Bodies in Action: Corporeal Enactments of Political Activism in the Czech Climate Movement[1]

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ABSTRACT In recent years we have seen the rise of climate activism in Czech Republic. In contrast with transactional activism based predominantly on small, advocacy and professionalized NGOs which use lobbying as their main repertoire of action supported by expert knowledge, this activism takes shape as embodied practices of mass civil disobedience such as occupying fossil fuel infrastructures during climate camps. The urgency of the climate crisis has brought the body and emotions back into politics. Based on qualitative, primarily ethnographic research of Czech climate activism, the article examines the role of the body in these new tactics. Drawing on conceptions of emotion and affect in social movements, it shows the shifts in the modes of activism and it addresses the questions of how bodies in action change the understanding of activism and politics, and help to create new forms of solidarity. Specifically, the article develops the concept of affinity as a way of organizing contemporary climate activism that can help explain the tension that activists feel between what is and what could be.

KEYWORDS environmental activism, body, emotions, direct action, climate justice, prefigurative politics, affinity

Introduction

At the end of the summer of 2011, a blockade of logging in Šumava National Park had just ended (Pelikán and Librová 2015). After more than ten years since the last direct action, there was mass direct action by the environmental movement in the Czech Republic. Those who took an active part shared their feelings, as the example of an activist from Greenpeace illustrates:

> Even I, an environmental activist, do not like to rush into non-violent direct actions, such as the blockade. I'd be much more pleased when everything can be solved in a different way and an extreme procedure of this type may not occur at all. Unfortunately, in the case of the illegal devastation of the Šumava National Park, there was no other option. (…) On the contrary, the participants in the blockade were a pleasant surprise for me. (…) There was a great atmosphere of mutual understanding, sharing, help and solidarity among the blockers. I spent a week on a special platform in a tree. Life in the treetop may seem to someone full of sensation and fun that everyone would like to experience. However, it is also a series of extreme situations

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> accompanied by hard work, exhaustion, lack of sleep, cold, not to mention the quality of hygiene and diet. Even so, I do not regret the time spent in a treetop. With very mixed feelings, I watched the forest, where our blocking ropes did not reach, turn into a clearing day by day, and how, on the contrary, the trees around us remained standing. We managed to save an island of the forest with several hundred trees, and it was worth all the troubles. (Pipková 2011)

The words of this Greenpeace activist to describe her experience of the blockade both aligns and conflicts with the predominant form of transactional environmental activism in the 2000s (Císař 2008; Císař et al. 2011; Novák 2017). As transactional activism, which is based on small advocacy groups that use a moderate and non-confrontational repertoire of actions such as production of expert knowledge, negotiations and lobbying, became more prevalent in the period of the 1990s and 2000s, many activists did not want much to do with "it" (direct actions, blockades and confrontational actions) and perceived it as a last resort (Císař 2009; Novák 2020). However, the description of the blockade shows that this reserved attitude towards direct actions was internally ambivalent, and demonstrates to what extent the joys and feelings from direct action were transformative. Over the next decade (in the 2010s), environmental activism fundamentally changed. Disobedient actions, climate camps, mass direct actions, confrontation, and direct action have appeared not as an "extreme procedure" or "last resort" but as a way of doing politics (Doherty et al. 2003; Cohen 2018).

This article examines the transformation of environmental and climate activism in the Czech Republic from more the transactional approach to more diverse and radical forms, from consensual politics (based on depoliticization and expert and scientific knowledges) to contentious politics, by drawing on the emotional turn in the study of social movements (Goodwin et al. 2000; Gould 2004, 2009). This turn started in the late 1990s and continues today. It is a response to conceptions of protests and social movements as irrational reactions to structural constraints, in contrast to institutional politics as a realm of reason and rationality, and to approaches of social movements studies that emerged in the 1970s, such as resources mobilization and political process models, which construed protestors as rational actors. "While earlier theorists had portrayed protestors as emotional to demonstrate their irrationality, the new theorists demonstrated their rationality by denying their emotions" (Goodwin et al. 2000: 71). Scholars participating in the emotional turn in movement studies challenge this dualist opposition and understand all human beings as both rational and emotional, and they challenge the rationalist assumption without returning to seeing social movements as irrational "crowds". As Gould points out "the emotional turn offers a multifaceted picture of human beings that, without denying the rationality and ability to reason of social movement actors, recognizes emotion as a ubiquitous feature of human life that is present in, influences, and brings meaning to every aspect of social life, including the realm of political action and inaction" (2009: 18).

Transactional environmental activism was based on rational actor theory and was researched through a rationalist paradigm (Císař 2008; Císař et al. 2011). The aims of this article are to rethink environmental activism and to offer possible explanations for its transformation by using a different theoretical perspective informed by the emotional turn and a focus on agency, where body, emotions, feelings and affect are essential.

