

Political Activism in the Czech Republic¹

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Paper presented at the Workshop on Contentious Politics, Columbia University, New York, April 28, 2008.

Acknowledgments:

The present paper includes parts of my study of political activism in the Czech Republic. *(Please, contact me for the exact reference in case you want to refer to the paper.)* While writing the study I was immensely helped by the participants of the Workshop on Contentious Politics, which I attended in the academic year 2006-2007. My very special thanks go to Charles Tilly, the workshop's convener and my mentor during my time at Columbia, and Sidney Tarrow, whose work and insightful comments motivated me to engage the issue of political activism in the first place. Many more people contributed to the study especially by their comments. I would like to thank Tsveta Petrova, Sun-Chul Kim, Roy Licklider, Sherrill Stroschein, Andreas Koller, Michal Luczewski, Steven Saxonberg, Mitchell Orenstein, Laura Anne Bunt, Radim Marada, Miroslav Mareš, Andrea Baršová, Ondřej Slačálek, Aneta Valterová, and Jiří Navrátil. My special thanks go to Kateřina Vráblíková, who continually discussed the research design with me and closely read various versions of the study.

As regards the present paper, I would appreciate whatever comments and suggestions that would help me prepare a journal article based on my protest event data. Of course, all comments are welcome!

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¹ This paper has been prepared as part of the research project Political Parties and Interest Representation in Contemporary European Democracies (code MSM0021622407). I also gratefully acknowledge the support of the J. W. Fulbright Commission.

1. Introduction

The political mobilizations that marked the end of the Communist regimes in many Central-East European countries raised high expectations, especially among Western observers, regarding the future of democratic citizenship in the region. When reading reflections on the Central-East European ‘revolutions’, one cannot but conclude that there was a wide belief in the possibility of reinvigorated active political participation and vibrant civic life in the post-Communist countries. However, after a short period of enthusiasm it became clear that these hopes would not materialize in the foreseeable future. The interpretation in the literature changed accordingly: there was a perceptible shift from the early enthusiasm of Central-East European citizens, to a gloomy picture of a passive, disinterested and cynical Central-East European population (see Sztompka 1997, Mishler and Rose 1998).

The skeptical accounts of Central-East European mobilizations see individual nonparticipation as a general indicator of the weakness of political activism and organized civil society (Wedel 1998, McMahon 2001, Howard 2003). Yet some recent contributors to the study of Central-East European political activism refuse to equate lack of participation with a lack of activism; rather, they reveal the particular nature of contemporary (post-Communist) activism. In order to define, if not explain, the specific nature of this Central-East European non-participatory activism, T. Petrova and S. Tarrow have come up with the notion of “transactional activism” (Petrova and Tarrow 2007).² Political activists are no longer seen only as mobilizing agents “capable of staging open-air collective protest”, but are also understood as “social agents who tap and command resources in order to put issues across to the public and to influence the agenda of their polity” (Flam 2001: 5; see also Petrova and Tarrow 2007).

In fact, after reading these studies one is forced to reconsider the relationship between participation and activism. This paper claims that an important *conceptual difference* exists between *participation* and *activism*. While the former refers to what ordinary citizens do as individuals, i.e. on the micro-level, when they engage in politics,

² *Transactional activism* means “the ties – enduring and temporary – among organized nonstate actors and between them and political parties, power holders, and other institutions.” It is differentiated from the notion of *participatory activism*, which is defined as “the potential and actual magnitude of individual and group participation in civic life, interest group activities, voting, and elections” (Petrova and Tarrow 2007: 79).

the latter encompasses the activities of more or less professional policy and social advocates at the organizational, i.e. mezzo, level. As the two are conceptually different, one can conceive of participation without activism as well as activism without participation. The latter situation seems to define post-Communist realities. Thus, although it has indeed been persuasively demonstrated that, on the average, Central-East Europeans participate less than their counterparts in the established democracies, it does not necessarily mean that civil societies in post-Communist countries are weak. Civil society, if understood as a set of intermediary organizations and groups that are *relatively* independent of both the state and the interests of private companies (see Habermas 1996, Ekiert and Kubik 2001: 83-84), can still prosper, even though it cannot rely on participation by individuals.

The following section offers a conceptual discussion based on the original dichotomy of the participatory and transactional forms of political activism introduced by Petrova and Tarrow. The chapter reinterprets Petrova and Tarrow's two types of activism as two dimensions of a new typology of political activism. Each of them describes a particular capacity of activist organizations: the first dimension refers to political activism's *mobilization capacity*, i.e. the capacity to mobilize individuals; the second dimension describes its *advocacy capacity*, i.e. the capacity to network, cooperate, and be included in the policy process. Positioned in the typology are five *activist modes*, which define five distinct kinds of contemporary political activism.

The modes of activism are as follows. Given the two dimensions, *old participatory activism* is characterized by both high mobilization and high advocacy capacities. Organizations that belong to this category are membership-based organizations that are able to mobilize relatively mass support; at the same time, they are able to cooperate among themselves and get access to political institutions. Compared to other activist modes, old participatory activists, such as trade unionists, in fact enjoy a privileged access to the political system under broadly corporatist arrangements sanctioned by the state.

New transactional activism is a category defined by relatively low mobilization capacity and, at the same time, high advocacy capacity. It comprises of various organizations of the so-called 'new social movements', such as networks of

environmental, human and women's rights movements. They are not based on wide membership, even though some of them are membership organizations, and are unable to sponsor big protest events.

New radical activism lacks both the capacity to mobilize individuals and the ability to develop a high level of advocacy capacity; radical groups do not attract 'masses' by their very definition and, at the same time, they face a closed political opportunity structure. This mode is composed of activists on both extremes of the political spectrum, such as anarchists and skinheads. It is usually based on relatively loose organizational platforms and individual activists.

Although the fourth mode, i.e. *civic self-organization*, describes actors completely different from radicals, it displays the same characteristics as regards the two dimensions as radicals do. Self-organization is characterized by limited mobilization and advocacy capacities. Unlike other modes, this activist mode is based on the organizational efforts of individuals, not organizations. The category of self-organization emerged inductively within the course of my protest event analysis as an unexpected mode; thus, at the moment, we do not yet know much about it. The last mode, characterized by high mobilization and low transactional capacities, consists of *episodic mass mobilization* based on short-term gathering of high numbers of protestors.

What is the pattern of political activism as it has developed in the Czech Republic? The third section presents the results of protest event analysis of data on the post-Communist Czech Republic obtained from the electronic archive of the Czech News Agency (CNA). The time period between 1993 and 2005 was selected for protest event analysis. Due to research capacity constraints, five years were sampled for actual coding: 1993, 1996, 1999, 2002, and 2005. All the events obtained for these years from the CNA's archive were manually coded for selected variables.³ Four out of the five above-defined modes have been identified by protest event analysis.

³ The total number of coded events is 1043 and is unevenly distributed across the years: 80 for 1993, 155 for 1996, 318 for 1999, 225 for 2002, and 265 for 2005. News reports were selected by online search, using thirteen search words commonly used in reports on protest events: protest, demonstration, petition, boycott, strike, march, blockade, rally, barricade, parade (průvod), performance, happening, and confrontation (for a similar strategy, see Kim 2006; see also Imig 2001). All selected events were subsequently manually coded according to a standardized scheme for the following variables: date, location, organizer (subject), number of organizers, action repertoire, claim, target (the object of claim), and the number of participants.

What explains the development of the four distinctive activist modes in the Czech Republic? The last section outlines an explanatory framework based on two factors – political opportunities and sources of activism (Jenkins 1983, Tilly 1995, Tarrow 1998, McAdam et al. 2001, Edwards and McCarthy 2004). Political opportunities can either be open or closed; sources can either be abundant, i.e. high, or there is a shortage of resources, i.e. they are low. One can think of four situations that are hypothesized on the basis of the two explanatory factors: (1) *occasional, small-scale mobilization* (open opportunities, low resources), (2) *inclusion* (open opportunities, high resources), (3) *marginalization/extra-institutional mobilization* (closed opportunities, high resources), and (4) *exclusion* (closed opportunities, low resources). Also, different mechanisms of *resource access*, i.e. aggregation of individual contributions, self-production of activist organizations by their own means, and patronage by foundations and other institutions, are added to the explanatory typology. As a result, the typology relates the explanatory factors, i.e. opportunities and resource access, to the dependent variable, i.e. modes of activism.

2. Transactional Activism and Beyond

The notion of transactional activism was developed in order to capture the specific character of political mobilization in the region of Central-Eastern Europe (CEE). Petrova and Tarrow's (2007) original concept stresses that although large numbers of individuals do not politically participate in the CEE countries, a stratum of relatively effective policy advocates has nevertheless developed in the region after the fall of communism. To put it bluntly, even if there is no participation on the micro-level, there is a lot of action on the mezzo-level. Thus the notion captures the political activism of advocacy organizations and professional activists working therein. The employment of the concept makes it possible to see relatively rich political interactions among various civil society actors even if these actors lack the capacity to mobilize many people.

In fact, the theoretical implications of the concept's employment are much more consequential than supposed by Petrova and Tarrow. The concept of transactional activism not only makes it possible to re-evaluate the state of political activism in post-communist countries, but invites a broader theoretical innovation in the study of social

movements. The dichotomy of the participatory and transactional forms of political activism actually differentiates between two forms of the capacities of activism. While participatory activism refers to the ability of activists to *mobilize* individuals, i.e. to induce them to participate, the term transactional capacity refers to their ability to enter into *transactions* with other non-state actors as well as representatives of formal political institutions. Distinguishing between the two capacities the notion enables us to observe a transactional form of activism that is not based on participation; in other words, a form of activism that displays low mobilization capacity.

Transactional activism defies the definitions of social movements that depend on the ability of movements to actually mobilize individuals (see Tilly 2004: 4-5, Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 120). While these definitions associate activism with participation and social movements with a particular activist form, i.e. participatory activism, the notion of transactional activism allows for disconnecting the two and seeing them as analytically separate concepts. While *activism* refers to what activists and their organizations do; *participation* captures what ordinary citizens do. According to this paper, activists are individuals who devote a substantial part of their time or/and other resources to the political activities of particular group(s)/platform(s)/organization(s). They do not have to be paid for their efforts in order to qualify as activists. The others are non-activists, i.e. ordinary citizens, who may or may not participate in politics. Similarly, research on political participation calls it with “action by ordinary citizens” (see Verba et al. 1995: 39, Teorell et al. 2007: 336). The difference is that unlike ordinary citizens, activists either profit *or* incur extra costs in relation to their political engagement.

Using these conceptual tools, there are three logically possible combinations of activism and participation that can be described as follows:

1. *activism with participation*: this combination characterizes an activist mode we will refer to as “(old) participatory activism”;
2. *activism without participation* (or limited participation): it defines two activist modes, labeled here as “(new) transactional activism” and “(new) radical activism”;
3. *participation without activism*: refers to two activist modes, namely “civic self-organization” and “mass mobilizations”.

