Environment and Democracy in the Czech Republic

The Environmental Movement in the Transition Process

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Introduction

Since a handful of environmental activists courageously lambasted the communist regime's appalling ecological record in the late 1980s, the realm of environmental politics in the Czech Republic has acted as a barometer of political change and the development of civil society in this new democracy.

This study traces the development of the Czech environmental movement, from an embryonic array of dissident activists opposing the communist regime in the late 1980s to a diversified and politically prominent social movement comprising an eclectic mix of organizations, ideologies and action strategies. The book represents the culmination of a decade of research during which time the activities, organization and interactions of environmental movement organizations (EMOs) have been explored from a variety of theoretical and empirical perspectives. At its heart lies an interest in the Czech environmental movement for what it reveals about the multifaceted process of regime change from authoritarian rule to political democracy.

A relatively high degree of environmental consciousness in Czechoslovakia during the late 1980s, as well as appalling levels of air and water pollution, propelled the environmental movement to political prominence at the time of the revolution (Albrecht, 1987; Jancar-Webster, 1993; Waller and Millard, 1992). During the 1990s foreign donors were keen to support nascent green organizations, often over and above other issues or interest groups. As the decade progressed, the EC/EU became increasingly involved in Czech environmental politics largely to ensure harmonization of laws and adaptation to western norms. Nearly a generation after the 'velvet revolution', and with the Czech Republic set to be admitted to the EU in May 2004, the perspective retains a capacity to reflect the interaction between political, social and economic processes, as well as the interplay between national and supranational agendas. Today, EMOs in the Czech Republic represent one of the most established and diverse sectors of associational activity. Their political fortunes are inextricably linked to the fundamental political issues of the reform agenda. As ever, not only are they affected by the turmoil of post-communist politics, but their status and interactions actually reflect its contradictions and shortcomings.

The primary academic interest here is thus the process of regime change. To a large extent, the use of the environmental movement is instrumental: it is

employed as a means for considering associational development in the context of concurrent political democratization and neoliberal economic restructuring. As a consequence of its relative size and development as an organized and prominent social movement, the environmental movement has offered the political scientist a valuable lens through which to consider the evolution of civil society in the Czech Republic and the various constraints on associational activity in a new democracy. A central objective of this book is to identify the impact of democratization on the environmental movement and to illustrate the extent to which legacies of the communist period have shaped the evolution of social movements in the so-called 'democratic' era.

However, the research takes issue with a number of commonly held assumptions. Firstly, the notion that the process of democratization has been entirely enabling for social movements is challenged. It is argued that the process of adaptation for EMOs and the need to redefine both their strategies and their ideology politically paralysed the movement during a critical period of the transition process. Yet the analysis also challenges the assumption that the problems faced by EMOs can be explained solely in terms of the authoritarian legacy. It is argued that change and fluctuation during the post-communist era have exerted a critical impact on civil society associations and shaped their evolution. Rather than assuming that greater access for social movements and the development of civil society are issues that can be dealt with at a later stage, the argument here is that power relationships established in the early stages of transition set a precedent in terms of social movement access and interaction with elites. The issue of resources as a determinant of EMO efficacy is another main theme of the book. What is argued here is that it is not simply a question of the availability of resources, but of who is providing the funding and the extent to which the agendas of donor agencies are being transmitted to recipient EMOs.

This enquiry into the Czech movement also seeks to add to the broader theoretical discussion regarding environmental organizations in post-industrial societies. The behaviour and development of Czech EMOs under what amount to unique political and economic conditions raise some fundamental questions regarding the relationship between movements, states and capital. Insofar as our current understanding of the motivation, strategic choices and rationale of environmental activism is almost entirely informed by western experience and the developmental trajectory of German, Scandinavian and French EMOs over the past three decades,[1] this study will, from the perspective of a new democracy, challenge some theoretical certainties regarding the influence of resources and the impact of the political process on organizational behaviour.

THE 'ENVIRONMENTAL LENS': A WINDOW ON DEMOCRATISATION AND TRANSITION

In what sense has the environmental movement acted as a window on political change? The eclectic mix of scientists, citizens, intellectuals and young students who comprised what can broadly be termed the environmental movement of the late 1980s represented the most visible expression of an emergent, or immanent, civil society. The prominent position of environmentalists within the broader dissident community in Czechoslovakia raised questions amongst western scholars regarding the extent to which such nascent environmental organisations represented an embryonic and radical civil society, or whether their apparent political influence and agency in the aftermath of the revolution was merely a temporary phenomena contingent upon the dynamics of the 'velvet revolution'. For dissident intellectuals such as Václav Havel, their prominence reflected the potential for a truly alternative political and economic model based on social movement politics. The prominence of green activists in Czechoslovakia at this time must also be seen in historical context.

The end of the 1980s witnessed a pan-European interest in environmental protection focusing on issues of ozone depletion and so-called 'greenhouse' gas emissions. The support for the UK Green Party at the 1989 European Parliament elections is often cited as evidence of a heightened consciousness of pollution that was sweeping the developed world and happened to coincide with political change in Eastern Europe. This was indeed the year in which Margaret Thatcher declared that the British Conservatives were 'the true friends of the Earth' (Rose, 1990: 6). The shock of Chernobyl and a host of scientific reports and enquiries into the health effects of water pollution propelled environmental agendas to the political forefront. The fact that, amongst the peace campaigners, human rights activists and workers of Eastern Europe protesting against the communist order, there were also environmentalists seemed to endorse notions of a new global environmental consciousness.

The important, though often exaggerated, role played by protesters in the events of 1989 in Eastern Europe also served to revive intellectual interest in the concept of civil society and democratic participation (Keane, 1988). The conceptual fusion of environment, democracy and civil society is perhaps one of the most significant and enduring legacies of the East European revolutions. Rightly or wrongly, the events of 1989 have been portrayed as people's revolutions and the triumph of civil society over the communist state.

For the political scientist interested in citizen–state relations during regime change, the Czechoslovak environmental sector provided the perfect empirical setting for research on the extent to which civil society was actually

developing and democracy was being consolidated. Having emerged prior to the collapse of the communist regime to help erode the legitimacy of the old order, the labyrinth of nascent environmental organisations appeared to be flourishing immediately after the revolution and, in 1990, they were by far the most numerous and visible expression of post-communist civil society (Fagin and Jehlička, 1998). The environmental movement that was emerging seemed to be dominated by amorphous organisations advocating radical strategies and solutions with a global political focus. There were also non-political conservation groups and a host of other commercial and recreational aggregations with an ecological focus. As a whole the movement appeared to represent and encapsulate the euphoric atmosphere of the time and momentarily offered a glimpse of an alternative, participatory and movement-based democratic politics.

Yet, in focusing on the role of environmental activists and their adaptation to the newly established democratic order, the political scientist was offered a unique insight into the complexities of democratic consolidation. The constraints of the authoritarian legacy, path dependency and lack of political experience were all reflected in the early experiences of environmental organisations. In particular, the perspective provided a lens on the tensions evoked by the external assistance being offered to Czechoslovakia at this time. Perhaps more than any other issue, the environmental clean-up was attracting international attention and legislative advice, the transfer of resources and tutelage were being promised and delivered by, amongst others, the UN, the EC and various European and US philanthropic organisations. Over time the environmental perspective has enabled a critical evaluation of such intervention and provided an insight into the way tutelage can evolve into dependency and disempowerment. As the decade progressed, it became evident that, not only did the lens of the environmental movement and its interaction with the new political elite have the capacity to reflect the unfolding relationship between the state and civil society in the new democracy, but the issue of pollution and its amelioration also encapsulated so many of the issues and dilemmas of the post-communist decade. For example, notions of opening up the country to foreign assistance, the 'return to Europe' sentiment, citizen participation and the efficacy of civil society, and technological change are as intrinsic to the clean-up process as they are fundamental to the entire reform process. Discussions regarding the environment and democracy almost merged as citizens, politicians, external organisations and advisers were united, so it seemed, in their concern about pollution levels in Europe's newly discovered centre.

However, by the mid-1990s the utopianism and radicalism of Czech EMOs had given way to a desire to be accepted as professional and institutionalised organisations unwilling to challenge the ideological hegemony of the new

consensus. Generally, the era of movement-based politics was over and had been replaced by professional adversarial politics. This altered political climate found expression in the attitude and strategic choices of environmental activists. During the Klaus period (1992–7), the environmental movement was politically marginalized and castigated as an anti-market relic of the socialist era that sought to usurp the liberal individualist agenda on which Klaus's centre–right Civic Democratic Party (ODS) had gained their mandate. Again the environmental 'lens' offered a valuable insight into the politics of this period. The attitude of the government towards civil society and associations and the logic of the new adversarial policy-making culture that dominated the mid-1990s were bitterly reflected in the treatment of EMOs by the Klaus administration. At times during this period the environmental movement seemed to be the main target of Klaus's antipathy towards the notion of advocacy groups and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) exercising their political voice. What is remarkable is how quickly the political prominence of environmentalists waned. Activists changed from partners of the elite to politically ostracised pariahs in the space of a few months.

Not surprisingly, the demise of Klaus's centre–right coalition in 1997 and the ensuing changes in the political opportunity structure proved immediately enabling for the EMOs who had been politically excluded and ostracised. The period since 1997 is seen as the dawn of a new era, in which EMOs are consulted as part of a reinvigorated policy process and a 'westernisation' of relations between the movement and the state has taken place. However, such a conclusion should be drawn with a great deal of caution. Whilst the interaction between EMOs and the state may appear to resemble relationships in established democracies, the role and function of Czech EMOs is distinctly path-dependent. At a superficial level the situation may reflect western norms, but the specific context in which EMOs operate and obtain funding is a critical determinant of their capacity and function.

Indeed, reflecting back on the post-communist decade from the vantage point of the environmental movement, the impact on EMOs of external involvement appears far more contentious than it did in 1990. Though few would dispute the benefits of foreign donations and assistance at a time when there was little indigenous funding for non-profit organisations, the true effect of such involvement is now more readily discernible. The dominance of ecological modernisation as the ideological basis of environmental policy, the demise of radical protest strategies and ideas amongst the established EMOs and the partnership between business, political elites and environmental organisations that foreign agencies have encouraged and fostered through their funding regimes and agendas are of critical concern not just in the Czech Republic, but elsewhere in the region (Cellarius and Staddon, 2002; McMahon, 2001). The extent to which EU accession was to shape the

environmental policy agenda as well as the activities and function of the environmental movement was largely underestimated. On the threshold of EU entry, the environmental perspective retains its capacity as a valuable vantage point for identifying and assessing the impact of the accession process and prospective membership, and the perils of opening up the Czech economy to an influx of foreign direct investment more generally. The contradictions and paradoxes of the EU's agenda are nowhere more evident: the Commission promotes growth and infrastructure expansion while simultaneously funding environmental organisations to oppose such schemes. The EU pressures the Czech government to make further cuts in public expenditure and to scale down public administration, simultaneously urging more effective regulation and implementation of environmental standards.

The perspective of the environmental movement has also provided a valuable lens through which to consider the rather vaguely defined stage of the democratisation process referred to by theorists as 'consolidation' or 'habituation' (Linz and Stepan, 1996; Diamond, 1996). During this stage, it is assumed that societal organisations become enmeshed within the rules of democratic decision making. Whilst there is evidence to suggest that the larger EMOs have indeed become part of the formal decision-making process, this does not necessarily validate the process as democratic, fair or inclusive, nor can it be taken as evidence of consolidation. The later chapters of the present book illustrate the extent to which community-based activists and more radical EMOs are excluded from formal decision-making processes.

The environmental 'lens' raises more fundamental questions regarding the theoretical logic and practical relevance of the transition/democratisation discourse for Central and East European (CEE) states. Democratisation theory is based on the consolidation of political institutions and procedures derived from and specific to the experience of liberal capitalism in western Europe. The failings of these procedures and institutions in existing democracies over recent decades, and the political challenges to them made by new social movements and radical ideologies, are conveniently ignored by transition theorists, who, like their development theorist predecessors of the 1950s, paint an especially rosy picture of political democracy for the purposes of export. The structure of power in which EMOs operate, the institutions and procedures of political democracy – the 'rules of the game' according to Larry Diamond (1996) – appear incapable of effectively contesting and challenging the supreme power exercised by transnational corporations (TNCs) and the multilateral agencies that defend their interests within 'democratic' decision-making fora. That such power is both impervious to the electoral process and beyond the contestation of 'democratic' political institutions is reflected in the realm of environmental politics. The more radical elements of the movement stand in direct ideological opposition to the consumption-based dogma of

neoliberal capitalism, yet their marginalisation and the cooption of more moderate EMOs within the hegemonic discourse of ecological modernisation is illustrative of the extent to which the arena of political contestation does not correlate with the true exercise of power in capitalist society and the limitations of liberal constitutional settings for containing aggressive neoliberal capitalism (Petras and Veltmeyer, 2001; Chomsky, 1999).

The belief expressed by some that the changed relationship between citizen and state as a consequence of 'globalization' has enabled the opening up of new supranational arenas of contestation is also challenged by the experience of the Czech environmental movement. The capacity of EMOs, whether in CEE states or in established democracies in western Europe, to make use of protest opportunities that have occurred as a consequence of, and in response to, globalization is entirely contingent upon activists having access to resources. For EMOs to contest and challenge the activities of TNCs and to pursue effective protest campaigns on a global scale is an extremely costly business (Newell, 2000). Many have argued that changes in global communications have augmented the capacity of EMOs to challenge the increasingly diffuse and globalised exercise of power (Castells, 1996). Yet, whilst access to the Internet may well provide EMOs with knowledge about campaigns taking place elsewhere and the global activities of TNCs, it does not necessarily enable them to take effective action against decisions that have an impact upon their 'local' environment. EMOs who wish to pursue TNCs and multilateral agencies on the global stage require the professional skills of lawyers, accountants, PR agencies and media specialists. Even local branches of international EMOs such as Greenpeace are unable to participate in the 'global' events of the parent organisation if they lack the resources to do so.[2]

The global capacity of the more radical or grass-roots EMOs in the Czech Republic is constrained by the peripheral status of their own government as well as by their weak and non-institutionalised status at home. It is the relatively established political status of western environmental movements that enables activists to be propelled onto the 'global' stage of civic politics. In essence, EMOs from powerful states can use their influence over their own national governments and over the TNCs whose headquarters are located within their states as a gateway to exerting influence at the global level. For CEE activists the national context acts as a constraint on their capacity to contest the ecological impact of foreign investment within supranational arenas. The demonstrations occurring in Prague during September 2000 against the World Bank and IMF summit countered the more heady and optimistic claims about the emergence of a 'global civic politics' (Wapner, 1996; Lipschutz, 1996). It was western activists with access to far greater levels of resources and experience that dominated and controlled the events. Czech activists, including long-standing campaigners with substantial protest

experience, were sidelined and quickly forgotten once the World Bank and its anti-globalisation cortege moved on.

At the core of this study is the belief that the perspective of environmental politics retains its capacity to provide a powerful and in many respects unique insight into contemporary political, economic and social developments in the Czech Republic. Indeed, the somewhat contingent link between the pro-consumption and foreign investment agenda of the government, unquestioningly endorsed by all the major political parties, and evidence of a growing culture of activism amongst sections of Czech society concerned about the political disempowerment of communities suggests that the environment as a critical lens will retain its value in the coming decade.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND CONTENTS OF THE BOOK

The most immediate task of a study of a national environmental movement is to offer an inclusive and workable definition of an environmental movement. This is not as easy a task as perhaps imagined in the sense that there is a high level of disagreement regarding the inclusion of certain forms of environmental activism within the broad notion of a movement, and whether more institutionalised organisations should inhabit the same movement space as radical non-institutionalised activists employing direct action and unconventional protest strategies. The first chapter of the book will consider such issues in detail, as well as distinguishing different environmental movement types. One of the key points raised within the chapter is that diversity is an important feature of a social movement and the key to its adaptability and campaign fluidity.

The second chapter will consider the dominant theoretical approaches to the study of social movements. It will offer a critical examination of the *political opportunity structure* approach and *resource mobilisation theory*, both of which dominate theoretical studies of western social movements and their organisations. This chapter will raise a key theme of this book, namely that the application of theoretical approaches borrowed from western studies to the Czech case must be approached with caution.

The remainder of the book will provide a detailed account and analysis of the Czech environmental movement, tracing its evolution and development from the nineteenth century through to the post-communist period. Chapter 3 will start by tracing the earliest expression of the movement during the latter years of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, through the tramping movement of the 1920s and 1930s, to illegal and clandestine political opposition during the final years of the communist period.

The fourth chapter offers a detailed analysis of the environmental movement during the first decade of post-communist politics. It charts the adaptation of EMOs to the new institutional and political context, as well as illustrating the impact of political change on the movement during the 1990s. A number of themes and issues arise and are followed throughout the analysis. These include radicalism versus institutionalisation, submerged networks versus professional hierarchic organisations, global versus local focus, and the impact of resources and foreign donations on strategies and ideology. These issues have shaped the present movement, but also reflect more fundamental dilemmas within post-communist politics. The chapter illustrates the extent to which the movement has altered profoundly since 1990. The main tenor of the argument here is that such change has as much to do with the events and decisions of the post-communist period as it does with the legacy of authoritarianism. The 1990s set precedents and established patterns of interaction between EMOs and the state that have subsequently become institutionalised.

Chapter 5 will consider specific environmental organisations as case studies. The aim here is to illustrate some of the more general observations regarding professionalism, radicalism, the involvement of external organisations, and the impact of funding made in the previous chapter. The final chapter is in a sense an extended postscript, the objective of which is to provide an overview of the environmental movement as of 2003. The bulk of the research for this book was undertaken between 1993 and 2000 and although many of the issues and themes identified and discussed from the perspective of the late 1990s remain pertinent or have in fact become more salient, other aspects of EMO activity have changed. This is particularly true in light of the 2002 election and the Czech Republic's planned entry to the EU in May 2004. This chapter also paves the way for a more informed conclusion, able to link the historic development and legacies of the movement with the current context of political and economic transformation, and able to reflect on the relevance of theoretical approaches to the study of environmental movements to the Czech case.

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THE CZECH ENVIRONMENT[3]: AN OVERVIEW OF CHANGING ISSUES, PROBLEMS AND AGENDAS

An attempt to understand how the Czech environmental movement has evolved, why specific organisations campaign on certain issues and have altered their behaviour over time, requires a preliminary knowledge of the environmental problems and issues, and the extent to which these have altered

since the collapse of communism. Although the link between issues and the behaviour of social movements is complex, there is a correlation (Della Porta and Diani, 1999; Doherty, 2002). It is fair to say that environmental movements – their strategies, internal organisation, relationship with the public and the state – are shaped by and respond to changing types and incidents of pollution.

It therefore seems appropriate at this stage of the book to include an overview of the environmental problems of both the communist era and the present period, and to consider in particular how economic change since 1990 has affected the physical environment and given rise to new issues while also ameliorating others. Such information is absolutely critical for a study such as this that aims to use environmental politics as a lens through which to measure the impact of political as well as social and economic transformation. Only with such knowledge can we begin to appreciate the true extent to which political and economic change has shaped the agendas and ideologies of environmental organisations in the Czech Republic and fashioned their strategic choices. Such detail is also, perhaps, worth including here because an extensive analysis of the changing nature of environmental problems in the Czech Republic has yet to be published.