The main thesis is that the body and associated emotions and affect are playing an important role in the transformation of activism, and are getting the body (back) into action.

When I use the term emotion I am referring to consciously experienced feelings such as fear, anger, exhilaration, joy or love. By the term affect I am referring to the ontological relation of bodies coming together and their increasing capacity to act collectively; affect is something that is built by activists, it is a strength of collective action (Clough 2012). But as Gould (2009) emphasizes, it could be difficult distinguish between emotion and affect, because they are simultaneously in play and so it is often difficult to unravel affect and emotions. Still, according to Gould it is important to make some conceptual distinction. With affect we can find a space for human motivation that plays a role in political action (or inaction). And it can help explain the tension that activists feel between what is and what could be. As I will show, in this in-between space we can find affinity as a key way of organizing.

The argument is organized as follows. First, I explore the mode of transactional environmental activism in the 2000s and the reasons that led to this type of activism. Second, I deal with the tensions and limitations of this type of activism based on advocacy and rationalist expertise suppressing the emotions that flagged in the introductory quotation of the Greenpeace activist. These tensions manifest themselves in the wave of a new type of radical activism. Third, I examine different forms of direct action within this type of radical activism and by analyzing them in climate camps, mass direct actions, and actions of civil disobedience, I present the thesis about the importance of the body, emotions and affect for the changing nature of activism in Czech Republic in the 2010s. Fourth, I develop the analysis of this radical activism through the concept of affinity as way of organizing. Together these sections show how emotions are used, often strategically, in political activism, which is not based on advocacy but on mobilizing and organizing people. It focuses mainly on the mobilization aspect, while the flipsides of strong emotions, such as burnout or fundamentalism, deserve another and separate article.

The article is based on qualitative research strategies and builds on my previous research on the environmental movement in the Czech Republic in the 1990s and 2000s (Novák 2017, 2020). Since 2014, I have conducted further research based on the ethnographic method of participant observation (Cattaneo 2006). This included participation in the programmatic "Breathe in" conference organized by environmental organizations in 2014, the climate camps and related direct actions organized between 2017 and 2020, the assemblies of the anti-coal group Limity jsme my (LJM), events by Fridays for Future in 2019 and 2020, direct actions by Extinction Rebellion (XR) in 2019, and the university occupation strike at Charles University in November 2019. I also draw on findings from my research on squatting (Novák et al. 2020; Novák 2021a) that provide me with a broader context and background for the Czech environmental and climate movements. I supplement this observational data with seven semi-structured interviews that I conducted with activists from Limity jsme my and Greenpeace. The article is part of ongoing research, which has focused primarily on the politics of climate justice from below, where the group/movement Limity jsme my is one of the most important protagonists in this transformation of political activism in the environmental and climate movements.

Beyond Transactional Activism

Environmentalism as a social movement appeared in the Czech Republic in the early 1990s, at the same time as its second wave in the form of political environmentalism in the West was co-opted and liberal environmentalism took on a hegemonic form (Macnaghten and Urry 1998; Doherty 2000). Due to the legacy of "actually existing socialism", Czech environmentalism leaned politically to the right or the centre rather than the left. As Vaněk (2002: 250) concludes, "(f)ears of repression and dislike for left-wing views gave rise to a particular type of the Czech environmentalist: a cautious person with the ideal of tolerance and democracy and of mild and placid nature". In the first half of the 1990s more radical groups such as Hnutí Duha (the Rainbow Movement) and Děti Země (Children of the Earth), based on participatory grassroots activism, used direct actions and civil disobedience as an important repertoire of action in the defence of the village of Libkovice, which was displaced by coal mining, and in the fight against the construction of the Temelín nuclear power plant. Yet in the second half of the 1990s these groups switched to transactional activism and abandoned even the more liberal forms of direct action and civil disobedience, such as nonviolent blockades and occupations (Fagan 2004; Jehlička et al. 2005; Novák 2017, 2020).

These groups, representing the second wave of political environmentalism, gradually abandoned not only this repertoire of action, but also system criticism, and to some extent returned to a type of activism that prevalent before 1989 based on more consensual and apolitical negotiation and expert knowledge (Jehlička et al. 2005). Císař speaks of transactional activism, which "is not primarily concerned with mobilising individuals, but is instead focused on the development of capacities that would enable organisations to shape public debates and influence various publics via the media" (2010: 740). The media-attractive events organized by small professional and advocacy NGOs (such as Hnutí Duha) became more important than the number of people mobilized in actions. Transactional activists primarily focused on a systematic use of lobbying while cooperating with each other, exerting pressure, and effectively asserting their interests (Císař 2008, 2009). They "did not really want to be seen as allies of the radicals" (Císař et al. 2011: 141) as this could discourage partners with whom they negotiated during the lobbying process. As I have previously argued (Novák 2017, 2020), this separation of transactional and radical activism in the mid-1990s was not inevitable but the result of mutual boundary-building which led to different trajectories within the ecological and anarchist/countercultural milieus.

