styles are seldom entirely consistent and there are regional and national cases that diverge from the general pattern (Rafail, 2014).

A number of factors have an impact on the predominant style of protest policing. These include: the legal framework; the current configuration of political power; the predominant discourses in mainstream media; the structure, culture, and technology available to the police organization; and the characteristics of contemporary social movements (della Porta & Reiter, 1998, 2006b). International factors include structures for coordination and communication between police forces and the degree of openness or closure of international institutions to demands from civil society. Ultimately, global processes such as the rise of the neo-liberal

economic system may be taken into account (Wood, 2014). According to della Porta and Reiter, all factors are filtered through "police knowledge"—i.e. the police officers' collective constructions of external reality (della Porta and Reiter, 1998). Related to this is "police philosophy", i.e. the dominant perceptions among police officers of their role in society (Winter, 1998). Both police knowledge and police philosophy should be treated as typically being more conscious, variable, and (in the case of police knowledge) practically applied aspects of the broader phenomenon "police culture" (Loftus, 2009; Wahlström, 2007).

Several authors have observed that specific "watershed events" sometimes trigger rapid change in police strategies and POMS (e.g., King, 2006). Such events typically involve policing failures: spectacular losses of control, injured police officers, and/or wounded demonstrators or onlookers. Generally, organizational changes are preceded by crises and failures because such events force organizations to reconsider practices that have been previously taken for granted (Powell, 1991). Reiner (1998) notes that senior police officers portray the tactical and strategic changes in British protest policing as reactions to new public order challenges manifested as failures during specific events (including the 1976 Notting Hill riots and the 1980 Bristol riots). Similarly, in Italy and Germany the protest waves between the 1960s and 1980s contributed to reformation of the old POMS (della Porta, 1995). However, we still lack systematic knowledge about how protest events contribute to police organizational change and how characteristics of events might contribute to the character of POMS changes.

Episodic police organizational change as a social movement outcome
Zald and colleagues (2005) provide a rare example of a general analysis of social movements' impact on organizations.[2] The authors identify three factors that affect organizations' response to pressures from social movements: (1) the ideological commitments among the prominent organization members to the movement's goals, (2) the organizational capacity to implement new procedures, and (3) environmental pressures (surveillance and sanctions). Although protesters' influence on police tactics is usually unintended, the factors mentioned by Zald and colleagues can be adapted to fit this class of cases. "Ideological commitment" can in the present case be translated into the dominant police philosophy, as well as the internal evaluations in response to specific events. "Organizational capacity" can be interpreted as financial resources, availability of professional competence, and centralization of police organizations. "Pressure" can be interpreted here as the character of external evaluations and pressure from public opinion.

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[2] See also King (2008).

Major protest events are potential windows of opportunity for social movement activists to influence public opinion about protest policing, or even to direct lobbying for change in the police organization. Della Porta (1999) pointed to the development of more differentiated framing of demonstrators in Italian and German public discourse as a result of protracted protest campaigns between the 1960s and the 1980s. In response to changes in public opinion, police forces adopted differentiated tactics.

Previous research indicates that pressure from public opinion results in policing strategy changes via the police knowledge of high-ranking police officers (della Porta & Reiter, 1998) who consider their own interpretation of events, and sometimes also those of lower-ranking officers, politicians, external experts and/or representatives of the security industry (Wood, 2014). As in other organizations, external influences have a stronger potential to instigate organizational reform if they are challenges to police organizational *legitimacy* (Ashworth, Boyne, & Delbridge, 2009; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). According to Suchman (1995), three general types of organizational legitimacy can be distinguished: *pragmatic* legitimacy (whether important stakeholders regard the activities of an organization as beneficial to them), *moral* legitimacy (whether an organization is perceived by its stakeholders to do the right thing), and *cognitive* legitimacy (whether an organization and its activities are generally understood and even taken for granted). In principle, legitimacy is dichotomous, a matter of either/or, but in practice an organization can be more or less *clearly* or *firmly* legitimate among different actors (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008).

The pragmatic legitimacy of the police is related to its capacity to uphold the law and maintain order and security. In non-authoritarian states, the police also need to sustain a general sense of moral legitimacy, which is linked to tolerance of demonstrators and upholding the right to public expression. This aspect of police legitimacy is challenged when protest is violently repressed and people are hurt, provided the protesters and their tactics are generally considered morally acceptable. (From the perspective of the protesters, this is also a question about pragmatic legitimacy.) In modern times, police forces generally have a high degree of cognitive legitimacy, given that most people take the institution completely for granted. Nevertheless, in cases of harsh police repression of peaceful protesters some may begin to question the previously taken-for-granted police legitimacy in maintaining public order. Another aspect of cognitive legitimacy is the comprehensibility of police interventions—that they are not perceived as arbitrary or governed by a hidden agenda.