These three combinations constitute the basis for a typology of activism to be presented below.⁴ Contrary to the original definition of the two types of activism by Petrova and Tarrow, I propose seeing them as two dimensions of a new typology of political activism. Each of them describes a particular capacity of political activists. In effect, the two dimensions differentiate between an activism's mobilization and advocacy capacities. As they are seen as dichotomous variables, their combination gives four quadrants, each describing a particular type of political activism (see Table 1).

Two types are characterized by relatively well-developed transactional capacity, i.e. they are based on capable organizations. *The upper left quadrant* contains the combination of high transactional and high mobilization capacities that is typical of 'old' organizations such as trade unions. These organizations, compared to other types, are both based on broad membership and able to cooperate, network, and communicate with their counterparts. They are recognized as legitimate partners by the political system. *The upper right quadrant* consists of high transactional capacity in combination with low mobilization capacity that marks the new transactional activism, as originally described by Petrova and Tarrow.

Two types are characterized by non-involvement of organizations and groups. Ordinary citizens may become mobilized even without the involvement of formal organizations and/or professional activists. Examples abound of informal and/or *ad-hoc* citizens' groups that form around particular issues: episodes of temporary mass mobilization, local neighborhood associations, self-defense groups, and community (NIMBY) activism. These 'self-mobilizations' take place without actually being organized by "candidates, parties, activists, and groups" (Rosenstone and Hansen 2003: 25). In some cases, professional activists come later in the process, in order to facilitate protest activities and appropriate them for their own purposes. *The lower left quadrant* defines high mobilization capacity together with low transactional capacity. These protest events are able to receive high popular support for a time, but are unable to sustain

⁴ In the typology, activism is understood in terms of its transactional, i.e. advocacy capacity, while participation is interpreted as activists' mobilization capacity. Participation and mobilization are two sides of the same coin: mobilization capacity refers to the ability of activists to induce individuals to actually participate.

themselves over time and translate their mobilization success into a lasting organizational legacy. *The lower right quadrant* contains the combination of low mobilization and low transactional capacities. This type includes two activist modes. Self-organizations do not mobilize many citizens and, similarly to mass mobilizations, do not sustain themselves organizationally over time. Although radical activism is based on the active involvement of devoted activists and organizational platforms, these are unable to mobilize anything close to a wide following, while at the same time they either fail or refuse to take the path of institutionalization, i.e. the path of organizational capacity-building that is a precondition for high advocacy capacity.

Table 1: Typology of Activism

		mobilization capacity	
		high	low
transactional capacity	high	old participatory activism	new transactional activism
	low	episodic mass mobilization	new radical activism; civic self-organization

Five different *activist modes*, i.e. old participatory activism, new transactional activism, new radical activism, self-organization, and episodic mass mobilization, are distributed in the four quadrants of the typology. Activist modes, which were defined on the basis of my protest event analysis, refer to five distinct clusters of *the actors' properties* (see also the next section). The definitions of five modes of political activism are as follows:

1. *Old participatory activism* is based on membership organizations. They enjoy relatively good access to the political system and are able to cooperate with other collective political actors. They do not mobilize citizens very often. When they do mobilize, they are able to publicly display high numbers of supporters. Thus this mode's public self-presentation is based on '*few events, many participants*'.
2. *New transactional activism* is based on small advocacy organizations. The openness of the political system to the demands of transactional activists varies over time and according to the issue area. The same applies to the ability of these groups to network and cooperate with other political actors. Although organizations in this mode often mobilize, they are unable to publicly display a

- high number of supporters. Therefore, this mode's self-presentation is based on '*many events, few participants*'.
3. *New radical activism* is based mainly, although not exclusively, on very loose organizational platforms and individual activists who are not members of any particular group. As regards their demands, radical activists face a completely closed political system. Their ability to network and cooperate is similarly limited. They mobilize more often than old activists, but much less often than their transactional colleagues. They employ radical and violent strategies more often than other activists. Therefore, this mode's self-presentation is based on '*few participants, militant strategies*'.
 4. *Civic self-organization* is based on 'individual' organizational effort, i.e. protest in this category is originally not sponsored by any formal organization or informal group. In terms of the political system's openness, self-organizations are hypothesized to face a situation similar to transactional activists. Their access varies. The same probably applies to their ability to network and cooperate. Self-organizations' public self-presentation is based on '*many events, no organizations, and few participants*'.
 5. *Episodic mass mobilization* consists of short-term events based on public displays of high numbers of participants and low transactional capacity. These events are originally neither sponsored by a formal organization or professional activists, nor do they give rise to a new organizational infrastructure. They demobilize as fast as they mobilize. Mass mobilizations' self-presentation is based on '*many participants, no organizations, and very few events*'.

3. Four Modes of Political Activism in the Czech Republic

What is the pattern of political activism as it has developed in the Czech Republic after 1993? In this section, the results of protest event analysis are reported. The focus is on the most important characteristics of collective action: frequency, location, the number of participants, action repertoire, targets, and claims (see also Ekiert and Kubik 2001: 116-139). Four out of the five above-defined modes have been identified by protest event analysis as existing in the Czech Republic after 1993. Episodic mass mobilization did not constitute an activist mode in the post-1993 Czech Republic. Four modes, i.e. old participatory activism, new transactional activism, new radical activism, and self-organization, were created by collapsing the original 38 values of the variable “actor” into the four categories. First, ten groups were created, which lumped together similar organizations: “civic self-organizations”, “political parties”, “trade unions, employees, agrarian organizations”, “environmental organizations”, “other new organizations”, “radical Left organizations”, “religious organizations”, “nationalist and radical Right organizations”, “other”, and “Thank You, Time to Go!”.⁵ Subsequently, these ten groups were collapsed into five categories: four of them represent particular (old participatory,

⁵ The category “civic self-organization” includes the following values: spontaneous event without an organizer and citizens’ self-organization such as petition committee without any help from an organization; the category “political parties” includes Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD), Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSCM), Civic Democratic Party (ODS), Green Party (SZ), Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People’s Party (KDU-CSL), Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA), Union of Freedom (US), and other political party; the category “trade unions, employees, agrarian organizations” includes professional association, trade union, agrarian group/organization, and employees; the category “environmental organizations” includes environmental group/organization (animal rights’ groups included); the category “other new organizations” includes women’s rights/feminist group/organization, human rights group/organization, group/organization advocating rights of ethnic minorities, group/organization advocating rights of disabled people, gay/lesbian rights group/organization, and peace group/organization; the category “radical Left organizations” includes Anarchists, anti-/alter-globalization group/organization, Trotskyist group/organization, Communist group/organization, group/organization of the radical Left in general, and humanist group/organization; the category “religious organizations” includes religious group/organization, church; the category “nationalist and radical Right organizations” includes nationalist group/organization, skinheads, and group/organization of the radical Right in general; the category “other” includes group/organization providing social services, cultural, recreational group/organization, developmental group/organization, nongovernmental organization in general, foreign group/organization, and other. The new variable was created by recoding the input variable “actor1”. Although multiplicity of organizers’ types was originally coded, there were never more than two types of organizers per event. As a result, there are two variables in the original catalogue referring to the organizer (“actor1” and “actor2”). Only 2.5 percent of cases display a valid value on the variable “actor2”. For this reason, the variable “actor2” is not included in the further analysis.

new transactional, new radical, and self-organized) modes of activism, as they have developed in the Czech Republic, plus there is the residual category.⁶

The four different modes of political activism capture four distinctive ways of political mobilization in the Czech Republic after 1993. They present four distinct clusters of characteristics of political actors; these characteristics differentiate them from each other. Most importantly, the modes differ in terms of the frequency of collective action, geographical location, size, i.e. the number of participants they have been able to mobilize per event, action repertoire (strategies used), targets (objects) of action, and claims (demands). Simply put, they form four different ways of doing political activism in the post-Communist Czech Republic. Drawing on the results of protest event analysis, they can be rendered as follows:

1. If compared to other activist modes *'old' participatory activism* displays a lower frequency of collective action, at the same time it is based on relatively broad participation. In other words, while organizations such as trade unions do not engage in mobilization very often, when they do, they are able to mobilize many people in the streets. They organize a relatively high proportion of countywide events. In terms of action repertoire (strategies), this activist form is characterized by a reliance on a limited number of standard non-violent strategies such as petition and demonstration. In addition, the strike is particularly important for this mode, as this group includes trade unions. New 'cultural' strategies associated primarily with the 'new social movements', such as performances or happenings, are underrepresented in the repertoire of this activist mode. In terms of its targets, old activism aims primarily at national state institutions and private companies.

⁶ The mode "civic self-organization" includes "civic self-organization" and "Thank You, Time to Go!". Although the latter would ideally be an instance of episodic mass mobilization, this mode has not been identified in the Czech Republic. Thank You, Time to Go! forms an exceptional case (in fact eleven cases) in the catalogue and does not constitute a particular activist mode in the Czech context. In general, episodic mass mobilizations have not marked the development of Czech activism since 1993. Therefore, the event is included in the mode "civic self-organization", as this is the closest category for the event to be included in, and is excluded from it for the analysis of the event size only. The category "old (participatory) activism" includes "trade unions, employees, agrarian organizations" and "religious organizations"; "new (transactional) activism" includes "environmental organizations" and "other new organizations"; the category "new (radical) activism" includes "radical Left organizations" and "nationalist and radical Right organizations"; and the category "other" includes "political parties" and "other".

The dominant category of demands for this activist form constitutes economic claims, followed by demands concerned with public policies. Old activism is clearly materialist in its orientation.

2. *'New' transactional activism* accounts for most of the protest events sponsored by a group or an organization. Except for self-organizations, this activist mode is far ahead of all other activist categories in terms of the frequency of collective action. As for the size of collective actions, transactional activists are unable to mobilize a wide following. In terms of action repertoire, transactional activists employ a somewhat wider portfolio of strategies than the previous category. While they very often resort to non-violent demonstration and petitioning, they also utilize 'cultural' strategies, such as performance, exhibition, and festival. The set of targets transactional activists aim at is similarly diverse. Thus national and sub-national institutions, private companies, public opinion, and somewhat less significantly institutions of other states figure almost evenly among its targets. Ecology, the environment, and animal rights form the single most numerous category of political demands, followed by human and civic rights and freedoms, and claims concerned with public policies. Transactional activists do not articulate economic demands; on the contrary, they display clearly 'post-materialist' orientation in the structure of their claims.
3. In terms of the frequency of events, the *'new' radical activism* fares somewhat better than old activism, but cannot compete with new transactional activism. New radical activism is the most centralized activist mode. On average, radical activists mobilize even fewer individuals per event than transactional activists. The two new categories of activism significantly differ from the point of view of action repertoire. The portfolio of radical activists is dominated by non-violent demonstration, but compared to the other activist modes it includes a relatively remarkable proportion of violent direct action. There are important differences in terms of targets as well. Radical activism is almost never aimed at a concrete national institution; the dominant categories of targets include international

institutions, public opinion, other states' institutions, political actors, and the Czech state and its political elite. Comparatively, radical activists are internationally oriented not only in their targets, but also in their demands. Out of all the activist modes it is the radicals whose demands concern issues of national security and foreign policy the most. Human rights issues figure prominently among their demands, together with claims focused on their ideological enemies.