Transactional activism based on small advocacy groups rather than mobilizing large numbers of people, emphasized expertise rather than confronting political power and power structures, seeking and expecting a consensual solution, based on rationalist ontology and on the assumption that a well-founded argument must somehow prevail in rational debate. It was based on rational models of action and excluded or suppressed emotions. Gould terms this the rationalist paradigm of social movements (2009: 16). Thus, a type of professional activism developed that required certain skills: legal, scientific, technical, fundraising. It was a type of activism that took place mainly in the office, and an ever-increasing amount of time was taken up by bureaucratic work. This type of activism thus was available only to a very narrow and specialized group of people. For many people who wanted to be active, the opportunity remained to contribute financially to the "professional activists" in small advocacy NGOs

who were active instead of them. Above all, the human body with its feelings and emotions disappeared from transactional activism. More accurately, the bodies and emotions never completely disappeared from the offices of environmental NGOs, but have been repressed, rendered invisible and disembodied in favour of rational argumentation, expert knowledge, and legal analysis and lobbying, as the introductory quote of the Greenpeace activist shows. Because environmental activists abandoned the repertoire of mass direct action, the space for emotional connection disappeared as well (Clough 2012). However, creating and reproducing this space is important for activists in order to achieve a sense of empowerment during oppositional and often contentious actions and social change (Chatterton 2008; Brown and Pickerill 2009).

Transactional activism thus encountered its own limitations. With its emphasis on rationality, this activism displaced bodily experiences. It widened the gap between professionals and volunteers. It abandoned the idea of mobilizing people and thereby limited practices that could initiate transformative experiences. My informants told me about this when they remembered activism in the first half of the 1990s, that is, before transactional activism fully prevailed. When, at the turn of 1992 and 1993, activists came to defend the village of Libkovice from demolition due to coal mining, they occupied empty houses to prevent their demolition.

> We defended the houses in incredibly difficult winter conditions. In the cold, wet, stink, sometimes with a lack of food and I think that the people who came there made such a deep friendship that it was a very great experience and unifying events not only on a personal level, but also an organization. I think we managed to establish some roots of cooperation there. (Interview, long-term activist with Hnutí Duha and Greenpeace CR, 2012)

Activists put their bodies directly in the path of excavators tearing down houses, but they also had to share the challenging winter conditions. This experience of discomfort, fear and worries, but also their overcoming together created strong emotional moments, as well as feelings of joy and power to act and cooperate as described by the informant. This is the kind of collective emotions which Jasper (1998) calls reciprocal. These are the affective ties of friendship, love, solidarity, and loyalty, and the specific emotions that these actions bring, and that play an important role in creating and sharing emotions and also consolidating the collective identity of the environmental movement. Also, these actions created space where people from different milieus could meet and share emotional connection and empowerment. Even for professional activists these actions of mass civil disobedience were important. One described the blockades against the construction of Temelín in the mid-1990s:

> They were also events, where people met once a year and did something meaningful, at least it seemed to them that they were doing something meaningful. Not just writing legal submissions, but physically trying to prevent the construction they are deeply convinced is wrong. It was a very motivating and strengthening experience for further work. (Interview, long-term Greenpeace activist CR, 2011)

This kind of protest action generates a dual effect. Externally, they are powerful "image events" (Juris 2008), where activists can communicate their message to an audience.

Internally, when they block excavators or the entrance to a construction site with their bodies or prevent the felling of trees, they provide space where "identities are expressed through distinct bodily techniques and emotions are generated through ritual conflict and the lived experienced of prefigured utopias" (Juris 2008: 62), as Juris has argued in the context of direct actions of the alterglobalization movement. And this is exactly what was missing when transactional activism began to dominate the Czech environmental movement in the 2000s.

The importance of a common bodily experience was also reflected by one of the organizers of the blockade against the felling of trees on Ptačí potok in the Šumava National Park in the summer of 2011.

