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Polanyi, political-economic opportunity structure and protest: capitalism and contention in the post-communist Czech Republic

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on Polanyian logic, we focus on the gradual institutionalization of capitalism in the Czech Republic and the protests accompanying this process. We hypothesize that different configurations of political economy, or what we term the political economic opportunity structure, trigger different popular responses and are a potent indicator of expected protest forms. To analyze this we chose to carry out a country case study, in which many variables commonly associated with political mobilization, in particular the state's institutional structure, are kept constant. By contrast, models of political economy vary over time, as a function of the extent and form of the international integration of capitalism. We focus on three configurations of political economy – national, globalized and austerity models – and for each one, identify the characteristics and mechanisms, i.e. concrete policy measures, that shape particular protest patterns in the context of our case study. In theoretical terms, this paper seeks to present one possible response, in this case a Polanyian response, to recent complaints about the disappearance of capitalism from social movement studies. At the same time, given the focus of this special issue, our goal is to analyze the current wave of anti-austerity protest that emerged in relation to what has been labelled the Great Recession.

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Introduction

Drawing on a Polanyi-inspired perspective, this paper seeks to present one possible response to recent complaints about the disappearance of capitalism from social movement studies (see Hetland & Goodwin, 2013). It focuses on the gradual institutionalization of capitalism in the Czech Republic and the protests that have accompanied this process. Employing a Polanyi-inspired perspective in the context of a contemporary post-communist society gives us an opportunity to analyze an accelerated 'great transformation' that has assumed the form of various types of capitalism and also look at the related forms of popular protest that simultaneously resisted and fast-forwarded this process.

While Polanyi analyzed the changing nature of capitalism in the nineteenth century, we have witnessed a much faster and shorter process of capitalist formation in the post-1989 political-economic transformation of former socialist states. Although his notion of the 'double movement' of marketization, which is resisted by protective counter-movements of regulation, de-commodification and social re-embedding, has already been applied in the context of post-communist transformation

(Bohle & Greskovits, 2012) and even economic globalization (Munck, 2002, 2007; Tarrow, 2005), our goal here is to apply this framework to recent protests. In the Czech Republic, the originally nationally managed wave of marketization was soon followed by qualitatively different processes of economic globalization and subsequently by restrictive measures in the form of austerity policies.

We see the state neither as easy prey for the forces of global capitalism (Munck, 2002; Tilly, 1995a) nor as the locus of the regulatory counter-movement against the market. Rather, we view it as an agent of the gradual marketization and globalization of Czech society, most notably vis-à-vis the initial absence of capital, capitalist class or 'spirit of capitalism' in the country (Drahokoupil, 2008; Eyal, Szelenyi, & Townsley, 2001). In this paper, we focus on the waves of protest that accompanied the gradual formation of a society integrated into the world of global capitalism. Although there was no way domestic protest could fully counter the forces of economic globalization, it nevertheless transformed over time in response to the changing dynamics of marketization. Therefore, our main research question is: how did the formation of capitalism shape the popular responses to it? We assume that different types of capitalism lead to qualitatively different protest responses.

Given the focus of this special issue, our goal is to analyze the current wave of anti-austerity protests that emerged in relation to what has been labelled a Great Recession. Our analysis draws on longitudinal data from the post-communist Czech Republic, which experienced the massive expansion of capitalism and globalization within the very short period of the last decades, and that gives us a unique opportunity to see whether and how different this protest wave is compared to previous waves related to the onset of capitalism in the 1990s and its internationalization at the end of millennium. Did it repeat past patterns of collective action, or did it develop in a new direction? More generally, how do these protest waves relate to what we know from the West?

Since our hypothesis is that different configurations of political economy trigger different popular responses, we have opted for a country case study, in which many variables commonly associated with political mobilization, in particular the state institutional structure, are kept constant, but models of political economy (and related configurations of political and economic elites; see also below) vary in time depending on the extent and form of international integration of capitalism. Therefore, the Polanyian framework is particularly productive for us, since it is based on a dynamic and multilevel notion of capitalism that operates on both the national and the international level and at the same time is open to political conflicts (see Bohle & Greskovits, 2012, p. 13; Della Porta, 2015, pp. 69–73). Drawing on Polanyi and his modern-day followers (such as Bohle & Greskovits, 2012; Blyth, 2002; Della Porta, 2015; Tarrow, 2005), we expect that the variegated level and form of international economic integration will shape political protest in particular ways.

Although the Czech Republic retained national control over the marketization process, its induction into the world of liberal capitalism in the 1990s, a process domestically referred to as an economic and political transformation, was abrupt and swift. This period ended in the transformation crisis of the late 1990s (1997–1998) and was accompanied by a surge in collective action. Subsequently, thanks to deliberate steps by the government, the country became economically integrated into the global market much more than it had been in the preceding period. This process of globalization and related Europeanization coincided with the visible presence of the global anti/alter-globalization struggle in the country when the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank convened in Prague (2000). Since 2006, the country has experienced a series of neo-liberal austerity measures signalling the ideological conclusion of the international integration process that took off in the late 1990s. A wave of protest ensued in response (2008–2009).

National, global and austerity capitalisms

Drawing on recent research in the field of social movement studies (Barker, Cox, Krinsky, & Nilsen, 2013; Della Porta, 2015; Della Porta & Diani, 2006; Kriesi et al., 2012; Pellow, 2007; for a review, see Císař, 2015) and on Polanyi-inspired political economy, this paper seeks to contribute to the 'bringing capitalism back in' debate by identifying the conditions of political economy that produce expectedly

different forms of resistance and protest. Recognizing the importance of the transformations brought about by economic globalization, we particularly focus on the interplay of national and transnational/global capitalism in determining the nature of the resistance that forms in opposition to it.

We draw on Polanyi (1957 [1944]) to shed some light on the ways in which political interactions are shaped, not under *capitalism* in general, but under *different configurations of a capitalist political economy*. Here, we relate to a much broader and internally deeply structured tradition of neo-institutional analysis of capitalism and its diverse forms (see Hall & Soskice, 2001 and Crouch, 2005 for two influential versions of it). As summarized by Crouch (2005, p. 13), ‘markets are always influenced by the structures of the societies within which they emerge’. Unlike the prevailing understanding of Marxism – the perspective Hetland and Goodwin (2013) call for – that prioritizes the power of the economy and social interests over politics, the Polanyi-inspired tradition underscores the relative autonomy of the political sphere in a capitalist society and consequently makes it possible to distinguish the *different regimes of political relations that form between political and economic elites and non-elite actors* under different configurations of the state and capitalist economy (see Bohle & Greskovits, 2012, pp. 15–21; Bruszt & Greskovits, 2009; Della Porta, 2015). In these terms, differently organized capitalisms, and most importantly the different ways in which various types of capitalism are internationally integrated, should produce different types of protest.