4. *Civic self-organization*, i.e. instances of collective action mobilized without the involvement of an organization or a group, form the most numerous category of events in the post-Communist Czech Republic. With the exception of the episodically mobilized "Thank You, Time to Go!" campaign, which was included in the category (see above), collective mobilizations in this mode tend to be small in size; in other words, they are numerous, but do not mobilize large numbers of individual participants. This is the most decentralized activist mode out of all. The action repertoire is dominated by petition, followed by non-violent demonstration. Self-organizations are mostly focused on national institutions, followed by their sub-national counterparts. The functioning of national institutions, the judicial system and the police, environmental claims, and demands concerned with public policies figure approximately evenly in the portfolio of self-organizations' claims.

Protest in the Czech Republic: Main Features

Four activist modes have been identified in the Czech Republic. This means that activism in the country cannot be fully captured by a single concept, such as transactional activism, alone. The pattern of political activism is diverse, including four different ways by which political activists organize and express their grievances. At the same time, the analysis demonstrates the relative importance of transactional activism among other activist modes (see also below). One of the most surprising findings is the emergence of self-organization as a distinct mode. In the remainder of this section, the four modes will be characterized in more detail on the basis of the most important aspects of collective action: the frequency of protest events, their geographical distribution and size, the number of participants, action repertoire, targets, and political demands.

Organizers of Collective Action and Its Geographical Distribution

The first indicator of the robustness of collective action is undoubtedly its frequency.⁷ Of the total, self-organizations form the most numerous group with 310 cases, followed by new transactional activism (288 cases), and new radical activism (147 cases). Old participatory activism accounts for the smallest number of events out of all modes (103 cases). Thus, the distribution of events has been very uneven among different modes. The same applies to their occurrence in time.

Figure 1 gives the distributions of events according to the activist mode and year. There have been two main trends that can be identified between 1993 and 2005. First, self-organizations form the only activist mode that has steadily been on rise. While in 1993 there were only seven instances of self-organized mobilizations, in 2005, 135 events took place. Second, all the other activist modes peaked at the end of the 1990s, dropped afterwards, and have stagnated since then. Thus, between 1993 and 1999, the number of events tripled for old participatory and new radical activism and doubled for new transactional activism. Between 1999 and 2005, the number of events decreased by half for all the three modes. In general, the figure demonstrates the important presence of events sponsored by transactional activists among Czech protest events after 1993; at the same time, it shows a surprisingly high proportion of self-organizations among them.

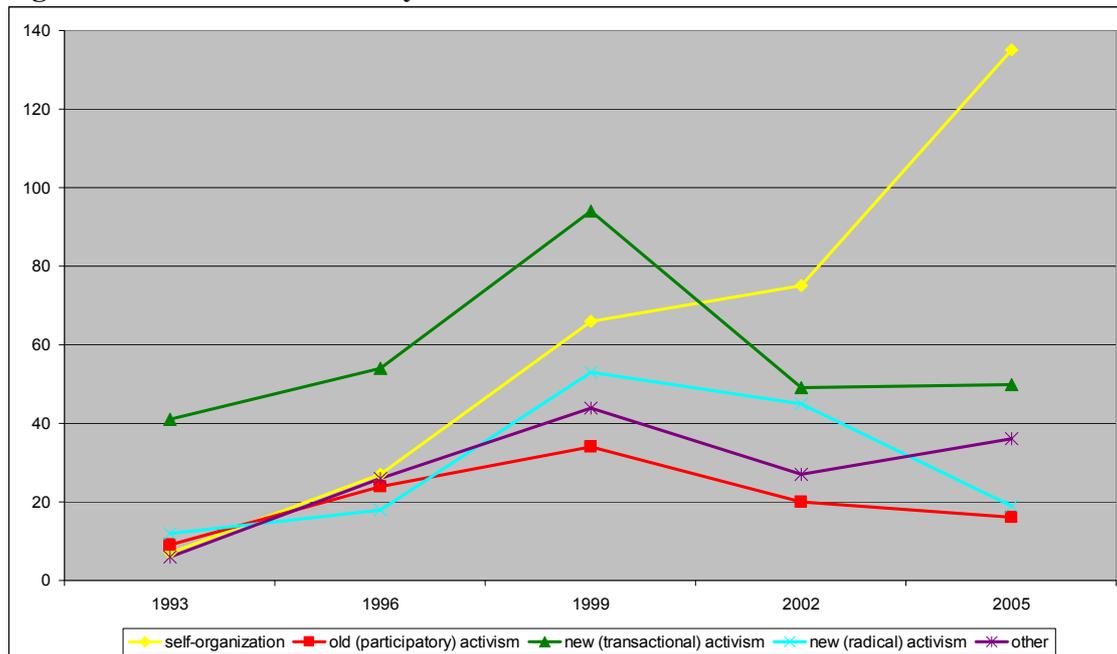
⁷ Although the present research is unable to provide a cross-country comparison, it is nevertheless able to compare the level of activism among different categories of activism within the country. There are no comparative data available for the period under study. The only publicly accessible data on post-Communist protest are presented by Ekiert and Kubik (2001) in their study of the first post-Communist period of 1989-1993. Although they can not provide a basis for a meaningful comparison of the frequency of protest events as they cover a different period of time, they are summarized in the table below. Ekiert and Kubik used newspaper data for their analysis (see *ibid*: chap. 1).

Number of Protest Events in Four Central European Countries, 1989-93

Country	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	Total
Poland	314	306	292	314	250	1.476
Slovakia	-	50	82	116	47	295
Hungary	122	126	191	112	148	699
East Germany	222	188	191	268	283	1.252

Adopted from Ekiert and Kubik 2001: 113.

Figure 1: Number of Events by Activist Mode and Year



How were the events distributed geographically? Do differences exist in this respect among different activist modes? Table 2 indeed shows important differences across the modes. As shown in the first column of the table, civic self-organization is the least centralized activist mode, as only 28 percent of events belonging to this mode took place in Prague. In this respect, radicals form the most centralized activist mode, with 60.5 percent of organized events located in Prague. New transactional and old participatory activists display similar proportions of organized events in the country capital, 46 and 50 percent respectively. The relative decentralization of self-organizations is also revealed by the third column: more than one third of this mode's events took place on a lower level than the national (Prague) or regional capital. Compared to other activist modes, the number is substantially higher: only approximately one fifth of the events sponsored by the old participatory and new radical activists, and one fourth of the events organized by new transactional activists, belong to the same category. As the second column indicates, with one exception there are no important differences in geographical distribution on the regional level. The only exception is the old participatory activists, who organize a comparatively low proportion of events on this level. At the same time, old participatory activists sponsor comparatively the largest proportion of country-wide

events (see the fourth column). In contrast, radical activists sponsor virtually no countywide events. Czech social movement organizations do not organize any events abroad. All in all, the distribution of events among different modes reveals that self-organizations form the most decentralized activist mode, and radical activists constitute the most centralized one.

Table 2: Geographical Location of Events by Activist Mode

activist mode	Prague	regional capital	the rest of the country	country-wide event	abroad	total
civic self-organization	85 28.0%	88 28.9%	111 36.5%	20 6.6%	0 0.0%	304 100.0%
old participatory activism	51 50.0%	10 9.8%	18 17.6%	23 22.5%	0 0.0%	102 100.0%
new transactional activism	131 46.1%	64 22.5%	69 24.3%	18 6.3%	2 0.7%	284 100.0%
new radical activism	89 60.5%	26 17.7%	31 21.1%	1 0.7%	0 0.0%	147 100.0%
other	75 54.3%	17 12.3%	23 16.7%	23 16.7%	0 0.0%	138 100.0%

Size of Protest Events

Low levels of individual participation, measured by organizational membership, were identified by the individual-level scholars as the main problem of Central-East European civil societies. How do these findings translate into participation in protest events? Is there a correspondence between low levels of organizational membership and low participation in protest events? Before we can answer this question, the pattern of individual participation in protest events must first be described.

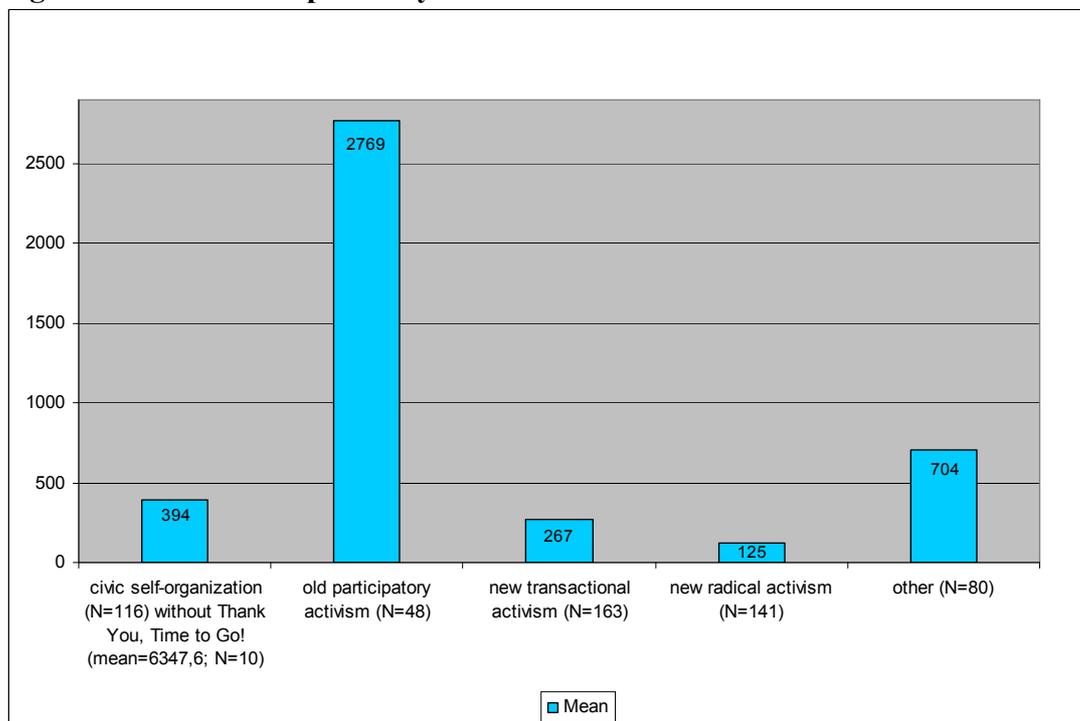
Figure 2 shows that different modes of activism differ in their ability to mobilize individuals.⁸ As the figure demonstrates, self-organizations and both types of new

⁸ Petitions are excluded from the analysis for the time being, as they form a strategy categorically different from others. Petitions will be analyzed separately at the end of this subsection.

activism are unable and/or unwilling to bring big numbers of people to the streets.⁹ Nevertheless, there are differences even among these modes in their mobilization capacity. While civic self-organizations' mean reaches almost 400 individuals per event, radicals lag behind with 125. Transactional activism's mean is found almost exactly between the two, displaying 267 participants per event.