> Despite incredibly difficult conditions, we slept for several hours constantly under great stress, and it was mentally and physically demanding, there was no conflict despite it. This is solidarity between people and voices didn't even have to be raised, and when someone lay on someone's mat by mistake, the first one lay down next to him again, it was just probably clear to everyone that they were there, pursuing some higher goals. I think that this result of the blockade is just as valuable as the fact that we saved the trees on Ptačí potok, or that it was not felled in other areas, which are the well-known and factual results of the blockade, but this result, psychological, social and political, is no less important. And I think that the people who were there, that it could have affected them for a lifetime, as the blockade in Libkovice affected me, for example. These are simply things that have a formative impact, lifelong, even if they last only a month, so it is so intense that you take it for a long time. (Interview, long-term activist with Hnutí Duha and Greenpeace CR, 2012)

As I show below, during such actions bodies assemble together and the emotions are consciously experienced, shared and transformed to the affect, which increases activists' capacity to act, strengthening the "power to act" collectively (Clough 2012). This affect cannot be built in offices, by lobbying or by applying for grants but only in collective and confrontational actions in the fields and streets. While professional work in offices emphasizes professional rationality, it tends to individualize people and the space for informal meetings and encounters disappears and the space for creating and sharing strong and reciprocal emotions also disappears. In contrast, when activists get together and use their bodies to resist the cutting down of trees or mining, if they are engaged in daily self-organization at the climate camp (cooking, washing dishes, digging the toilets etc.), the shared emotions founded on common concerns and transformative feelings of the fear of police violence or the joy of successful collective action can help to build affect. The content and the mode of these emotions have a significant role in solidary behaviour in the everyday situations of movements and so collective emotions during mass direct actions are "the glue" of solidarity (Salmela 2015). When this lack of space for emotional connection, missing in transactional activism, met with the wave of the new generation of activists, the body was reactivated.

Bodies Coming Together

In September 2014, a programmatic conference of the green movement called "Breathe In" was held near Brno, with the expressed aim to reflect on the state of the movement and open a debate on its future direction. As I noted in my field notes:

> The conference is attended by representatives of all major NGOs, and I am surprised that in contrast to a more conservative view that emphasized what legal disputes and cases were won and what laws were enforced and influenced, criticism of the current repertoire of actions of environmental organizations prevails. There are opinions that the environmental movement must look for allies, that environmental issues cannot be separated from social ones, that it must be a movement that involves people on a daily basis, that it is necessary to be more radical, to use direct actions and civil disobedience. Even that there is a need for system change and to replace capitalism. It's a lively debate, and to discuss things like systemic critique, capitalism, the need for radicalism, and direct action had been hard to imagine a few years earlier. (Field notes, 2014)

These debates reflected an apparent disappointment with the state of the environmental movement, which had become dominated by several professional and advocacy environmental NGOs rather than a heterogeneous social movement.

In 2015, Czech Greenpeace saw a major strategic turnaround. "We wanted to move away from transactional activism and to involve people not only financially and as volunteers, but we also try to lead them to be active on their own and not rely on Greenpeace" (interview, long-term activist from Greenpeace, 2020) At the same time, they were a harbinger of upcoming changes. In 2015, Limity jsme my was created, originally as an informal initiative, by an emerging younger generation of activists dissatisfied with the transactional activism of environmental NGOs (Novák 2021b). One of the cofounders recalls that

> It bothered us more than one thing, that Hnutí Duha was bureaucratic and worked mainly in the offices (…). We were bothered by the terrible conformism in tactics, the way of working, the orientation towards lobbying, expertise, technical solutions. We were bothered by the naive idea that that we would come to the politicians and just explain it to them nicely, such a naive emphasis on rationality where better arguments prevail, that one who has better data, better arguments would convince those companies. This activism was completely blind to power structures. (Interview, co-founder LJM, 2020)

At the same time, for this new generation of activists, there was a formative experience of student protests against neoliberal reforms in 2011 and 2012. This experience was shaped by contentious politics, including mass mobilizations and demonstrations, blockades, occupations of the university, but also self-organizing and informal gatherings. It was not just about better technical arguments, but about a clash with power and, thanks to victory, also about empowerment.

The emergence of LJM meant a new type of radical political activism and was predominantly formed as a result of activists' participation experiences in German climate camps organized by *Ende Gelände,* a civil disobedience movement occupying coal mines in Germany to raise awareness for climate justice. Another significant formative influence was the forming of the Klinika Autonomous Social Centre in Prague (Novák et al. 2020; Novák 2021a), an empty building that activists had occupied, which in March 2016 struggled for its existence, when activists declared civil disobedience and occupied the house against planned eviction. Activists from all over the Czech Republic came to their support and together they defended the house against eviction for several weeks. This experience of living together, cooking, decision-making in assemblies, cleaning, but also collectively sharing

emotions (fear, tension, joy), but also bodily sensations (winter, warmth in a heated room, fatigue) created strong reciprocal emotional connections. The moment when the activists managed to avert the immediate threat of eviction was also a moment of empowerment, and a feeling that collective direct action and disobedience works. Bodies coming together, collectively built affect and thus the feeling of the "power to act" (Clough 2012). The experience of Klinika, "the camp without a leader" as the informants and activists called it, was important in two ways. First, it inspired environmental activists by showing how a radical prefigurative politics could be pursued. The term "prefigurative politics" has been used to signal that utopian social relationships such as egalitarian and nonhierarchical relations and/or goals (such as ecological sustainability, anti-capitalism) can be anticipated by and brought about through their collective performance in the present (Yates 2014).