COMMUNISM AND POLLUTION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The environmental decay of communist Eastern Europe has been widely documented by academics since the late 1980s (Slocock, 1992; Waller and Millard, 1992; Russell, 1990; Fagin, 1994; Tickle and Vavroušek, 1998). Beyond academia and in the general media, images of polluted villages choked by sulphur emissions from neighbouring power plants and billowing factory chimneys bore witness to over 40 years of communist-style industrialisation. From the aluminium plants of *Ziar nad Hronom* in Slovakia, to the polluted towns of northern Bohemia in the Czech Republic, the ecological cost of communist industrialisation in Czechoslovakia appeared great (Albrecht, 1987).

Whereas West European states had restructured their economies away from heavy industry in favour of information-based technology, and by the late 1980s had transferred a substantial amount of manufacturing to the developing world, the centrally planned economies were unable to make such a shift largely, though not entirely, because western capitalist states were in control of the required technology and innovation and were able to restrict access to the Warsaw Pact countries. The East European states were thus forced to retain their vast, antiquated industrial plants and energy-intensive production methods (Dienes, 1974).

In Czechoslovakia, as in Poland and East Germany, the main environmental problem of the communist era was air pollution and sulphur dioxide emissions in particular. Various studies conducted in the early 1990s suggested that the situation regarding air pollution was at crisis point, with figures on sulphur dioxide emissions suggesting that the country was the most seriously polluted in Europe (Slocock, 1992: 32). Such high concentrations of sulphur dioxide were basically derived from industrial production and, to a lesser extent, domestic consumption. Heavily subsidised energy, inefficient production and reliance on brown coal, or lignite, with a low calorific value constituted a disastrous combination that exacerbated levels of ambient air pollution. Various statistics are available that endorse the link between energy-intensive industrial production and air pollution. For example, it was claimed that the ten largest brown coal power stations accounted for over a third of SO_2 emissions. Other figures suggested that 87 per cent of total SO_2 emissions and 76 per cent of NO_x emissions were derived from 2500 major industrial installations (Slocock, 1992).

However, the problem was not simply the quantity of sulphur dioxide that was produced (though considering the size of the country this was substantial), but the absence of adequate filters and other 'clean air' strategies to mediate the social and physical impact of such emissions. While most industrial plants were fitted with electrostatic dust filters, most of these were fitted in the mid-1970s and were no longer operating effectively. Most factories and power stations had no capacity for desulphurisation of flue gases. By the mid-1980s, Czechoslovak citizens were being exposed to an estimated 3 million tonnes of sulphur dioxide per annum, a substantial proportion of which was coming from neighbouring Poland (Russell, 1990: 8–9). Though this was roughly equal to amounts produced in the UK, measures taken in Britain during the 1950s and 1960s to improve air quality, plus the different geographic context, meant that the impact on human health and the visibility of such pollution was far less.

The social, economic and political impact of such high concentrations of sulphur dioxide in Czechoslovakia became increasingly serious for the regime. The main issue became, towards the late 1980s at least, the effects on human health. The increase in respiratory diseases amongst children and adults in densely populated industrial areas aroused considerable concern (as discussed in Chapter 3). There was also the economic impact of illness-related absenteeism, infant mortality, reduced life expectancy and increased medical expenditure. Emissions also had a negative effect on animal health, the built environment (damage to historic buildings), forests and agriculture in general. The exact costs of pollution relating to all of these remain anecdotal as the communist authorities, largely for political reasons, did not gather or make available scientific documentation of this kind. What is available was largely

gathered by western organisations and academics. Studies and surveys conducted in the late 1980s estimated that between 50 and 60 per cent of forests in Czechoslovakia were dying or severely damaged (ibid.: 12). Rates of respiratory illness amongst adults and children in north Bohemian towns were estimated to be between two and 12 times higher than in less industrially developed areas of the country (IUCN, 1990: 40).

High levels of other ambient pollutants also posed a threat, including nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, ammonia, fluorine, chlorine, volatile hydrocarbons, phenol, hydrogen sulphide, arsenic and lead aerosols. Most of these originated from industrial production, though nitrogen oxide emissions also came from cars, as did lead emissions.

The other major issue by the end of the communist period was water pollution. The problems largely stemmed from poor regulation and inadequate technology, and by the late 1980s the quality of Czech water was deteriorating. The proportion of water deemed unfit for human consumption rose from 47 per cent in 1970 to nearly 60 per cent in 1989 (ibid.: 56). In Czechoslovakia water supplies were polluted by the excessive use of fertilisers in agriculture as well as by emissions from coalmines and other industrial sources. Water pollution was obviously a major health issue. A survey conducted in 1984 and leaked to environmentalists found that only 50 per cent of all tap water in the Bohemia consistently met health standards.[4]

Soil pollution and, post Chernobyl, the issue of nuclear safety and waste were additional environmental issues of public concern by the end of the communist era. However, generally speaking, it was air pollution that was singled out as the key issue and concern. This was due largely to its blatant visibility (though stagnant rivers and dying forests were hard for the regime to conceal) but also to the fact that it was seen as the direct consequence of poor economic management, underinvestment and excessive production of heavy industrial goods, a large proportion of which were for export to other Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) states, or were produced for Soviet military needs.

THE CZECH ENVIRONMENT SINCE 1990: A DECADE OF ABATEMENT?

The importance of placing any assessment of environmental protection in the context of broader political, economic and social processes is immediately apparent with regard to trends in air and water pollution and waste disposal over the past decade.

Whilst political reforms (democratic political process, more open policy process, independent environmental associations, freedom of information,

liberalisation of the media) have played a part in ameliorating the environmental devastation of the late 1980s, much of the improvement in air and water pollution can be attributed to the decline in industrial and manufacturing production rather than investment in conservation measures, or the successful implementation of progressive legislation. Some quite extensive new environmental legislation has been introduced, but, as discussed in Chapter 3, its development was stalled during the mid-1990s and implementation has been slow. Indeed, what this study of the environmental movement during the 1990s will demonstrate is that, whilst there exists a plethora of quite diverse environmental organisations that in many respects function in the same way as their western counterparts, political access was heavily restricted throughout the 1992–7 period and it is only recently that EMOs have been involved within the reinvigorated policy process. In a climate of economic austerity it is perhaps unsurprising that there has not been a major investment in environmentally sustainable technologies and alternative energy sources. In some cases foreign direct investment has brought cleaner production, but generally the older polluting industries remain under state ownership.

The case of air pollution illustrates the impact of industrial decline on pollution trends. Though emission levels of sulphur dioxide remain higher than the OECD average,[5] the decline in the country's heavy industrial output (largely as a consequence of the opening up of the Czech Republic to the global economy and the severing of economic ties with the former USSR) has reduced emissions by approximately 50 per cent, and of particulate matter by approximately 71 per cent (see Table 1). The bulk of emissions during the communist period emanated from brown coal-powered energy plants and heavy industrial production. The decline in heavy industrial manufacturing had an almost immediate impact on levels of sulphur dioxide emissions. However, it ought to be noted that the 25 per cent decrease in emissions of sulphur dioxide between 1990 and 1993 was less than the corresponding 33 per cent decrease in industrial production for the same period (Fagin and Jehlička, 1998: 116; Fagin, 2001). This dispels notions that the reduction has been caused by increased energy efficiency or the introduction of new, cleaner technologies. Indeed, pollution per unit of industrial output remains high and may even have worsened. It also implies that such a reduction is potentially temporary and the trend may be reversed as economic growth increases, as is predicted. Energy consumption per unit of production in the Czech Republic remains significantly higher than the EU average.

The environmental dividend from economic restructuring must also be offset against the deleterious impact on the environment of the growth in consumerism and, in particular, increased car ownership. The number of cars, including vans, in the Czech Republic increased by over 30 per cent to nearly

1 million between 1991 and 1997 (MŽP ČR, 1997a: 34; Moldan and Klarer, 1997: 118). Though aggregate data suggest a significant overall decline in emissions of nitrogen oxides from 920 000 tonnes per annum in 1989 to 432 000 tonnes per annum in 1996 (MŽP ČR, 1997a: 8), this conceals the true extent of the problem. Levels of nitrogen oxides in urban areas such as Prague, where the increase in car ownership and use is most acute, actually increased between 1991 and 1995, and remain significantly higher than the level for 1989 (MŽP ČR, 1997b: 17). The reduction in annual average emission levels for nitrogen oxide can be explained by the regulation of stationary sources and has occurred largely as a result of industrial decline during the early 1990s. Also aggregate data for nitrogen oxides emissions (see Table 1) do not distinguish between stationary sources and mobile sources and, thus, the true extent of the increase in emissions from cars is hidden. Indeed, the impact of the increase in private transport on ambient air quality is perhaps the most serious environmental problem facing the Czech Republic today. The long-term forecast issued by the Ministry of Environment is that there will be a gradual increase in the frequency of occurrence of above-limit concentrations of ozone at ground level and a continued rise in levels of nitrogen oxides despite the increased use of catalytic converters and obligatory vehicle emission tests (MŽP ČR, 1997b: 15).

Emission trends for carbon dioxide (Table 1) tell a similar story. Though there has been an *overall* reduction in emissions since 1990, it is interesting to note that the level for 1996, 886 000 tonnes per annum, was similar to the level for 1985, 889 000 tonnes. There was in fact an increase in emissions in 1991, 1994 and 1996 (MŽP ČR, 1997b: 8). The data suggest that there is by no means a significant declining trend with regard to carbon dioxide emissions. With regard to the data on nitrogen oxides, the decrease in emissions is largely a consequence of climatic conditions and industrial decline rather than the

Table 1 Trends in emissions of principal air pollutants, 1990–96 (kt.p.a.)

Year	SO_2	NO_x	CO	Solid substances
1990	1876	742	1055	631
1991	1776	725	1102	592
1992	1538	698	1045	501
1993	1419	574	967	441
1994	1278	434	1026	355
1995	1091	412	874	201
1996	946	432	886	179

Source: MŽP ČR (1997a, 1997b).

success of regulatory measures or the introduction of new technologies and strategies since 1989. The case of water pollution reinforces the view that where improvement has occurred this is due to changes in industrial and agricultural production (as a result of marketisation and the opening up of these sectors to foreign competition) rather than substantial investment or policy implementation. Whilst overall surface water pollution decreased significantly between 1989 and 1994[6] and the proportion of water discharged into public sewers that receives some form of treatment has increased by 16 per cent since 1990 and now equals 90 per cent of the total discharged, such apparent improvements are offset by the fact that despite a reduction in the use of manufactured fertilisers, there was not a parallel decrease in concentrations of nitrates and phosphates, and over a third of water flows remained severely polluted (Moldan and Klarer, 1997: 112). This is particularly alarming in the sense that it suggests that the ecological benefits of industrial decline must not be permitted to obscure the fact that levels of pollution per unit of production remain high or may even have increased (Moldan, 1993; Fagin and Jehlička, 1998: 116; Fagin, 2001).

Of further concern is the fact that, despite an overall reduction in consumption and waste water discharge, evidence suggests that the quality of drinking water has in fact worsened in some regions since 1990 (Moldan and Klarer, 1997: 112). The water system of the Czech Republic requires significant improvement: over 70 per cent of the country's drinking water comes from surface sources and there has been no substantial improvement in the quality of ground water during the past decade (MŽP ČR, 1997b: 6–8). Most of the waste water treatment facilities still lack the technology to filter nitrogen and phosphorus. Nearly a fifth of the population continue to rely on individual wells for their water supply, the water from which in most cases contains unacceptably high levels of nitrates and bacterial pollution (ibid.: 9). In sum, any improvement in levels of organic pollution, petroleum products and apparent acidity/alkalinity can be attributed to a combination of industrial decline (particularly sugar mills), a reduction in the use of agricultural fertilisers, and greater precipitation in recent years rather than an improvement in water treatment.

However, it is with regard to the issue of waste management that the impact on the environment of marketisation is most blatantly illustrated. Whilst the successful regulation of hazardous waste emissions from inefficient state enterprises must be acknowledged (tighter regulations and steeper fines have been gradually implemented), the reduction in industrial waste has occurred largely as a result of recession within the heavy industrial manufacturing sector. Moreover, the reduction has been somewhat overshadowed by the substantial increase in municipal waste emanating from public sources and from private households. Despite its various inefficiencies, the supply-led

command economy did not generate the amounts of consumer waste seen in western market economies; there tended to be less packaging and the shortage of consumer goods was a deterrent to the unnecessary disposal of items. However, increased consumerism since 1990 has led to a sustained rise in all kinds of waste. Since 1995 the amount of total waste produced in the country has increased considerably. In 1995, 74 million tonnes of waste were produced (according to OECD methodology) compared with 93 million tonnes the following year, representing an increase of nearly 25 per cent (MŽP ČR, 1997b: 9). This trend has subsequently been maintained. It should be noted that the steep rise between 1995 and 1996 could be explained in part by the introduction of more stringent regulation and registration of waste (ibid.: 55). The bulk of all waste, 56 per cent of which is hazardous waste, is still disposed of in landfills. Though the total number of landfills in operation has declined quite dramatically since 1991, from 10 000 to 380 in 1996 (ibid.), the estimated 7000 waste dumps and landfills, including those no longer used, pose a serious environmental hazard in terms of water and soil contamination (Moldan and Klarer, 1997: 112).

Throughout much of the 1990s, studies of the environment in the Czech Republic, or indeed anywhere in Central and Eastern Europe, focused exclusively on the legacy of communism. The environmental impact of excessive industrialisation, inefficiency, lack of investment and a host of other deleterious aspects of communist economic management and political organisation were seen as the logical starting point for understanding environmental issues and politics. However, nearly a generation since the collapse of communism in 1989, the legacies of neoliberal capitalism on the Czech environment are now the logical and realistic starting point of any analysis of environmental politics. Though the communist legacy continues to exert a profound impact, the new political elite had sufficient time to deal with the environmental issues and put into effect policies and regulatory structures. Moreover, the environmental impact of profound economic restructuring has been substantial and has given rise to a whole series of new issues.

It is with such considerations in mind – the nature of current environmental problems, the extent to which issues and problems have altered since 1989, and the inextricable link between environmental politics and neoliberal economic reform and political democratisation – that this study of the Czech environmental movement is framed.

NOTES

1. See in particular studies by Kriesi *et a*l. (1995).
2. An internal document published by Greenpeace in 2000 outlined the need to rationalise resources within the international organisation on the basis that some local chapters lacked

the capacity to participate in global campaigns.

3. When referring to the pre-1989 period, this is the environment of Czechoslovakia, largely because studies and information related to the federation as a whole. Thereafter my focus is on the environment of what became the Czech Republic in 1993.
4. The survey was conducted by scientists within the Biological section of the Czech Academy of Sciences. They were commissioned to conduct various research into the state of the environment during the mid-1980s, much of which ended up being leaked to activists and foreign journalists.
5. Emissions of sulphur dioxide in the Czech Republic in 1996 equalled 92kg/person p.a., compared with the European OECD average of 36kg/person p.a. (MŽP ČR, 1997b: 8).
6. In this five-year period BOD_5 was reduced by 55 per cent, insoluble substances by 43 per cent, crude oil substances by 64 per cent, inorganic salts by 25 per cent, acidity/alkalinity by 72% per cent (Moldan and Klarer, 1997: 112).

1. Defining an environmental movement

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this chapter is to identify what is understood by the term 'environmental movement', and then to distinguish the more specific concept of an 'environmental movement organisation'. What are required here are workable definitions that are both sufficiently inclusive and descriptive to convey the types of mobilisations likely to be encountered in the Czech Republic since 1990. Definitions derived from western experience of over three decades of environmental protest are an obvious starting point, though any definition must be suitably broad to encompass different constellations of protest and specific organisational forms reflecting the recent political history of the Czech Republic.

Amongst those studying environmental protest, and indeed social movements generally, there is considerable discussion regarding terminology: mobilisations surrounding the environmental issue are described by a variety of ill-defined and often overlapping terms, the meanings of which alter over time as new forms of protest emerge to challenge contemporary environmental problems. Amongst academics much discussion centres on the types of aggregations or mobilisations to be included or excluded within the concept of an environmental movement, and the extent to which different organisational forms can and should be distinguished. Thus arriving at a suitable definition of an environmental movement, able to convey the dynamics and diversity of a relatively young and still evolving movement, is no easy task.

SOME CONCEPTUAL CONFUSION

Various contributions to what might be termed the 'environmental politics' literature have attempted to clarify the complex forms of activism that typify environmental movements, and to categorise aggregations in a way that facilitates some kind of systematic enquiry (Doyle and McEachern, 2001; Doherty, 2002; Rootes, 1999).

Broadly speaking, two things need to be disentangled. First, there is the uncertainty surrounding the use of the concepts *green movement* and *environmental movement*. Some commentators have used the distinction in an

attempt to separate people who recycle bottles and sign petitions from those who are actively engaged in mounting a challenge to the political, social and economic order. In this sense 'green' is used rather pejoratively and is often associated with consumerist campaigns to promote 'green' products. This study, in line with the general academic literature on environmental movements, draws a distinction between the two, and focuses on the political movement and those involved in campaigns rather than individuals and associations who do not actively challenge the political order.

Dobson (2000) employs the green/environmental distinction in a different way in order to separate the element intent on tackling environmental problems from within existing liberal capitalist political and economic structures ('environmental'), from those intent on far-reaching systemic, cultural and behavioural change ('green'). This effectively echoes the fundi–realo distinction found elsewhere in the literature (Young, 1992; Eckersley, 1992), but, instead of seeing them as part of the same movement, argues that the two should be considered as separate on the basis of the challenge to power. The issue of whether to include institutionalised realists within the same social movement as radical activists, invariably operating in submerged networks akin to what Melucci (1985, 1988) and others describe as *New Social Movements*, is a complex debate that will be discussed in more detail below, but is essentially a theoretical discussion far beyond the remit of this enquiry.

Whilst fully endorsing the view that structural changes have given rise to fundamentally different protest opportunities and forms of activism, this study favours incorporating both elements under the banner of a single *environmental* movement. The distinction, whether termed fundi/realo, old/new or green/environmental, represents ideal types between which a diversity of organisations and activists hover and fluctuate. Such volatility over time and space is arguably the defining feature of any social movement (Doherty, 2002).

Whilst defining the more radical and amorphous elements of the movement is complex, the second area of confusion concerns the multiplicity of terms employed to describe the more formal aggregations that populate environmental movements. To an extent this confusion is semantic as well as conceptual. Terms such as 'pressure group' or 'interest group', that were employed to describe institutionalised environmental organisations a generation ago, are now deemed inadequate insofar as they fail to convey the sense of identity and ideological conviction that is critical in understanding the dynamics of an environmental movement. Such terms also imply a focus on the national political or policy process, which may in fact be only a fractional component of an EMO's strategic agenda. The diverse organisational forms employing a plurality of strategies and repertoires of action that comprise

contemporary environmental movements require a less circumscribed term than 'interest' or 'pressure' group. 'Environmental movement organisation' (EMO) is thus a more inclusive term that does not conjure up images of particular strategies and courses of action.