When reacting to perceived external challenges to organizational legitimacy, actors within police organizations respond in the context of organizational myths (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). In

order to protect the organization's central myths, organizations may try to rescue established practices through merely revising formal principles while *decoupling* their actual practices, which remain largely unchanged.

As we shall see below, the contents of the national POMS reforms are influenced by international diffusion. In line with aspects of DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) theory of institutional isomorphism, McCarthy et al. (1999) pointed to *coercive* and *mimetic* mechanisms of POMS diffusion. In the present cases, mimetic isomorphism (imitating practices of foreign police forces) may be triggered by traumatic protest events, while coercion (enforced change in practices) is expressed through external evaluations and in top-down implementation of new POMS on a national level. Della Porta and Tarrow (2012) further identify three processes involved in international diffusion of police and protester behaviour: active *promotion* of strategies by some police agencies, internal and external *assessments* after failures, and *theorization* of new strategic and operational models.
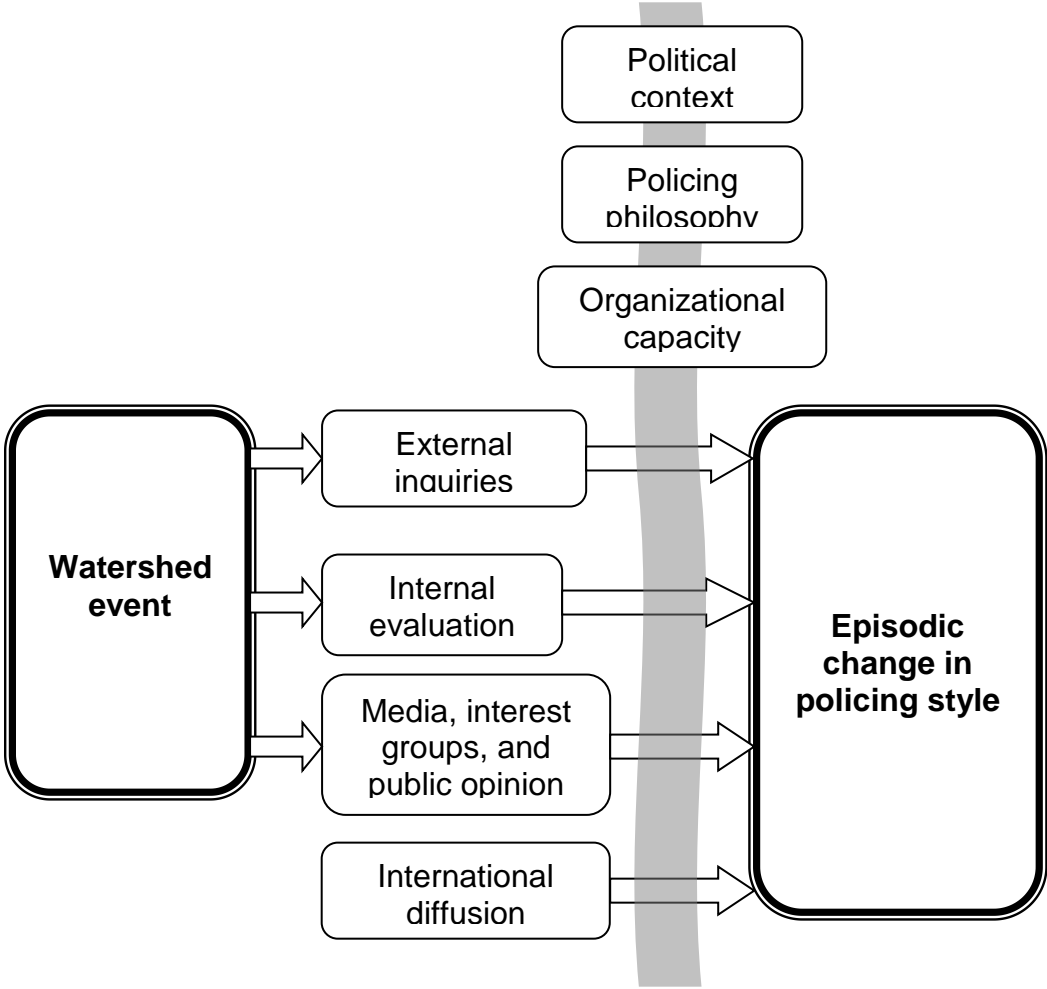

Figure 1. Processes leading to episodic change in protest policing styles.