> Klinika managed to [have activists] step out of the wasteland of radical isolation on the fringes of society, it was such a breakthrough into the logic of how things work. And in this regard, Klinika raised the generation [of activists] in the milieu of the radical left, which has not been so ideologically driven, but is more orientated to practice (…) I remember how some person from the Anarchist Federation gave a nice lecture in 2012 on non-hierarchical forms of organization, he drew various pyramids and rings on the board [affinity groups and plenum of delegates of affinity groups], but I don't think it affected me at all. But a few days at Klinika, when I saw how it works, I immediately understood what it meant and that it could work that way. And it spread so naturally, but it was also the space where you could meet, to make assemblies, to have lectures. (Interview, founder of LJM, 2020)

This is good example showing how the immediate bodily experiences of anarchist direct action was influential in shaping the experiences of activists, and how it helped create the affect that has transformed the nature of activism.

Second, it was a space where anarchist, autonomous and countercultural milieus on the one hand and ecological milieus on the other hand began to meet again and influence each other. These milieus had been separated since the second half of the 1990s and followed two different trajectories: the anarchist trajectory eventually led to ideological purity and insignificance and the ecological one to transactional activism and helplessness (Novák 2020c). From their encounter, interweaving and interaction similarly as in the 1990s, a type of radical activism emerged, for which direct action was the way of doing politics. This was reflected in the LJM manifesto:

> We are part of a global movement (…) We feel solidarity with the people most affected by climate change and ecological problems. We are aware that ecological problems cannot be separated from social and economic issues (…) We work non-hierarchically, we do not have bosses, we are independent of political parties. (…) We stand for direct action. Radical politics, which intends to solve deeper causes of social problems, has never been successful without direct action (…) Direct action is our main, although not exclusive, means of changing and mobilising society (…) We want to change the system, not the climate! (Manifesto, LJM, 2017)

LJM's activism was not advocacy, but based on mobilizing people in protests and direct actions. And direct action, as understood and developed by LJM, was not an instrumental tool to use after all possibilities were exhausted, not a last resort, but a main way to mobilize

and a "way of doing things" (Doherty et al. 2003), characteristic of what Carter calls the third wave of radical environmentalism (Carter 2007; Saunders 2012).

LJM became part of a transnational climate justice movement, not only by declaration in a manifesto, but also by organizing joint bus trips to protests and blockades (COP in Paris 2015 and climate camps in Germany). These trips were important because they became spaces for emotional connections. They built on and strengthened friendships, but also allowed people from the Czech Republic to experience strong emotions during the blockades of coal mines in Germany, which motivated their radical activism at home. In 2016 LJM sent a bus of Czech activists to Ende Gelände and this resulted in the successful blocking of a mine. Moreover, the sun was shining and for the first time in history, Germany was producing 100% of its electricity from renewable sources.

> So the mood was completely euphoric, and at that time there were already people from the Klinika milieu, and it was clear that a milieu of people was born with whom something could be invented. And when we saw the enthusiasm of the people in the bus, we thought that we should do something like that in the Czech Republic and we said on the way back: 'Let's do Climate Camp in our country!' (Interview, one of founders of LJM, 2020)

Since 2017 LJM have been organizing climate camps, which accompany mass direct actions aimed at fossil infrastructure (Černík 2021) and represent a crucial moment for the emerging climate movement in the Czech Republic.

The Making of the Climate Movement: "Climate Justice is Handmade!"

The climate camps generally have four key goals: education, direct action, prefigurative sustainable living, and building a grassroots movement to effectively tackle climate change by both resisting climate crimes and developing sustainable solutions. Czech climate camps had a trigger effect on the climate movement in Czech Republic, because they provided space for the socialization of many future activists from Fridays for Future (FFF), Universities for Climate, and Extinction Rebellion, which emerged later. Moreover, LJM have become the trend setters of the Czech climate movement. If the Klinika autonomous social centre "raised a generation" (interview, founder LJM, 2020) that embarked on the first civil disobedience and mass direct action in the climate camps, then LJM raised the first generation of the climate movement and were able to change the attitudes of transactional activists. As an activist from Greenpeace put it,