TOWARDS A DEFINITION

Perhaps the key to resolving some of the uncertainty lies in first arriving at a coherent understanding of a social movement. Within this study, the term is used to denote the all-embracing orbit from within which various aggregations and networks emerge and operate. At a very basic level, social movements refer to the constellation of individuals around a particular issue of political significance, and the articulation of grievances or difference within the political public sphere. The defining feature of a social movement is a level of ideological diversity with regard to the issue at stake, though with all those involved accepting a broadly defined objective, such as greater environmental protection or gender equality. It is such ideological expanse and diversity that distinguishes a social movement from the individual movement organisations that most visibly represent particular aims of the movement within both the political and public spheres at a specific time. What is vital to an understanding of social movements is to recognise that movements are greater than their composite organisations and aggregations. Whilst specific aims of a movement can be represented by individual organisations or a constellation of activist aggregations, the movement itself is always a larger phenomenon, part visible, part submerged, never fully institutionalised (Della Porta and Diani, 1999: 13–20). Social movements cannot be reduced to their constituent organisations because they are likely to represent only part of the movement.

However, such a definition is still too vague and broad to form the basis of an empirical study intending to chart the evolution of a social movement. Doherty (2002: 7) suggests the following four defining features of a social movement: it was a shared common identity; it acts, at least partly, outside political institutions, using protest as one of its forms of action; it is characterised by uninstitutionalised networks of interaction; it rejects, or challenges, dominant forms of power.

On the strength of such a pluralistic definition, it becomes far easier to locate the parameters of an environmental movement, to include and exclude various actors, and to identify the activities and scope of the movement. The four criteria are, of course, ideal types and the degree to which a particular movement encompasses all elements at any one time will vary. Specific organisations within the movement will also display differing degrees of commitment to the four ideals, though in all cases there should be some

evidence of shared identity, a willingness to engage in and support protest, to be part of a wider network and to challenge the dominant power structure and its values.

Following Doherty's conceptualisation of a social movement, it follows that the term *environmental movement* refers to 'broad networks of people and organisations engaged in collective action in the pursuit of environmental benefit' (Rootes, 1999: 2). This study employs the concept to refer to the overarching form within which a variety of activities relating broadly to environmental protection occur. The aggregations that emerge within the movement will be both ideologically and organisationally diverse; they will pursue very different campaigns and have access to a variety of resources. Activists will perhaps be involved or have links with more than one organisation and may be active in other social movement campaigns. Links between groups and organisations will be fluid and informal. At a macro level the movement will resemble a network of disparate individuals and aggregations loosely united on the common theme of environmental protection. The strength of certain factions and the predominance of particular campaigns and ideologies will alter over time. In this sense the dominant characteristics of an environmental movement are flux and diversity. The notion of an environmental movement as an overarching form spanning a variety of organisational types, reflecting diversity and an eclectic mix of ideals and strategies, is a conceptualisation employed, apparently, by activists themselves (ibid.).

Narrow definitions that reduce the concept to the realm of formal politics, and adopt a purely pluralist–interest group perspective, or that define an environmental movement entirely in terms of its links with the state will fail to capture the essence of the movement, and in so doing will not convey its true strength and capacity (Doyle and McEachern, 2001: 61). Recent work on new social movements and globalisation (Welsh, 2000) points to the limitations of measuring the influence of environmental movements solely in terms of formalised organisations and their involvement in institutionalised politics. Traditional analytical approaches are often incapable of conveying the dynamics of modern protest, particularly with regard to submerged and dispersed networks of activists using Internet linkage to stage effective campaigns and mobilise activists across national boundaries. Including the less visible and non-institutionalised elements of an environmental movement within a conceptual framework is vital insofar as the dynamic of modern movements appears to rest on the subtle interaction between formal and informal components. Such linkage is thus as important in understanding the operation and function of environmental movements as the interface between movement activists and political or state institutions (Pakulski, 1991: 32). The capacity of an environmental movement to challenge concurrently policy at

the local, national and, increasingly, at the global level, to spawn conservation programmes as well as political lobbyists rests heavily on its eclectic nature and diverse overlapping internal networks (Welsh, 2000).

IDENTIFYING ORGANISATIONAL FORMS WITHIN ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS

Notwithstanding the political and cultural importance of submerged networks and amorphous protest activities, the most visible expression of any social movement, and indeed the focus of most empirical studies, is the composite formal organisations, referred to in this study as environmental movement organisations (EMOs). At this stage of the study, it is necessary to identify the types of organisations that are likely to be found within the Czech environmental movement. Such modelling is based on the experience of western environmental movements. In light of Doherty's criteria for what constitutes a social movement, the diversity of organisational forms is perhaps best portrayed as a series of intercepting and overlapping dichotomies:

- elite versus grass-roots level,
- institutionalised versus submerged,
- conservation versus political ecology,
- radical activism versus conventional protest,
- professional versus participatory,
- national (or local) versus supranational (or global).

Recent attempts within the western theoretical literature to capture the diversity of social movement organisations and to construct a typology of associational forms that reflects contemporary developments in western environmental movements can be used as a basis for analysing Czech environmental movement organisations. In terms of identifying different types of movement organisation according to strategic choice and organisational form, Diani and Donati's (1999) theoretical typology of western social movement organisations captures the transformation and the hybridised nature of their strategies and organisational logic that has resulted in the emergence of a breadth of organisational forms. Diani and Donati's model challenges the rigid dichotomy between professionalism versus grass-roots action that divided earlier research (Lowe and Goyder, 1983; Jordan and Maloney, 1997) and offers a typology of activism that captures the dynamics and pragmatism of late capitalist protest.

Though it is one of the main arguments of this book that the specific location of CEE states within the global economy will condition the capacity

of EMOs compared to west European organisations, there is some logic in applying western-derived typologies to the Czech case. It has to be acknowledged that Czech EMOs confront not dissimilar issues to their western counterparts. In both cases the power and regulatory function of the nation state has been transformed by the dynamics of global capitalism. Whether from Group of Seven (G7) states or new democracies, EMOs are enmeshed within a similar power structure comprising transnational corporations (TNCs), multilateral agencies, a conglomerate of powerful states and a variety of competing societal interests. Green activists are forced to adapt their strategies in response to shifting loci of power and to an altered agenda of environmental threats. Both eastern and western EMOs must adapt to changes in the media and to the political importance of cultural symbols if they are to challenge successfully the exercise of power. Of course the relative power of particular national EMOs will differ, but the global canonisation of consumerism and the commodification of natural resources are issues with which all EMOs must deal, and which require them to 'invade the hegemony' of late capitalism, parody its values and obtain resources and knowledge (Starr, 2000). It is quite likely that the similarity in contexts will give rise to not dissimilar organisational types. This is not to suggest, as many predicted in the early 1990s, that EMOs in CEE have 'caught up' with their western counter-parts. Rather, they have in a sense by-passed critical stages of development and now embrace similar political, social and economic contexts. Only in this sense is globalisation the great leveller.

It is on the basis of such logic that Diani and Donati's typology of western EMOs is seen as being potentially applicable to EMOs in the Czech Republic. The model identifies four broad organisational types based on two dichotomies: professionalism versus participation, and disruptive versus conventional forms of activism:

- *public interest lobby* – professional staff, weak participatory inclinations and emphasis on lobbying;
- *participatory protest organisation* – participatory emphasis, grass roots subcultural structures and a strong inclination to disruptive protest;
- *professional protest organisation* – professional activism and the mobilisation of financial resources, use of both conventional and confrontational tactics;
- *participatory pressure group* – members involved in organisation, i.e. not just passive, emphasis on conventional tactics rather than protest.

It is argued that organisational forms are determined by the mix of strategies selected by particular organisations. Decisions are made regarding the mobilisation of time (smaller core of committed activists) and/or resources

(more emphasis on passive mass membership), depending on the specific campaign and issues (Diani and Donati, 1999: 16–17).

Diani and Donati's typology is potentially useful in helping to identify different strategies and organisational forms amongst Czech EMOs. Yet, despite its overall usefulness, in order to understand the political function of EMOs in a young democracy and the particular constraints at work, a broader range of explanatory factors is required, including consideration of the extent to which the specific political transition process and the context in which resources have been made available to Czech EMOs have an impact upon organisational logic. This will be the focus of the following chapter, in which the specific factors and contexts that may have given rise to particular strategies and organisational forms in the Czech case will be considered.

At this stage it is important to acknowledge that, whilst typologies and categorisation of organisations are obviously valuable, there is a danger that organisations operating in a different political, social and economic context could be classified rather superficially on the basis of an apparent shift towards professionalism, or in terms of resembling contemporary western organisations. From this, various assumptions could then be made regarding the political role and function of the EMO. As the empirical sections of this book will illustrate, many of the constraints on Czech EMOs are highly particular and relate specifically to the complexities involved in trying to establish civil society in a post-authoritarian state. Even when a trend towards westernisation is clearly discernible, the specific political context as well as dependency on external funding impose a unique developmental constraint that may not be temporary or transitional, but an endemic long-term feature of EMO activity. Causal linkage needs careful qualification and analysis. The dynamics of the 'triple transition' as well as the legacy of authoritarian rule and the events of the late 1980s are likely to mediate and moderate causal factors of organisational behaviour (Fagin, 2001).

GREEN PARTIES

There remains the somewhat thorny issue of whether green political parties ought to be included within the conceptual framework of an environmental movement. After all, such parties are organisational forms that represent environmental interests of varying ideological shades and their activists and members may well be involved in other non-party environmental organisations within civil society. Most, if not all, interpretations of an environmental movement stress overlapping and intersecting networks of activists as a key characteristic.

The problem surrounds the issue of institutionalisation and the extent to

which Green Parties challenge the existing power structure. There is also the fact that Green Parties, unlike EMOs, directly seek political office and have in a sense moved out of civil society. Although, like social democratic parties in Western Europe, Green Parties may have emanated from the grass roots and community action, their operations as political parties elevate them to an entirely different level of activity, which is both publicly governed and bound by constitutional rules (Rootes, 1999: 2). Whilst there is always likely to be an element of social movement activity that is more institutionalised and closer to the political elite than others, EMOs, however mainstream and institutionalised, retain a presence within civil society and operate outside the formal institutions of government and politics. There is a sense that those elements of the movement that move to form a green political party, though they may retain links with EMOs, have taken a step too far and, by virtue of joining the political process, are governed by a different set of priorities.

This is clearly a difficult issue to resolve, and a question beyond the remit of this study. What ought to be recognised, and indeed is of particular relevance to the Czech case, is that an established Green Party with strong links with movement activists as well as enjoying a measure of political influence can be of great benefit to a national environmental movement. That the Czech Green Party remained entirely separate from the environmental movement until very recently has undoubtedly had an impact on the movement's ability to influence the political elite, particularly during the mid-1990s. The Green Party will be considered in this study from the perspective of its changing relations with the movement.

ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS IN WESTERN EUROPE: A DEVELOPMENTAL MODEL

As noted above with regard to organisational typologies, in developing a conceptual understanding of environmental movements and their organisational forms it is largely unavoidable to draw on the experience of west European states, and to use the evolution and development of environmental movements therein as a model for the Czech Republic. Placed in a broader historical perspective, this approach is, in many respects, logical and appropriate in light of the country's pre-communist economic development and the tradition of pluralist and democratic institutions during the First Republic (1918–38). As a variant of industrialisation and modernisation, the communist model led to not dissimilar social processes and issues (of which environmental protection is a good example) to those of western capitalist democracies. This also endorses using the western developmental model as a methodological approach. Furthermore, insofar as

the Czech Republic has, since 1990, experienced a rapid decline in heavy industrial and manufacturing production, and a transformation towards a post-industrial society, microsociological interpretations of the emergence of environmental protest derived from western responses to such change are deemed to be appropriate to the Czech case.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTEST, INDUSTRIALISATION AND GREEN KNOWLEDGE

Some studies of western movements distinguish between conservation-type movements and more radical political ecology or anti-nuclear movements (Doyle and McEachern, 2001: 64–5). Whilst there is certainly validity in this distinction – Scandinavian movements tend to be more conservation-oriented than the anti-nuclear German movement, for example – it is perhaps more appropriate to view national movements as generally evolving over time to counter and challenge various aspects of modernisation. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century environmental organisations tended to be more conservation-oriented in response to the tensions of industrialisation and urbanisation, and threats to the countryside (Garner, 1996: 62). Many of the early movement organisations in England combined an enjoyment and study of the countryside with a mildly expressed concern about the damage to common ground and species.[1] This was largely typical of other national environmental movements at this time. Mid-to-late twentieth-century movements were confronting nuclear power and a more profound political critique of modernisation.

Whilst it is possible to identify specific developmental stages in the evolution of environmental movements in western capitalist democracies, and to distinguish the degree to which specific national movements are more conservationist or political ecology-oriented, a common theme running through each phase, and indeed characterising environmental movements generally across time and space, is the challenge to the hegemonic knowledge discourse and scientific 'rationale' on which industrialised society operates. It is this common denominator that perhaps most accurately characterises the history of environmental protest in west European societies. The critique of energy and other governmental agendas and policies based on scientific 'knowledge' by contemporary environmentalists is merely the latest expression of this underlying attempt to redefine the knowledge base of society and to challenge the control of science by the state in the interests of capital. The current discourse of sustainable development and the attempts of environmentalists to force states to acknowledge the debate surrounding the sustainable use of resources is merely the most recent attempt

to recast the intellectual boundaries and deployment of 'science' (Jamison, 2001).

Both the conservation movements of the earlier twentieth century and the radical environmentalists of the 1960s and 1970s sought to challenge the values and logic of industrial society at its various developmental stages. Present-day environmentalists who challenge consumerism and the endemic commodification of natural resources within late capitalist society remain squarely within this tradition.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTEST AS 'NEW' POLITICS

While identifying continuity between the various stages in the development of environmental movements is helpful in terms of understanding their underlying function as challengers to the hegemonic discourse, the extent to which protest and relations with the state have altered as a result of structural changes – and in particular the changed relationship between capital interests and the state since the late 1970s (Chomsky, 1999) – is, nevertheless, vital in understanding current environmental mobilisations and their specific political role in late capitalist society.

Largely as a result of structural and economic changes within industrial society during the latter half of the twentieth century, the nature of social movement activity and composition is said to have altered (Inglehart, 1990; Offe, 1985). Hierarchic and ideologically rigid labour movements with a linear developmental trajectory from grass roots to elite level representation, have been somewhat eclipsed by what are referred to as 'New Social Movements' (NSMs) (Melucci, 1988).

It is suggested that NSMs represent a change in the content of political participation (Koopmans, 1996: 28) and are distinguishable from earlier, or 'old' social movements on the basis that activists within NSMs are drawn less by structural considerations and transcend class and social strata. Ideology is less unifying and generally the movements are characterised by more fluid modes of participation, organisational structure, strategy and membership. NSMs are also said to reject conventional strategies and approaches that directly challenge the state and the policy elite in favour of activities based within civil society; that is, rather than operating at the elite level like trade unions, they prefer campaigns designed to raise consciousness within communities. Certainly there has been a move away from tightly organised, elitist and hierarchic organisational structures in favour of grass-roots mobilisation and 'do-it yourself' activism (Wall, 1999). Activists within NSMs are less concerned with specific policy and instead address issues of life style and attack cultural norms. In this sense the rise of NSMs has been

explained in terms of post-materialist values and concern for identity and 'quality of life' issues (Inglehart, 1990). The expansion of education and improvements in the standard of living delivered by welfare capitalism in the postwar era shifted the agendas and focus of activists towards non-material rather than material issues. Insofar as activism over the past decades has sought to deconstruct identity and to focus on the personal rather than the formal political arena, the NSM phenomenon has been closely associated with postmodernism.

Many commentators attempting to explain why such altered forms of protest should have occurred point to the changed structure and diffusion of political and economic power within and beyond the nation state. NSMs are seen as a logical response to new forms of bureaucratic and technological control that regulate social life in late capitalism (Kitschelt, 1986: 58). It is argued that hierarchic and elitist movements focusing on the political process and tangible social and economic issues are no longer an appropriate strategic response to a society in which the issues and arenas of contestation, along with the boundaries of power, have dramatically altered (Touraine, 1977).

An alternative interpretation of the emergence of NSMs draws more on changes that have occurred within industrial societies, portraying an environmental consciousness as part of a whole array of 'postmaterialist' issues that become important once basic 'material' needs have been satisfied (Inglehart, 1990). This theoretical discussion is seen as particularly relevant in explaining the rise of environmentalism in Western Europe, as it is, indeed, to CEE states. As to explaining the different strategies and approaches of this type of 'new politics', it is claimed that while environmental politics is primarily the domain of the educated middle classes, the issue, like other quality of life issues, crosses class boundaries. Activists seek to differentiate themselves from earlier class-based social movements.

The NSM literature is valuable in terms of understanding why new forms of protest have emerged (Doherty, 2002), yet considering environmental movements solely from the perspective of NSM theory would fail to provide a suitable theoretical framework for identifying different types of organisational forms and their various protest strategies. Although within all national environmental movements in Western Europe there are aspects of EMO behaviour that can most appropriately be understood in terms of NSM theory (Koopmans, 1996: 43), there remains a substantial proportion of modern environmental activism, mobilisation and campaigning based on conventional strategies that is best understood from the perspective of 'old' movement theories. Interestingly, evidence from west European states suggests not only that 'old' issues (labour relations, material issues) remain prevalent, but that unconventional mobilisations, with which NSMs are supposedly associated, are by no means the dominant forms of protest

(Koopmans, 1996). It would therefore be wrong, when analysing environmental mobilisation in a new democracy, to start from the premise that modes of activism akin to 'new' politics have replaced conventional strategies and issues, or that they have come to dominate arenas of political participation in established democracies. While new social movement theory can explain the emergence of environmental activism, it cannot be used to fully understand strategies, behaviour and the internal organisations of movement organisations. In establishing an appropriate theoretical framework for assessing environmental movements in a new democracy such as the Czech Republic, both 'new' and 'old' notions of social movement activity are required. Far from being expunged as strategies in old established capitalist democracies, conventional lobbying, hierarchic internal structures and an elite-level policy focus remain dominant features alongside radical grass-roots politics and alternative life style campaigns pursued by submerged 'new' networks.

FROM RADICALISM TO INSTITUTIONALISATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTEST

One of the most prominent debates surrounding environmental mobilisation in western politics concerns the extent to which environmental movements appear to have become institutionalised and to have lost their radical ideologies and political dimension (Rucht, 1999). While it is an over-simplification to suggest that radicalism has disappeared from western movements, there has certainly occurred an institutionalisation of environmental movements. The politics of environmental protest, which in the 1970s involved radical patterns of protest and non-institutionalised action, have become far more mainstream and part of the infrastructure of the institutionalised political process. Today, even when unconventional strategies are employed, evidence suggests that states are more inclined to tolerate such behaviour and adapt to it (Koopmans, 1996). Unconventional protest has therefore not disappeared, but been institutionalised, and the 'new' issues have become prevalent to a lesser or greater degree, depending, according to Koopmans, on the particular political process and the opportunity structure within the individual state (ibid.: 44–5).