We focus on *three configurations of political economy*, or, in other words, three configurations of the *political economic opportunity structure*, identified in current political economy literature, and we specify their main characteristics, configurations of elite economic and political actors they involve, and the mechanisms, i.e. concrete policy measures, that shape particular protest patterns in the context of our case study. In our understanding, the opportunity structure for social movements and other non-elite actors is formed not only by the configuration of elite *political* actors and institutions (for a classic definition see Kriesi, 2004), but by the configuration of elite *political and economic actors* (such as banks, important firms) *and institutions* (such as tripartite), and how they relate to their non-elite counterparts (here we adapt the originally transnationally applied notion by Pellow, 2007, p. 62 to the national level; see also Cisař, 2015; Della Porta, 2015). In other words, political economic opportunity structure is a set of political and economic factors that shape the conditions for the involvement of movement actors in protest politics. These factors cluster in particular patterns or ‘models’. Consequently, we specify how these particular models shape what social movement studies identify as the relevant dimensions of political protest, such as organizers, cooperation among organizers in protest events, the frequency of protest events, the action repertoire, the targets and frames used, and we look at these models in the particular context of the development of Czech capitalism.

First, there is the model of *nationally regulated capitalism*. The initial period of post-communist capitalist development in Czechoslovakia and later the Czech Republic was defined by such an arrangement (Myant, 2003; Stark & Bruszt, 1998), which has clear implications for political protest. In this model, we would expect a form of capitalism regulated by domestic political institutions that mostly through a tripartite arrangement take various social interests into consideration in its decisions, and a pattern of protest typical of traditional union-based activism.

Second, there is the *globalized model of capitalism* which is integrated into the network of global economic exchanges. This model applies to the second period of Czech post-communist capitalist development, which started in the late 1990s (Drahokoupil, 2008; Myant, 2003). The progressive economic globalization of Czech capitalism occurred in conjunction with the country’s political Europeanization in the run-up to EU accession. As indicated in the vast body of literature on the consequences of globalization, this model of capitalism is expected to lead to internationally coordinated protest action. Therefore, in this model we would expect to find Czech protest becoming internationally coordinated and globalized in its demands and predominantly concerned with the pitfalls of global capitalism.

Third, there is the globalized model of capitalism that embraces the ideological discourse of neo-liberalism with its *austerity policy prescriptions*. The third period of Czech capitalism’s development after 2006 fits this model (Saxonberg & Sirovátka, 2014). Drawing on recent literature on the Great Recession (Bermeo & Bartels, 2014) demonstrating that state-level austerity policies introduced in

response to the recession have helped create yet another type of popular, i.e. anti-austerity, movement around the world, under this model we would expect to find a third, distinctive pattern of economic protest emerging in the country.

Capitalism the Czech way

The model of political economy

Although the country was positioned within a generally (neo)liberal global economy after communism's collapse (Bruszt & Greskovits, 2009), the first period in the development of capitalism in the Czech Republic (Czechoslovakia until 1993) unfolded against a background of broad consensus among political elites on a distinctly Czech approach to new economic challenges (Stark & Bruszt, 1998). As Myant (2003) shows, Czech capitalism arose out of mixed perspectives and expectations: the neo-classical economic policies pursued by one section of the political elite, the political idea of a 'return to Europe', and social-democratic views on various social problems. Even if it was largely the advocates of the first perspective, i.e. neoliberals, who steered the initial course of development, the measures and policies that in reality emerged in this period were a broad compromise of all three views. As a result, the reform process was based on a particular national model of capitalist development (Bohle & Greskovits, 2012, pp. 138–181).

During this time, as well as securing social peace through the initial rounds of voucher privatization (which every adult was entitled to participate in for a symbolic fee), the government actively sought to reach compromises with trade unions via a tripartite mechanism (for a critical discussion, see Ost, 2000). During the early 1990s, the Czech state was very open to communication with union representatives; according to some, it is because of this social dialogue that the Czech Republic managed to avoid some of the transformation excesses that affected some other post-communist countries (Stark & Bruszt, 1998). Consultations with labour unions and employers were maintained throughout the term of the first government led by Václav Klaus (1992–1996). Important policy decisions were made on the basis of prior consultation within the tripartite framework (this 'pre-emptive corporatism' broke down only after the mid-1990s). The result was national capitalism done 'the Czech way', which at the time was heralded as a miracle of post-communist transformation.

The expected characteristics of collective action

Just as union-based social movements became institutionalized in the West in response to the development of national welfare capitalism in the second half of the twentieth century, we should expect to find in the Czech Republic that the formation of a national model of capitalism and its corporatist structure in the early 1990s gave rise to national union-based activism and protest. Given the extent to which unions were incorporated into the formal institutional arrangement of the Czech state, protest should only have been a 'last resort' strategy for them. Since trade union organizations enjoyed comparatively privileged access to the Czech political system, they should have been able to rely on formalized and conventional interactions and consequently would have organized comparatively fewer collective action events. In line with the generally inclusive strategy of the state, it can be expected the police did not take a repressive approach to these events.

Trade union activism has traditionally been based on relatively broad membership. Union organizations can thus be expected to mobilize large numbers of people in the streets once they opt for protest strategies. In terms of action repertoire, this form of activism is generally characterized by a reliance on a limited number of standard non-violent strategies such as petitions, demonstrations and strikes, the latter being particularly important for trade unions. By contrast, the new 'cultural' protest strategies, such as performances or happenings, which are associated primarily with the new social movements, are rarely used by trade unions. Accordingly, the dominant category of demands in this form of activism should be economic claims and demands concerned with national economic policies. In terms of broader cooperation, under this model we do not expect to find trade unions joining forces with other types of collective actors.

The globalization of Czech capitalism

The model of political economy

A new model of capitalism started to develop at the end of the first decade of post-communist transformation. The Czech Social Democratic Party won the 1998 elections and effectively established a much more globalized version of capitalism. Paradoxically, it was social democracy that provided this global form of capitalism in the country with the institutional underpinning it required, although probably any political force would have acted in the same way at the time (see Drahoukoupil, 2008). Although the plans of the new government were originally aimed at a more *étatiste* vision of how the economy should be managed as compared to the declared neoliberal programme of the previous governments (even though that programme was never fulfilled), it soon found itself in a situation of major banks in collapse, a sharp decline of credit in the economy, and generally poor economic performance. As a consequence, government policies prioritized the sale of non-privatized, ‘economically unhealthy’, or even vulnerable and poorly managed companies to foreign buyers. The government also started to attract foreign investors through active investment incentives (see Drahoukoupil, 2008, pp. 115–123; Myant & Drahoukoupil, 2012).