> LJM had the courage to bring the tactic of mass direct action, and I think it worked. It was the first group dedicated to the climate, except for us. Greenpeace also had a problem with that, because no one cared about climate issues, which has changed nowadays. Because people felt the effects, but also because LJM was already pushing the climate. I admire their professionalism in the sense that they think about it, even strategically, which FFF lacks a bit. They have the image of rebels, but at the same time they are humble and have certainly influenced the functioning of the Czech Greenpeace. Some people in Greenpeace used to be sceptical about LJM, but the results were always good and I've tried to get people from the Czech office to the climate camp to personally experience and see it, and when half the office went there last year,

> they were excited about how it all works. LJM are highly respected. (Interview, long-term activist from Greenpeace, 2020)

Similarly, direct experiences from the climate camps have changed the attitudes of sceptical activists from Hnutí Duha. The emergence of grassroots, participatory activism has influenced transactional activism, which has not disappeared, but both types of activism now exist side by side. Although Hnutí Duha still retains the dominant features of transactional, advocacy activism, it cooperates with LJM. Greenpeace meanwhile is undergoing an internal transformation to incorporate grassroots activism into its workings. The climate camps of LJM had a "dual effect" (Juris 2008). *Externally*, they not only drew attention to the climate issue before interest became widespread in society, but also raised new issues: the linkage of fossil fuel infrastructures and oligarchic power, especially in Czech coal mining and, through the discourse of climate justice, they made visible social and power inequalities (for example, that responsibility for climate change is not individual but structural) and politicized climate crises. This served as a counterweight to the depoliticization of climate change by the media and politicians, who often emphasize the responsibility of individual consumers. *Internally*, climate camps constituted an important space for making the climate movement. Because now there were no longer just two or three NGOs operating on transactional activism but a heterogeneous social movement(s) of formal NGOs and informal groups, organizations and individuals, climate camps were crucial for networking. In promoting people's participation (ranging from young people, students, and artists, to a few parents with children, university lecturers, and scientists) in the daily operation of the camp from morning assemblies through cooking to toilet maintenance and water importing, the camps provide space for care and emotional connection. Together with mass direct action when bodies come together and people can feel "power to act" (Clough 2012), affects are important as the "glue" of solidarity (Salmela 2015), as I will show below. Through this, activists can build a collective identity.

> The climate camp is very important, it is one of the few events where mass civil disobedience is done, plus the people meet there, which is also very important and networking takes place there, which is also important and teaches and gains experience there how to organize like this. In my opinion, this is crucial. (Interview, activist and independent photographer, 2020)

Climate camps with direct action but also with an emphasis on the prefiguration of a socio-ecological concrete utopia (ecological sustainability, participation, equality, sharing and caring, degrowth) thus involve what Routledge (1997) calls "imaginered resistance": struggles that both are mediated and embodied.

Preparations for the climate camps, their operation and cleaning up afterwards required horizontal coordination, and allowed for a wide involvement and participation, starting with manual and technical skills in building infrastructure (tents, compostable toilets, solar power plant), through the daily operation of cooking, washing, and cleaning. This type of radical activism thus offers the application of a wide range of competences, not only those of the highly-skilled expert, but often manual skills as well. The threshold of involvement is thus much lower than that of transactional activism. The importance of these activities, such as cooking in the kitchen, cleaning the toilets, or a night watch at the campsite, is often

emphasized in common assemblies as part of the prefigurative politics of care; it defines a principle of non-exploitation and solidarity in our relation to other people.

The climate camps further included mass direct events focused on destabilizing fossil fuel infrastructure, especially mines and power plants. Activists, in the form of civil disobedience, broke into the mine or perimeter of the coal power plant and with their bodies tried to block its operation, at least for a while. Although such action is rather symbolic in that it aims to draw public attention to the causes of the climate crisis and politicize the debate on causes and solutions, the activists themselves often emphasize that it is important for them to "really go there and with their bodies block mining at least for a while" and "stand in the way of the fossil business". This was also reflected in the fact that during and after the mass direct action, affinity groups and plenums discussed whether they had succeeded in stopping mining for a while. This embodiment of activism is reflected in the saying "climate justice is handmade", where "handmade" refers not only to blocking the mine, but also slicing carrots in the kitchen of the climate camp.

Under the motto "climate justice is handmade" the climate camps have had a trigger effect for climate movement groups such as Friday for Future, Extinction Rebellion, and University for Climate that mobilized people for actions in which bodies came together and where the body played a much larger role than in the case of transactional activism. Similarly to the case of direct actions in climate camps, in Fridays for Future the bodies of high school students did not go to school but engaged in strikes in city squares (for the first time in May 2019). In the case of Extinction Rebellion, bodies blocked car traffic and occupied the highway in the centre of Prague (in October 2019), or performatively "died" in the city hall when they demanded a declaration of climate emergency. In the case of the University for Climate, bodies of university students occupied the university building (in November 2019).