In light of the growth in environmental direct action across Western Europe during the 1990s, it seems fair to conclude that both the institutionalisation of organisations and the continual emergence of radical protest (which may or may not become coopted over time) remain dominant characteristics of western environmental movements. That institutionalised EMOs and radical protest exist concurrently and remain as dominant features of western

movements can also be understood in terms of a protest cycle in which a new generation of more radical protest emerges as a reaction to the institutionalisation of EMOs (Tarrow, 1994). With regard to analysing the Czech movement, it is important to acknowledge this developmental trend, but also to recognise that the evolution of national movements capable of retaining an element of radicalism while also becoming part of the political process depends heavily on the nature of the specific political system. How the political process mitigates the development and evolution of particular national movement organisations will be considered in the next chapter.

PROBLEMS OF CLASSIFICATION

The dangers of operating within too rigid a conceptual framework when analysing the Czech environmental movement have already been discussed. Insofar as the objective of this study is to discover the peculiarities and distinctiveness of the Czech movement, classification models derived from western experience, though of theoretical value, must not be permitted to obscure critical differences and discontinuities.

A more general methodological point concerns the characterisation of any environmental movement according to the most visible and blatant expressions of its activities. The conclusion of the previous section, that western movements include a diversity of organisations employing a variety of strategies, must caution against trying to characterise the Czech movement rather superficially on the basis of apparent shifts and the most visible strategies of a cluster of EMOs.

There is a danger that generalised depictions of a movement can obscure peripheral organisations that buck the mainstream trend. A national movement that is more conservationist than political ecology or 'New Left' may still contain radical political elements that are unwilling to be coopted within formal structures and the policy process. Over time, and as a consequence of particular events and decisions, these elements may come to dominate the movement and, by so doing, change its character entirely. The British movement provides a good example of the way in which the character and composition of movements can change over time. The historic dominance of conservationists (Garner, 1996: 62–4) and the institutionalised nature of environmental groups in the UK have, since the mid-1990s, been somewhat eclipsed by the rise of eco-anarchist and generally more politicised organisations in the form of anti-road protesters and the campaign against the expansion of Manchester airport (Wall, 1999; Doherty, 2002).

Classifying a particular environmental movement according to the activities (interaction with the state, role within the policy process) of its most visible

and prominent organisations can lead to a narrow focus on elite-level or visible groups (organisations focused on by the media) at the expense of small, amorphous aggregations enmeshed within communities away from the political and media limelight. This is often manifest within methodological approaches and reinforced by ideological or academic preconceptions (for example, the desire of political scientists to focus on elite level activists and the policy process, compared with social anthropologists who, equally erroneously, often ignore the formal political arena in their research).

In analysing a movement it is important not to be too bound by dichotomous classifications (that a movement has to be either radical or moderate, conservationist or political ecology, coopted or grass roots) and to start from the premise that particular movements will contain elements of all to varying degrees and that the balance between certain ideological strands will alter over time. It is also vital to recognise that such diversity is the key to the longevity and adaptability of the movement. While it may be appropriate to classify a national movement as *predominantly* conservationist, or radical grass roots, there is a danger that this depiction will become a straitjacket and even a self-fulfilling prophecy. Indeed, as already noted above, recent developments in west European environmental movements suggest that, while the dominant (and well-documented) trend is for radical organisations to become increasingly more conventional and professional, in recent years groups that emerged at the elite level have combined more radical tactics with elite-level strategies and campaigns of mass mobilisation (Rootes, 1999: 3). Any classification must not prohibit a recognition that movements alter significantly over time as new elements become prominent and challenge the 'old guard' that have dominated the movement and given it its character.

Failure to acknowledge fully this dimension of the evolution of environmental movements, or a reluctance to accept that diversity is an endemic feature of all social movements, can lead to claims that various networks, clusters of organisations and activists represent a distinct and separate movement. Claims are then made about there being different and separate environmental movements within specific west European states, based either on conservation or political ecology/anti-nuclear elements. The organic nature of social movements (the extent to which they naturally change and evolve over time) is being misrepresented as a hiatus rather than as a sign of a movement evolving and adapting to changing political and economic conditions. The polarised strands may appear to represent very different ideological positions and approaches, but future alliances, networks and political accommodations cannot be predicted. Nor can it be assumed which 'branch' of the movement will survive and carry the gauntlet beyond the current generation. The movement is in this sense greater than the sum of its parts and no faction or organisational form can represent its wider interests

(Diani and Donati, 1989; Della Porta and Diani, 1999: 141). Indeed, studies have suggested that the public, and movement activists, make little distinction and tend to view the movement as an eclectic whole (Rohrschneider, 1990: 251–66). This attitude is also to be found within the Czech movement, in which young activists will lend their support widely to an array of networks and organisations depending on the campaign issue.

CONCLUSION

This chapter set out to provide a definition of an environmental movement and to consider types of composite organisations that represent the visible and institutional expression of the movement. It was deemed necessary to begin by defining a social movement as the foundation for defining an environmental movement. A definition based on four criteria was used. The strength of this model lies in its ability to identify and incorporate a diversity of aggregations within the broad framework of a social movement, largely because it is constructed around a plurality of criteria rather than narrowly based on ideology, specific strategies or attitude to the political elite. The activities that fall under the banner of a social movement must have a common identity, must include a non-institutionalised element enmeshed within civil society, must oppose the dominant power structure and must operate outside the formal political institutions.

Armed with such a definition, the more specific concept of an *environmental movement* was considered. In order to identify the parameters of the movement – what is to be included and what is not – a case was made for drawing on the developmental model of western environmental movements. This helped identify various distinctions and trends and offered a theoretical and conceptual basis for understanding the diversity of aggregations that fall under the broad category of an environmental movement. What became evident was, first, that dichotomous approaches that pitch radicalism against conventional strategies and 'new' politics against old should not be permitted to obscure or transform the criteria for being included within the framework of an environmental movement. Second, the development and nature of environmental movements in western Europe were more complex than perhaps envisaged: radicalism and institutionalised conventional protest operate side by side.

The discussion established the key argument of this study: that, although western-inspired conceptual frameworks and theoretical approaches provide a basis for analysis, the specific context of establishing a social movement in a new democracy must not be eclipsed. Variables that appear to explain organisational forms and strategic choices in west European democracies must

be viewed as contingent and dependent when explaining organisational activity in a new democracy such as the Czech Republic. The specific impact of the political context on the Czech environmental movement will be considered more fully in the following chapter.

NOTES

1. Examples of such organisations in Britain include the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society (1865) the Ramblers Association (1935) and the Council for the Protection of Rural England (1926).

2. Different approaches to the study of environmental movements

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter established a suitably inclusive definition of an environmental movement and identified types of movement organisations. The task now is to move beyond definitions to construct a theoretical framework for exploring the behaviour of Czech EMOs and to identify variables shaping strategic choices and organisational logic. The general theoretical literature that has evolved to explain SMO (social movement organisation) behaviour in western capitalist democracies is the logical starting point. The more specific theoretical discourse on environmental movements and organizations and the factors shaping their activities is almost entirely drawn from the experience of established western democracies over the past 30 years (Kriesi, 1995). An extensive comparative literature exists charting the evolution of environmental movements, their relations with the state, their strategic choices and their ideological values. There is also a substantial literature focusing on the impact of resources on western organisations (McCarthy and Zald, 1977).

A first important consideration is the extent to which such western-inspired theories of social movement behaviour are relevant to the new democracies of CEE. The answer depends largely on how one views the economic, political and social legacy of Soviet-style communism, and whether one is prepared to accept that the system was a variant (rather than antithesis) of modernisation that gave rise to similar environmental problems and social processes. If one accepts the argument that, although the legacy of Soviet-style communism in Eastern Europe undeniably resulted, through its emphasis on heavy industrialisation and quantitative production ethic, in a specific set of environmental problems and issues (Fagin, 1994; Waller and Millard, 1992), the historic structural processes that led to the emergence of environmental movements in Western Europe were certainly present in the pre-communist histories of these states and did, in the Czech case at least, lead to the emergence of similar kinds of conservation movements and organisations during the early decades of the twentieth century (Tickle and Vavroušek, 1998; Jamison, 2001: 60–61).

In other words, it is possible to view the environmental movements in CEE and Western Europe today as sharing a similar historic trajectory. Certainly with regard to the Czech Republic, modernisation and industrialisation preceded the communist takeover (Krejčí, 1972; Suda, 1969; Paul, 1979, 1981). Sovietisation of these states after 1945 is best understood as altering and manipulating a process of modernisation that had begun during the Hapsburg era and the inter-war years (Schöpflin, 1993). Despite differences in economic organisation and political institutions, communist and capitalist states shared a similar logic of industrial expansion and growth. Modernisation, whether in communist or capitalist guise, gave rise to not dissimilar structural contexts and stratification, and led to environmental degradation and ultimately protests. Distinct political institutions and approaches to dealing with societal demands meant that protest manifested itself differently in the two system types. Nevertheless, the impetus for environmental protest, the issues and ideological challenge were similar by products. From such a perspective using a theoretical framework derived from western experience is of value in understanding the emergence of environmental protest in Czechoslovakia during the communist era, and the subsequent development of environmental activism in the Czech Republic since 1990.

However, it will be argued below that applying a western theoretical perspective to the Czech movement is problematic. A key theme of this book, and indeed one of the main conclusions drawn from the empirical research, is that the development, function and dynamics of the Czech movement reflect the specific context of the country's transition from authoritarian rule to political democracy. The somewhat simplistic assumptions of the early 1990s that the former communist states were catching up with Western Europe and destined to follow a western developmental path (Habermas, 1990) have subsequently been replaced by a more profound theorisation which recognises that these states are in fact on a distinct course through post-industrial economic transformation, or are in fact leapfrogging over a critical stage in the development of market–state–society relations (Pickles and Smith, 1999).

This has implications for all aspects of political, social and economic change. While the Czech environmental movement may appear to resemble its western counterparts in terms of strategic choices and the behaviour of EMOs, this should not be permitted to obscure the impact of the unique trajectory on movement formation and organisational logic. Whilst the emergence of environmental protest in both system types can be understood as a reaction to industrialisation and modernisation, the legacy of authoritarian rule, the collapse of the communist economic and political system at the end of the 1980s, and the subsequent construction of political democracy alongside

neoliberal reform undeniably imposes a unique and specific dimension on environmental mobilisations. Theoretical explanations derived entirely from social movement behaviour in established western capitalist democracies cannot entirely explain the behaviour and interactions of EMOs in the Czech Republic.

The following analysis of the various theoretical approaches to the study of social movement organisations will thus be a critical review, mindful of the context of the transition to capitalist democracy, and conscious of the tenacious legacies of authoritarian rule prior to 1989. What is sought here is a theoretical and conceptual framework to apply to the Czech case, but one that acknowledges that the impact of explanatory variables will be mediated by the distinct economic and political context in which EMOs and the Czech movement have emerged.

EARLY APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF SOCIAL PROTEST

Early structuralist and microsociological approaches to the study of social movements and collective action suggested that the presence of grievance explained mobilisation and was a sufficient basis for understanding the emergence of social movements. Protest was seen as a systemic weakness and was viewed as an unhealthy sign for democratic polities. Whilst there is certainly evidence of a correlation between levels of grievance and the mobilisation of old social movements (such as labour movements), the causal linkage is inadequate in explaining contemporary mobilisations of 'new' social movements, of which environmental protest is undeniably part. As environmental movements expanded from the late 1960s onwards, and became increasingly diverse in their political outlook and strategies, it was recognised that theoretical approaches that stressed grievance, or that saw social unrest as a malady of democratic politics, required a serious overhaul. The experience of the anti-nuclear movements of the 1970s suggested that the existence of an environmental danger or crisis, while a potential stimulus for mobilisation, is insufficient in explaining why some national movements are more or less prominent and radical than others.

For example, Kitschelt's study of the anti-nuclear movements in France, Sweden, the USA and Germany concluded that the variation in movement forms is explicable in terms of differing political processes and opportunity structures in which movements operated, as well as the resources available to them (Kitschelt, 1986). By systematically assessing the impact of such institutional constraints on movement capacity and trajectories, this study encouraged analysts of social movements to consider the political contexts in

which they operate as the basis for understanding mobilisation and modes of collective action rather than focusing on structural change, or indeed the presence of grievance alone. Kitschelt's study, along with other similar research on the European and American social movements (McCarthy and Zald, 1977), represented a significant breakthrough in terms of understanding social movement organisations and popular protest. It was argued that levels of grievance were largely a constant variable and that the efficacy and success of movements and organisations in mobilising citizens hinged on the nature of the political system and the availability of resources.

Whereas structuralist and microsociological theories were able to identify the changing structural relations surrounding protest, explain the involvement of certain social groups in contemporary social movements, and to account for changing patterns of participation and mobilisation, the emphasis placed on institutions and resources has, through cross-national comparisons, provided a far more in-depth understanding of specific national movements and a more developed knowledge of why movements and their composite organisations behave in the way they do. Specific political contexts and the availability of resources are recognised as determinants of protest and mobilisation. Rather than viewing a society with active SMOs as unhealthy and politically vulnerable, political structures and the existence of resources that facilitated the articulation of protest and a discursive interaction between the political elite and SMO activists were viewed positively.

In explaining the types of environmental movement and movement organisations that emerge within a particular state, there are two broad theoretical approaches: the *political process* approach, or *political opportunity structure* (POS), and *resource mobilisation theory* (RMT). Both identify an array of variables that shape and explain strategic choices. These range from specific contextual circumstances, such as the particular environmental issues at stake, to institutional, historical and political variables that may exert a profound impact on attitudes, strategic choices and the availability and deployment of resources. The two approaches are not entirely disconnected in the sense that they both seek to identify the variables available to organisations that will facilitate protest. The RMT approach places greater emphasis on the organisation as a rational actor, whereas the focus of POS is the political process. Nevertheless, it is most appropriate when analysing movement organisations to employ the approaches in combination.

THE POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE APPROACH

What broadly constitutes the political process or political opportunity structure

approach is now a highly developed and extensive literature (Eisinger, 1973; Piven and Cloward, 1977; Kriesi, 1995). It should be noted from the outset that, while the variables that are deemed to affect strategy choice and patterns of organisation amongst SMOs in western Europe are certainly relevant to EMOs in the Czech Republic, it should not be assumed that their impact will be identical. The communist legacy and the specific processes of economic and political reform since 1990 impose a specific context in which movements operate.

The political opportunity structure approach focuses on the distribution of power within the state as a determinant of social movement influence and access. The extent to which the political institutions of a given system provide access for social movements to the public sphere and political decision making arena, the existence of formal and informal networks, and the cultural setting in which organisations interact with the state, are identified as determinants of organisational activity and behaviour (Eisinger, 1973; McAdam and Snow, 1996; Tilly, 1978; Gamson and Meyer, 1996; Kriesi *et al*., 1995). With regard to the formal constitutional setting and its impact on movements, Kitschelt notes that '[the] rules allow for, register, respond to and even shape the demands of social movements that are not yet accepted political actors' (1986: 62). In his comparative analysis of new social movements across Europe, Koopmans identified the party and electoral systems as critical determinants of social movement access. He concluded that '[systems] which are highly resistant to the penetration of new conflict dimensions … structurally block the breakthrough of new politics' (Koopmans, 1996: 44–5). The balance of power between executive and legislatures is also seen as an important variable insofar as the greater the capacity of the latter to initiate and control the legislative agenda, the more access and opportunities for social movements to gain influence. Variation in policy-making styles and institutional and procedural settings for deliberation will have an impact upon the capacity of movements. Kitschelt went on to identify a number of other variants, including the ability and willingness of the state to control the financial sector, the relative size of the public sector, and the capacity of economic interest groups vis-à-vis other interests to exert an impact on policy makers. The relative power of the judiciary and the capacity and fragmentation of the institutions concerned with the implementation of policy are also acknowledged as important variables (ibid.: 64).

The conclusion echoed by many is that strong, repressive centralised states will produce strong well-organised movement organisations with radical agendas (Della Porta and Diani, 1999: 154; Kriesi, 1995: 51–2). Open and inclusive political systems tend to encourage lower levels of radical and unconventional mobilisation (Koopmans, 1996: 45). On the basis of a comparative study of social movement activity in various west European

states, Kriesi *et al*. (1995) conclude that, whilst weak and inclusive states (such as Switzerland) give rise to high levels of mobilisation, this tends to involve moderate action repertoires. In an attempt to theorise why some SMOs operate within formal rather than informal networks, it is claimed that weak and inclusive states encourage strongly developed formal organisations. In contrast, strong states (such as France) give rise to radicalism and lower levels of mobilisation that tend 'to be concentrated in unconventional forms' (Kriesi, 1995: 51–2). The moderately strong but highly inclusive Dutch state encourages strong SMOs committed to conventional forms of protest. Yet, it is argued, the lack of formal access means that unconventional forms of protest continue to be a feature of campaigns. Formal access breeds conventional protest, though the stronger the state the more radicalism. The basic assumptions of this literature can be summarised thus:

- Strong, repressive centralised states will produce strong well-organised movement organisations with radical agendas and unconventional forms, yet with lower levels of mobilisation. Such states will be able to act decisively.
- Weak and inclusive states give rise to high levels of mobilisation and moderate action repertoires. Decentralised states will provide more access and opportunities for contestation, but significant changes in policy are less likely to be enacted and implemented.

A recent contribution to the study of European social movements operating at the EU level introduced the notion of legal opportunity and its impact on social movement behaviour (Hilson, 2002). This draws on the POS approach in terms of opportunities available to organisations, but focuses on legal structures and opportunities as opposed to purely political structures and processes. It is claimed that the absence of political opportunities – a closed system or an unresponsive elite – may encourage an organisation to use litigation and other legal strategies as part of their action repertoire. Legal frameworks, new legislation and case law will thus potentially affect the strategic choices of organisations.

CRITIQUE OF THE POS APPROACH

There are a number of inherent problems with the political process, or political opportunity structure approach, when employed to analyse EMO activity across Western Europe. Such problems become, not surprisingly, even more acute when attempting to apply this approach to newly democratic states in CEE.

The first problem involves the tendency to use the POS approach to arrive at generalisations regarding the political process and its conduciveness to social movement pressure. Whilst it is quite reasonable to conclude that overall the political and constitutional structures of the French system are 'closed' relative to other European systems, when conducting longitudinal single country studies such as this, there is a danger of oversimplification and a failure to distinguish important differences amongst sections of the political elite and different components and levels of the institutional framework. As Hilson notes with regard to the UK, 'although one might conclude that the … administration is relatively open to environmentalists, it does not necessarily follow that this will be true across all sub-areas of environmental policy' (2002: 244). As will be demonstrated with regard to Czech EMOs operating at a regional level, or opposing controversial public policy decisions, the local political opportunity structure can be quite different from other local structures and from the national context.