The shift away from the prevailing model of ‘pre-emptive corporatism’, where the interests of employees were considered in order to prevent protests or social instability, occurred as the membership and bargaining power of trade unions steadily declined and the domestic class of managers and owners started to be replaced by established multinational companies. The new management had much more room for manoeuvre: trade unions were less and less able to organize within the newly established and externally managed corporations, whilst the service sector grew in strength and the willingness of employees in general to join trade unions declined. Moreover, global economic integration was accompanied by political integration into the EU through the accession process, which significantly shaped domestic policies towards a more liberal model (Drahoukoupil, 2008, pp. 122–123, 176–180; Streeck, 2014, pp. 103–112). As soon as the accession referendum (2003) was over, the social democratic government prepared and implemented a plan of restrictive fiscal reform in the anticipation of adopting the Euro (see Bohle & Greskovits, 2012, p. 175). By 2004 a ‘European’ model of capitalism had replaced the ‘Czech version’ (Myant, 2003, p. 118).

The expected characteristics of collective action

Like the developments in the West, we would expect to find that the globalization of Czech capitalism would lead to a corresponding globalization (or related Europeanization) of collective action resembling movements for globalization or Europeanization (in the European context) ‘from below’ and representing a noticeable extension to the preceding form of national trade union-based activism. Most importantly, the main target of this movement should be supranational institutions rather than the national political economy. In fact, international institutions and their democratization should under this model play a more important role in its issues and framing than the level of national polity (see Della Porta, 2012 for the West).

Based on Western experience, this globalized movement should be formed by a variety of collective actors, whereby the old left-wing unions became aligned with new left platforms and even with sovereignist critics of economic globalization and European integration (for more, see Della Porta & Caiani, 2009; Desai & Said, 2001, pp. 64–75; Green & Griffith, 2002, p. 55). This variety of components should translate into a variety of expressed issues. Also, given that a wide variety of collective actors are included, the protest movement should be able to organize mass protest events; albeit with less frequency than national trade unions can on the domestic level. International movements convene comparatively rarely on the occasions of big meetings of international organizations such as the EU or G8 summits, which are accompanied by an escalation of force by the police (Della Porta & Caiani, 2009; Tarrow, 2005). In terms of cooperation, this protest wave should form a densely cooperating international structure connected across various levels of decision-making.

Crisis of capitalism?

The model of political economy

By the early 2000s, both the manufacturing industry and the service sector had been privatized and all the major banks were owned by international financial corporations. The Czech Republic had by that time one of the most open economies in the world. It was predominantly driven by foreign direct investment and was dependent on international trade, with Germany as its most important trade partner (Draxler, 2014). Accordingly, the country was not as severely affected by the Great Recession as some other former communist countries; however, the perceived threat of a recession significantly impacted local politics and government policies.

Seven months after the 2006 elections a centre-right coalition painfully emerged, in which ODS, Klaus' old party, was the senior member. The government followed a clearly neoliberal strategy and used the threat of an alleged crisis on the horizon to legitimize further cuts and liberalization in healthcare, pensions and family policies that had already been initiated under the previous social democrat government. A detailed description of particular austerity measures is given by Saxonberg and Sirovátka (2014, p. 464), who conclude that some of the most radical reforms came not only before the financial crisis, but also 'before the centre-right government came to power', which demonstrates that even the social democrats shared the neoliberal ideology. However, with ODS coming to power, state debt reduction via austerity measures appeared to be the government's only concern, as reflected not only in its policies, but also in its public statements (Draxler, 2014). While the previous 'material' turn to global capitalism in the late 1990s took place under social democratic governments, which packaged it in old-fashioned leftist rhetoric, the right-wing governments after 2006 openly declared a free market and monetarism as their political programme. As a result, the Czech Republic has experienced greater integration into the global economy not only in terms of economic exchanges but also in terms of the neoliberal political project that has been attempted since 2006.

The expected characteristics of collective action

The popular response to austerity policies introduced during the Great Recession in the West brought about a reinforcement of both mass-based left activism and experiments with novel models of decision-making and framing political demands such as the Occupy movement (Bermeo & Bartels, 2014; Streeck, 2014). Many anti-austerity protests took the form of a 'mass experiment in direct democracy' and took place in 'occupied' squares that provided a space for the formation of local, popular or neighbourhood assemblies, encampments, permanent camps, or even 'mini-republics' (Romanos, 2013; Simiti, 2014). In some contexts, experimentation and mass participation went hand in hand: it is estimated that 25% of the Greek and 8% of the Spanish population participated in the protests (Sergi & Vogiatzoglou, 2013). Consequently, protests were scaled down from the international and global levels of the previous internationalized protest wave and became concentrated in the arenas of national politics; they no longer aimed at the symbols of corporate capitalism to the same extent, but rather targeted domestic political institutions (Sergi & Vogiatzoglou, 2013; Simiti, 2014).

Therefore, unlike the rather rare moments of international mobilization (see above), we would expect these protests to be more frequent and possibly even bigger in size given that they would be embedded in nationally defined constituencies. The portfolio of issues would in this case transform in co-relation to the change in the primary targets of these nationally orientated protests. Anti-austerity protests would likely target particular domestic measures such as employment legislation, social services, pensions and education instead of the more abstract notion of neoliberalism or corporate capitalism. An explicit anti-capitalist or anti-corporate framing should not play any significant role; instead the problems of (national) democracy would likely constitute an important issue. Based on Western developments in protest policing, like in the previous model, we would expect coercive tactics (see King & Waddington, 2013). In terms of cooperation, there would likely be a centralized structure of cooperation on the national level between various types of collective agencies.

Research design and data

Although there has been much debate surrounding both the actual conceptualization of environmental variables and their subsequent operationalization (see Della Porta & Diani, 2006; Kitchelt, 1986; Kriesi, 2004; McAdam, 1996; Meyer & Minkoff, 2004; Tarrow, 2011; Tilly, 1995b), all the discussions notwithstanding, the concept of the political opportunity structure (i.e. the dominant way in which the context is analyzed in social movement studies) is at its core ‘made up of the formal political institutions’ (Kriesi, 2004, p. 70) or ‘mainstream institutional politics’ (Meyer & Minkoff, 2004, p. 1458). At the same time, these are influenced by the society’s cleavage structure ‘from below’ and by the wider international context ‘from above’. However, in line with the general argument, this international context has been conceptualized in the form of institutions (Tarrow, 2005) rather than in terms of the capitalist economy, whose influence is being studied in the present paper.