When we turn to the two main cases, and the three complementary cases, the general goals are to determine the role of social movements in instigating police organizational change through protest and how activists' actions, and the character of protest events, may affect the character of change.

Watershed events and the introduction of new protest policing strategies

Denmark

On 18 May 1993, a majority of Danes accepted the EU Maastricht treaty during the second national referendum on the issue. During the ensuing riots in the Nørrebro area in Copenhagen, the police allegedly fired 113 shots and wounded at least 11 people. Several police officers were injured as well. The event was subject to intense political debate and two official investigations (cf. Christrup, Haagen Jensen, & Homann, 2000), both of which have been criticized for not investigating the police procedures in sufficient detail (Karpantschof & Mikkelsen, 2008: note 50). Still, both external pressures, such as more precise criticism by the Director of Public Prosecutions, and internal pressures, in terms of wanting to avoid any equally traumatic events for the police in the future, contributed to extensive reforms to protest policing strategies and tactics.

In 1996, police inspector Kai Vittrup became commander of the uniformed branch of the Copenhagen Police and took a leading role in the reform work. Based on observations of police practices primarily in Germany and the Netherlands, and on studies of military history, a new policing concept was developed and codified in two extensive volumes (Vittrup, 2003a, 2003b).

Prior to the 1990s, the main developments in Danish protest policing had concerned improved equipment, including the introduction of tear gas. Under new police leadership the goal was to create a more flexible style of policing that, depending on the situation, could become more offensive. A central tenet of the tactical model was to remove law-breaking and disorderly individuals from the crowd by snatch squads. These operational principles were put into practice using armoured and lightly armoured vehicles already used in the Netherlands, and officers were expected to operate primarily without shields and truncheons to facilitate selective arrests. While stressing the need for negotiations, the model also includes repressive forms of interventions beyond the time and place of the protest. This is expressed through the principles of guerrilla warfare; i.e. to be defensive when the opponent is on the offensive, to be offensive when the opponent is defensive and to strike when the opponent is weak (Vittrup, 2003a: 103).

The new "mobile concept" was put to test in connection with the 2002 EU summit in Copenhagen, which included protecting visiting international leaders. The events at the EU summit in Gothenburg (see below) were used by the Danish police as a cautionary example that contributed to the government's decision to invest additional money in a large number of lightly armoured vehicles demanded by the police. During the meeting, there were hardly any violent confrontations between the police and protesters and no serious attempts were made by demonstrators to force the blockades to the EU summit. However, the police operation was marked by a number of repressive proactive strategies, such as checkpoints in the city where people with "suspicious appearances" were frisked, and some blatant shows of force[3] that led to demonstrators feeling criminalized (Peterson, 2006; Wahlström & Oskarsson, 2006).

Conflicts between police and radical groups escalated in 2006 and 2007, in anticipation of the demolition of the regionally well-known squat and music venue Ungdomshuset (the Youth House) (Karpantschof & Lindblom, 2009). In March 2007, the house was evacuated by the police in a military-style operation that was kept secret until its execution. The evacuation ended with several injured demonstrators (Karpantschof, 2009: 70). Subsequently, frustrated youth and activists rioted in the streets with little police control.

The United Nations Climate Change Conference hosted by Copenhagen in December 2009 attracted a number of large protests, including a demonstration of 40,000 to 100,000 participants (Wahlström, Wennerhag, & Rootes, 2013). While the police generally kept a low profile, a conflict in one section of the march resulted in a much-criticized mass detention of 968 demonstrators, among whom 955 were released later that night without prosecution (Ritzau, 2009).

In 2001 the Danish government had changed from a social democratic and liberal government coalition to a liberal conservative government, which passed a number of laws extending the coercive capacities of the police in relation to demonstrators (cf. Karpantschof & Mikkelsen, 2008). The "terrorist package" increased the surveillance capacities of the police and introduced lifetime imprisonment as a potential sentence for several activities related to a very imprecise definition of terrorism (Vestergaard, 2006). The introduction of "frisking zones" allows the police to establish zones within which they have unlimited rights to stop and search. Since 2009, the so-called "rascal package" (Dk: lømmelpakken)[4] has allowed police to detain people for up to 12 hours without arrest and has radically increased the sentence for obstructing police work

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[3] That is, the police tactic of deliberately lining up its resources (i.e. armoured vehicles and police officers in protective equipment) in a disciplined way, in order to intimidate potential "troublemakers" (Vittrup, 2003a: 97–100).
[4] Formal name: "L 49 Forslag til lov om ændring af straffeloven og lov om politiets virksomhed".

in conjunction with disorder. The 2009 mass detention of demonstrators was clearly facilitated by these laws allowing preventive detentions.