As Figure 2 demonstrates, old participatory activism fares much better than other activist modes in its capacity to mobilize individuals. On average, old activists do not organize many events, but when there is one, they are able to mobilize a relatively large number of individuals. Old activism displays the lowest number of organized events out of all activist modes; at the same time, these events are relatively well-attended when compared to those of other activist modes. These results further support the findings for Central-Eastern Europe of individual-level scholars, who similarly point out low levels of participation in all organizational types except for trade unions (see Howard 2003).

Figure 2: Mean Participation by Activist Mode



⁹ “Thank You, Time to Go!” is regarded as a separate category. The campaign was an exceptional event that was able to episodically mobilize a high number of people at the end of 1999.

Only old participatory activism displays the capacity to mobilize many individuals. Therefore, drawing on the findings of individual-level studies, one can conclude that there is a correspondence between organizational membership and participation in protest events. Although membership in trade unions has significantly dropped in the Czech Republic after the fall of Communism¹⁰, unions still remain comparatively mass-based organizations capable of mobilization when deemed necessary (see Figure 2). Compared to unions membership in new transactional activism's organizations is lower: according to the results of the 1999 European Values Survey in the Czech Republic (World Values Survey Association 2007), 6.6 percent of respondents claimed membership in environmental organizations, 2.5 percent in women's groups, and 0.7 percent in third world development or human rights organizations. In the same year, 15 percent of the Czech population participated in trade unions (Vašková et al. 2005: 142). These results are in line with other studies, which show a positive correlation between organizational membership and political participation (see Verba et al. 1995, Putnam 2000, Norris 2002, McAdam 2003, Teorell 2006). In this case, membership in unions probably facilitated individual participation in protest events sponsored by them. All in all, the only activist mode that displays *mobilization capacity*, as measured by organizational membership and the number of participants in protest events, is old participatory activism.

Although mean participation clearly demonstrates the differences among the four activist modes in terms of their mobilization capacity, it is unable to provide any information as to the typical size of events both generally and according to the activist mode. Table 3 gives an overview of events according to their size and year.¹¹ As demonstrated by the first line of the table, very small protest events were predominant in every year under study. In general, almost one half of all events did not mobilize more than fifty individuals. Cumulatively, as shown by the first three lines of the table, three fourths of all events did not attract more than 200 participants. Further, the fourth line

¹⁰ While at the end of 1990 62 percent of the Czech population (84 percent of all employees) participated in trade unions, in the middle of 2003 it was only 12 percent (22 percent of all employees). According to available estimates (as there are no exact numbers available), at the end of 2004 trade unions in the Czech Republic claimed a membership of 860 000 individuals (Vašková et al. 2005: 142).

¹¹ All petitions, i.e. 350 events, are excluded from the catalogue. There are 106 more missing events, i.e. cases for which there is no information on the magnitude of participation available.

shows that only ten percent of all events belong to the category of 500 and more protestors. Although there are some frictions, no consistent trend can be identified in time. All in all, mobilization ability of Czech social movement organizations did not change in time.

Table 3: Number of Events by Number of Participants (petitions excluded)

range of participants	1993	1996	1999	2002	2005	total
3 – 50	35 57.4%	50 54.3%	77 41.2%	63 55.8%	64 47.8%	289 49.2%
51 – 100	7 11.5%	10 10.9%	26 13.9%	20 17.7%	20 14.9%	83 14.1%
101 - 200	6 9.8%	11 12.0%	33 17.6%	15 13.3%	20 14.9%	85 14.5%
201 - 500	7 11.5%	13 14.1%	27 14.4%	6 5.3%	13 9.7%	66 11.2%
501 and more	6 9.8%	8 8.7%	24 12.8%	9 8.0%	17 12.7%	64 10.9%
total	61 100.0%	92 100.0%	187 100.0%	113 100.0%	134 100.0%	587 100.0%

Although no general trend can be identified, there are important differences among the four activist modes (Table 4) in number of events. Civic self-organizations usually have small events (40 percent) with other categories being roughly equally represented. Old participatory activism is the only activist type that displays a high proportion of big events (38 percent). At the same time, small events are still strongly represented in this mode. Comparatively, there are a relatively small number of events sponsored by old activists. Both types of new activism are completely dominated by small events. In both cases, events up to 100 activists account for almost three fourths of all events organized. Transactional activism is predominantly based on very small events (almost two thirds of all events have been attended by up to 50 individuals). There are almost no large events in the categories of new activism.

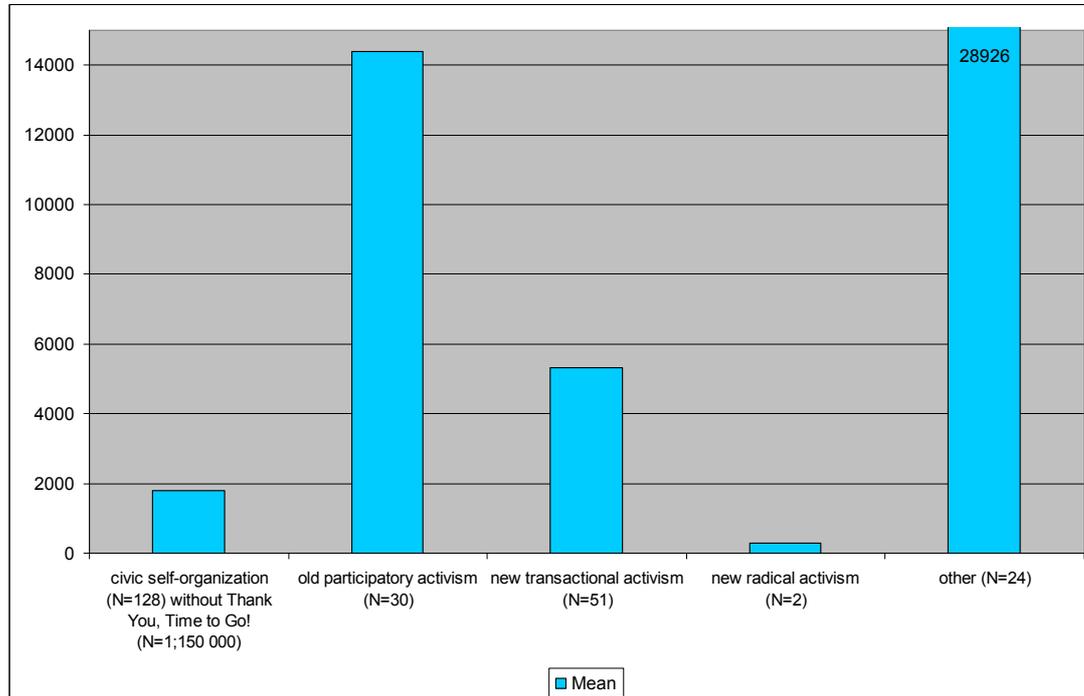
Table 4: Number of Participants by Activist Mode (petitions excluded, “Thank You, Time to Go!” included)

activist mode	3 - 50	51 - 100	101 - 200	201 - 500	501 and more	total
civic self-organization	50 39.7%	17 13.5%	23 18.3%	16 12.7%	20 15.9%	126 100.0%
old participatory activism	12 25.0%	5 10.4%	8 16.7%	5 10.4%	18 37.5%	48 100.0%
new transactional activism	99 60.7%	19 11.7%	23 14.1%	14 8.6%	8 4.9%	163 100.0%
new radical activism	76 53.9%	26 18.4%	20 14.2%	16 11.3%	3 2.1%	141 100.0%
other	38 47.5%	11 13.8%	10 12.5%	10 12.5%	11 13.8%	80 100.0%

Differences in mobilization capacity across the four activist modes are shown even when petitions are taken into account (see Figure 3).¹² While new radical activists organize no petitions, civic self-organizations’ petitions are comparatively numerous and at the same time very small on average. Compared to self-organizations, transactional activists’ petitions are much less numerous and their mean number of signatories is much higher. Yet at the same time it is only one third of the mean participation in petition drives organized by old activists, who organize the smallest number of petitions out of all the modes that employ this strategy.

¹² There are altogether 350 petitions in the catalogue; 236 cases include information on the number of signatures garnered by respective petitions.

Figure 3: Mean Participants in Petitions by Activist Mode



What is the typical size of a petition according to the activist mode? If we look at the distribution of petitions we see that differences in mean participation notwithstanding, both civic self-organizations and old participatory activism are based predominantly on rather small petitions (see Table 5). Petitions up to one thousand signatures constitute two thirds of all the petitions of these two modes. At the same time, the proportion of *large petitions* for old activists is relatively high, amounting to more than one fourth of all petitions. New transactional activism differs from the previous two: two thirds of all events belong to the category that covers petitions signed by more than thousand people. Petitions of more than 10.000 signatures account for more than 16 percent of transactional activism's events.

The findings regarding the mean participation in petitions and their size seemingly contradict both theoretical expectations, and the results of the analysis of individual participation in protest events other than petitions. Thus, despite our hypothesis, as well as data on non-petitions demonstrating that transactional activism is not capable of mass mobilization, it nevertheless displays a comparatively high ability to induce individuals to join petition drives. However, the two findings are not necessarily

in contradiction with each other. First, it is less costly for an individual to sign a petition than to join a demonstration (Verba et al. 1995). Therefore, it is similarly easier for an activist to convince an individual to sign a petition than bring him to the streets: “larger numbers of adherents can be mobilized for low-cost activities of short duration... than for higher cost ones that imply ongoing commitment of time and energy...” (Edwards and McCarthy 2004: 141).

Second, as this analysis’ comparison of old and new activist types makes clear, mass participation is facilitated by organizational membership (see above). In general, research on political participation demonstrates a significant positive correlation between political participation and membership in associations (see Verba et al. 1995, Putnam 2000, Norris 2002, McAdam 2003, Teorell 2006). Members of organizations are more likely to be mobilized, as they are easily reachable by activists who can at the same time provide them with other resources in order to induce them to participate. Transactional activism is not based on membership organizations; thus, its capacity to physically mobilize individuals is limited. At the same time, our data suggest¹³ that these organizations nevertheless exhibit a relatively well-developed organizational capacity, which makes it possible for them to engage in sustained and long term petition drives. Signatures can be collected by a handful of motivated activists within a relatively long period of time. Therefore, the occurrence of big petitions within the transactional mode suggests something about this activist type’s capacity to organize low-cost protest events. However, it does not challenge the fact of transactional activists’ limited capacity to engage individuals in higher-cost activities.

¹³ These data are not included in the present version of the paper.