There are different uses of the concept; some of them see political opportunity structure as a static notion that captures the general institutional setting of a state or states at a particular point in time (Kitchelt, 1986; Kriesi, 2004). By focusing on one country, the effects of several potential factors, most importantly the nationally defined political opportunity structure, are kept constant; after 1993 there were no significant changes in the Czech Republic’s constitutional arrangement or political system, party politics included. However, although the country was politically stable up to 2010, the model of political economy, and the closely related configurations of elite *political and economic actors*, i.e. the political economic opportunity structure (see Pellow, 2007), went through important changes, as set out above. Not limiting ourselves to political factors, we thus use our protest event data to analyze the potential effects of a changing *political economy* on the nature of economic contention in the country.

The original argument can be used differently depending on research design (McAdam, 1996; Tarrow, 1996). There is important work on cross-time variation in access to the political system and the effects of this transforming political context on the mobilization of social movements (McAdam, 1996; Tarrow, 2011). Here, the authors typically not only look at the general configuration of the political system, but also include the stability/instability of elite alignments, the presence or absence of movement allies in the political system, and the state’s propensity for repression (McAdam, 1996, p. 27). As indicated above, the general institutional structure did not vary in our case; the same applies to the general level of repression, although there was variation in policing strategies, which we interpret below. Most importantly, there was variation in the elite alignments and the potential allies of movement actors depending on who was controlling the government.

At the same time, as defined in our theory section, elite alignments cannot be reduced to just political actors since they also include economic elites, such as domestic managers/owners in the national model, and the foreign investors who arrive in a country when its national economy begins to be globalized (the second model above). The same applies to the conceptualization of elite allies, who can hardly just be made up of political actors, as the classic political opportunity structure argument claims, but must necessarily include the way in which the interests of employees are negotiated with employers (economic actors) and the framework of these negotiations. As specified in our theory section, the tripartite, paradoxically, was more active under the right-wing governments of the early 1990s than at the end of the decade, when social democracy came to power. In general, if we looked only at the political elite, it would be hard to make sense of the developments in economic protest in the post-communist Czech Republic, since the narrowly understood ideological currents (left and right) did not follow the expected directions. It was frequently not the right-wing political elite but the social democrats who introduced and ideologically packaged the marketization agenda. According to our theory, this was tied to the international integration of capitalism (see also Drahoukoupil, 2008).

Data

Our paper is based on a protest event analysis. A protest event is defined here as a gathering of at least three people who convene in a public space in order to make claims that bear on the interests of an

institution/collective actor (we draw here on Tilly's definition of contentious gathering; see Tilly, 1995b, p. 63). Only real episodes of collective action are included; threats of resorting to collective action, such as strike alerts, were excluded. The data-set includes all events in which the first or second main issue of protest had to do with *social policies* and *the economy*, i.e. an issue related to the economic system, monetary and fiscal policies, taxes, wages, social benefits, welfare issues etc.

We used the electronic archive of the Czech News Agency (ČTK) and searched for selected keywords in all electronically available news stories. All events organized during the peaks of economic contention in the country were included in order to get detailed information on the nature of economic contention (for more descriptive information on both the data source and the dynamics of economic contention in the country, see Císař & Navrátil, 2015). In particular, we include data from the following periods: between January 1997 and December 1998; January 2000 and December 2000; January 2003 and December 2003; and January 2008 and December 2009. The data-set comprises 491 events (PEA SOCECO). We coded and analyzed all relevant characteristics (see Table 1).

Types of protest cooperation were identified using a social network analysis (SNA) of protest event data (see Krinsky & Crossley, 2014). A protest coalition is conceptualized as ties between two or more types of actors that cooperate in the same protest event or organize it. The unit of analysis here is a type of actor. Nine types of actors were distinguished: new left groups, left-wing parties, right-wing parties, trade unions/employees, new social movement organizations, radical right groups, firms/private associations, community initiatives and service NGOs. The tie between actor types is treated as undirected: when two types of actors take part in the same event the tie is always considered symmetric as it represents the willingness and the capacity of the given type of actor to cooperate with other group(s) in the event and to contribute to the success of the event, either by mobilizing its own members and supporters or by assisting with organization and know-how. The original two-mode (affiliation) network was created from the protest event data. Exploration and visual analyses were conducted in UCINET (Borgatti, Everett, & Freeman, 2002).

Czech resistance against (the consequences of) capitalism

The *national protest* of the end of the 1990s was driven mostly by trade unions and, in line with our expectations, it was the biggest protest wave relating to the economy and social policies in the history of the Czech Republic (see the first column in Table 1). Trade unions were the most visible organizers behind this protest wave with respect to both the first (most important) and all organizers of events. Although environmental organizations sponsored some of the events (mostly in relation to a very visible anti-nuclear campaign), this protest wave exhibited a clear 'old left' pattern. It was driven by trade unions in close cooperation with social democracy, youth organizations, and even the Communist Party, and in addition to the economy and social policy it focused mostly on issues relating to the operation of state institutions and democracy (which we did not expect in the theory section; the reason probably lies in the specific nature of post-communist transformation; see the discussion below) and on industrial policies, and consequently it targeted national institutions. The most used, although not very visible, frame was economic effectiveness. Protest relied mostly on a standard set of strategies, such as demonstrations, petitions, performances and strikes, and it was not subjected to escalated police coercion.

As shown in Figure 1, protest cooperation under the national model revolved around three key brokers from various sectors (left parties, the radical right and the new left) and there was a significant number of organizations that did not cooperate in any coalitions (34%). On average, each actor cooperated in four coalitions. The key actors that promoted protest cooperation were the left-wing parties and their affiliated organizations and new left organizations (often joined by a radical-right populist party), while trade union organizations remained rather isolated and fragmented, even though they were the most active organizers of the collective protest.

The bulk of this wave consists of events organized by trade unions during the 1998 election campaign in support of social democracy. The largest protest event involving trade unions since 1989

Table 1. Three models of capitalism: characteristics of protest.