Sweden

The EU summit in Gothenburg took place 14-17 June 2001 and included a visit by the then-US President George Bush Jr. Whereas the largest protests (one against Bush and two against the EU) turned out to be orderly and peaceful, both on the part of demonstrators and the police, this was not true for other events on their periphery.

The Gothenburg municipality had provided visiting political demonstrators with accommodation at several schools. Coinciding with the arrival of the US president, Thursday 14 June, the commander of the police campaign decided to detain 500 people present at a school. This resulted in violent conflict around the school and a general build-up of tension and frustration among the activists. When, on Friday, a demonstration moving towards the summit venue put pressure on police cordons barring the road, the police made a rather blunt intervention that triggered a riot on the main avenue in Gothenburg. The undermanned police were temporarily forced to retreat from the avenue by a comparatively small number of determined rioters. During the continued clashes with the protesters in a nearby park, the police opened fire and wounded three people.

After initial praise in the media, the police were subject to critical scrutiny not only by researchers and journalists (e.g. Björk & Peterson, 2002; Löfgren & Vatankhah, 2002) and the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights (Östberg, 2002), but also by a Government Official Report (Göteborgskommittén, 2002). The police preparations, tactics, and organizing in connection with the summit were criticized. The events during the EU summit were also formally assessed by the police in two reports (West Götaland Police Authority, 2002; Swedish National Police Board, 2001). Subsequently, two national projects on tactical development led to a 2004 report (Taktikutvecklingsprojektet, 2004) containing a handful of suggestions concerning the adoption of a new "mobile concept" and the creation of a national reinforcement organization. These suggestions led to the introduction of the new "Special Police Tactics" (hereafter SPT).

Activists had a direct influence on this process in at least two ways. First, a large number were interviewed during the official governmental inquiry, providing their versions of events. Second, a few of the protesters were interviewed by officers at the National Police Board in connection with the early drafts of the new concept.

In 2005 SPT was codified in an official instruction manual (Danielsson et al., 2005). Whereas the Danish "mobile concept" directly influenced SPT, in terms of the overall strategic

principles and its range of tactical manoeuvres, from the start the Swedish concept included further developments, especially concerning its "communicative approach" (Wahlström, 2007). The latter aspect of SPT involves prior negotiation with demonstrators, maintenance of openness to communication between individual police officers and demonstrators, and the development of specialized dialogue police units (Holgersson, 2010). The Swedish National Police Board later hosted a research project in which the new police tactics were evaluated (Adang, 2013; Swedish National Police Board, 2010). The project recommendations were based on the "social identity model" in social psychology: to maintain a differentiated approach to the participants in a demonstration, to assure working communication with demonstrators, and to focus on facilitating the protestors' "legitimate" objectives (Reicher et al., 2007).

Following the EU summit, the Swedish police have not, thus far, faced any comparable challenges and the new policing model has been used primarily during sporting events. However, a series of extreme-right mourning marches in the Stockholm suburb Salem during 2001–2010 and concomitant anti-fascist counter-demonstrations serve as a rough indicator of the contemporary developments. Police tactics during these events ranged from reactive violence against anti-racists in 2003, to flexible and tolerant tactics during 2004–2005, followed by occasional proactive repression such as the mass detention of counter-demonstrators in 2008 (Wahlström, 2010). The latter incident is a reminder of how the police easily fall back on undifferentiated and hard tactics despite theoretical knowledge and training in dialogue and a differentiated tactical approach.

Between 1994 and 2006 Sweden had a social democratic government and the head of the Gothenburg Committee was also a social democrat: former Swedish Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson. In terms of legal innovations, a 2005 law was passed against demonstrators wearing masks (SFS 2005: 900) as a consequence of debates related to the 2001 Gothenburg riots. So far this law has had very limited practical application. In 2009, another law was introduced (SFS 2009: 389) that extended the legal capacities of the police to remove participants in a crowd from the location.