The next critical issue is the assumed and rather simplistic linkage between political process variables and impact on EMOs. Della Porta and Diani note that 'some changes in the political opportunity structure do not have any effect on a social movement unless they are perceived as being important by the movement itself' (1999: 223). Activists within an EMO have to believe that an opportunity exists for a change in behaviour to take place, as opposed to an objective calculation that such a change has occurred. This complicates the cause and effect linkage quite considerably. There are several preconditions for any linkage between political systemic factors and movement organisation behaviour, most notably the belief amongst activists that ultimately the state and political elite are worthwhile targets and that changes in opportunities at state level will deliver a dividend for the particular organisation. In Della Porta and Diani's words, '[activists] must blame the system for the problem' (ibid.: 224). Even when a link can be empirically demonstrated (for example, a new government with a different attitude towards EMOs, new institutional setting and so on), quantifying the impact is incredibly difficult.

The problem here is identified by Rootes as being to do with the tendency to define as structural features what are in fact contingent variables (Rootes, 1997, 1999). The receptivity of political elites to particular interests and demands may be irrespective of and unaffected by institutional structures. Elite attitudes may be influenced by ideology, international factors, contemporary issues within or beyond the state, or simply by prejudice. This has encouraged some commentators to favour 'political opportunity' rather than 'political opportunity structure' in order to identify the non-structural influences that the POS approach is incapable of distinguishing (Hilson, 2002: 244).

Such criticisms become particularly problematic when the POS approach is

applied to the study of a social movement in a new democracy such as the Czech environmental movement. The culturally specific origins and the rather circumstantial nature of many of the 'empirical' conclusions become glaringly evident. For example, to assume that the fact of France happening to witness the emergence of a particular type of environmental movement is attributable to the nature of its political system is to overlook the extent to which political and economic circumstances with which the development of the French movement coincided, together with historic legacies of social protest, are critical in understanding the modern French movement. The dominant scientific discourse of the postwar period in Europe, plus the ideological cleavages of French society, explain the behaviour and evolution of their environmental movement. To assume that contingent institutional structures can be built into a cause and effect hypothesis that will then be relevant in explaining the activities and behaviour of EMOs in an entirely different state is, to say the least, circumspect. In a relatively new democracy such as the Czech Republic, the success and political impact of institutions is conditioned by the extent to which democratic practice and procedure has been consolidated. The most open and responsive political institutions may exist in a vacuum and fail to deliver substantive change in political practice if there has yet to be significant consolidation.

To summarise the criticisms raised above, the fundamental problem in applying the POS approach beyond established capitalist democracies is that the causal effect cannot be assumed. Other factors, such as the legacies of authoritarianism, are likely to exert a significant and specific impact on organisational activity. In west European states the impact of the institutional variables identified by POS theorists as conditioning EMO behaviour is derived from a particular relationship between state and society and between economic interests and the political elite. In the case of CEE states, democratic political institutions have been introduced relatively recently. They have been established on the basis of their success in delivering stable political decision making elsewhere. It is inevitable that, to a degree, institutions will come to reflect the cultural and political norms of CEE states in the way they function. To assume they can deliver the same outcomes as similar institutions and practices in established democracies is to ignore the path dependency of the transition process and implies that the collapse of communism in 1989 offered a tabula rasa on which entirely new political institutions and relationships could be grafted. The reality has in fact been that new institutions and processes 'borrowed' from elsewhere have been somewhat transmuted in order to fit the political culture and traditions of the Czech Republic.

As will be demonstrated in the ensuing chapters of this book, rather than stimulate radical actions and agendas, the repressive style of the Klaus

government (1992–7) prompted a deradicalisation of EMOs and a decline in ideological diversity at a time when far-reaching policy decisions were being enacted, the ecological impact of which are only now being realised. A centralised, closed and exclusive state did not lead to more radical repertoires or encourage direct action as appears to have been the case in France (Kriesi, 1995: 178). The dependency of Czech EMOs on the state and on foreign donors for funding,[1] acts as a specific constraint on their political adventure and mediates their interaction with the political process.

As noted above, the assumption that a set of variables relating to the political process and institutional structures of the state will exert a specific impact on social movement organisations depends upon a particular relationship between organisations and the state and is tied to distinct theoretical interpretations of state power in western capitalist democracies derived from a liberal pluralistic interpretation of the state, and underpinned by notions of state sovereignty and representation of interests. For EMOs operating in a former authoritarian state attempting to consolidate political democracy, the ability of social movement organisations to influence the policy process, as well as the capacity of liberal political structures to represent interests or challenge political power in any significant way, may be substantially different from the scenario in established democracies in which social movements are often deeply entrenched and processes of deliberation well-embedded. It seems that the whole POS approach rests on a particular modernist notion of state sovereignty in which the liberal state is and should be the focal point of an organisation's activities. The ephemeral role of the state in CEE, the power of mutlilateral agencies and the influence of TNCs have to be acknowledged as a serious limitation on the impact of POS variables.

One of the problems for consolidating political democracy in CEE is that citizens do not necessarily perceive the state to be significantly empowered to mediate the flow of foreign investment and influence (Scholte, 1998). The influence of the EU and the predominant neoliberal discourse, which it fastidiously upheld within CEE despite the recent election of centre–left government coalitions across the region, undoubtedly challenges the capacity of the state to regulate the flow of foreign capital and to deliver environmental or other social safeguards. The impact on social movement organisations of election results, new political elites gaining office, constitutional reform and the enactment of legislation providing greater access to information is moderated by the underlying economic and political consensus. That EU membership and the 'liberalisation' of CEE economies are off-limits for democratic contestation does not encourage activists to view the political elites as sovereign and empowered.

Whilst it is certainly valuable to consider the nature of the political process

when trying to understand the role, function and strategic choices of the Czech environmental movement, a causal relationship between institutional structures and organisational response cannot be assumed. Rather, the political process and the institutional structure of the state are merely a set of dependent variables, the impact of which are contingent on a variety of factors, including the attitudes, behaviour and ideology of the political elite, the historic legacies of state–societal relations, as well as the involvement of TNCs and multilateral agencies in the economic and political reform process. As will become evident in subsequent chapters of this book, the relationship between the state and international institutions, and the underlying economic ideological discourse and policy, have been the main determinants of the political capacity of Czech EMOs since 1990.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION THEORY

The other main approach to studying social movement organisations is resource mobilisation theory (RMT) (Zald and McCarthy, 1987; Tilly, 1978; Oberschall, 1973), which challenges the notion that the presence of grievances is enough to explain protest and instead portrays SMO activists as rational actors who consciously decide to organise and mobilise on the basis of the availability of resources. The capacity for mobilisation is dependent on the existence of various material and non-material resources, such as money, availability of benefits, expertise available to a particular movement organisation: 'the type and nature of the resources available explain the tactical choices made by movements and the consequences of collective action on the social and political system' (Della Porta and Diani, 1999: 8). Such a perspective shifts emphasis from the *system* towards the *activists* and is thus somewhat aligned to rational choice theory.

Resource mobilisation theorists make a number of significant points regarding the importance of resources that are extremely relevant to this study of the Czech environmental movement. Most notably, it is claimed that the greater the amount of discretionary resources amongst citizens and the elite, the greater the amount of resources available to social movement organisations. The higher the incomes and the more time that citizens have available to them as a consequence of increased prosperity, the greater the benefit to organisations (McCarthy and Zald, 1977: 1224). McCarthy and Zald's claim that social movement organisations benefit from 'the satiation of other wants' is of particular relevance to this study in the sense that it suggests a definite relationship between levels of economic prosperity and organisational capacity. What this study of the Czech environmental movement will suggest is that resources (or lack of them) are perhaps the most

critical factor in shaping EMO activity and behaviour. The specific context of economic and political transformation since 1990 imposes a particular set of constraints on resource availability to EMOs and other social movement organisations in post-communist politics.

The central claim of RMT is that grievance alone is insufficient in explaining the existence and success of SMOs. According to McCarthy and Zald, 'it is only when resources can be garnered from conscience adherents that viable SMOs can be fielded to shape and represent the preferences of such collectivities' (1977: 1226). In other words, with regard to environmental mobilisation, ecological crisis, sympathy for a particular cause amongst the population and political opportunities will not alone result in the emergence of efficacious organisations.

CRITIQUE OF RMT

With regard to the Czech case, the approach is of value in explaining why certain EMOs with access to resources have been better able than others to adopt a professional veneer and gain political access. Yet, as with the political process approach, while the importance of resources for EMOs is not contested, the danger lies in making deductions about the impact of resources on the capacity of Czech EMOs without acknowledging the specific structural context in which they operate. For example, the case of the *South Bohemian Mothers*, discussed in Chapter 5, suggests that having resources does not necessarily guarantee a political dividend and can actually lead to dependency and isolation from indigenous communities.

Applying resource mobilisation theory to the analysis of social movement activity in a new democracy such as the Czech Republic assumes a linkage, based on the western experience, between the availability of certain resources and action that is not necessarily replicated in a post-authoritarian context. For Czech EMOs, resources come from external donors, who invariably impose particular agendas on recipient organisations. Moreover, the donation of resources (including know-how and technical assistance) is invariably temporary and in certain cases cannot be deployed successfully without more long-term training and indigenous resources being available in the first place. In short, resources are a dependent rather than independent variable. How they can be used and what conditions are attached to them is critical. The case of *South Bohemian Mothers* illustrates how resource endowment can actually weaken the political capacity of an organisation and delay development. Resources can explain patterns of activity and political efficacy, but the importance of structural context in which conflict and collective action emerge should not be underplayed (Piven and Cloward, 1992).

A MORE RADICAL PERSPECTIVE: THE GLOBALISATION APPROACH

An alternative and somewhat more radical interpretation of the factors explaining current social movement behaviour and the strategic choices of, in particular, environmental movement activists, emphasises the impact of the altered relationship between the state and corporate interests (Wapner, 1995; Newell, 2000). Whilst the approach implicitly endorses the importance of resources in enabling EMOs to challenge TNCs directly, it challenges the basic logic of the POS approach that the character of the political state, its openness or closure and changes in the political process will be the main determinants of EMO behaviour.

It is argued that EMOs are more inclined to by-pass the state in their campaigns and to focus directly on TNCs. This is not to suggest that the state has ceased to become an important vehicle for regulation and control of TNCs, but that it has become part of a larger web of governance within which EMOs play an enhanced and specific role. The shift in EMO behaviour is explained by a perception that the state is either unwilling to restrain, or incapable of restraining, corporate activities that damage the environment, and that several decades of inter-state accords relating to the environment have failed to stem the tide of degradation and abuse of natural resources by corporate activities (Vidal, 1997). The sense that TNCs have, as a consequence of neoliberal ideology, been able to burst out of the regulatory framework that at least partially constrained them in the past encourages direct strategies and the formation of links between EMOs and TNCs. However, as Newell concludes, 'NGOs exercise a different form of "power" over corporations … a less coercive power aimed at changing consciousness and creating mechanisms of accountability … These are forms of control which the state does not exercise a monopoly over' (2000: 133).

It is claimed that the changed status of EMOs within the power equation of global corporate activity has exerted a profound impact on EMO strategies and behaviour, and that the altered structural context should form the basis of our understanding modern environmental action. An array of different strategies and approaches are identified which are often used in tandem by EMOs. Attempts to encourage an environmental consciousness amongst TNCs, to provide incentives for corporations to improve their practice, and even the formation of partnership schemes involving EMOs and TNCs, are often combined with campaigns to humiliate TNCs, to ridicule their image and to challenge directly their status (Rodman, 1998). The key to such strategies is international, if not global, cooperation between activists in one state opposing the antics of a TNC, sharing their knowledge and coordinating their activities with activists facing a similar threat elsewhere. The space between the source

of decision making and the multiple sites of consumption and degradation, as a feature of global capitalism, arguably necessitates such 'global' cooperation.

It is the issue of global linkage and the assumption that EMOs across the globe will have the resources to facilitate such strategies that are perhaps the most significant shortcomings of this approach. In this sense the approach is liable to the same criticism as that levelled at RMT, that the approach is essentially western-centric and ignores the constraints on EMOs in non-western states to gain access to the global protest space and to challenge TNCs at this level. The resources required to stage effective campaigns at this level are quite distinct and are unlikely to be as available to less developed EMOs in former authoritarian states as they are to established EMOs in western democracies. In this sense, while strategies based on directly challenging TNCs may well have become a global phenomenon, they are likely to be pursued by western activists. Thus, as a basis for understanding EMO activity in a new democracy, the approach is of less explanatory relevance. In CEE states such as the Czech Republic, the potential for EMOs to take on certain regulatory functions and exert a measure of power over TNC activities in their region is conditioned not just by the absence of resources, but also by the relative power of TNCs over national governments that are even less inclined or empowered to take action against corporations intent on investing in their economies. If there is a value in this approach for the Czech environmental movement it lies in mapping possible future patterns of behaviour amongst the more radical elements of the movement and in identifying effective strategies for contemporary environmental activism.

CONCLUSION

It would be folly to suggest that the various theoretical approaches to the study of social movement organisations lack relevance to this study of the Czech environmental movement. All three approaches discussed above have their merits in terms of understanding the strategic choices made by Czech EMOs since 1990. Yet, as Hilson notes, the problem lies in the fact that there is a tendency not to employ the approaches together, but to adopt one framework as the theoretical basis for studying movement organisation behaviour (Hilson, 2002). While institutional structures and processes influence strategies, organisations will adopt strategies that fit their resources. Protest in the twenty-first century in an advanced industrial society, whether it is in an old established capitalist democracy or a new democracy in CEE, is an expensive business. New media technology, plus know-how in public relations, marketing and advertising, not to mention fundraising and

accounting, augment the significance of resources. Yet access to resources and the extent to which they will empower EMOs in a new democracy, are conditioned by the context in which such resources are being provided and, most notably, by whom. To understand SMOs in CEE it is important to employ all three approaches in conjunction, but also to recognise that the impact of all variables will be contingent upon the specific relationship between state, capital and society as well as on the unique dynamics of the triple transition, in which economic reconstruction, constitutional design and the consolidation of political democracy are occurring concurrently.

Without wishing to counter the claim made at the start of this chapter, that the western theoretical discourse is the logical starting point for a study of the Czech movement, the issues raised regarding the application of POS and RMT approaches suggest that, although the western literature is of relevance in understanding the Czech movement, the political and economic context imposes a particular dimension on variables that are deemed to affect organisations and determine their behaviour. There is undoubtedly merit in applying the western literature on social movements to a study of the Czech environmental movement. It offers models, typologies and a host of relevant variables to explain strategic choices and behaviour, as well as providing a conceptual framework for identifying trends and assessing strategies and ideological divisions. Yet the fact that this literature is derived almost entirely from environmental movements in established western capitalist democracies is obviously problematic when studying a movement in a newly established democratic state that is still undergoing a unique and profound period of social and economic change. Existing analyses of environmental movements in CEE states have clearly been influenced by western experience and tend to adopt a framework based on a particular interpretation of the evolution of west European movements (Manning, 1998; Pickvance, 1998; Lipschutz, 1996). The unique context of what Offe terms the 'triple transition' is entirely lost in such analyses (Offe, 1990, 1996). It is implicitly assumed that environmental movements in CEE will follow western movements along a trajectory from radical participatory 'new' social movements to networks of formalised, professional mass membership organisations (Kriesi, 1995). In the Czech case, the notion of the environmental movement as being on a continuum from submerged oppositional social movement in the months prior to the 'velvet revolution', towards increased institutionalisation and professionalism remains the dominant discourse and underscores existing accounts (Slocock, 1998; Moldan and Klarer, 1997; Tickle and Vavroušek, 1998).

Such a perspective is based on a somewhat inaccurate and subjective portrayal of developments within western environmental movements during

the past three decades. Whilst a general trend towards professionalism, resource endowment and institutionalisation may be characteristic of *certain* elements of *some* western environmental movements, their political capacity has always relied on the diversity of strategies and organisational forms *within* the movements (Meyer and Tarrow, 1998: 19). Though some western organisations, over the course of the past three decades, have certainly become more professional and institutionalised, organisational diversity and grass-roots activism has remained a feature of western environmental movements that have in some countries (such as the UK) become increasingly dominant in recent years (Wall, 1999; Crozat, 1998: 60). Recent contributions to the social movement literature duly acknowledge that earlier depictions of rigid dichotomies between 'insider' and 'outsider' groups or between conventional and radical activists (Lowe and Goyder, 1983) no longer capture the essence of protest (Diani and Donati, 1999). The mix of strategies (lobbying, direct action, passive versus active membership) as a dominant feature of modern movement organisations offers a more valuable framework for understanding movement organisations and their interactions with state and society. It would appear, therefore, that CEE movements are being measured up and assessed according to a truncated, inaccurate and somewhat reductionist depiction of the western model.

As well as inaccurately reflecting the development of western movements, this approach is also prone to obscuring the specific dependent variables that are likely to explain movement organisation behaviour in CEE states. Rather than seeing the shift towards professionalism and the decline of radicalism amongst a core of Czech EMOs simply as evidence of westernisation, such trends should be analysed in the context of the Czech Republic's transition from Soviet-style communism to neoliberal capitalism (Fagin and Jehlička, 1998; Fagan and Jehlička, 2003). It is vital that any study of the Czech environmental movement acknowledges that different causal variables may result in what superficially appears to be the same effect as in established western democracies.

To assume that the Czech environmental movement is a stage or so behind western movements and is merely going through a necessary developmental phase of deradicalisation and institutionalisation is also highly problematic. It reflects a contestable notion that the CEE states are destined to follow a western course of development and assumes that Czech activists face the same political and economic scenarios that European campaigners faced a generation or so ago. Underlying this view is a notion that CEE states are in transit towards economic and political parity with established western states. In fact their ephemeral status within the global regime of capital accumulation is critical in understanding the limited influence of environmentalists and their capacity to mobilise and challenge political decisions.

Czech EMOs face aggressive foreign direct investment and operate within the context of an increasingly diffused power structure in which the state is substantially more disempowered and ephemeral in the face of international organisations (EU, WTO, IMF, World Bank) than the G7 states of Western Europe. The Czech government has little capacity or inclination to regulate the flow of capital into the country other than within the remit of EU-inspired directives. Rather than replicating a bygone stage of western development in which environmental campaigners exerted pressure on their governments to negotiate concessions and temper the ecological consequences of capitalism, CEE campaigners face a political and economic context in which pro-growth neoliberal consumerism and subservience to foreign direct investment is the accepted mantra. Essentially, the 'catch-up' approach seems to ignore two key issues. First, the era in which environmental movements emerged in Western Europe (Keynesian economic policy, state regulation of industry) has gone for good and is certainly not being replicated in the CEE states. Second, the state in the new capitalist democracies of CEE do not operate in the same way as their western counterparts. Politicians are less empowered to regulate, are unaccustomed to the process of deliberation between competing interests and, as a consequence of privatisation in the 1990s, are closely aligned to new capital interests.

The discussion in this chapter suggests that whilst the theoretical literature explaining the actions of social movements and their organisations is likely to be of relevance to this study of the Czech environmental movement, it is to be applied cautiously and from a critical perspective. In essence, while there may be evidence of 'westernisation' (professionalism, institutionalisation, passive membership and so on), such characteristics might prove to be hybridised variants of what has been observed in the west, and to have arisen as a result of entirely different causal factors.