	National model	Globalized model	Austerity model
Frequency of protest (annual average)	52	98	96
Attendance per event (Std. Dev.)	8491 (47,887)	2054 (11,676)	3562 (16,140)
First organizer (%)	Trade unions (35)	Trade unions (29)	Trade unions (33)
	Environmental organizations (13)	No formal organizer (25)	No formal organizer (18)
	No formal organizer (10)	Radical left organizations (8)	Non-political interest groups (9)
	Youth organizations (9)	Community (7)	Cultural organizations (6)
	Communist Party (6)	Non-political interest groups (5)	Community (3)
All organizers (%)	Trade unions (28)	Trade unions (29)	Trade unions (30)
	Youth organizations (15)	No formal organizer (23)	No formal organizer (15)
	Environmental organizations (13)	Radical left organizations (8)	Non-political interest groups (10)
	No formal organizer (8)	Community (6)	Cultural organizations (5)
	Communist party (5)	Non-political interest groups (4)	Youth organizations (3)
Most frequent issues raised (except for general issues of economy and social policy) (%)	20	5	7
State institutions and democracy			
Industrial policies	3	2	1
Other groups' rights	0	0	4
Cultural policy	0	1	2
Agriculture	2	1	1
Area planning	0	0	1
Radical left	0	1	0
Consumer protection	3	1	0
Foreign policy	0	2	0
Demonstration	47	50	42
Petition	32	23	26
Performance	9	6	9
Strike	8	8	15
Boycott	2	2	6
Direct action	1	7	0
Hunger strike	1	2	0
Litigation	1	0	0
Conference	0	2	1
National political institutions	63	33	57
Regional authorities	1	7	9
Local authorities	8	13	15
International institutions	2	6	0
Other states	0	1	0
Firms, companies	10	17	10
Nonprofit organizations	0	0	1
EU	0	0	1

(Continued)



Table 1. (Continued)

	National model	Globalized model	Austerity model
Framing (%)	15	29	20
Economic effectiveness	14	29	53
Socio-economic rights	1	0	6
Social inclusion	3	3	1
Law and order	1	3	10
Diversity	1	2	1
Activism and engagement	1	2	1
Basic human and political rights	0	2	2
Protection of environment	1	1	1
Police present at event (%)	15.4	15.8	9.4
Police employing nonviolent strategies (%)	18.8	35.5	5.6
Police employing violent strategies (%)	12.5	19.4	22.2
Number of arrests per event	0.7	2.3	0.5
Non-cooperating actors (%)	34	47	38
Average No. of protest cooperations	4	2.8	3.8
Actors with the highest degree	Party of pensioners (15), radical right party (13), Communist Party (11)	Trade union federation (12), employees of steelworks (11), ibid (11)	Trade union confederation (23), Social Democracy (14), police trade unions (9)
Most frequent abstention from coalitions	Employees of particular organizations and communities	Communities and interest groups	NGOs and communities

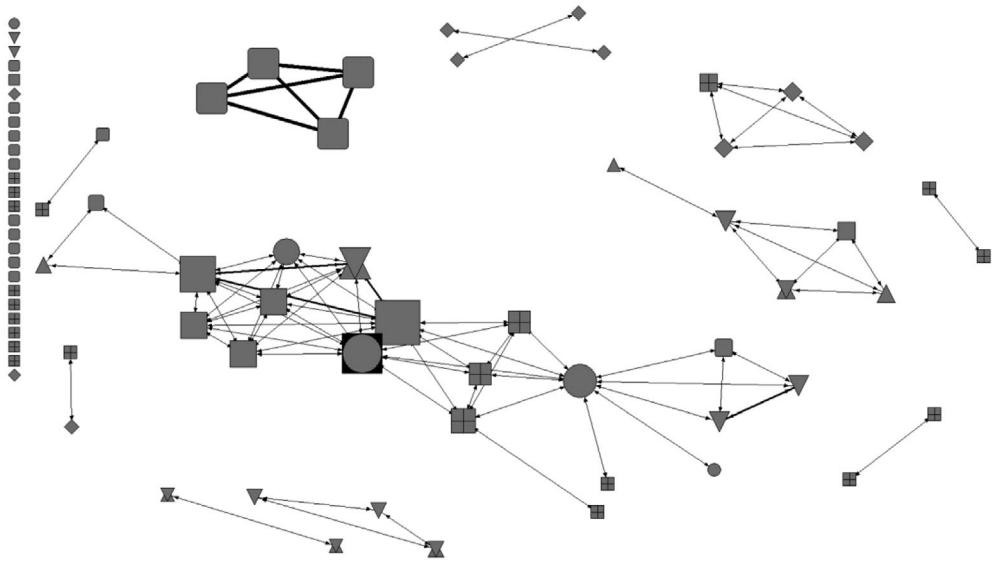


Figure 1. Inter-organizational protest cooperation (1997–1998). Source: PEA SOCECO.

Note: The strength of a tie denotes the frequency of cooperation between two actors; the size of a node stands for the frequency of actor's cooperation with other actors; its shape stands for the actor type (a circle denotes new left, a square: left-wing parties, an upwards triangle: right-wing parties, a box: trade unions/employees, a downwards triangle: NSMs, a circle in a box: radical right, a diamond: firms/private associations, a rounded square: community initiatives; opposing triangles: service NGOs).

took place in November 1997 and targeted the economic and social policies of the government. It was coordinated by the main Czech trade union federation and supported by the (at that time) oppositional Social Democratic Party and by some interest groups (pensioners), the new left (anarchists), and also a radical right party. New social movement organizations played only a minor role in co-organizing protest, while community organizations (here mainly student groups) formed separate coalitions. The groups that participated least in coalitions were employee groups and communities (usually citizens united against some specific threat to their interests). The logic of cooperation clearly points to the dominant position of state-level players and therefore to the key role of the nation state and its elites in the political economy.

As shown in the second column of Table 1, the presumably *globalized protest* at the beginning of the millennium was still being organized by trade unions, but the active involvement of informal, new left and community platforms clearly distinguishes this wave of protest from the previous one. In line with our expectations, not only did traditional trade unions sponsor protest events during this wave, but new left and informal actors also became visibly engaged in the mostly general issues of economic and social policies. In contrast to the previous wave, this wave was not so much concerned with the issues of state governance; its portfolio of targets was larger and included not only state institutions but also other levels of political decision-making, both international and local, and most importantly also involved private sector actors, firms and companies. In terms of framing, this wave relied on frames of economic effectiveness and rights almost twice as much as the previous one. Although in terms of the strategies used this wave of protest was not substantially different from the previous one, it nevertheless had some specific features, in particular the much wider use of direct action, that reflect the new left's involvement in organizing these protests. It is also possible to observe here an escalation in policing strategies, as both police involvement and the average number of persons arrested increased. Coercive police tactics escalated during the meeting of international financial institutions in Prague in 2000 (see also below).