Affinities as a Way of Organizing

> All dressed in white overalls, we are jumping out of the buses, we are crossing the road, and through the bushes we are entering the mine. The police, who have been watching us in the vans all along, stay behind us. The euphoria, we have been able to outsmart the police! We are running, the buddies hold hands so that they don't get lost, you can always hear them calling the names of their affinity group. Forming the so-called finger we are running, deeper and deeper into the mine, we stop for a moment, waiting for the latecomer. My heart is pounding, I'm catching my breath, my legs are starting to hurt. Stop, the assembly of affinity group delegates begins, we are arguing about how and where to go next. The scouts who have surveyed the terrain give us information about where the police and the private security guards are. In the plenary session and then in the affinity groups, it is decided how someone feels and how far we will go. There is no boss to command. My initial scepticism about this action quickly disappeared, euphoria mingled with fatigue and fears that the police will catch up with us soon. But at the same time I feel happy with the others that we managed to deceive the police, who watched and harassed us at the camp all week. The joy of the fact that we managed to break into the mine and it seems that we stopped the excavators. 150 people in white overalls are approaching the excavator, we already have maybe 7 or 8 kilometres of alternating running and fast walking accompanied by short breaks filled with meetings in affinity groups. From a distance, we hear police supplies honking and

> flashing. We are running, our hearts pounding, we are clinging to the affinity groups, we are running to the excavator, sitting down and folding our arms and legs together. We are creating a human chain on the ground. At that very moment, the police are jumping out of the vans, surrounding us and pointing their weapons at us. Heart beats, we are catching our breath. Joy, fatigue, tension and anticipation of what will happen in the coming moments. But at the same time, a strong sense of solidarity with the people around us, we are not alone. (Field notes, 2017)

The activists, by dressing in white overalls and moving like a finger, or a single formation, appear outwardly as a single organism, which is internally composed of the cells of individual affinity groups. We can understand this as a rejection of the imperative of an individualized society in which everyone is a rational actor who calculates for her- or himself. It is a matter of accepting or rather trying to shape a collectivity through action, but which at the same time preserves and develops the individual and his horizontal relations. Using their bodies in the large "crowd" formed as a finger to block mining, and escaping the police and security agencies, generated powerful feelings of agency and solidarity. It was largely through these kinds of intense, reciprocal, emotional experiences that activists began to feel connected, both as an affinity group and as part of the larger climate justice movement. People in these mass direct actions have been organized into affinity groups, which form one to two so-called fingers. Affinity groups consist of a pair (buddies) and are usually made up of 4 to 12 people who know each other. During the action, they take care of each other, negotiate and send their delegates to the so-called plenum of delegates, at which further progress is discussed during the action. The organization through affinity groups allows the course of the direct action to be as horizontal and non-hierarchical as possible and allows people to influence its course during the action. That this horizontal and flexible structure is also effective was repeatedly shown at direct actions in 2017 and 2020, when activists were able to outsmart hierarchically organized police and to get into the mine and block its operations.

This affinity structure, which draws inspiration from the anarchist currents of the newest social movement (Day 2004), is important for this type of activism, which is defined through a commitment to two primary concepts: a politics of direct action in which direct interventions are preferred to formal politics of demands, and the practice of affinity as guiding logic (Day 2004; Clough 2012). Affinity refers to both a mode of political organization with a conception of egalitarian, non-hierarchical, grassroots, consensus-based democracy and to a particular emotive connection between comrades, some kind of sympathy for someone else. This "anarchist affinity is a feeling of trust, closeness, respect and equality upon which alternative politics are based. It is the emotional foundation for society of free and equal individuals. To have affinity with others is to already live anarchist ideal; it is the basic component prefigurative politics that sets anarchism from other Leftist tendencies; the insistence that means of social change be identical to the ends" (Clough 2012: 1673).

While LJM are not explicitly an anarchist movement, I argue that because they have a commitment to the two primary concepts (politics of direct action and affinity as guiding logic) they have implicitly anarchist tendencies similar to the environmental direct action movement of the third wave of environmentalism (Doherty 2002; Doherty et al. 2003; Day 2004; Novák 2017). And for this radical activism, militant confrontations, symbolic conflicts, and performative rituals which generate powerful emotions have always been

important. They are not incidental to this radical activism. Activists use emotion strategically, they speak about their feelings during actions and after, in order to generate the commitment necessary to maintain participation (and to avoid burnout), working to build affective attachments or evoke certain emotions with the goal of motivating and sustaining action. This is particularly important for informal networks that rely on friendship, affinities and consensus decision-making to reinforce internal solidarity. It is a tactic to organize such actions that generate powerful emotions, which prepares activists for participation in the movement. Such direct actions are "characterized by 'high ritual density', resulting from the bodily awareness of co-presence among ritual participants who are physically assembled and share mutual focus of attention" (Juris 2008: 65). This direct action as performative ritual has a transformative effect: amplifying an initiating emotion, such as anger, fear or environmental grief, and transforming it into a sense of collective solidarity and constituting the glue of solidarity. By "high ritual density" Randal Collins (2001) means protest, in which the bodily practices of large groups of participants amplify emotion and transfer it into a sense of collective solidarity. Such protest as mass direct action during climate camps organized through affinity groups.