With such considerations in mind, the remaining chapters of this book will offer an extensive account of the development of the Czech environmental movement, tracing its historic roots during the communist era, its role in the undermining and eventual collapse of communism in 1989, and its evolution through the 1990s and the era of so-called 'democratic' politics. Much emphasis will be placed on resources, interaction with the state, external agencies and institutions, and the impact of the authoritarian legacy in determining the efficacy and behaviour of the movement. The concluding chapter will return to the key theme of the book, namely the extent to which the unique context of political democratisation and neoliberal economic reform in the Czech Republic have shaped the movement, and consider the extent to which this country study offers a challenge to the comparative theoretical discourse on social movements and environmental organisations in particular.

NOTES

1. Though state funding for EMOs has always been small compared to foreign donations, funds from privatisation and other state funding represent an important source of income. At the local level, volunteer-based EMOs often depend upon the good will of the local authority to provide office space, the point here being that, in the absence of sustainable levels of private donations, there is still a higher level of state dependency compared to Western European EMOs.

3. Origins of the Czech environmental movement: from conservation to political opposition

This chapter will begin the empirical study of the Czech environmental movement by tracing the historic roots of the present movement through the pre-communist and communist periods. Particular emphasis will be placed on the role played by environmentalists during the second half of the 1980s and in the lead-up to the collapse of communism in 1989. In essence, this chapter will offer a basis for considering the extent to which pre-1989 traditions of environmental protest have shaped post-communist development.

The discussion will begin by outlining the early manifestations of environmental protest during the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the First Czechoslovak Republic. The roots and traditions of associational activity, as well as the ideology and discourse of Czech environmentalism, will be traced and examined. The second half of the chapter will focus on the specific role of environmentalists during the communist period up to its end in the autumn of 1989, and will outline the type of movement that existed on the threshold of political democratisation and economic transformation. The key question here is whether this amounted to a foundation on which the present movement has been built, or a redundant and expired legacy of opposition to authoritarian rule. As will become evident in subsequent chapters, the key to understanding the evolution of the present movement since 1990 is to appreciate the extent to which it has had to reform and adapt its political role while retaining characteristics of its previous incarnation as submerged opposition movement.

THE HUSSITE LEGACY AND TRADITIONS OF CIVIC PROTEST

In identifying the roots of environmental protest and associational activity, the broader tradition in the Czech lands of civil associations acting as a politicised opposition to state power is absolutely critical. Political association is a key characteristic of Czech political culture dating back to the fifteenth century and the *Hussite* period, in which the defence of national and spiritual freedom reached its climax and set a glorious example (Seton Watson, 1965: 56–75;

Paul, 1981: 4–7). The preservation of nature, the fight for spiritual freedom as an inner sanctum under imperial rule, and the mobilisation of citizens against unjust and unlawful diktats are immensely powerful legacies and traditions from which environmentalists have drawn inspiration. The ecological consequences of early industrialisation were viewed as the latest manifestation of imperialist subjugation, to be resisted in the *Hussite* tradition through mobilisation and political opposition.

EMPIRE, MODERNIZATION AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Typical of most European environmental movements, Czech environmentalists trace their origins back via what Eckersley describes as the 'preservationist stream', to the enlightenment and romanticism movements (Eckersley, 1992; Tickle and Vavroušek, 1998: 123; Kundrata, 1992). The roots of the modern environmental movement as a conglomeration of formal organisations can be traced back more specifically to the associational activity of the second half of the nineteenth century under the Habsburg Empire (Bradley, 1971). A concern for conservation and nature protection was manifest in the establishment of virgin forest reserves in the *Šumava* mountains in southern Bohemia by the Austrian aristocracy at the start of the nineteenth century. At the same time there emerged at community level a labyrinth of what were known as 'decorative' clubs concerned with landscape protection (Tickle and Vavroušek, 1998: 123–4).

The conservation movement of the nineteenth century was enmeshed within the broader national consciousness movement. Though this was an eclectic mix of interests mobilised to achieve national sovereignty, it established a potent culture of associational activity and civic protest. As was occurring in other Western European states at this time, urbanisation and industrialisation were provoking a reaction amongst sections of society concerned about the deleterious impact on the natural environment and on rural life. The political institutions of bourgeois modernisation allowed for the emergence of associational activity, which enabled the representation of conservation interests during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The democratic structures of the First Republic, established in 1918, formalised and consolidated such channels of representation.

Though the emergence of civil society across Western Europe tended to coincide with and support the development of liberal bourgeois capitalism, the Czech lands witnessed the emergence of a particularly politicised civil society during the late nineteenth century. The fact that rapid liberal industrialisation and modernisation occurred during a period of, albeit progressive, imperial rule meant that a relatively independent and differentiated civil society quickly

became the vehicle for national independence and opposition to Austrian hegemony. The fusion of rapid modernisation on the one hand, and the struggle for independence from an unmodern empire on the other, served to radicalise the emergent civil society and politicise its institutions. Perhaps under different circumstances Czech civil society would have been apolitical and passive, and little different from its western counterparts; however, the enmeshing of a highly educated middle class, a politically conscious and organised blue-collar sector, and the prolonged existence of imperial rule at a time of rampant national self-determination served to radicalise liberal civil society. Thus, in the decades prior to the creation of the First Republic, civil society performed the function of an invisible or alternative state, a platform from which apparently innocuous associations could advance the cause of an independent Czech state.

Though there does not appear to exist a detailed and thorough account of the activities of conservation associations during this period, the existence of what were known as 'decorative' clubs is well documented (Kundrata, 1992). These were predominantly run and supported by the middle classes and intellectuals and numbered 378 individual organisations plus an umbrella organisation by the early years of the twentieth century. Their membership is estimated at in excess of 50 000 people. These organisations were essentially conservation groups of a kind seen in Britain and elsewhere during the late nineteenth century. Although they represented a mild and somewhat apolitical critique of modernisation, the particular culture of associational activity and the politicisation of Czech civil society during the latter years of Austrian rule augmented the function and development of these groups.

INDUSTRIALISATION DURING THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Although Czechoslovakia was to depart dramatically from western political, social and economic traditions after 1948, its pre-communist development during the twentieth century fits firmly within the western tradition. As a modern capitalist economy, the First Republic was among the ten most industrially developed countries in the world (Selucký, 1991: 154), 'an industrial giant [that delivered the] … highest standard of living in east and central Europe' (Bradley, 1971: 154). Industrialisation in the Czech lands can roughly be divided into two phases: an initial expansion of light industrial production which began in the second half of the eighteenth century, followed after 1850 by the expansion of railways and heavy industrial production. By 1930, 34.4 per cent of the Czech population was employed in industry and the country was more highly industrialised than France, Austria or Italy, and

enjoyed parity with Britain. The thoroughly modern nature of the First Republic is illustrated in figures relating to employment: almost half the working population was employed in banking, trade, commerce and transport sectors, whilst less than a quarter was employed in agriculture (Krejčí, 1972; Paul, 1979: 139).

Such a perspective is extremely important in understanding the roots of environmental consciousness and activism in the Czech lands. While different political institutions and state–society relations after 1948 imposed a unique trajectory on environmental activism, the early manifestations of this tradition were largely indistinguishable from early environmental consciousness in western states. The early movement was anthropocentric in ideological orientation and emerged as a reaction to modernisation and industrialisation. It gained a political foothold as a consequence of democratic reforms and representative institutions of the First Republic.

As was occurring in Britain and elsewhere in Europe during the early twentieth century, the development of ecology as a scientific discipline greatly assisted the nascent ecological organisations. Researchers at leading institutes across the country lent their support to activists involved in the various decorative clubs, and the publication of studies and reports gave credence to the cause in general. The preservationist and somewhat reactionary character of these clubs was now endowed with a scientific legitimacy.

Here again the extent to which science, technology and higher educational institutions had been particularly developed in the Czech lands is an important consideration. In the absence of a nobility, most of whom had either emigrated or returned to Germany following the Battle of the White Mountain in the early seventeenth century (Paul, 1981: 8), the Czech lands were in a sense more technologically and industrially 'modern' than either Britain or Germany. As administrative and military posts in the Habsburg Empire were reserved for Austrians, the Czech population, including the most educated, were successfully occupied in the commercial, professional and industrial sectors. As a result, vocational training was highly regarded in Czech society and the labour force became ever more skilled as industrial production expanded. In addition to Charles University, the Prague-based Institute of Technology was opened as early as 1707 and, as the nineteenth century progressed, numerous vocational schools were opened offering a variety of courses in commerce, agriculture, engineering and manufacturing (Selucký, 1991: 155–6). By the mid-twentieth century, the Czechs could boast of a labyrinth of colleges and universities in which ecology was taught and researched. This spawned a cadre of scientists and experts invariably linked to the network of conservation organisations, and willing to offer technical and specialised advice and assistance. This linkage between environmental movement and the scientific intelligentsia was to prove critical in the late

1980s. It also is of relevance today in understanding the development of the present movement.

TRAMPING

In terms of its political ideology and discourse, the Czech environmental movement of today can trace its roots specifically to the tradition known as 'tramping', which evolved during the First Republic. A concern in Czechoslovakia for what we rather generally refer to now as 'the environment' began as a largely apolitical, though entirely anthropocentric, interest in conservation and nature protection. Though the tramping tradition never constituted an organised movement as such, the term is understood by many Czechs as a positive reference to a historic pastime whereby a group of friends went from the cities into the countryside to pursue outdoor activities and a life style based on limited material means (Jehlička *et al*., 2002: 5–6). There was a strong cultural element to tramping, based on literature, music and life style; a notion of outdoor living and enjoyment of nature. If there was a political dimension to this tradition it involved a mild and rather unsystematic critique of modernisation and bourgeois industrialisation. During the 1920s and 1930s, tramping provided an escape from urban squalor and the bureaucratic and social transformation associated with industrial production.

PROTEST DURING THE COMMUNIST ERA: THE DISSOLUTION OF ASSOCIATIONAL ACTIVITY

In its quest to eliminate political and social pluralism, the communist elite dismantled the institutions of civil society in Czechoslovakia after 1948. However, that the culture and traditions of civic protest established during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (including conservation and nature protection) were in fact extinguished by the collapse of the First Republic and the onset of fascism a decade earlier is often overlooked. Though a plethora of voluntary organisations and civic associations briefly returned after 1945, the socioeconomic devastation of Czechoslovakia, plus the widely held ideological rejection of liberal capitalism and embracement of statist 'solutions', paved the way for the near total dissolution of an independent civil society during the early 1950s. In order to understand the political impact of environmental protest in Czechoslovakia during 1948–89, and the context in which green activism emerged and developed, it is necessary to embark on a slight detour to consider the nature and workings of the Soviet model in some detail.

The Soviet-style political system equated active participation with mass mobilisation in favour of party doctrine, controlled and channelled by the formidable state machine (Waller, 1993). The communist power elite was intolerant of alternative ideological viewpoints. Thus the democratic notion of participation as the expression of contradictory ideas and the articulation of sectional and specific interests other than narrowly defined class interests was rapidly suppressed after 1948, though not, as the existence of clandestine dissident organisations and more radical branches of the conservation movement suggests, entirely successfully (Wolchik, 1991: 32–8). In stark contrast to liberal notions of democratic participation in which politics is dominated by a theoretically accountable elected elite and the majority of citizens limit political involvement to periodic voting, the Soviet model, theoretically at least, engaged the masses in the bureaucratic process and the party machine. Whereas the liberal model provides citizens with the ultimate sanction of removing an unpopular administration at elections, the vanguard party supposedly acts in the interest of the proletariat. In contrast to liberal doctrine, which bases participation on choice and autonomy, the Marxist notion of historical materialism rules out the emergence of an alternative political force able to challenge the hegemony of the communist party. According to Marxist doctrine, political parties serve and represent class interests; thus, in a communist society, other political parties are unnecessary and cannot exist, as class conflict has supposedly been eradicated, or at least is in the process of eradication. The Communist Party has to enjoy a monopoly of political power in order theoretically to execute and guard the interests of the ruling class.

Although the definition of communist states as totalitarian (Schapiro, 1972) exaggerated the capacity of the Party to suppress dissent and undermined the need for officials to consult groups and interests (Brown, 1966; Hough, 1983; Gross-Solomon, 1983; Skilling, 1966), there was a significant gulf between theory and reality in terms of the principles of democratic centralism and mass participation. By the early 1950s, Party discipline and centralised political power in Czechoslovakia had become overbearing and negated notions of grass-roots involvement to such an extent that the lower echelons of the Party state machinery merely rubber-stamped decisions of the leadership (Wolchik, 1991).

Not surprisingly, a normative liberal notion of participation as the expression of individual and sectional interests very quickly became a rallying cry for those who opposed the Soviet-maintained communist regime. The desire to form associations and articulate alternative opinions, almost regardless of their nature and intent, became a key objective of the dissident movement. The demise of independent and pluralistic political expression extended far beyond the denigration of the non-communist political parties. In

the years after 1948 the Communist Party state machinery intruded dramatically into the realms of the economy and the sphere of civil society. By 1950, almost the entire economy was state-controlled, though the bulk of the agricultural sector remained in private ownership until 1956. The Party systematically intervened in all spheres of public life and extended its control and influence in areas such as education and organised religion. A significant turning point in the history of civil society and independent activity in the Czech lands was the dissolution of voluntary and social organisations in 1951. Since 1849, the formation of a voluntary organisation had been a legal right and free association had become a feature of Czech life that subsequently spawned intellectual development and the movement for national and cultural autonomy during the late Habsburg years. The estimated 70 000 societies, clubs and associations in existence in 1948 were not dissimilar to the types of organisation that had begun to emerge across Western Europe (Krejčí, 1972; Šilhanová *et al*., 1994). They catered for a diversity of needs and interests, political and non-political, operated independently of the state though owing their legal position to it.

The structural transformation that occurred in 1951 as a result of the Communist takeover resulted in a host of formerly independent professional and vocational organisations being reorganised into national organisations under the auspices of the Party and the National Front, and essentially losing their independence entirely. The communists' decision effectively to abolish such independent political and philanthropic activity by incorporating associations within the extended party structure annulled the remaining remnants of organised opposition that still existed. The emasculation of what had been a relatively independent civil society that had historically been a vehicle for the expression of discontent and opposition, bolstered the Party's monopoly of power. Indicative of the orientation of Czechoslovakia within the Soviet orbit, the expanded and revised Party structure was a replica of what existed in the USSR and elsewhere in Eastern Europe.

Reminiscent of the start of Stalin's 'revolution from above' in the USSR 20 years before, the early 1950s witnessed the harsh deployment of the legal system against perceived political adversaries and the origins of State Security terror. Act 23, passed by the National Assembly in August 1948, allowed for the arrest and imprisonment of political opponents (Bradley, 1971: 180). By the early 1950s show trials were in full swing in which Party members, social democrats, anti-Nazi activists and former members of the International Brigade during the Spanish Civil War were accused of treason and harshly sentenced.[1] As was the case in the USSR during the 1930s, purges of the Party went far beyond eliminating potential opposition to the leadership: a swathe of committed activists and loyal ideologues were tried and executed. In a climate in which citizens could be arrested without warrant and detained for an

indefinite period of time without access to the law on the pretext of being an enemy of the state, political participation and organised opposition to the Party were obviously seriously curtailed. Though the non-communist parties, who had been incorporated into the reconstituted National Front in May 1948, remained formally independent, retained their organisational structures and held conferences, they were unable to exercise a significant degree of political independence. The merger of the Social Democratic Party with the KSČ in June 1948 further limited the scope of opposition and weakened the already enfeebled non-communist bloc.

Though membership of the KSČ continued to rise in the early 1950s, popular support for the Party declined. Economic difficulties in the early years of the decade prompted harsh monetary reform, which in turn led to mass demonstrations across the country. This first episode of popular dissent was met with harsh repression rather than any moves towards liberalisation on behalf of the Party. However, the spate of protests amongst Czech intellectuals following the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in 1956, at which Khrushchev guardedly denounced Stalin (Nove, 1975: 131, 138), called into question the success of the communists' reorganisation of civil society in Czechoslovakia along Soviet lines. A posse of artists, intellectuals, writers and students used the 1956 Second Congress of the National Union of Writers, a communist-created organisation, to criticise the regime for failing to instigate a formal response to Khrushchev's speech. Whilst the immediate response of the regime was to call a national conference to discuss the events of the Congress, the longer-term response was an attempt at controlling the intellectual and artistic spheres by intensifying censorship and tightening artistic freedom. In general, the Czech leadership was successful in resisting the pressures emanating from the USSR for even limited de-Stalinisation, and generally the temporary thaw occurring elsewhere in the communist bloc was felt least in Czechoslovakia.

Yet, despite attempts to create a utopian society based on new ideals and beliefs, and, through the re-writing of Czech history, the denigration of previous liberal democratic traditions such as voluntary organisations and independent associations, the legacy of civic protest and the tradition of nature conservation could not be entirely eradicated. Indeed, in a certain sense the apluralistic and repressive nature of the communist system preserved and exalted these traditions.

For instance, though the communist system effectively curtailed the activities of those who might have had an interest in re-establishing the *tramping* tradition after 1948, the legacy of this movement gained a new, powerful and ostensibly political momentum that was to inspire environmental activists throughout the communist era (Jehlička *et al*., 2002). The idea of leaving the politicised city and 'escaping' to the freedom of the countryside

represented a rejection of the politicisation of civil society and an endorsement of the values of pre-1948 society. In contrast to the Party's penetration of the home, the workplace and all other social spheres which were a feature of city life, tramping communities in the countryside provided an opportunity to express opinions, to escape the rigidities of state planning and control, and to express a rejection of the materialistic basis of communist life. Of particular significance was the internal democracy of many such communities. Without in any sense wishing to portray the tramping tradition as ecocentric, there was a definite spiritual element to such activities, based on a notion of respecting and enjoying nature and living according to its rules. Tramping represented a counter-culture throughout the communist period. Its glorification of the American Wild West and frontier mythology was in direct opposition to the anti-western (and particularly anti-USA) discourse of the regime. The anti-urban and pro-nature aspect of tramping culture gradually gained political momentum towards the end of the communist era as the ecological devastation of parts of the country became a key issue around which opposition movements were forming (ibid.: 6).

TIS: THE ROOTS OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Whereas tramping represented more of a tradition than a formal conservation movement, the origins of the present movement can be traced back to 1958 and the formation of *Tis* (Yew), the first real nature conservation group to be established along similar lines to current ecological organisations (Kundrata, 1992). It may seem somewhat surprising that an environmental organisation of any description was able to emerge under the restrictive institutional setting of Soviet-inspired communism sketched above. However, it must not be forgotten that *Tis* and the other organisations that emerged during the communist period either operated directly under the auspices of the state (through the Socialist Union of Youth or as part of the *Narodní fronta*, the Communist dominated National Front coalition) or were semi-legal rather clandestine organisations.

