**6HUM1012 Popular Protest, Riot and Reform**

**Workshop 4: ‘contentious gatherings’ and Charles Tilly**

**Table 1:** Verbs in newspaper reports of contentious gatherings, south-eastern England, 1758-1820, [extract] from Charles Tilly, *Popular Contention in Great Britain, 1758-1834* (1995), p. 265

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **verb** | **1758-81** | **1789-1811** | **1819** | **1820** |
| attack | 17.4 [%] | 4.7 | 3.8 | 2.8 |
| cheer | 0.8 | 4.2 | 3.7 | 8.9 |
| control | 15.0 | 8.0 | 4.0 | 4.1 |
| fight | 1.5 | 1.2 | 0.7 | 0.5 |
| meet | 2.8 | 9.6 | 12.1 | 9.1 |
| move | 9.7 | 6.2 | 3.2 | 5.6 |
| resolve | 1.6 | 13.7 | 23.4 | 19.1 |

**Table 2:** types of contentious gathering, south-eastern England, [extract] Tilly, *Popular Contention*, p. 258

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of event** | **1758-81** | **1789-1811** | **1819** | **1820** |
| Attacks on persons or their property | 46.5 [%] | 12.1 | 3.1 | 1.5 |
| Seizure of food or property | 5.9 | 1.1 | 0 | 0 |
| Meeting to communicate with national government | 21.5 | 35.0 | 57.8 | 41.6 |
| Electoral assembly | 5.3 | 13.5 | 7.0 | 9.1 |
| Strike or gathering for wage demands | 4.6 | 1.1 | 0 | 0 |

**Analyse the language of the newspaper reports. What words do they use to describe political meetings? What do they show about the development of political movements in this period?**

Tilly, *Popular Contention*, p.25 –

**4 explanations for why ‘contentious gatherings’ and political movements developed over this period:**

* War
* Parliamentarisation
* Capitalisation
* proletarianisation

**p.363 –**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Eighteenth century** | **Nineteenth century** |
| 1. People’s frequent employment of the authorities’ normal means of action, either as caricature or as a deliberate if temporary assumption of the authorities’ prerogatives in the name of the local community.
 | Use of relatively autonomous means of action of a kind rarely or never employed by authorities. |
| 1. Convergence on the residences of wrongdoers and the sites of wrongdoing.
 | Preference for previously planned action in visible public places. |
| 1. Extensive use of authorised public celebration and assemblies for the presentation of grievances and demands.
 | Deliberate organisation of assemblies for the articulation of claims. |
| 1. Common appearance of the participants as members or representatives of constituted corporate groups and communities rather than of special interests.
 | Participation as members or representatives of special interests, constituted public bodies and named associations. |
| 1. A tendency to act directly against local enemies but to appeal to powerful patrons for redress of wrongs beyond the reach of the local community and especially for representing outside communities.
 | Direct challenges to rivals or authorities, especially national authorities and their representatives. |
| 1. Repeated adoption of riots, irreverent symbolism in the form of effigies, dumb show and ritual objects to state grievances and demands.
 | Display of programmes, slogans and symbols of common membership such as flags, colours and lettered banners. |
| 1. Shaping of action to particular circumstances and localities.
 | Preference for forms of action easily transferred from one circumstance to another. |
| 1. Parochial, particular, bifurcated.
 | Cosmopolitan, modular, autonomous. |

pp.44-6