Table 5: Size of Petitions by Activist Mode

activist mode	3 – 200	201 - 500	501 - 1000	1001– 3000	3001 - 10000	10001 and more	total
civic self-organization	45 34.9%	25 19.4%	16 12.4%	21 16.3%	16 12.4%	6 4.7%	129 100.0%
old participatory activism	9 30.0%	8 26.7%	2 6.7%	1 3.3%	2 6.7%	8 26.7%	30 100.0%
new transactional activism	4 7.8%	4 7.8%	9 17.6%	16 31.4%	10 19.6%	8 15.7%	51 100.0%
new radical activism	1 50.0%	1 50.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 100.0%
other	4 16.7%	3 12.5%	2 8.3%	4 16.7%	2 8.3%	9 37.5%	24 100.0%
total	63 26.7%	41 17.4%	29 12.3%	42 17.8%	30 12.7%	31 13.1%	236 100.0%

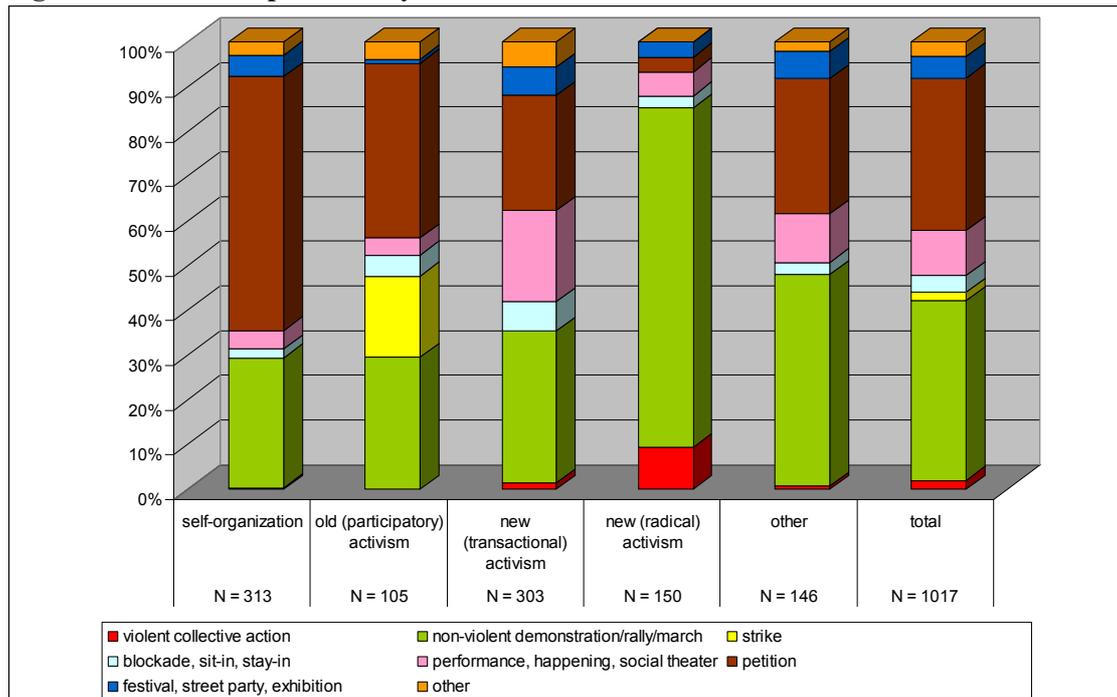
Action Repertoire

According to Charles Tilly (1995: 42), repertoire refers to “a limited set of routines that are learned, shared, and acted out through a deliberate process of choice”. Particular repertoires connect particular claimant-object pairs; they call “attention to the clustered, learned, yet improvisational character of people’s interactions as they make and receive each other’s claims” (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 16). The results of this study further support Tilly’s findings: particular sets of strategies cluster in the form of different action repertoires that characterize different activist modes.

Figure 4 shows action repertoires of our four activist modes. It well demonstrates the limited repertoire of post-Communist collective action in the Czech Republic, which was dominated by the standard strategies used nowadays by collective actors in democratic and democratizing regimes. In this respect, Czech results are in congruence with the results of other studies of post-Communist collective action (see Ekiert and Kubik 2001: 127). In general, non-violent demonstrations/rallies/marches, petitions, happenings and performances account for most protest events. In this respect too, Czech results support Ekiert and Kubik’s conclusion according to which post-Communist

collective action is “*decidedly nonviolent*” (ibid). Violent collective action was defined in the present research as violent direct action, including events such as attacks on property and people, and violent/confrontational demonstrations. Only 22 cases of violent collective action (2.2 percent of all events) were cataloged for the years under study.

Figure 4: Action Repertoire by Activist Mode



The most interesting findings concern differences in repertoire among different activist modes. Although the three generally most used strategies appear in every mode’s repertoire, their relative proportion varies plus there are strategies that are dominantly used by one mode only:

1. As demonstrated by the first bar of Figure 4, civic self-organization is dominated by petition drives, which suggests limited availability of organizational and other resources in this activist mode. Petition drives are among the least costly collective action strategies for both organizing and participating individuals. In this respect, this analysis’ results coincide with the results of available surveys of individual participation that consistently point to petitions as the most widely used ‘non-conventional’ participation strategy in the Czech Republic (World Values Survey Association 2007). On the other hand, when we look at the whole sample

- of cases (see the figure's last bar), non-violent demonstration is shown to be the most represented strategy (40 percent), followed by petition (34 percent). However, this might be more the result of the method used in this paper than a real difference. It is clear that demonstrations and rallies are more attractive for media coverage than petitions. Only huge petitions and petitions that were sent to the CNA by their organizers appear in the data set. It should be assumed that petitions are underrepresented in the present data set. This gives us even more confidence in saying that the petition is the dominant strategy of self-organizations.
2. The second bar of Figure 4 shows the composition of old participatory activism's strategies. Although petitions and non-violent demonstrations account for most of old participatory activism's repertoire with 39 and 30 percent respectively, it is specific as the only mode to employ strikes, which account for 18 percent of the portfolio. If we showed only trade unions and professional associations' repertoire, we would see that strikes account for 30 percent of their strategy set.
 3. The third bar reveals that new transactional activism's repertoire mostly includes non-violent rallies and demonstrations (34 percent) and petitions (26 percent); a specific component of the repertoire is formed by happenings and performances, which account for one fifth of the portfolio. No other activist mode is characterized by such a high proportion of this type of repertoire.
 4. According to the fourth bar, new radical activism displays two remarkable characteristics. First, it is completely dominated by non-violent demonstrations (76 percent); second, it contains a relatively high proportion of violent action (9 percent) that is virtually absent in other modes' repertoires. Out of all activist modes, radicals are most likely to use violent strategies, even though they still account for less than 10 percent of their strategy. At the same time, the radicals are completely distrustful of petitions, which form an important part of the other modes' strategy sets.

To sum up: although different modes share the most common strategies, each of them utilizes them to a different extent. In addition, three modes are characterized by

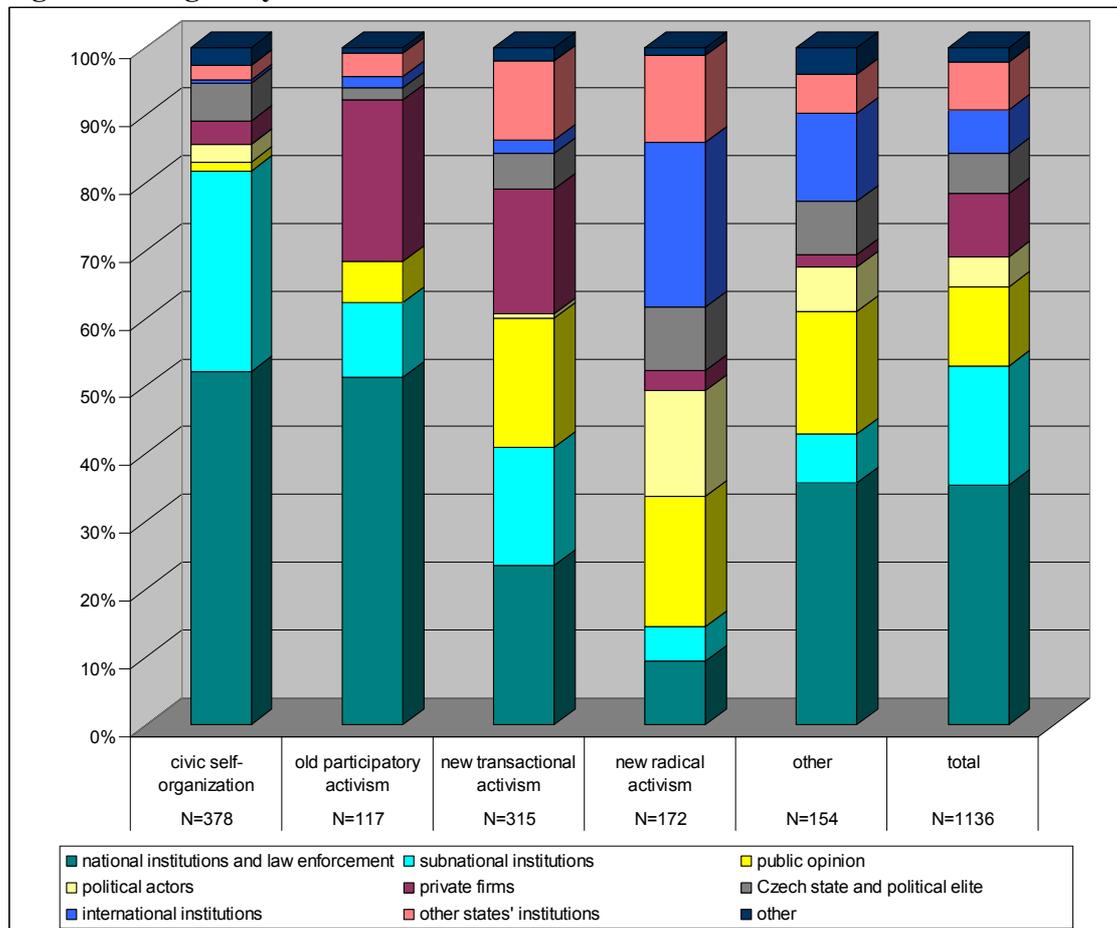
specific strategies that cannot be found in other modes' repertoires. Thus self-organizations mostly rely on petition drives; they are not characterized by an exclusive strategy. Old participatory activism is specific as the only mode to use strikes. New transactional activism is defined by the use of the 'cultural' repertoire associated with new social movements. Radicals are most likely to resort to violent action; at the same time they almost never use petitions.

Targets

In line with Ekiert and Kubik's definition, a target of collective action is defined as "the person, institution, or organization whom the protestors want to respond or react to their demands or grievances." (Ekiert and Kubik 2001: 134) Similarly to their findings on post-Communist Poland in the period of 1989–1993, the state¹⁴ was the most common target in the Czech Republic too. State institutions accounted for 59 percent of the targets of collective action in the Czech Republic in the period under study (it was 77.5 percent for Poland in Ekiert and Kubik's study). If we disentangle particular categories of targets regardless of their 'stateness', we can see in the last bar of Figure 5 below that the most frequent targets were the central state institutions (government, parliament, president) (34 percent), followed by sub-national institutions (18 percent), public opinion (11 percent), and private firms (9 percent). A particularly interesting finding is the relatively high proportion of other state's institutions, most commonly embassies in Prague, which were targets of collective action (7 percent).

¹⁴ The "state" here is the sum of the values "national institutions", "institutions of law enforcement", "sub-national institutions", "the Czech state in general and the political elite".