Tis was formed when the Association of Nature Conservation broke away from the National Museum Society. Though the organisation effectively emerged from the institutional structures of the party state, its activists were not tied to the state apparatus. At the more radical fringes of the organisation, *Tis* activists did embark upon more ostensibly political campaigns, including a provocative letter sent to the Czechoslovak President in 1971 criticising the plan to build a hydropower plant in a protected area (Jehlička, 2001: 82). Like activists elsewhere in Europe, *Tis* activists in the early 1970s drew their

inspiration from Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*. Indeed, members of the organisation read extracts of the ground-breaking text on Czechoslovak radio (ibid.). This was unquestionably a daring and provocative act at the time of repressive censorship and the *normalisation* of the party state in the early 1970s.

By 1969, *Tis* had split and the Slovak 'branch' had become the Slovak Union of Nature Conservationists, a Party-affiliated organisation. The Czech element of *Tis* survived until December 1979, when the organisation was closed down because it was perceived by the hard-line leadership to have assumed an unacceptable political role by forging links with dissident groups. The organisation was essentially reformulated as *Český svaz ochránců přírody* (Czech Union of Nature Protectors – CUNP), also a Party-affiliated organisation. Whilst in later years activists within CUNP, most notably the Brno branch, were to become radical environmental campaigners, the activists involved in state organisations, who numbered in the region of 50 000, were in large part, and for much of the communist era, people with an interest in nature conservation. They helped clear rubbish from streams, planted trees, dredged rivers and looked after protected areas. Perhaps the most controversial aspect of their activities was the dissemination of knowledge regarding ecosystems, though this was still what the communist regime termed 'small ecology' as opposed to 'big ecology'. The latter involved decision making and policy whereas the former was seen as apolitical and harmless (Jehlička, 2001: 81). For much of the ensuing decade until the second half of the 1980s, environmentalists in Czechoslovakia were involved in 'small ecology'. Librová characterises the activities of environmentalists thus:

> The goals pursued by humble and devoted activity of nature protectors were, on closer inspection, in a fundamental contradiction to the government's orientation on extensive economic growth that was later replaced by the effort to maintain the status quo of citizens' consumption at any cost, including devastation of the environment and natural resources … At a practical level and measured by actual results of [Czech] nature protectors' work, their activities were foolish. [They] were seeking to save individual plants, register ant-hills and prevent amphibians from being run over by cars when they migrated across a road. At the same time, government policy was capable of turning vast tracts of the country into desert by a single stroke of the pen. (Librová, in Vaněk, 1996: 42–3)

The most prominent and visible state-linked organisation with an environmental dimension was *Brontosaurus*, the conservation group that was established in the early 1970s in response to the 1972 UN Stockholm environment conference. The organisation emerged as part of the Socialist Youth Movement and provided a generation of young Czechs with an environmental education as well as the experience of outdoor communal living. The activities of *Brontosaurus* were firmly within the tramping

tradition. From 1975 onwards this involved taking children and young adults for summer camping trips to the countryside, to stay in the beautiful rural locations in order to carry out maintenance work. The ethos of the camps was to combine ecology with a culture (or counter-culture) of music and communal living. It was part educational and part leisure activity and was extremely popular amongst Czech adolescents of the 1970s and 1980s, so much so that demand far outstripped places available. Indeed, many activists within the modern movement date their environmental awakening from their involvement in *Brontosaurus* (Jehlička *et al*., 2002).

The only legal environmental organisation during the communist period that was permitted to discuss what Jehlička terms 'big ecology' issues was the Ecological Section (*Ekologicka sekce*). This was an organisation made up of scientists and experts from within the various institutes of the Academy of Sciences. These people had access to sensitive and secret environmental data and, as the environmental devastation worsened during the 1980s, were called upon by the regime to draft reports, the most notable of which was commissioned in 1983 and 'leaked' to the public three years later. Generally their activities included holding seminars and lectures which were open to the public. The Ecological Section forged links with key dissidents and signatories of Charter 77, and members included many key activists and environmental officials of the post-communist era (Jehlička, 2001: 81; Jehlička *et al*. 2002: 7). By 1989, the Ecological Section was estimated to include a network of over 400 scientists (Tickle and Vavroušek, 1998: 127).

During the 1960s and 1970s, the regime viewed, rather naively, the activities of *Brontosaurus* and a growing interest in conservation as an entirely apolitical leisure pursuit. They distinguished this 'small ecology' from the pressure that began to be exerted on the regime by scientists within the Biological Society of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences from the mid-1980s. While accepting Librová's view, outlined above, that there was an inherent antagonism between even 'small ecology' and the objectives of communist society, in many respects the activities of *Brontosaurus* and CUNP fitted in with the peculiar goals of east European socialist states: volunteering, patriotic appreciation of the countryside and introducing the country's youth to wholesome outdoor activities rather than permissive western influences. During the *normalization* period, the regime itself was keen to encourage citizens to enjoy nature and to leave the politicised cities as a way of diffusing tensions and of distracting them from social and economic issues. When certain elements seemed to be articulating a more political standpoint, for example in the case of *Tis* activists in the 1970s by forging links with dissident groups, their organisation was rapidly dismantled. Environmentalism was tolerated by the regime so long as it was framed in a cultural context, or in a scientific or technological way – the pursuit of solutions to the problems of

pollution rather than a challenge to the political power of the regime to 'deal' with environmental issues (Tickle and Vavroušek, 1998: 157). Though this was typical of the situation in other east European communist states, it was perhaps more pronounced in Czechoslovakia owing to the particularly technocratic nature of society pre-dating 1948. After all, the decorative clubs and the tramping movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries only gained any real legitimacy when they aligned themselves with 'serious' scientists and 'experts'.

THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE CRISIS OF COMMUNISM

When analysing the role of environmentalists during the late 1980s it is important not to lose sight of the causes of regime change and to exaggerate the influence of environmentalists. Green activists constituted a handful of individuals rather than any kind of mass movement. This is not to deny their significance. Even the smallest of protest demonstrations was potentially destabilising for a Soviet-type system which, unlike democratic systems, lacked the institutionalised intermediary structures or ideological capacity to respond to societal demands (Waller, 1993). Yet the suggestion made by some authors (for example, Tismaneanu, 1990, Tickle and Vavroušek, 1998) that what was occurring in the late 1980s was a rebirth of civil society engulfing the communist regimes across Eastern Europe is an inaccurate representation of the role and influence of dissidents at this time and an underrepresentation of other key factors propelling the collapse. This was not a mobilised and empowered civil society in the waiting. Rather, popular mobilisation assisted the process of destabilisation and helped weaken an already severely embattled regime. Environmental activism represented a significant part of a broader submerged opposition movement that included peace activists, musicians and religious groups. As a persistent feature of communist politics in Czechoslovakia during the 1980s despite the repression meted out to them, the activists chiselled away at the already dented authority of the beleaguered leadership so that when changes occurred in the Soviet Union under Gorbachev – the renunciation of the so-called 'Brezhnev Doctrine' – the regime was incredibly vulnerable (Waller, 1993).

The environmental critique was particularly significant because it represented a moral, political and scientific attack. Quite amazingly, the environmental degradation and its consequences seemed to epitomise perfectly everything that was at fault with the system (Fagin, 1994). It struck at the heart of the ideological rationale of the system and indeed the underlying logic of the political and economic model.

First and foremost, the transboundary nature of pollution undermined the

fundamental assumption of the leadership that its jurisdiction over political, economic and social decisions was sacrosanct. By the 1980s, other states were being affected by air pollution emanating from industrial sites in northern Bohemia. That these states and their incumbent environmental organisations criticised the Czechoslovak state undermined its sovereignty. Also, in the sense that the environmental issue appealed to nature and a 'higher order', it challenged the regime's ideological antipathy towards metaphysical and spiritual reason as well as the basic rationale of Soviet communism and its cavalier attitude towards natural resources. The degree of devastation was also impossible to disguise. No amount of censorship of data could disguise a stagnant pond or damage to forests. Respiratory illnesses suffered by children living in Prague could not be blamed on anything other than poor air quality. For a regime that relied so heavily on censorship as a political tool the environmental devastation represented an intractable dilemma.

The environmental critique also struck at the heart of so much that was wrong with the command economy and the political structures of democratic centralism. The emphasis on heavy industry, the subsidization of energy prices and the incapacity of the leadership to consult and engage in dialogue with opposition activists were all highlighted in the context of pollution (ibid.). The environmental devastation blatantly exposed the imperative to modernise the economy, along the lines of western capitalist states, towards information technology rather than heavy industry. Yet this was impossible in the context of political and economic isolation. The necessary foreign capital and know-how were not available and, even if they had been, the organisational structure of the command economy did not lend itself to the radical restructuring of the entire system that was required. It is inconceivable that the production of computers or other high-tech equipment could have occurred while the relationship between state, producer and consumer remained bound by the strictures of central planning and Party control. The Leninist principle of the leading role of the Party was threatened by the devolution of power to experts and intellectuals. The promotion of loyal Party officials who were unlikely to challenge Party decisions was the favoured strategy pursued in all Soviet-type states. Restructured in the 1950s to meet the military and economic needs of the Soviet Union, the Czech economy was particularly energy-intensive, producing quantities of industrial goods far in excess of domestic need, but also, owing to the quantitative rather than qualitative ethic of the system, in an inefficient manner. Not only was the Czechoslovak economy energy-dependent, its power plants were fuelled by brown coal with a low calorific value (Russell, 1990; Slocock, 1992).

The Czech economy of the late 1980s was in dire need of a capital injection to replace the outdated and inefficient industrial equipment that exacerbated pollution. Yet this could not be achieved in the context of the Cold War and

what western leaders saw as the blatant disregard for human rights in the communist bloc. Apart from the fact that the leadership had little idea of how the economy could be restructured within the context of the command economy and the structures of democratic centralism, vested military and industrial interests within the political elite prevented any substantive reform from being considered. In light of experiences in the GDR and Poland, the leadership was fearful of reducing energy subsidies and raising prices – the logical solution for reducing heavy consumption and encouraging conservation. All in all, the environmental issue seemed to epitomize and encapsulate all that was at fault with the Soviet-style system. On this basis the issue attracted the support of dissidents more generally. The semi-legal and, by the late 1980s, increasingly autonomous, environmental organisations became an effective platform from which to lambaste the leadership (Fagin, 1994).

Perhaps most significantly of all, the environmental crisis exposed the extent to which the monolithic and ideologically rigid communist political model denied the regime the benefits of consultation and objective expertise that are instrumental to the policy process in capitalist democracies. By the late 1980s, the environmental 'opposition' (the Ecological Section, *Brontosaurus* activists and other campaigners) held the most accurate knowledge about the true state of the environment as well as the most appropriate solutions. Their cooperation in the process of drafting a state environmental plan was essential, yet this was impossible within the context of the leading role of the Party and the monolithic structure of power. The ideology of Marxist Leninism provided no answers other than to maintain the power of the party elite and to continue along the scientific course to Utopia – a profound embarrassment to even the mildest reformers within the higher echelons of the party.

FROM 'SMALL' TO 'BIG' ECOLOGY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTEST DURING THE 1980S

What the regime had not anticipated, and could not deal with, was the politicisation of environmentalism and, critically, the fusing of links between those concerned with ecological issues and the growing movement of dissidents, from 1977 onwards. Indeed, it is the linkage between environmentalists and Charter 77 that is critical in understanding the politicisation of environmental protest and the radicalisation of the movement by the end of the 1980s.

Initially, the Chartists were encouraged to support environmental campaigns by the western peace movement, with whom the signatories had

close links (Waller, 1989: 311). The political discourse of the New Left had convinced western peace activists of the potential agency of broad-based movements. Not long after their inception, Charter 77 drew attention to environmental degradation as both an abuse of human rights (clean water, healthy life and so on) and a failure of Czechoslovakia to honour international agreements and commitments regarding transboundary pollution and nuclear safety. Although, as Tickle and Vavroušek note, 'the number of Charter signatories who were also active environmentalists could literally be counted on the fingers of one hand, Charter maintained a relatively steady output of ecological statements over the thirteen years of its opposition period' (Tickle and Vavroušek, 1998: 126). Though the numbers of those involved in environmental protest and their exact links will, as a result of the clandestine nature of such activity, always remain somewhat opaque and uncertain, it is fair to conclude that there was much interlinkage between activists, issues and protest networks. Charter 77 appears to have played a critical coordinating role and certainly performed a vital function in mobilising and politicising the new generation of young environmental activists during the second half of the 1980s (Waller, 1989: 316).

By far the most significant change that occurred during the 1980s, and of particular concern for the increasingly embattled regime, was the forming of links between environmentalists and foreign organisations such as Greenpeace, which staged its first western-inspired environmental direct action in the Czech spa town of Karlovy Vary in April 1984 (Tickle and Vavroušek, 1998: 22). This cooperation was facilitated largely by the leaking of reports to the western media, which will be discussed in some detail below.

A NEW GENERATION OF ACTIVISTS

By the latter half of the 1980s, what can be referred to as the environmental movement in Czechoslovakia had certainly changed. Estimates suggest that the largest state environmental organisation, CUNP, had a membership of 26 000 by the end of the decade (Kundrata, 1992). While the ostensibly conservationist element remained, a more politicised and independent component of illegal environmental associations did exist and will be discussed more fully below in the section on the collapse of communism. Though these small aggregations were in many cases offshoots from CUNP and *Brontosaurus*, their ideology and discourse was distinct. What had happened within *Brontosuarus* by the late 1980s is significant in the sense that it reflects the increasing gulf and polarisation between conservationists and a more radical element. While top-level conservation activists within the organisation were controlled by *nomenklatura* cadres of the Socialist Union of

Youth (*Socialistický svaz mláde že* – SSM), the more politicised and interesting activities were being undertaken away from the centre by local activists, loosely affiliated to the regional or local branches of the formal organisation (Bouzková, 1989, 1999; Jehlička, 2001: 83). The ecological critique articulated by the radicals was inspired by a fundamental frustration at the political and economic logic of the communist system and the alienation of urban, industrial and materialistic values of communist society (DeBardeleben, 1985: 37–9). This is not to suggest that conservation was not their prime concern, rather, they had made the leap from 'small' to 'big' ecology and realised the futility of trying to achieve any amelioration of the environment within the framework of the communist system.

Thus, by the end of the 1980s, a new cadre of young and politicised activists had emerged from within the established state environmental organisations such as CUNP and *Brontosaurus*. Critically, although these activists were by and large not part of Charter 77, they were certainly connected to the dissident network of intellectuals. They represented a new cadre of dissident, too young to have experienced 1968 and therefore not traumatised by the Soviet invasion and conditioned by its legacy. Through their limited contact with western activists they were conscious of the growing tide of environmental consciousness that was becoming increasingly prevalent in western states. They were undoubtedly encouraged by the policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika* being pursued by Gorbachev in the USSR. Many of this generation of activists remain within the Czech (and Slovak) environmental movement today, or at least they were prominent figures throughout the 1990s.

While *Tis* activists had read *Silent Spring* a generation earlier, they had not formed links with international organisations and, under pressure from the hard-line regime, backed off from their 'big ecology' endeavours. Although, as Jehlička notes, activists within the legalised Ecological Section (*Ekologicka sekce*) were by the 1980s pursuing 'big' ecology debates under the noses of the leadership (2001: 83), it was the younger generation who embraced a more radical and outwardly political ecology agenda. These young activists were linked up to international environmental organisations such as Greenpeace and *Friends of the Earth* (FoE) and were not prepared to back down, not least because the leadership was far more vulnerable in the late 1980s than it had been in the heyday of *normalisation*. As university students this new cadre had the intellectual capacity as well as the practical access to scientific studies with which to confront the regime with the effects of pollution. Though the interplay between dissidents, intellectuals and international influences over the environmental issue was not unprecedented and should not be exaggerated, it was more entrenched by the latter half of the 1980s and concrete linkages had been formed.

A notable turning point occurred in 1984, when a controversial Party-commissioned report on the state of the Czech environment was leaked, via Charter 77, to the western media.[2] Extracts of the report listing the extent of the devastation and the failings of the administration appeared in *Le Monde*, *Tageszeitung* and *Die Zeit*. Details of the report were also broadcast on Radio Free Europe which, much to the anger of the regime, had begun to take a particular interest in environmental problems and activism (Jehlička, 2001: 83). The exposing of the state of the Czech environment in the western media strengthened the position of environmentalists at home who now could rely on the support of their western allies. From this point onwards, international delegations to Czechoslovakia invariably raised the environmental issue. The regime could no longer hide or deny the extent of the problem and was now forced into a defensive and reactive position. This linkage between activists and international supporters was to prove critical. As the decade progressed, the pan-European concern for the environment exerted a considerable influence on the embattled regime and turned the pollution issue into a highly contentious and pressing concern, ranked alongside human rights, religious freedom and peace.

NEW STRATEGIES AND CAMPAIGN APPROACHES

The change from 'small' to 'big' ecology and the emergence of a new cadre of activists resulted in a profound change in strategy, with western-type actions being used for the first time. Activists within *Brontosaurus* began to use open public meetings to publicise controversial issues and mobilise support. From 1987 the organisation adopted the aim of 'defending the right of young people to a good environment' (Bouzková, 1989: 4). This symbolised the shift within certain quarters of the organisation to a more overtly political ecology ideology and critical position vis-à-vis the regime. Writing in 1989 just prior to the revolution, Bouzková describes the new approach and campaign rationale of the more radical elements of *Brontosaurus*:

> It is our new way of fighting unsuitable projects and it is rather efficient. You get to know who is connected with the project and what the background is. Mostly it is the first truthful information after gossip about the issue. It allows journalists to write about it – it is much easier for them to come here than to run from one person to another asking them questions. And surprisingly all the invited ministries and enterprises send their representatives. (Bouzková, 1989: 9)

One action undertaken by a group of citizens in 1987 stands out as a turning point in terms of campaign strategy and the response of the regime

to environmental protest in general. In early 1987, a letter signed by over 300 people in the *Chomutov* district of North Bohemia was sent to the Chairman of the District National Committee and later to the then Prime Minister, Ladislav Adameč, complaining about the lack of a warning system to alert people to the expected increases in air pollution at particular times of the year. The letter clearly worried the local Party elite and it was eventually reported in the local Party paper some months after it had been sent. Exactly how many of such letters were sent to officials is unknown. What is significant is that by 1987 there was a recognition by the authorities that they needed to respond to such concerns. In this somewhat extraordinary case the officials actually admitted there was a problem and that errors had been made.

From this point onwards, independent criticism of the regime's legacy on the environment increased. This was largely due to a perceived opening in the political opportunity structure precipitated by the appointment of Ladislav Adameč as Czech Prime Minister and other young reformers within the ruling elite and, of course, was a consequence of what was occurring in the USSR under Gorbachev. A lengthy report also written in 1987 by a group of experts aligned to the Slovak Union of Nature Conservationists (*Slovenský sväz ochrancov přirody*) in Bratislava exposed the appalling state of the city's human and physical environment (Stansky, 1988). The detail within the report, which revealed a shocking misuse of resources and outright failure of the authorities to protect the natural environment, necessitated a response from the regime. Though the editor was arrested and other authors threatened, the attempt to suppress and dispute the findings and to make recriminations against those involved was rather half-hearted. Most significantly, the report was described in the official media as having come from 'opposition groups', awarding environmentalists an unprecedented political status normally reserved for human rights activists and peace campaigners.