The United States

The break-down of the police operation in Seattle in 1999 at which protesters managed to temporarily shut down a WTO meeting (Gillham & Marx, 2000) has been characterized by police officials as comparable to Pearl Harbor for the US police forces (Noakes & Gillham, 2007: 335). It was followed by a number of evaluations by the Seattle Police Department (2000), the Seattle City Council (2000), the American Civil Liberties Union (2000), and by R.M. McCarthy and

Associates (2000). Although the conclusions of the different reports are quite disparate, two general themes can be distinguished: (1) the loss of control over protesters by an undermanned and insufficiently trained police force, and (2) the excessive violence against protesters, including the use of less-lethal weapons, by police officers lacking visible identification. Except for the ACLU report, these evaluations highlighted the need for improving mass arrest techniques for handling unruly protests.

The Seattle events provoked anxiety within US police organizations, perhaps caused not so much by the excessive repression of protesters as by the humiliating loss of control over the streets. Gillham (2011) describes how, in the wake of Seattle, federal and local law enforcement agencies in the US organized national conferences and training to "develop and share neutralizing strategies useful for undermining the actions of transgressive protesters" (p. 639). Subsequently, new trends of a primarily more repressive type of protest policing could be observed in the US and Canada, including large no-protest zones, increased use of surveillance, and proactive tactics such as pre-emptive arrests (Noakes & Gillham, 2006; Rafail, 2010; Vitale, 2007; Wood, 2007). Noakes and Gillham (2006) propose the label "strategic incapacitation" to characterize the emerging style of protest policing in response to the failures of the previously dominant "negotiated management" approach, harmonizing with contemporary developments in crime policy. Strategic incapacitation is based on a readiness to use harsh repression *selectively* at all stages of protest events in order to incapacitate "risk groups".

One must not underestimate the effects of the September 11 terrorist attacks in 2001 and the introduction of the US Patriot Act on protest policing. The increased tendency of authorities to regard expressions of dissent as a threat to US security appears to have taken the sting out of any post-Seattle concerns for constitutional rights and prepared the ground for the spread of new less-lethal technologies for public order policing, such as pepper spray, Tasers, and flash-bang grenades (Wood, 2014). The "protest as threat" discourse is also evident in the federally co-ordinated monitoring of the Occupy protests in 2011 (The Partnership for Civil Justice Fund, 2012). Although these protests were actually met with a relatively tolerant police approach in some cities, they were harshly repressed in other locations (Gillham, Edwards, & Noakes, 2013; Vitale, 2012).

Italy

After the Seattle protests, police forces in Europe began adopting new tactics to implement the tactical innovations of the Global Justice Movement (della Porta et al., 2006; della Porta & Tarrow, 2012). The 2001 G8 summit in Genoa, which took place about a month after the

Gothenburg EU summit, stands out as one of the most violent events, with Italian protester Carlo Giuliani fatally shot by a *carabiniere* (della Porta & Reiter, 2006a). Schools inhabited by visiting activists were also brutally raided by Italian police, resulting in a number of seriously injured activists. After a long legal process, 25 police officers were found guilty in 2010 of falsifying evidence, grievous bodily harm, and libel (Kington, 2012). An Interior Ministry committee report on the Genoa events recommended, inter alia, more extensive police training on relations with protesters and institutionalization of police contact groups (della Porta & Reiter, 2006a). However, the Prodi government's proposition to initiate a "full parliamentary commission" was voted down by parliament.

Della Porta and Reiter (2006a) found only limited tactical changes by the Italian police resulting from the G8 experience. With respect to police organizational changes, they argued that "the Genoa events did not lead to a full debate on structural problems but to specific adjustments on the occasion of individual events" (p. 40). In an analysis of a demonstration in Rome on 15 October 2011, della Porta and Zamponi (2013) identified "selective incapacitation tactics typical of the policing of transnational protest in the early 2000s" (p. 78). The apparent failure to initiate any extensive reforms within the Italian police should be seen in the light of (1) the complexity of having three different domestic police organizations which are not perfectly co-ordinated, as well as (2) the Italian policing philosophy that emphasizes protection of the state from the people (della Porta, 1998; della Porta & Reiter, 2006a).

The United Kingdom

In 2009, British police forces were shaken by events during protests against the London G20 meeting. This was not the first major protest in the UK in response to an international summit. Neither was it the first occasion in that decade when the British police used controversial methods of repression, such as "kettling". A media scandal was created by the death of a bystander and video images proving that he was beaten by a police officer just before his collapse (Rosie & Gorringe, 2009). The subsequent Home Office report on how to improve British protest policing suggests future emphasis on the facilitation of protest and included a specific chapter on Swedish "dialogue policing" (Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary, 2010). The UK National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) also revised its *Manual of Guidance on Keeping the Peace* (NPIA, 2010).