Figure 5: Targets by Activist Mode



There are important differences among the different modes in terms of their targets (see Figure 5). As the first bar shows, civic self-organizations mostly focus on national, law enforcement, and sub-national institutions, 50 and 30 percent respectively. All types of state institutions constitute 87 percent of this mode’s targets, which means that self-organization is a truly state-centered activist mode. This is not the case with the other modes. The second bar demonstrates that old participatory activists focus half of their claims on the central institutions and one fourth on private firms. All types of state institutions account for 64 percent of old activism’s targets. The table’s third bar reveals that new transactional activism is not dominated by a particular type of object. Four categories are roughly equally represented in its portfolio: national and sub-national institutions, public opinion, and private firms. Taken together they account for three fourths of the targets of this activist mode. Particularly interesting is the relatively high

proportion of events that were not aimed at institutional targets, but rather strove to attract public opinion (almost one fifth of all targets).

This feature is common for both new activist modes, and provides some evidence for supporting a hypothesis concerning their changed modus operandi. According to this hypothesis, these activist modes are no longer primarily concerned with mobilizing numbers, but rather develop capacities which would enable them to shape public debates and influence various publics via the media: “Protest assumes forms of dry statistics, shocking and distressing photographs, eye-witness accounts, fliers, posters, graffiti, protest e-mail, lobbying or scientific expertise. Protest becomes expressed in publications, legal challenges, film festivals, art exhibits, training-programs, conferences, national and international networking efforts” (Flam 2001: 5). While transactional activists typically opt for professional methods of public relations and activist ‘marketing’, i.e. they work on framing their issues and trying to get to the mainstream media, radicals often express their grievances in direct action, which is by definition attractive for the media.

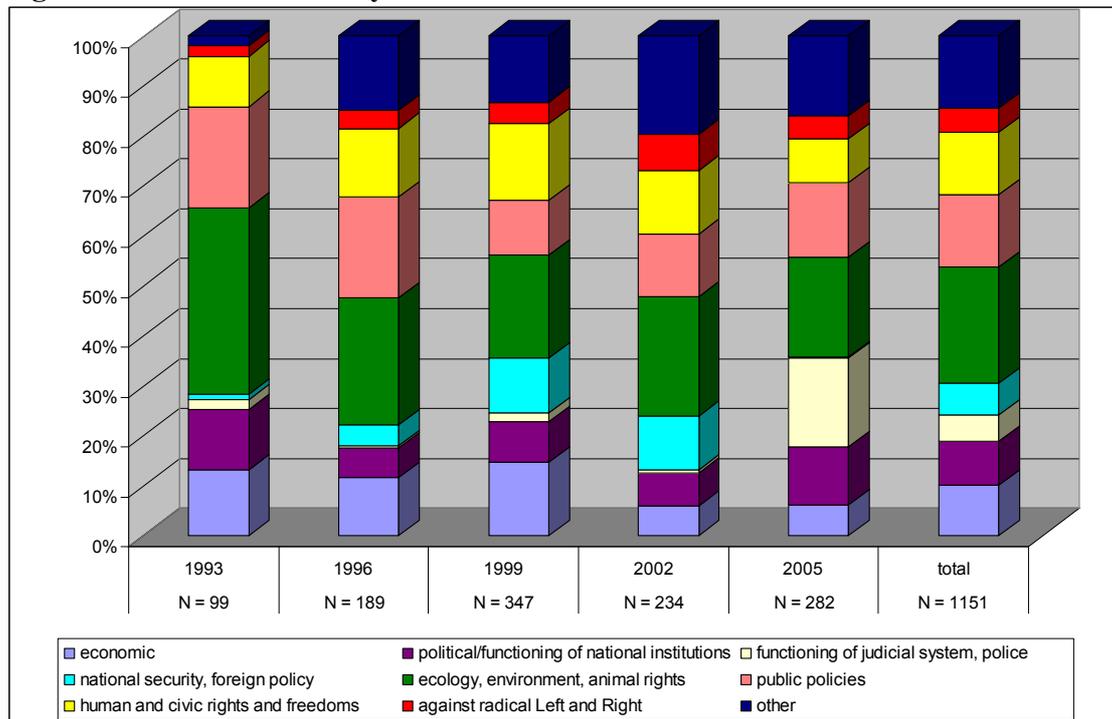
While new transactional activism is not predominantly state-centered (all types of state institutions account for only 46 percent of its targets), as shown in the table’s fourth bar new radical activism is related to the state even less. All types of state-based targets account for only 24 percent of all the objects of the radicals’ political claims. Radicals are decidedly international in their orientation, as international institutions and other states’ institutions account for 37 percent of this mode’s targets. One fifth of all events strive to attract public opinion, and 16 percent of events are targeted against other political actors. This number well illustrates the fact, apparent even from casual reading of mainstream newspapers, that political radicals often target their enemies on the opposite extreme of the political spectrum. However, the present analysis seriously questions a relatively widespread assumption according to which radicals focus in their claims and action mostly on their immediate political enemies. Compared to other targets in their portfolio, inimical political actors do not form the dominant category of their targets at all.

Claims

Although no really big transformation-related social conflicts occurred during the first post-Communist years in the CEE countries (Greskovits 1998), the available data show that, if there was a mobilization, it primarily concerned transformation-related, i.e. economic, issues. Thus, Ekiert and Kubik's study of Polish protest in the period of 1989–93 shows that “protestors’ demands had a predominantly economic character. Poles protested *mostly* to improve their standard of living.” (Ekiert and Kubik 2001: 130) Perhaps one major finding of the present analysis is that the character of Czech protestors’ claims in the period of 1993–2005 was completely the opposite. While Ekiert and Kubik in the beginning of the 1990s found almost none of the ‘post-materialist’ demands commonly associated with the new social movements in Poland, these demands, counted as the sum of environmental and human-rights-related claims, constituted one third of all demands in the studied period of time in the Czech Republic (see Figure 6). It is more than economic claims, even if we include demands concerning public policies among them, as the latter usually have direct implications for the state budget. This lump category of economic demands accounts for one fourth of all political claims. If we look at explicitly economic demands only, they constitute only one tenth of all demands publicly expressed in the Czech Republic. As demonstrated by Figure 6, ecological demands consistently formed the single most represented category of political claims (23 percent of all demands).

The pattern of political demands observed in the Czech Republic displayed, perhaps surprisingly, ‘post-materialist’ features. Given the fact that the Czech population, if compared to West European countries, did not display a particularly ‘post-materialist’ orientation in the 1990s (Rabušic 2000), this finding brings up an interesting question to be dealt with. For the time being, suffice to say that in terms of political mobilization and protest, Czechs have been concerned with environment and human rights decidedly more than with their economic welfare and wellbeing.

Figure 6: Political Claims by Year



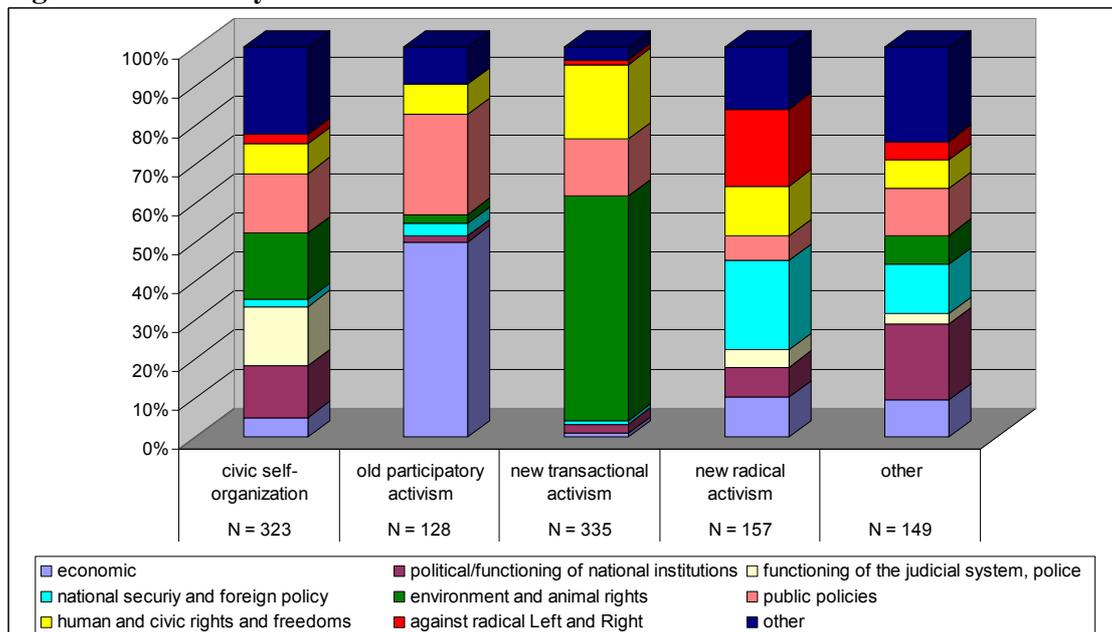
There is yet another interesting finding based on the analysis of political claims. The relatively high proportion of demands concerning human rights and national security and foreign policy (taken together they account for almost one fifth of all claims) seems to suggest that Czech activists are much less parochial in their orientation than one might suppose on the basis of general evidence regarding the trans-nationalization of political activism (see Imig and Tarrow 2001). This is to an extent confirmed by the proportion of international targets: they account for more than 13 percent of all targets.

When looked at through the lens of activist modes, claims display similar structural features as targets and repertoires did: different demands cluster around different activist modes (Figure 7). Civic self-organizations possess the most variegated portfolio of claims; they concern a number of different issues. The portfolio is not dominated by any particular demand; in addition this activist mode is characterized by the presence of the relatively most robust group of claims in the residual category (22 percent). This fact further underscores the diverse character of self-organizations' claims. Four roughly equally-represented categories, i.e. the functioning of national institutions, the judicial system and the police, environmental claims, and demands concerning public

policies, account for 61 percent of all claims. Human rights issues constitute 8 percent and economic claims 5 percent.

The old activism’s portfolio of claims reveals its ‘materialist’ orientation: economic claims and demands bearing on public policies account for three fourths of all claims of this activist type. In this respect, the new transactional activism presents the ideal opposite of its old participatory counterpart. The claims’ portfolio of the new transactional activism is clearly dominated by environmental and human-rights related issues, which together constitute 77 percent of this mode’s claims. The analysis of the new radical activism further supports what has already been said about this activist type: it is to a large extent concerned with itself and at the same time, it is the most internationalized activist category. One fifth of its claims are articulated against immediate political opponents, i.e. radicals of the opposite political persuasion. At the same time, national security, foreign policy and human rights issues account for 36 percent of their claims.

Figure 7: Claims by Activist Mode



Summary of Findings

In order to characterize the pattern of political activism in the Czech Republic after 1993, this section has been focused on several important aspects of collective action (for the

summary, see Table 6). The only activist mode that has displayed mobilization capacity was old participatory activism. Protest event analysis has persuasively demonstrated that while old activists are able to mobilize citizens, the new activists lack such capacity. Organizations of the old activist mode are membership-based actors, even though they have experienced an outflow of members since the beginning of the 1990s. New organizations lack wide membership, even if some of them are membership organizations. In terms of the number of organized events, transactional activists outnumber all the other types of social movement organization, which indicates their (transactional) capacity to organize protest events.