Many informants told me how the climate camps encouraged further activities and how important it was for building a movement. Students who participated in climate camp and mass direct action were affected by these actions, they could feel this collective solidarity and they also felt the "power to act".

> The advantage of direct action and the climate camp is that it intensifies the building of strong ties, you experience emotions, prepare for the action, building trust, in that buddy system, in those affinity groups. It quickly accelerates the formation of relationships, you experience strong emotions, it can even destroy them, but my experience is that it strengthens them. When you feel it and you feel that direct action gives you something, there is a great enthusiasm and you have a greater tendency to look for a way to do something similar again. So it brought our group together and we needed to do some more direct action, not just giving lectures. During the occupation of the university, new people got involved and they are still active. (Interview, activist University for Climate, 2020)

Direct actions create relationships and strong reciprocal emotions (see Jaspers 1998) that cultivate affinity for a certain type of doing politics – egalitarian, non-hierarchical, grassroots (see Day 2004; Clough 2012), which in turn draws in new activists and allows these groups to operate more powerfully.

Conclusion

Transactional activism and advocacy dominated Czech environmentalism in the 2000s, but it changed in the next decade, when groups and organizations based on participatory activism and mobilization began to emerge. Researching especially direct actions organized by Limity jsme my, the article seeks to show that since 2015, alongside transactional activism, radical activism, which seeks to mobilize and organize people, has emerged to a significant degree. This does not mean that transactional activism disappeared completely, it still exists, but next to it there is radical activism, which emphasizes mobilization, direct action, participation,

and affinity. And above all, with this activism the body has taken on a new significance: it has moved from the office to the field, and with that, emotions play a larger role and are no longer repressed. The movements are moved not only by the rationalist arguments of experts or advocacy activists but also by emotions and by affect. As Gould writes, "as rational and cognitive as we humans beings are, we are also moved affectively" (2009: 29). This article has shown how radical climate activism combines rationality with emotion, or more accurately, uses emotions to mobilize and act and tries to bring this perspective of social movement research to the Czech Republic.

If, as Císař (2008) claimed regarding the political activism of the 1990s and 2000s, transactional activists did not cooperate with radical activists and vice versa, then that has now changed. What is new is not only that transactional activists consider radicals as allies. But radical activism as undertaken by Limity jsme my has catalyzed new forms of climate movement activism. In the second half of 2010, the climate movement emerged as a social movement that is heterogeneous and uses various strategies and tactics that it seeks to complement. In the article, I focused on the form of radical activism, which brought about a change in the constellation of different forms of activism.

The reasons for this transformation are both structural and related to agency. The structural explanations include the overall radical shift after the 2009 collapse of the climate conference in Copenhagen (COP), which transformed the climate movement. This was reflected in Greenpeace's turn away from transactional activism and a wave of radical climate activism in Germany (Ende Gelände). Furthermore, knowledge about climate change is becoming more accurate, and as a result of the activities of scientists, politicians, social movements, it becomes increasingly difficult to deny. In this article, however, I focused mainly on agency, how the actors themselves understand their "power to act", and how modes of embodiment and related emotions such as experiences from protests (the student movement) and social conflicts (Klinika, Ende Gelände) have opened up spaces for emotional sharing and consequently the formation of new subjects. I have focused on that part of the Czech climate movement in which the actors themselves began to develop another type of political activism that, instead of lobbying political elites, is seeking to mobilize and engage people and to confront power structures. I have shown how this type of contentious politics is based on a politics of direct action and on the practice of affinity as a guiding logic. Throughout the article, I have argued that actions such as climate camps and mass direct actions are important for building a climate movement that is heterogeneous and includes not only radicals, precisely because it provides spaces for emotional connection and acts as a glue to the solidarity of this diverse movement. If the climate movement is to succeed, it must take into account the body and emotions. However, it is also necessary to choose a different theoretical approach for research. This article, based on the emotional turn (Gould 2004, 2009) in the study of social movements, can be understood as a first small step to research climate activism in the Czech Republic more comprehensively.

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