Figure 2 demonstrates that the pattern of protest cooperation changed considerably under the globalized model. First, cooperation on the whole weakened, as 47% of actors did not cooperate

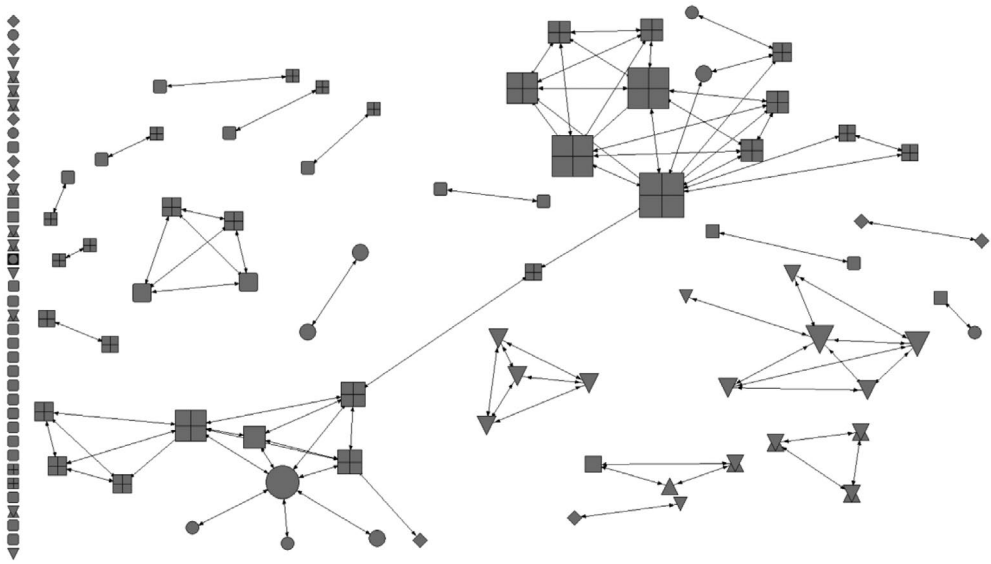


Figure 2. Inter-organizational protest cooperation (2000 and 2003). Source: PEA SOCECO.

Note: The strength of a tie denotes the frequency of cooperation between two actors; the size of a node stands for the frequency of actor's cooperation with other actors; its shape stands for the actor type (a circle denotes new left, a square: left-wing parties, an upwards triangle: right-wing parties, a box: trade unions/employees, a downwards triangle: NSMs, a circle in a box: radical right, a diamond: firms/private associations, a rounded square: community initiatives; opposing triangles: service NGOs).

at all in protest events. At the same time, cooperation became less frequent (with an average of 2.8 ties per actor participating in a coalition). Trade unions and new left actors were the most active in cooperating in protest events and co-organized a large part of them, while the role of left parties in coalition-building significantly declined. In addition to these coalitions, a separate protest coordination structure was co-organized by new social movement organizations (instead of communities, as in the previous period). Equally, service NGOs began to be involved in protest coalitions, usually with other types of actors. The actors that participated least in any coalitions were (again) communities and also particular interest groups such as the Chamber of Commerce and professional associations. Generally, cooperative activities reveal the rise of a new threat beyond the nation state, namely, multinational companies operating both transnationally and on the local/regional levels.

More precisely, two unrelated protest waves arose in response to the globalization of Czech capitalism; only the second one (in 2003) originated inside the national political economy and it arose in response to politically articulated pressures of internationalization and Europeanization. The first wave accompanied the summit of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) that was held in Prague in 2000, but local activists did not become fully integrated into the transnational network of anti-capitalist struggle, so the event did not make any lasting imprint on Czech activism or protest. As a result, wider cooperation between trade unions and the new left did not materialize in the Czech Republic under the pressure of globalization (unlike in the West).

When looking at the events related to the summit, one can see the limits of the indigenous globalization-related movements in the Czech Republic. As our protest event data clearly demonstrate, the distribution of events was highly uneven during the summit. September 26 (S26) clearly dwarfed all the other days of the anti-IMF/WB protests. The explanation is straightforward: many radical foreign activists came to Prague just for this one day. According to some local participants, a significant number of 'invisible' Czech protestors took part in the S26 protests; however, before the foreign activists came and after they left, the protests were unable to mobilize more than a few hundred activists. This was at least partly due to tough security and preventive measures taken by the Czech state, which created very unfavourable conditions for domestic participants. All schools in Prague were closed during the

summit, people were advised to leave the city for their own safety during the expected riots, and 12,000 police from across the country were called in. Clashes – or a ‘war’ according to Czech newspapers – did in fact occur in the streets during the summit.

The 2000 protest wave (not reported in the table) was four times smaller than the average for the globalized model. It was mostly run by informal platforms and radical left groups (46% together), with trade unions organizing only 14% of events. As a result, it did not exhibit the features we expected it to have in terms of its size and the composition of organizers. This wave relied mostly on demonstrations, but did not use petitions very much (15%) and expectedly used direct action in almost 10% of the events. It focused mostly on the economy and social policy. As expected, the protest targeted not only national and local but also, to a comparatively larger extent, international institutions (12%), and it was subjected to escalated policing (on average 4.5 people were arrested at each event).

As demonstrated in the third column of Table 1, the *anti-austerity protest* was almost the same as the previous wave in terms of its frequency; at the same time, it was much bigger in terms of attendance (although not as big as the national protest of the late 1990s). These protests were coordinated by a wide variety of organizers, such as trade unions, political parties and informal and non-political groups. Their cooperation (see below) was also manifested in the portfolio of issues and frames of protests: some previously absent rights-related issues were raised and new frames of social inclusion and diversity were employed in the anti-austerity protests. In contrast to the previous waves, the protests were dominated by the frame of socio-economic rights, which were raised in argument against the perceived threat of economic insecurity posed by the planned austerity measures of the government. In terms of action repertoire, this wave relied on a truly wide portfolio of strategies, including a number of strikes, which targeted mostly national and subnational institutions, as well as firms. As expected, international targets were much less prominent, as neoliberalism was increasingly contested on domestic ground with much less police presence than the previous wave.

Figure 3 illustrates that the number of isolated actors decreased (38%) in comparison to the globalized protest, and the average number of instances of protest cooperation per actor engaged in a coalition increased to 3.8. The major actors promoting protest coalitions slightly changed again:

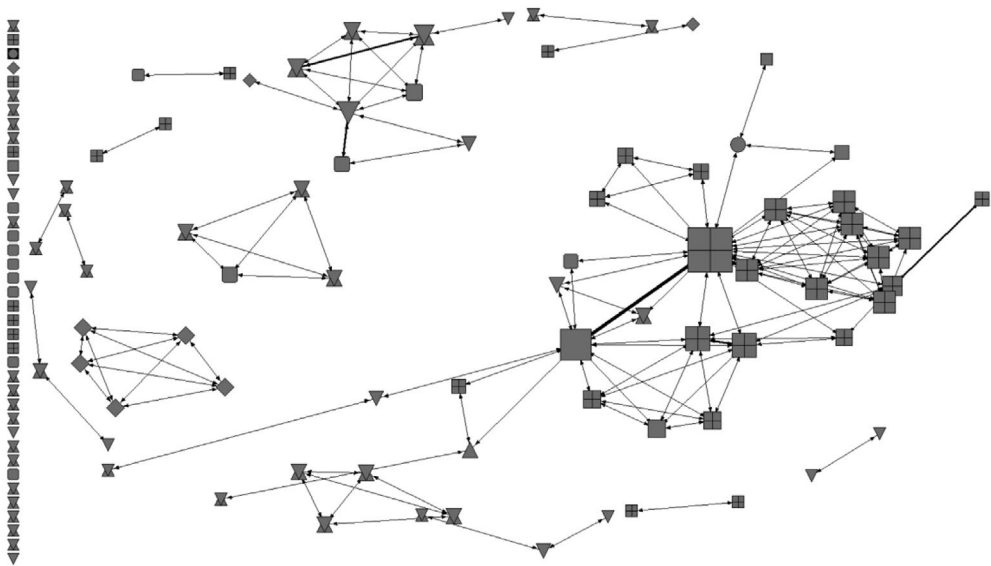


Figure 3. Inter-organizational protest cooperation (2008–2009). Source: PEA SOCECO.