Although the old activists do not organize many events, this should not be read as an indicator of transactional incapacity. Given the extent to which old activist organizations have been incorporated into the formal institutional arrangement of the state, protest has usually been only the 'last resort' strategy for them. Old activists are, more than other types of activism, generally able to make use of formally institutionalized channels of interest representation, which are difficult to study using the tools of protest event analysis (Brokl et al. 1997). Trade union organizations, which account for most events in the category, have enjoyed, with the exception of the mid-1990s, comparatively privileged access to the Czech political system, especially through the tripartite institution (the Council for Economic and Social Agreement CR), and thanks to their contacts with the Social Democratic party (Brokl et al. 1997, Hála et al. 2002).

During the early 1990s the executive branch of the Czech state was very much open to communication with representatives of old advocacy organizations, primarily the unions. Some are even of the opinion that thanks to this social dialogue, consisting of broad consultations by government politicians under the tripartite structure, the Czech Republic managed to avoid some of the transformational excesses that affected some other post-Communist countries (Stark and Bruszt 1998). Important decisions were consulted beforehand within the framework of the tripartite. This corporative mechanism was disrupted only in the mid-1990s (Bruszt 2000). In 1998, with coming to power of Social Democrats, labor unions achieved greater influence than ever before (Hála et al. 2002, Mansfeldová 2005).

Table 6: Summary of Protest Event Analysis

activist mode	number of events organized	location	number of members and/or protestors	action repertoire	targets	claims
old participatory activism	low	relatively centralized; countrywide	high	petitions; non-violent demonstrations plus strikes	national institutions; private firms	materialist
new transactional activism	high	relatively centralized	low	non-violent demonstrations; petitions plus 'cultural' strategies	national and sub-national institutions; public opinion and firms	post-materialist
new radical activism	low	most centralized	low	predominantly non-violent demonstrations plus violent action	international and other states' institutions; public opinion; other actors	national security; against ideological opponents
self-organization	high	most de-centralized	low	mostly petitions	national and sub-national institutions	very variegated

4. In Search of an Explanation: Opportunities for and Sources of Political Activism

As has thus far been shown, the four different activist modes display peculiar characteristics in several important respects. How can we account for the demonstrated differences? In order to identify explanatory factors, this paper turns to the *political process model* (Tilly 1995, Tarrow 1998, McAdam et al. 2001) and the *resource mobilization paradigm* (Jenkins 1983, Edwards and McCarthy 2004). While the first one identifies a set of contextual variables, a so-called political opportunity structure, as the main explanatory factor of political mobilization, the latter focuses on differences in resource access as the factor that explains variegated capacity of social movements to mobilize. This section presents a framework that combines both contextual and resource-based factors. The first subsection focuses on the notion of political opportunity structure.

The second subsection discusses various mechanisms of resource access, and the third subsection presents the integrated framework.

Political Opportunity Structure

The notion of political opportunity structure is usually comprised of several dimensions that describe the environment of movements' political action. This environment is most importantly formed by institutional factors, which will be discussed in the first part of this subsection. At the same time, the notion will be reinterpreted in a way that will make it possible to conceptualize differences in the configuration of opportunities across various policy areas. In other words, this paper will introduce an issue-specific political opportunity structure. Second, as pointed out by recent contributions, political opportunity structure is not only constituted by institutional factors, but also consists of cultural properties. Accordingly, the second part of the subsection will focus on the so-called "cultural political opportunity structure". Third, as a result of the recent process of internationalization, political opportunity structure is reinterpreted as a multi-level concept: according to this understanding, opportunities are no longer provided only by states, but also by international organizations. Therefore, the last part of this subsection will concentrate on the formation of a "multilevel opportunity structure".

Institutional properties of political opportunities will first be dealt with. Although there has been a lot of debate regarding both the concrete conceptualization of environmental variables and their subsequent operationalization (see Kitschelt 1986, Gamson and Meyer 1996, Tarrow 1998, Kriesi et al. 1995, Tilly 1995, Tilly and Tarrow 2007), all the discussions notwithstanding, the core of the concept is made up of both formal and informal political institutions (Kriesi et al. 1995, Kriesi 2004). The basic idea of the approach based on political opportunity structure is that open political institutions facilitate mobilization and closed institutions impede it. The level of their openness or closeness is a function of the number of access points available for social movement organizations and other nonstate actors in a political system at a given point in time. Thus, open opportunities can be operationalized as the existence of formal and informal mechanisms and procedures of inclusion of nonstate actors in the policy process of a given polity. Closed opportunities display the opposite value. While open access

facilitates political mobilization and invites nonstate actors to be integrated in the political process, closed opportunities exclude them from the process, and increase the costs of collective action (see Tarrow 1998: 71).

There are different uses of the concept; some of them see political opportunity structure as a notion that captures the general institutional setting of a state (Kitschelt 1986). In this understanding, variations in the openness or closeness of political opportunities across different states explain the differentiated level of mobilization of social movements therein. As regards social movements within a state, on this account, they all face the same political opportunity structure. A different view points out to the fact that openness/closeness of political opportunities, i.e. institutional access, may vary across different policy areas even within the institutional structure of one state: “[a]lthough there are certainly times when a state is more or less open, Big Opportunity approaches... conflate differential opportunities for various issues and constituencies” (Gamson and Mayer 1996: 280). Therefore, instead of focusing on the characteristics of the whole political system, some scholars prefer to pay more attention to issue-specific political opportunities: “instead of being fixed and constant for all movements... political opportunity structures are at least in part issue specific. The openness and closedness [*sic*] of the political system... varies across policy domains and therefore... political opportunities are more favorable for certain challenges and challenging groups than for others” (Berclaz and Giugni 2005: 17). As this paper focuses on one state only, this is the direction it shall follow too. As demonstrated below, different social movements have faced different political opportunities in the Czech Republic after the fall of Communism.

As recent contributions to the study of social movements have pointed out, political mobilization is not only determined by the level of institutional access; the structures in which nonstate actors interact possess a symbolic dimension, i.e. “the cultural side of opportunity” (Gamson and Mayer 1996: 279). Accordingly, Koopmans and Statham (1999) propose to include cultural properties of the political context in the analysis based on the notion of political opportunity structure. They coin the term “discursive opportunity structure” in order to highlight the idea that the context of political mobilization is not only shaped by formal political institutions, but also is formed by prevailing interpretative schemata that make some ideas and claims generally

acceptable, 'sensible', 'realistic', and "'legitimate' within a certain polity at a specific time" (ibid: 228). Prevailing political discourse provides "a language in which policy can be described within the political arena and the terms in which policies are judged there" (Hall 1989: 383).

Similarly to institutional opportunities, cultural opportunities may differ across different policy areas too. Depending on cultural conditions prevailing in a particular area, some activist discursive devices, i.e. frames, will resonate and others will not (Benford and Snow 2000). Frame resonance "concerns the relationship between a movement organization's interpretative work and its ability to influence broader public understandings" (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 17). As every public discourse is bounded, there is only a limited set of claims deemed legitimate at a particular point of time. If activists wish to be successful, their claims either have to fall within this set, or they must be able to reinterpret it in a way that fits their goals. The boundaries of what is regarded as "legitimate" change in time: for example, Ellingson (1995) has shown that discursive conditions change in response to particular events marking the temporal development of political mobilization.

Discursive conditions at the same time limit political actors and provide them with cultural resources to draw on, when they make their claims: in other words, they provide them with a particular repertoire of legitimate claims and action forms (Spillman 1995, Steinberg 1998, 1999, Tilly 1995). Regarding the potential for cultural resonance, there are differences among different modes of activism: while moderate movements usually aim at a limited change, they "do not ask publics for radical revisions of their conceptions of societal arrangements.... [they address the society] in a readily accessible, and hence broadly legitimate, language" (Williams 2004: 103). Radical movements, on the contrary, "explicitly articulate their critiques of the extant, and the dimensions of the desired future society." As a result, radicals' demands often approximate the boundaries of the established discourse, "falling outside what many people are able to "hear" as acceptable visions of society" (ibid). It is in times of revolutionary changes, when the legitimate discourse of the old regime is suddenly replaced by what used to be regarded as a radical agenda shortly before (Kurzman 1996). Normally, similarly to the

development of institutional conditions, discursive conditions within a polity change gradually in response to both internal and external influences.

As a result of globalization and internationalization, *external influences*, mostly in the form of international and transnational organizations' interferences in originally domestic politics, have recently become important determinants of social movements' mobilization (Meyer 2003, Cisař 2004, Tarrow 2005). Reflecting the processes of globalization and internationalization, and Europeanization as an important instance of them, the political process model has recently applied its originally state-level-based notion to the study of international organizations too (Marks and McAdam 1999; Tarrow 2005). Thus, recent contributions have pointed out that political opportunities are not only provided by national institutions; an *international opportunity structure* is also developing, which influences both state institutions (Sikkink 2005) and nonstate actors operating within national boundaries (Risse-Kappen 1995, Keck and Sikkink 1998, Risse 2003, Meyer 2003). In the same way as state institutions provided, and keep providing, political opportunities for political actors at the nation-state level, supranational institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the European Union provide opportunity spaces for both state and nonstate actors to interact, cooperate, and clash in conflict. There are two basic ways of how international institutions influence mobilization of nonstate actors.

First, in a "partially globalized world", to borrow a phrase from R. Keohane (2002), international institutions interfere with national political opportunities: "Changes in the international context can, by altering political and economic conditions, and/or perceptions of those conditions, change the opportunities for activists within a country." (Meyer 2003: 20) When, for example, a social movement organization is attempting to push through its agenda in a particular national political system, the likelihood of its success increases manifold if this agenda is in line with internationally recognized norms or overlaps with the agenda of important international organizations. International institutions both shape domestic opportunities, creating new access points for some actors and closing them for others, and provide domestic actors with resources they would not be able to obtain otherwise.

Second, international institutions provide nonstate actors with additional opportunities to mobilize at the *supranational* level. Nowhere are these opportunities more developed than in the context of an integrating Europe. The influence of the EU not only changes the domestic rules of the game and redistributes available resources in domestic political arenas, but also enables particular groups of political actors to expand the scope of their activity and to enter either into direct interaction with European institutions or with EU-supported networks of nongovernmental organizations. As already pointed out by the theory of multilevel governance in the mid-1990s, the political process in the EU is characterized by the interconnectedness of subnational, national, and European institutions that enable political actors at different levels to interact and establish various types of coalitions (Imig and Tarrow 2001, Greenwood 2003).

Resources

While differences in the openness of political opportunity structure help explain a great deal of variance in political mobilization observed in a particular polity, contextual variables do not give us a full picture. Not all actors in a given polity are able to seize opening opportunities, as they might lack necessary resources and/or organizational capacity to do so (see McAdam et al. 2001). In order to analyze differences across the different activist modes identified in this paper, resource access is combined with contextual variables. The goal is to generate an explanatory typology of political activism in the Czech Republic. This section focuses on different mechanisms of resource access.