Recent studies indicate that the recommendations in the HMIC report have affected British protest policing—at least in some areas—in terms of a stronger emphasis on the strategic role of specially trained teams of liaison officers who can act as intermediaries and convey a more

nuanced picture of activist perspectives to police commanders (Baker, 2011; Gorringe et al., 2011; Stott et al. 2013; Waddington, 2013). However, this possible trend towards facilitation and dialogue is counterpoised by evidence of increased activist surveillance by police (Gilmore, 2010) and increased training in the use of less-lethal weaponry such as "accelerated energy projectiles" (Stott et al., 2013). In other words, it appears that significant adaptations have taken place in response to the 2009 G20 events, albeit reflecting long-standing tension between negotiated management and militarization of British protest policing (Jefferson, 1990; Waddington, 1994). The development of public order policing in the UK has likely also been shaped by experiences during subsequent major public order events, such as the student protests and the 2011 London riots.

Summary

Denmark and Sweden underwent the most significant POMS changes, including both increased emphasis on dialogue and facilitation, combined with selective and pre-emptive coercive strategies. The UK has shown similar tendencies, although arguably not as radical, whereas the post-Seattle (and 9/11) changes in the US public order policing appear to have been primarily repressive. Italy is the "negative case" where no clear-cut changes in POMS can be identified in response to the G8 protests in Genoa. The five cases are summarized in Table 1.

[Insert Table 1 here]

Analysis: Watershed events and police reforms

In all but one of these cases, traumatic protest events triggered police organizational reform processes. Interviews with Danish and Swedish senior police officers indicate that failures of this calibre were absolutely necessary to initiate reform processes. Prior to the respective watershed events, both Danish and Swedish police used strategic and operational approaches to protest policing that appear to have been internally criticized infrequently, if at all. One might argue that *anticipation* of failure could be sufficient for change, exemplified by the international diffusion of police tactics triggered by the diffusion of protest forms (e.g. summit protests). While acknowledging this mechanism on the level of police tactics, I have nevertheless found no examples where a policing failure in one country has by itself triggered extensive organizational reform in other countries. This can be extrapolated into the general proposition that *unless drastic political changes occur, failure during a major protest is a necessary condition for episodic change affecting entire POMS*.

However, this type of event is far from sufficient for police organizational change, as exemplified by the Italian case. Several factors influence whether or not a reform process will be initiated. First, one crucial feature is the dominant mode of police philosophy (Winter, 1998) within the national police organization(s), and whether the police regard themselves as primarily *Staatspolizei*—protecting the state against the people—or *Bürgerpolizei*—first and foremost protecting the rights of the citizens. This corresponds to Zald et al.'s (2005) notion of an organization's *ideological commitment*. In my interviews with both Danish and Swedish police officers, *Bürgerpolizei* rhetoric is prominent when accounting for change. Using excessive violence contradicts the self-image and outwards performance of how police forces should act in predominantly consensual and corporatist societies (Wahlström, 2007). The police officers also repeatedly distinguished their domestic police forces from those in other countries and set limits for what activities are possible in Scandinavia. In contrast, the stronger emphasis in Italian policing philosophy on protecting the state arguably made the police forces more resistant to change in response to cases of excessive police violence. In the US, the 9/11 terrorist attacks also contributed to a stronger *Staatspolizei* approach, resulting in new strategies in which concerns for civil rights became increasingly limited.

Second, the political constellation of power may facilitate or impede change. Even in countries where the police are not tightly linked to the government, police forces remain sensitive to political messages and affected by the laws passed in parliament. Both Denmark and Sweden had social democratic governments when the post-event inquiries were initiated, as did Great Britain in 2009, which may have affected the composition and directives of the inquiry committees. In Italy, the Berlusconi government was not known for expressing liberal attitudes towards popular dissent, and in the US the federal government has limited influence on police practices at state and city levels.

Third, the character and precision of conclusions from official inquiries appear to be crucial for providing motivation for, and direction of, change. According to the interviewed Danish police officers, some inquiries were neither sufficiently critical, nor precise enough, to instigate any particular reform. In the US, the contradictions between interpretations in different inquiries led to greater potential for ignoring criticism of excessive violence. Both the political constellation of power and the external inquiries correspond to Zald et al.'s (2005) concept of *pressure*. In terms of *organizational capacity*, there are some indications that organizational centralization might be conductive to change—as in Denmark—while decentralization contributes to the absence of change—as in Italy. Financial resources often tend to become available when political elites consider improvements necessary.