Note: The strength of a tie denotes the frequency of cooperation between two actors; the size of a node stands for the frequency of actor's cooperation with other actors; its shape stands for the actor type (a circle denotes new left, a square: left-wing parties, an upwards triangle: right-wing parties, a box: trade unions/employees, a downwards triangle: NSMs, a circle in a box: radical right, a diamond: firms/private associations, a rounded square: community initiatives; opposing triangles: service NGOs).

while the new left withdrew from cooperation with trade unions, it was, to some extent, replaced by left political parties and their affiliates. The agent most active in co-organizing protests was by far the main trade union confederation, followed by the Social Democratic Party, employees of companies or public institutions, and the Communist Party, all of which often joined the same demonstrations against the government's austerity policies. The number of coalitions on the left increased sharply in 2008 and later decreased again.

The coalitions of new social movement organizations that usually formed in parallel to cooperation on the left disappeared and were replaced by agrarian interest groups and service-oriented NGOs, cooperation among which increased in strength compared to the previous protest wave. The actors that participated least in any coalitions and more so than previously were NGOs (focused on specific issues) and (again) local community platforms. The expansion of cooperation among the key trade union confederation, its counterparts abroad, and local/sectorial trade union organizations reflected both a relative decline in the importance of the nation state as the single actor regulating particular industries and the corresponding scaling down of protest to the subnational level and to the level of enterprises. At the same time, cooperation between parties on the left points to the simultaneous politicizing of the role of the national political elite.

Discussion

Our data demonstrate that depending on the particular model of political economy three different varieties of economic contention formed in post-communist Czech Republic. Specifically, as we expected in the theory section, they represent three different forms of economic contention in successive waves: the first wave of economic contention was driven by trade unions, which maintained their position as the most important organizers in every period, and supported the main local left party as a reaction to the early stage of development of *national capitalism* after 1990; the second wave was driven by *transnational and European influences* and it was more concerned with international socio-economic developments, but it did not fully match the Western-based 'global justice movement' model; the third wave was formed by trade unions, employees and political parties cooperating in reaction to the *national austerity policies* introduced before the onset of the global financial crisis.

In line with our expectations, the first (national and old left-driven) wave was the biggest in terms of its size, but consisted of fewer protest events, while the internationalized second wave was smaller in size but consisted of a larger number of events. Although the latter finding seems to be at odds with our expectations, this is because we based them on the Western experience of movements for 'globalization from below', while in our analysis we recorded all protest events that took place in the country. Were we to focus just on truly globalized events, which would include only the events related to the meeting of international financial institutions in Prague in 2000, our expectations regarding frequency and size would be proved correct. The third wave maintained the same frequency of events as its predecessor and contrary to our expectations there was no increase, but because it returned its focus to the national level this protest managed to attract a much wider following.

Given that in modern politics economic demands are raised mainly by trade unions, it is not surprising that Czech trade unions occupied the central position among protest organizers. We hypothesized they would predominate in the national model, but they remained the most active actors in all three models, which seems to demonstrate their organizational ability even under conditions of increased globalization and internationalization, conditions in which the capacity of trade unions to act on behalf of their constituency would generally be expected to decrease. *Compared to other actors*, trade unions preserved their organizational capacity throughout the studied period. New types of actors joined them in the position of important organizers in the globalized model, when new left and informal (often international) actors also became visibly engaged in protest. At the same time, globalized protest did not display the same characteristics as the global justice movement did in the West, which is what we expected, especially in terms of the breadth and variety of cooperating actors. In the Czech Republic

wider cooperation only came about with the anti-austerity protests after 2006, when trade unions, political parties and informal and nonpolitical groups joined the protest coalitions (see also below).

As regards other characteristics, our expectations were generally confirmed, except with respect to issues and policing. Our data support the issue composition of protest we expected as reflecting the domestic development of capitalism in the first model, the internationalization of capitalism in the second one, and the political acceptance of capitalism in the third. At the same time, in the first period there were more claims relating to the operation of state institutions and democracy than predicted, which is probably due to the dual nature of post-communist transition involving the construction not only of a capitalist economy but also of a democratic state (see Offe, 1996). In fact, as is evident from the way the framing of issues evolved over time, problems of economic justice only slowly gained prominence in Czech protest discourse. This is probably due to the general rejection of critical class-based and economic justice discourses by a post-communist society (see Musílek & Katrňák, 2015). Unlike in the previous waves, socio-economic rights-related frames dominated the anti-austerity protest. In terms of the repertoire of contention, in the national model the established strategies of the old left still prevailed, while new strategies such as direct action emerged only under the conditions of global capitalism. The third model included all the types of strategies previously observed. The targets followed the expected logic, with national-level targets dominating under the national and anti-austerity models and a more internationalized portfolio under global capitalism, which shared with the third model a more pronounced presence of private sector targets such as firms and companies. Last but not least, policing strategies did not fully follow the pattern we expected. Although we observed the expected soft strategies under the national model and a much more coercive type of policing in 2000, in the third period we found relatively little police presence, although there was an increase in the level of violence, and a small average number of people being arrested. The escalation of police coercion seems to have had more to do with the *transnational character* of protest in 2000 than with the *general internationalization* of Czech capitalism.

Empirical findings on protest cooperation suggest that our expectations were based on a rather too straightforward vision of the impact of the modes of capitalism on contentious alliances. There are two aspects of this cooperation that should be differentiated: the magnitude and the structure of cooperation. First, the magnitude of cooperation seems to be related to the level on which the main adversaries operate. Both national capitalism and domestic austerity measures, which occur on the national level (even if they are firmly tied to the international political economy), seem to be associated with more frequent protest cooperation. This is consistent with the effect of immediate, i.e. national-level as opposed to international, political threats towards increasing the number of alliances that has been observed elsewhere (see McCammon & Van Dyke, 2010). Consequently, although protest targeting the symbols of global (and therefore more remote) capitalism was able to attract interest and attention from counterparts to domestic protesters located abroad, under the model of global capitalism the number of alliances among domestic actors decreased.