As the adherents of the resource mobilization paradigm pointed out long ago, contemporary organized political activism is based on the availability of resources, such as money, time, leadership skills, expert knowledge, cultural and human capital (McCarthy and Zald 1977, Jenkins 1983, Zald 1992, Edwards and McCarthy 2004). While availability of resources fosters mobilization, their shortage disables it. There is a variety of resources that are available for political activists at a particular point of time. At the same time, not all the resources are accessible to all the activists. Rather, activists are always limited in what resources they can get hold of: “in order to be available for use, resources must be both present in a specific socio-historical context and accessible to

potential collective actors” (Edwards and McCarthy 2004: 118). The resources instrumental for successful mobilization are always unequally “distributed within societies and among them. Moreover, within a society the control of resources varies from one social group to another as it does among the various members of each group.” (ibid)

In order to conceptualize expected differences in resource appropriation among the four activist modes, different mechanisms of resource access will be hypothesized for each of them. Edwards and McCarthy (ibid: 131-135) define for social movement organizations (SMOs) four bundles of mechanisms of resource access: aggregation, self-production, appropriation/co-optation, and patronage. Aggregation defines mechanisms by which resources are generated *from individuals* and “converted into collective ones that in turn can be allocated by movement actors” (ibid: 131). Self-production refers to mechanisms by which resources are created *by movements themselves*: social movements organizations “create cultural products like collective-action frames, tactical repertoires, music, literature, and organizational templates for enacting specific types of collective events or issue campaigns” (ibid: 134). They also self-produce other resources such as human capital via training and economic resources by means of merchandising their own products. Appropriation/co-optation includes mechanisms of *strategic appropriation of already existing institutions and organizations* for movements’ purposes. Patronage describes “the *bestowal of resources upon an SMO by an individual or an organization* that often specializes in patronage.... Government contracts, foundation grants, and large private donations are the most common forms of financial patronage...” (ibid: 135, italics added) As will be shown below, different activist modes are characterized by different mechanisms of resource access. This variegated accessibility of resources shapes activist modes in particular ways.

Explanatory Framework: Opportunities and Resources

Before we come to the formulation of our explanatory framework, every activist mode will be categorized according to political opportunities, availability of resources, and mechanisms of resource access. *Self-organizations* constitute the activist category we know the least about at the moment. No qualitative data have been collected thus far on

this activist mode. We know that the mode is constituted by events that never started as a result of organization-based activism. However, this is not to deny the importance for this activist mode of social networks and socially appropriated pre-existing institutions (see McAdam et al. 2001). Although the category includes instances of NIMBY activism, neighborhood-based activism, and other examples of community action aimed at the sub-national level of decision-making, it cannot be solely limited to community activism – at least not yet. We know that there is a relatively high proportion of protest events that have targeted national-level institutions. As regards both the availability of opportunity and resource access, they can only be hypothesized for the time being.

1. *Opportunities*: Given the very variegated portfolio of political claims in this category, the institutional access for this activist mode probably varies across different policy areas. In general, however, as there has been a clear increase in the number of this type of events, one can hypothesize that opportunities for this activist mode have been opening, facilitating citizen mobilization in the Czech Republic.¹⁵
2. *Resource access*: As the events in this group have been taking place without a direct involvement of organizations and platforms, no high financial start-up costs are presumably needed for self-organizations. According to our hypothesis, dedicated individuals, probably experienced in social and/or political organizing, are a necessary condition for this type of activism to take place. An example can be taken from the catalogue: mayors of 84 East Bohemian municipalities protesting via petition against a new state budgetary policy. On the other hand, organizers might be individuals temporarily mobilized by some ‘precipitating event’ who would suddenly find themselves in a position to (co-)organize some type of protest (see Klandermans 2004). A following example can be drawn from our catalogue: parents of about 10 children protesting against their children’s school being closed down by not sending them to the classes in the new school. As regards the mechanisms of resource access, aggregation, self-production, and appropriation/co-optation are expected to be identified in this mode.

¹⁵ On the other hand, opportunities may have been opened, yet not seized by citizens, from the beginning of the 1990s on. Individuals could have lacked necessary resources, such as know-how. If this turned out to be true, it would be a case of so-called “missed opportunities” (Meyer 2002: 17).

Old participatory activism primarily includes trade-union organizing and religious groups. The former are the center of our interest.

1. *Opportunities*: Opportunities for old participatory activism have been relatively open for the whole period under study. The only exception was the period of the short-lived Klaus second government, which was in power between 1996 and 1997, when consultations between the government and trade unions taking place under the first Klaus government, were disrupted (Bruszt 2000). Thus, with the exception of the mid-1990s, trade unions enjoyed relatively privileged access to the political system, which was first mediated through the Council for Economic and Social Agreement, and was subsequently provided by Social Democrats under their governments between 1998 and 2006 (Hála et al. 2002 and above).
2. *Resource access*: While trade unions mostly rely on membership contributions, and a property-based income (Hála et al. 2002, Kroupa et al. 2004), religious organizations mobilize individual contributions and many of them receive important public sector funding in various forms (see Jäger 2006). As trade unions are concerned, there are two basic sources of income. First, there are membership contributions. Union members contribute 1 percent of their salaries to union organizations' budgets. Second, there is a property-based income. Although differences exist among different union federations, the property of the pre-1989 state-controlled union federation was distributed among them after the fall of Communism and constitutes the second important source of unions' funding (Hála et al. 2002, Kroupa et al. 2004). As a matter of facts, other resources, such as know how and organizational skills, displayed a similarly path-dependent logic. As regards the mechanisms of resource access, unions engage most importantly in aggregation.

The category of *radical activism* subsumes activist groups of the radical Left and Right that have operated in the Czech Republic.

1. *Opportunities*: Radical groups have consistently faced a firmly closed political opportunity structure as regards both institutional and discursive conditions. In

general, radical groups have neither enjoyed institutional access nor have their claims resonated with the discursive environment of the Czech Republic. In this respect, their demands have clearly fallen outside of the established public discourse. Understood as extremists, these organizations have been closely monitored by law enforcement agencies (Ministry of Interior 1999-2005). Needless to add that many of these groups would never seize open opportunities, even if they were open to them, as their identity is forged in direct confrontation with the 'system'.

2. *Resource access*: Radicals cooperate neither with public institutions nor established private foundations. From their point of view, such cooperation would equal to cooptation; thus, they strive to maintain their independence by being dependent on sources generated by their own means only. These are, most notably, volunteering, individual contributions, revenues from journal sales, and benefit performances (Vráblíková 2006, Císař and Koubek 2006, Mareš 2003). In other words, they derive their sources via mechanisms of self-production. In addition, there are some small alternative foundations that are regarded as legitimate sources of funding in the eyes of radical activists. Although exact numbers are nowhere to be found, these grants can not in any way compete with grants for transactional activists. The same applies to the 'budgets' of radical organizations in general. For many of them, this is a deliberate strategy.

New transactional activism that is predominantly based on the activities of small advocacy organizations has developed only after the fall of the Communist regime.

1. *Opportunities*: Institutional access varies in time and across different policy areas. Environmental and human rights activists enjoyed a short period of open institutional and discursive opportunities in the beginning of the 1990s and saw them closed with the coming to power of the first Klaus government in 1992. The situation for them again changed after the second Klaus government collapsed at the end of 1997 (Fagan 2004). At the end of the 1990s, institutional access opened up for activists as a combined result of coming to power of Social Democrats and the pressure from the European Union (EU) that shaped the country's institutions

during the accession process. Unlike the previous two sectors, women's rights groups were denied access from the very beginning of the 1990s. Equally, the discursive conditions were not conducive to the demands of women's rights groups. Their situation changed only at the end of the 1990s, when the EU stepped in (Čísař and Vráblíková 2007). Since the last elections in 2006, which brought a new center-right coalition headed by the Civic Democratic Party to power, opportunities have narrowed again.

2. *Resource access*: In general, with the important exception of Greenpeace, Czech advocacy organizations have been unable to rely on resources provided by either a high membership base or individual contributors. Nor have they been able to draw on property-based resources; they possess virtually no property. Until recently, advocacy organizations were not recipients of any important public-sector funding. Although volunteering has played a role, there have been few members and supporters to provide organizations with their time and financial contributions. Thus, the necessary resources have had to come through different channels. Advocacy organizations became dependent on grants, know-how, and other resources provided mostly by foreign agencies, i.e. states, international organizations, and public and private foundations (although these sources have often been channeled through local agencies). These foreign funding agencies created the supply-side of transactional activism in CEE. As regards mechanisms of resource access, new transactional activists have derived their resources mostly via patronage. While in the first half of the 1990s, these resources were provided typically by the US and US-based private foundations, although individual European states and foundations also played an important role, these sources dried up by the end of the decade. The EU overtook their role as the primary source. To put it bluntly, 'Americanization' of Czech civic life was replaced by its 'Europeanization'.

Combing the two variables, each assuming two values, four outcomes are predicted (see Table 7). Open opportunities together with a limited access to resources give rise to *occasional, small-scale mobilizations*. Although there is not enough

information for the time being, self-mobilizations are hypothesized to be placed within this category. The mechanisms of resource access hypothesized for self-organizations are aggregation, self-production, and appropriation/co-optation. Open opportunities in combination with access to resources define the *situation of inclusion*: nonstate actors enjoy access to the political system and, at the same time, they possess necessary resources to act. Old participatory activism, with the exception of a short period under the second Klaus cabinet, belongs here together with new transactional activists in the period after the collapse of that cabinet. The two differ in terms of resource access: while old participatory activists have relied mostly on aggregation, new transactional activists have been deriving their resources through foreign patronage.

Closed opportunities and access to resources create a situation in which activists either resort to *extra-institutional mobilization*, as some Czech environmentalists did in the period of 1992-97, or they are *marginalized*, giving up on political mobilization and turning inwards, as women's rights groups did in the same period. While environmentalists were able to find some resonance for their claims via the media, women's rights did not even exist as a legitimate part of the public discourse. As regards resource access, both were dependent on foreign patronage. Closed opportunities and limited access to resources result in the situation of *exclusion*. Nonstate actors are excluded from the political process and interactions. Radical activist groups fall into this category, as they have displayed limited mobilization and advocacy capacities, and rather focused on providing alternative social spaces for their members and sympathizers. The mechanism of radicals' resource access has mostly been self-production.

Table 7: Explanatory Framework: Four Modes

		resources	
		low	high
opportunities	open	<p>occasional, small-scale mobilization</p> <p>self-organizations [resource access: <i>aggregation, self-production and appropriation/co-optation</i>]</p>	<p>inclusion</p> <p>old participatory activism, with the exception of mid-1990s [resource access: <i>aggregation</i>]</p> <p>new transactional activism (1998–present) [resource access: <i>international patronage</i>]</p>
	closed	<p>exclusion</p> <p>radical activism [resource access: <i>self-production</i>]</p>	<p>marginalization/extra-institutional mobilization</p> <p>new transactional activism (1992–1997) [resource access: <i>international patronage</i>]</p>

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