These observations can be summed up in a second proposition: *criticism following extraordinary cases of police repression is more likely to lead to change in POMS if the police are relatively centralized, the national policing philosophy is dominated by a Bürgerpolizei approach, the political opportunity structure is generally open to extra-parliamentary protest groups, and the inquiry committees formulate precise and authoritative criticism of the police.*

In order to approach this as a social movement outcome, we need to know how actions of political protesters affected the initiation of episodic change in POMS. Obviously, no policing failures could occur if nobody staged demonstrations in the first place. Following the events, activists also had a role in formulating public criticism of the police and mobilized to raise public awareness of their version of the events, albeit to varying degrees of success. Also, in the Swedish case protesters were given significant space in the inquiry process and some also had the opportunity to convey their perspectives directly to the police. Consequently: *activists affect the instigation of police strategy and/or POMS change through protest organization and by publicly communicating their interpretations after the events.*

Finally, to explain how the protest events and subsequent inquiries affect the *trajectory* of the reform work, policing failures should be understood as challenges to police legitimacy. In Denmark and Sweden, the experiences of the policing failures were used as a basis for deciding to reform POMS, and the development of new strategies was retrospectively described by senior police officers as attempts to solve prior problems that manifested during the watershed events. The *moral legitimacy* of the police had been challenged by public reactions to blatantly excessive police violence, to the verbal abuse of protesters, and, moreover, to police officers firing live bullets at people. When the police have acted in ways that are regarded as excessive, a way to maintain the moral high-ground is to reorganize protest policing to minimize the risk of playing the role of "the villain" in future protest dramas. Thus, strategy reforms in response to challenges to police moral legitimacy are liable to include more subtle and discretionary tactics, and strategies to increase commanders' control of individual police officers, as well as police officers' self-control (Wahlström, 2007). It should be emphasized that improved policing strategies to maintain the moral high-ground are not necessarily less repressive, even though they may be less obviously aggressive, as illustrated by the increasingly proactive strategies adopted in Denmark and Sweden (Peterson, 2006; Wahlström, 2010). Similarly, in the British case, "facilitation" was emphasized in response to the death of a demonstrator and the much-criticized penning tactics. Conversely, the moral legitimacy of the US police does not appear to have been seriously challenged after the 1999 events in Seattle, and the subsequent discourse of police officers in the

US seems to have become more critical of negotiation with activists (cf. Noakes, Klocke, & Gillham, 2005).

All cases are also examples of challenges to the *pragmatic* legitimacy of the police with respect to its capacity to maintain order and uphold the law. The reforms address this by attempting to increase the effectiveness of crowd control strategies, i.e. improving the repressive capacity of the police. This is reflected in the more offensive aspects of the strategies and in the use of armoured vehicles in Denmark and Sweden, and these approaches appear to have dominated American protest policing in the decade following Seattle and the 9/11 bombings.

In Sweden, the police also acknowledged the occasional loss of *cognitive* legitimacy among protesters when motives for police actions were perceived as obscure. The emphasis on negotiation and using dialogue units to continually communicate with protesters is a response to this. However, the general cognitive legitimacy of the police—that it is completely taken for granted as an institution—is typically so strong in democratic societies that it is not a prominent problem in police discourse on strategic development.

In sum, interactions between protesters and police during major protest events may lead to policing failures that challenge the legitimacy of the police in different ways. To the extent that such challenges are acknowledged by the police, their character sets some of the initial parameters for organizational change. *In contemporary western democracies, significant challenges to the moral legitimacy of the police push reforms towards more differentiated and possibly more communicative approaches, while challenges to their pragmatic legitimacy highlight the need for more coercive strategies. Events that effectively challenge police cognitive legitimacy create incentives for increased transparency and communication. These adaptive strategies are not mutually exclusive.*

It is necessary to consider whether what appear to be substantial change might simply be various forms of *decoupling* of organizational rhetoric—which easily adapts to maintain organizational legitimacy—from actual organizational practices—which are generally resistant to change (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Do police adaptations to maintain legitimacy involve changes in actual policing practices, or do they mainly amount to changes in rhetoric? No definite answer can be given because of the high degree of situational variation in protest policing strategies and tactics. However, unlike many organizational practices, protest policing is an inherently public activity, which makes it difficult to decouple rhetoric from practices that are often not only easily observable but also increasingly well-documented by activists (Askanius, 2013). Therefore, the reforms documented in this chapter should not be dismissed as empty rhetoric. Nevertheless we should be sensitive to the possibilities that the police may account for discrepancies between

myth and practice by blaming the exceptional circumstances of a protest, demonizing a specific group of protesters, or redefining the main goals of an operation.