Second, in contrast to this, the structure of cooperation among different types of actors (political parties, NGOs, trade unions, communities, movements) seems to be related mainly to the different positions these actors occupy under the different constellations of political economy. More specifically, it has to do with their particular political positions under different constellations and the changing perception of their legitimacy as protest partners. During the development of national capitalism we found employee groups, political parties and NGOs to be relatively absent from protest coalitions. This seems to support the above-discussed effect of the generally low relevance, or even rejection of, economic justice demands in the public discourse, which disabled more extensive cooperation across different political positions. We witnessed a shift in this pattern during the anti-/alter-globalization protests, when more politically diverse patterns of cooperation were enabled by the seemingly 'abstract' critique of global capitalism; with the exception of established political parties, however, which maintained their isolation and intra-group cooperation. Different types of actors started to network during the last phase of capitalist transformation, when the economic left-right dimension of political conflict asserted itself (see also the discussion on framing above) and diminished the barriers

to cooperation between them. In other words, attempts at the gradual establishment of neoliberal capitalism seems to have been followed by the crystallization of alliances of resistance that in the end consisted of various types of actors.

Conclusion

We focused on the development of capitalism in the Czech Republic after 1989 and the inter-related emergence of counter-activism that this development has thus far produced. Here, we will summarize our two more general contributions to the fields of political economy (1) and political mobilization (2) and sum up the main characteristics of the last protest wave in the form of anti-austerity protest (3).

(1) Drawing on a Polanyi-inspired perspective, we focused on the 'double-movement' of marketization and the opposition to it. Our analysis shows that the relationship between the development of capitalism and popular responses to it might in fact be more complicated than what is implied by the traditionally invoked metaphor of double-movement. We demonstrated that different configurations of capitalism trigger different types of collective action; it may therefore be rather difficult to fit them into the binary opposition of a singular movement towards capitalism and correspondingly a singular counter-movement resisting this progressive marketization. Rather, it seems that a variety of counter-movements respond to varieties of capitalism; or in other words, varieties of capitalism produce varieties of protest formation.

Our analysis makes a broader contribution to the field of political economy, which predominantly conceptualizes cross-national differences between different types of capitalisms (Bohle & Greskovits, 2012), often based on a simple dichotomy between the more liberal (capitalist) and the coordinated (socially embedded) models (Hall & Soskice, 2001; see Hancké, Rhodes, & Thatcher, 2007 and Nölke & Vliegthart, 2009 for further discussion and the application of this perspective to Eastern Europe). By employing Polanyian logic within the context of one country, we captured the variability of marketization and the corresponding protests against it over time, thus demonstrating how a seemingly stable model of national political economy was transformed and produced three different patterns of collective action.

(2) Echoing Hetland and Goodwin's influential article, McAdam and Boudet (2012, p. 199) conclude that

studying power and contention with little or no reference to economic influences and actors is akin to studying the universe without the reference to the sun ... or at least one of its two most significant suns, the state being the other.

Responding to these calls to incorporate (political) economy within the study of social movements and protest, this paper sought to analyze the possible relationship between particular models of capitalism and economic contention. In our understanding, the results summarized above demonstrate that the context that shapes political mobilization is formed not only by political variables, as the political opportunity structure argument claims, but by more complex clusters of political and economic variables, which can be captured under different models of capitalism.

Therefore, the political opportunity structure argument, as it was originally formulated, has rather limited explanatory power when it comes to economic protest and forms of such protest in the selected case. Moreover, since the influences of economic globalization and the related restructuring of the domestic economy are not specific to the country analyzed here, we believe that the classic political process model is in need of a more general innovation, which we propose in the terms of the political economic structure. Changes in the configuration of power (among political actors) are unable to explain protest, unless the configuration of economic actors and their economic policy orientations are taken into account together with the degree to which political and economic actors are integrated into the global market. In fact, these factors can turn out to be more important in the globalized world than whether the (nominally) left or right is in power in a particular state.

This opens an avenue for future theoretical work on the political economic opportunity structure, which includes a given configuration of elite economic actors (major corporations, banks) in addition

to the configuration of political actors captured by the established notion of the political opportunity structure. In order to develop this idea further, especially with respect to the interaction between the economy and politics, future work will have to effectively draw on both established studies of political mobilization (most of which are based on a study of the state) and a to some extent suppressed political economy tradition (adding the capitalist economy to the study of the state; see also Čísař, 2015). While Pellow (2007, p. 65) sees the economy and politics under the conditions of transnational capitalism as intimately intertwined, since ‘it is conceptually a mistake to even separate the state from capital’, we have presented another solution to this task of theoretical integration in the form of a Polanyi-inspired perspective based on varieties of capitalism. In this perspective, the different logic of the interaction between economic and political actors defines each configuration of the political economy.

(3) Moving from the more general level to a more particular contribution, the anti-austerity protests after 2006 were the result of a popular response to liberal pro-market policies that had been openly justified by claims about the need to roll back the ‘debt-generating and heavy-footed’ European model of capitalism. Even if the main indicators of the Czech Republic’s economic and financial stability were above average compared to other EU countries, the government decided to follow the examples of some other post-communist countries (e.g. Slovakia or the Baltic states) with a marked neoliberal agenda and pro-market measures. Although those measures and that agenda were not in fact fully implemented, political attempts to institutionalize them provoked a series of reactions in the form of anti-austerity protests.

Various components of the left – especially trade unions and political parties – started to cooperate in response to the threat of fiscal austerity. The characteristics of these protests corresponded to our expectations. Thus, the framing of these protests shifted towards the failure of a corrupt state to uphold social rights and away from the problems of dysfunctional (global) capitalism. The protests focused on the absence of transparency and the insufficient amount of negotiation surrounding political measures adopted by the state, i.e. on the procedure behind rather than on the substance of these measures. Articulations of anti-neoliberalism were nowhere to be seen during the protests; instead it was primarily the malfunctioning state that was politicized during the protests and that protesters demanded as a priority be fixed.

As regards the issue of the quality of governance, the Czech mass-based protests against neoliberal policies might seem to resemble the Western-based quest of anti-austerity movements for an alternative democracy. However, in the Czech context these protests in fact represented a very moderate call for basic transparency in the elite-driven political process and for minimizing the room for corruption that had been created by plans to outsource public services. There was much less experimentation in these protests with various types of deliberation and participatory decision-making than what was seen in the West. Generally, Czech anti-austerity protests were simply calling for the standards of liberal democracy, including respect for social rights, to be upheld, which in the eyes of the protesters the state was failing to do.

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