Because the focus in this chapter has been police organizational changes as a social movement outcome, less attention has been given to the internal organization of the police force and the international learning between countries. Nevertheless, the examples confirm that the Scandinavian police reforms include the learning processes outlined by della Porta and Tarrow (2012): after initial assessments the police commanders looked for models promoted elsewhere and subsequently theorized the more or less hybridized forms of policing strategies and tactics from their different sources of inspiration. However, the Scandinavian cases highlight the importance of national identity and the significance of the "police cultural proximity" of different national police forces for judgements about what constitutes a convincing mode of organizing protest policing. It is not necessarily the best international practices that are adopted, nor those most well promoted; it is those that appear effective while not conflicting with national self-image, domestic laws, and available financial, material, and human resources.

Conclusion

Protest events accompanied by policing failures are crucial triggers of episodic change within police organizations. Yet, events like these are not by themselves sufficient conditions for triggering organizational change; otherwise such changes would be internationally abundant. Furthermore, even though changes in POMS are influenced by a number of external factors, such as political opportunity structures and international learning processes, characteristics of the triggering events themselves also influence the trajectory of change, since they become the warning examples that define the primary problems to be solved. Challenges to different dimensions of police legitimacy contribute to different types of organizational solutions.

This study illustrates that outcomes of social movements may come about in organizations essentially as measures designed to prevent movements from "winning" and to maintain organizational legitimacy in the face of challenges. Such measures can indeed be irrelevant or even contrary to movement goals.

Finally, this study also highlights the potential importance of specific "watershed events" for other types of outcomes of social movements. Changes in political opportunity structures and international learning processes were not enough to induce police organizational change in the cases studied; a traumatic event was necessary. This may apply to other types of social movement outcomes as well. Such outcomes become highly contingent since the characteristics of the events themselves have implications for the direction of further developments, and these

characteristics are products of unpredictable interactions, often between several different groups of actors. When studying the development and outcomes of social movements, we must therefore pay careful attention to events that become turning points and to the processes they initiate.

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Table 1: An overview of the major crowd control events and subsequent reforms discussed in the paper

Event	Policing failures			Mediating factors			Outcome
	Police loss of control over protesters	Dead or seriously injured protesters	Character of inquiry	Government at the time of public inquiry	Nationally predominant policing philosophy	Later events of importance	Reform of police strategies or organization
Maastricht Treaty protests Copenhagen, Denmark, 1993	Yes, extensive rioting exacerbated by police actions.	Yes, 11 shot, yet none mortally wounded.	Vague criticism, later specified by Director of Public Prosecutions.	Social democratic. Replaced by liberal conservatives in 2001.	Strong Bürgerpolizei approach.	New strategies demonstrated during EU summit in 2002.	New POMS. Focus on selectivity, mobility, and proactivity complemented by communicative tactics.
WTO meeting, Seattle, USA, 1999	Yes, major loss during first day of protests.	Excessive use of force but no lethally injured protesters.	A number of contradictory inquiries.	Democratic president, Bill Clinton (replaced by George Bush Jr in 2001).	Weak Bürgerpolizei approach. Increasing tendencies towards Staatspolizei approach.	9/11 events. Increased focus on proactive security measures.	Trend towards "strategic incapacitation", including selective proactive repression and surveillance.
EU summit meeting, Gothenburg, Sweden, 2001	Yes, at specific locations.	Yes, three activists shot. One had life-threatening injuries.	Specific criticism in several inquiries. Activist voices in inquiries.	Social democratic.	Strong Bürgerpolizei approach.	No protest events of comparable size or importance.	New POMS inspired by Danish concept. Dialogue policing. Systematic evaluations.
G8 meeting, Genoa, Italy, 2001	Yes, at specific locations.	Yes, one protester shot to death.	Weak criticism. Legal processes against individual police officers.	Right-populist president Berlusconi.	Staatspolizei approach.	No events of comparable importance.	No major changes since Genoa.
G20 meeting, London, UK, 2009	Yes, at specific locations.	One bystander dead after being subject to police violence.	Specific criticism and some concrete proposals.	Labour. Replaced by conservative liberal coalition in 2010.	Strong Bürgerpolizei approach.	Student protests and London urban riots in 2011.	New guidelines. Stronger emphasis on negotiation, facilitation, and selectivity.