The politicisation of the environmental cause was now well established, with the opening up of a nascent and highly informal and non-institutionalised discursive forum involving dissidents, experts and reformist members within the ruling elite. Though the demonstrations and petitions that became the salient feature of dissident protests in the run-up to the revolution tended to concern religious and political freedoms, the environmental issue was capable of rousing popular support and aroused a significant amount of popular interest in the months prior to the revolution. It seemed to touch all sections of society: parents of children affected by pollution in Prague, workers concerned about their health and that of their families, specialists and experts, and, of course, dissidents who had long recognised the political potential of the ecological bandwagon.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTEST AND THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM IN 1989

In terms of understanding the role of environmental protest in the collapse of communism, western notions of protest movements and mobilisations operating in constitutional democracies have to be applied cautiously to what was occurring in Czechoslovakia during the late 1980s. This was not the mobilisation of a mass movement. Rather, as noted above, the 'environmental movement' as such involved a handful of activists from a submerged network of dissidents, scientists and citizens. Small demonstrations involving a dozen or so people, the publication and distribution of data, and letters sent to the authorities complaining about particular environmental problems were the kinds of actions being undertaken (Tickle and Vavroušek, 1998:128).

Yet such tactics became increasingly significant in the days prior to the collapse of the old order as environmentalists joined a host of other disgruntled sections of society. Demonstrations against air pollution in the town of Teplice[3] and a protest march against plans to build a new road through Stromovka Park in Prague during 11–13 November, preceded the main demonstrations that brought down the regime later in the month (Shepherd, 2000; Jehličkа, 2001: 85). At this stage the activists on the streets provided an important backdrop to the events taking place at elite level. They were an angry audience egging on the removal of one set of actors from the stage by others intent on running the show in a different way.

However environmental protest was not entirely a sideshow. The political context in which these activists were operating, the strategies they employed and, most importantly, knowledge about the state of the environment altered quite rapidly in the months prior to the revolution. Information regarding the social and health implications of high levels of ambient air pollution became more readily available and there was a strong sense that the pollution issue was gaining political momentum. Whether or not actual levels of pollution did in fact worsen during this period (Hughes, 1991; Jancar-Webster, 1993), the appalling levels of air pollution in the coalmining, steel and metallurgy regions of Northern Bohemia that had been blatantly obvious for years were now the focus of popular condemnation. Writing just prior to the revolution, a Czech journalist for the BBC, Jan Obrman noted:

> As a result of the belief that 'nothing can be done anyway', Prague's residents, along with the rest of Czechoslovakia's population, have shown remarkably little interest in their environment in the past. This attitude seems to be changing for two main reasons. Not only are residents increasingly affected by the serious ecological situation and the mistakes in the way the city has been developed, but there have also been a few opportunities for criticism … This new public interest in the environment, however, is still very limited. (Obrman, 1989)

Whilst there was a new willingness amongst members of the public to criticise and vocalise their frustrations and anger, for the first time the regime appeared to be increasingly active with regard to the environmental issue: though it continued to suppress demonstrations brutally, legal public seminars on the environment were held in Prague and Bratislava during February 1989, and an, albeit rather half-hearted, public opinion survey was carried out in the capital to find out people's attitude to the environmental crisis. This new climate was backed up by the leaking of scientific reports and data, and the increasing criticisms of the regime's ecological record by leading scientists and a general acceptance by the regime that the state of the environment was a cause for concern. However, despite the de facto change in approach, official condemnation of environmental protest remained strong. At the meeting of the Party's Central Committee on 12 October, 1989, Ivan Knotek, Central Committee Presidium member, criticised 'the antisocialist attitude' of unofficial (environmental) groups, accusing them of misusing the public's justified concern about the environment and claimed that these activists opposed 'everything that promoted socialist development – coal-powered, nuclear and hydroelectric power plants' (Obrman, 1989).

THE FORMATION OF NEW ORGANISATIONS

In the months just prior to the revolution a number of small new environmental organisations were formed. It was these groups rather than the older conservation organisations of the communist period that were to become the EMOs of the post-communist period. However, at this stage they were illegal, their operations were clandestine and they constituted a highly politicised submerged network with a few core activists. The most notable of these was *Hnutí Duha* (Rainbow Movement), a Brno-based student group favouring direct action and influenced by the campaign tactics of the activist organisations within Greenpeace International. Established in the summer of 1989, a few months before the revolution, *Hnutí Duha* had links with activists in Prague, where a campaign office was established soon after the revolution. The organisation articulated their ecological critique in global and somewhat esoteric terms.[4]

A similar organisation to *Hnutí Duha* was also established during this period. Called *Dětí Země* (Children of the Earth), this group of young activists emerged from CUNP and aspired to be the Czech branch of the international environmental organisation Friends of the Earth. However, during the early 1990s, FoE-I deemed them to be too insignificant (hence the rather ironic name '*Children* of the Earth') and it was *Hnutí Duha* that ultimately became FoE-CR. At the time of the revolution, *Dětí Země* was also committed to

radical action and a global rather than specifically local environmental focus.

Another significant organisation established in the year prior to the revolution and still in existence today was *Pražské matky* (Prague Mothers). Formed by a circle of friends during a particularly serious smog alert during the winter of 1988/9, the group of mothers campaigned openly on the health implications for children of air pollution in Prague and the locality. An open letter was sent to the media and all relevant state institutions in Prague complaining that their children were suffering increasingly from allergies, asthma and other respiratory diseases as a result of poor air quality, and that the authorities had failed to inform residents of high concentrations of ambient pollution during extreme meteorological conditions. The Mothers argued that the new pollution-monitoring stations were of little use if the results were not transmitted to the public (Obrman, 1989).

The organisation had links with the Catholic Church, and was heavily influenced by Christian teaching and notions of responsibility for nature.[5] It was also supported and encouraged by Charter 77 and the Ecological Section (or *society* as it was often referred to by this stage). The emergence of the Mothers was particularly problematic for the regime in the sense that it claimed to be a group of apolitical non-experts, and to be speaking up for ordinary people and parents in particular. Whilst blatantly political organisations could be dismissed as oppositionists, the Mothers spoke as citizens protesting to a regime that was supposed to be the most appropriate and only acceptable force for protecting the social and health interests of Czech citizens. Their complaints also hit at the heart of what was at fault with the communist system, namely the absence of information and an open exchange between citizens and the state. Though the organisations began by rather humbly claiming to be non-experts concerned with their locality and their children, the Mothers collected vital data on the state of the environment and soon began to extend their campaign focus to include issues affecting the family in general (food, education, health) and to support other ecological campaigns across the country (for example the anti-Temelin campaign, the protest against the *Snezka* mountain lift and the controversial dam at Gabčickovo).

In the weeks just prior to the revolution another environmental organisation was established to coordinate the activities of the emerging movement. It was called *Zelený Kruh* (Green Circle) and its objective was to improve communication between activists. In the weeks before the revolution there were only three organisations who were members of *Zelený Kruh*. By the early 1990s, the number had risen to 40.[6] As with the other organisations established at this time, *Zelený Kruh* was to become a critical component of the nascent environmental movement after the revolution.

CONCLUSION

What has been demonstrated in this chapter is that the historic roots of the modern environmental movement extend back prior to the communist period. The movement draws on a strong 'small' ecology tradition, but one that has nevertheless tended to cast conservation and a concern for nature in a political and dissenting light: a rebellion against conventional life styles, a reaction to industrialisation and urbanisation. It is this aspect of the tradition that is perhaps most relevant in understanding Czech environmental activism in the second half of the 1980s, which took on a new, more radical guise and made a leap from 'small' to 'big' ecology in terms of the ecological critique of Soviet-style communism, its values, logic and institutions. For many within the politicised movement of the late 1980s the environmental crisis provided a useful and legal platform from which to lambaste the embattled regime, and the mobilisation proved critical in helping to erode any legitimacy in the regime that still remained.

Whether the modern movement has retained this 'big' ecology agenda is debatable and will be considered in the ensuing chapters. It is fair to conclude at this point that neither the legacies of tramping, prewar conservationism, nor the unique function and highly politicised role of the submerged movement of the late 1980s were particularly enabling with regard to the role that environmental organisations were required to fulfil after 1990. EMOs were expected very quickly to contribute to policy debates, to acquire a professionalism and strategic logic typical of their western counterparts.

In contrast to western movements, which have in many respects evolved incrementally in response to the various stages of modernisation and whose professionalism and political function is very much a product of their specific evolution, Czech environmentalism has had to rebuild itself on a number of occasions as a result of political hiatus (the dissolution of civil society in the late 1930s and the consolidation of one-party rule after 1948), most recently since 1990. The present movement has a rich tradition on which it can and does draw, yet its current discourse and patterns of interaction with political and economic elites may have more to do with current agendas regarding EU expansion and economic restructuring than with tangible traditions from the pre-communist or communist period. This undoubtedly has profound implications for the movement and its linkage with Czech citizens. The extent to which the movement has had to be built almost from scratch during the 1990s and the legacies of pre-1989 activism almost expunged is a key theme of the following chapter.

NOTES

1. Milada Horakova, who had been a member of parliament and an anti-Nazi resistance leader, was tried and sentenced to death in 1950. Rudolf Slansky, the once prominent Party secretary-general and Vlado Clementis, the former foreign affairs minister, with 13 other prominent communists, suffered a similar fate (Suda, 1969: 43).
2. The report, entitled 'Report on the State of the Environment in Czecholsovakia', was commissioned by prime minister Lubomir Strougal, generally seen as a reformer by Czechoslovak standards. Its main author, Dr Jaroslav Stoklasa, was later forced to leave his post in Prague and move to České Budějovice. This gives some indication of how seriously the regime was beginning to take the environmental issue and the extent to which it had, by virtue of the punishments dealt out to environmentalists, become a potent dissident issue, along with human rights.
3. In Teplice, a 16-year-old apprentice put up posters calling for people to gather and protest against 'the inhuman attitude of leading figures of the political apparatus'. About a thousand residents of the town responded and protested, wearing gas masks. The event had a domino effect across Northern Bohemia (Jehlička, 2001).
4. Interview with Daniel Vondrouš, April 1994.
5. Interview with Michaela Valentová (*Pražské matký*), May 1999.
6. Interviews with Marie Haisová (*Zelený Kruh*), April 1994, June, 1995.

4. The development of the Czech environmental movement, 1990–2000

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will trace the development of the Czech environmental movement during the first post-communist decade, a period of supposed democratic consolidation. In addition to charting the evolution of the movement, the political and economic constraints on EMOs will be analysed, particular attention being paid to the issue of access to and conditionality of resources, the impact of the political process or political opportunity structure, and the extent to which the specific political and economic context during the 1990s shaped environmental protest and conditioned the strategic choices of activists.

For the environmental movement, as with many aspects of political, social and economic activity in the Czech Republic, the period was one of considerable flux. A brief interlude of unprecedented political influence in the early 1990s was followed by a nadir of isolation and marginalisation (1992–7) reminiscent of the communist period. From 1997 until the end of the decade the professional organisations that had become the institutionalised expression of the green movement enjoyed a certain degree of political access and influence within the re-ignited policy process. Such flux is perhaps surprising insofar as one might have assumed that, once the authoritarian system gave way to democratic institutions and procedure, the country was on a firmly established democratic course, and the position of associations and other emblems of democratic society would gradually have improved and evolved. What the case of the Czech environmental movement suggests is that the introduction of political democracy can, in the short-term at least, be destabilising and a non-linear process.

This chapter makes a number of fundamental observations. First, the collapse of communism and the onset of political democracy in 1990 was not as enabling and empowering as might be assumed for the nascent and inexperienced environmental movement organisations that had played a prominent role in the demise of the old order. The 1990s are best seen as a period of dislocation and gradual adaptation rather than a flourishing of their influence and political status. As will be illustrated in this chapter, EMOs had

to adapt to a very different political context and were expected to fulfil a contrasting political function from that of the dissident days of the late 1980s. At best the movement was expected to contribute and provide professional input into the new policy process; not to oppose but to propose, not to court radical abstract agendas but to focus on the detail and mundane small print of policy and legislation. At worst the movement was required to be apolitical, to relinquish its former ambitions of exerting influence over the political process and to accept the economic and political decisions of the Klaus government as a necessary and non-negotiable foundation for any future political access for the environmental lobby.

The second point to be emphasised here, and indeed a central theme of the book, is that the evolution of the movement has been both path-dependent and shaped by the political circumstances and the economic agendas of the post-communist period. As to where the legacy of the past intersects with the modern context is hard to determine, indeed it could be argued that the two cannot be extrapolated, yet to assume that the particularities of the environmental movement can be explained by the transition from communism alone is to ignore the critical impact of current factors shaping the strategies, political access and ideology of organisations, factors which can be blamed directly, not on the authoritarian past, but on the subjective agendas of the present.

It is therefore more appropriate perhaps to acknowledge the importance of the authoritarian legacy *plus* the unique context of the political and economic reform agendas of the post-communist period as having imposed a unique developmental course on the environmental movement and having conditioned the interaction between movement organisations, society and the state since 1990. Indeed, the movement has been particularly affected by the turbulent political opportunity structure of the democratic era. Czech EMOs have suffered as a consequence of the reactionary purging of pro-environment political leaders such as Bedrich Moldan in the early 1990s for supposedly having cooperated with the old regime, by the dissolution of the Czechoslovak Federation in 1993 which resulted in many Slovak activists leaving the movement, by the sudden death of one of the movement's most influential and prominent figures, the former environmental minister, Josef Vavroušek, in February 1994, and by Václav Klaus's particular antipathy towards civil society and environmentalists. The adoption of a neoliberal economic ideology, or the 'Washington consensus', has imposed specific constraints on the movement and has, to a great extent, determined the availability of resources. Such factors cannot be ignored or simply subsumed within the 'authoritarian legacy'.

The value of employing such an approach when analysing the evolution of the movement since 1990 cannot be overemphasised. It cautions against

assuming Czech EMOs will behave like their western counterparts, or indeed that their current modes of operation and strategic choices are merely temporary phenomena. Despite outward appearances, the movement has not entirely followed a western course. Though EMOs in the Czech Republic seem to function and operate like those of any other west European environmental movement, such outward similarities should not be permitted to obscure fundamental differences that relate as much to the particular neoliberal economic agenda in which the Czech Republic is absorbed as to the legacies of the past. The Czech movement today may resemble its western counterparts – professional, well-resourced, ideologically pragmatic and relatively close to the policy elite – but it does not share their developmental trajectory, nor does it have the same relationship with the political and economic elite. Its capacity to mobilise and raise resources is very different largely owing to the current context in which environmental agendas and activism are forced to seek an accommodation with an aggressive variant of neoliberal global capitalism. The particular position of the Czech Republic within the global regime of capital accumulation, the interplay between policy makers, multinationals and the financial institutions that dictate the conditionality of the reform agenda, exerts a profound impact on the power, influence and capacity of the environmental movement. As will be illustrated in this chapter, the 1990s established the fact that the movement's activities are to be dictated by the context described above: access to resources and the capacity to contest decisions and exert influence are constrained by the particular position of the Czech Republic within the global political and economic power structures of late capitalism.

THE 'ENTHUSIASTIC' PERIOD[1]: 1990–91

From the perspective of the early 1990s, it seemed as though the environmental movement was destined to enjoy an unprecedented degree of influence and political opportunity under the aegis of democratic politics. Opinion polls at this time suggested that the issue of pollution was of great concern to the general public and was seen by many as a top priority for the new regime. Moreover, the unusual political prominence of environmentalists, both prior to the revolution and within the ranks of the new regime, seemed to suggest that the environmental issue would receive special attention in post-communist politics. The new administration, under the premiership of Petr Pithart, was composed of dissidents and activists many of whom had been involved with ecological groups at the time of the revolution. The degree of overlap between the new political cadre and EMO activists was particularly evident in the Ministry of the Environment: Josef Vavroušek, the Federal

Minister, and Bedrich Moldan, the Czech Environmental Minister, had both been members of the Ecological Section of the Biological Society (discussed in the previous chapter). Others such as Dr Jaroslav Stoklasa, responsible for compiling data on the state of the environment in the early 1980s, were now working within the ministry.

Yet such overlap between movement activists and the new administration brought problems for the fledgling environmental movement in the sense that there occurred 'a massive brain drain [from the movement] to the newly founded state environmental institutions' (Jehlička, 2001). Overnight the movement lost its intellectual and experienced upper tier, the bulk of whom were now full-time employees within the new administration, designing new laws and regulations, and helping to formulate an administrative structure to deal with the environmental devastation of the communist period. Though these former activists did not in any sense sever their links with the movement, the EMOs were now run by a core of young radical activists who, not surprisingly, lacked any political experience.

THE 'NEW' ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT OF THE EARLY 1990S

The post-communist environmental movement included established networks of environmental activists involved in CUNP, the Czechoslovak Union of Nature Conservationists (*Český svaz ochránců přirody*), and the Ecological Section during the communist era. Such networks have remained particularly prominent at the local and regional level, where conservation groups aligned to CUNP are often a visible expression of the environmental movement even today. However, in Prague and Brno, it has been the new, more politicised, EMOs established either just before or immediately after the revolution that have become the dominant expression of environmental activism in the post-communist period.

In the months just prior to the 'velvet revolution' the number of such organisations had increased dramatically. By early 1990, the number of groups in existence were estimated to be somewhere in the region of 800 (Šilhanová *et al*., 1994, 1996). The new EMOs consisted typically of young students who had been drawn to the environmental issue during the months prior to the velvet revolution via state organisations such as the CUNP, which had been established in 1979, or *Brontosaurus*, the conservation branch of the Socialist Youth organisation (Tickle and Vavroušek, 1998: 125; Waller, 1989). The new EMOs, such as *Hnutí Duha* and *Děti Země*, were small amorphous organisations that lacked cohesive internal structures. There was also a great deal of overlap between groups in terms of the campaign issues and the

activists involved. It was not untypical for activists to form or be involved in more than one organisation at this time. In many cases apparently separate EMOs occupied the same small office space and were run by the same people.

FUNDING AND RESOURCES

EMOs were in need of tutelage and practical assistance with regard to running an organisation and communicating with the public and the political elite. They were duly offered this by a host of external agencies including the Swedish environmental organisation *Acid Rain*, philanthropic foundations such as USAID, the German Marshall Fund (committed to economic restructuring in Central and Eastern Europe), the British Know How Fund and (later) EC/EU funding as part of the *Phare Program*. In the early 1990s several young Czech environmental activists with little knowledge and experience of environmental activism within a democratic context visited their western counterparts in organisations such as Friends of the Earth (FoE) and Greenpeace. However, this learning opportunity served mainly as an inspiration for changes in the form and function of movement organisations and as access to information rather than as a source of substantive learning. As one activist who visited western organisations at this time notes, 'we simply came there and discussed with similar organisations in Germany, Austria and the Netherlands about what they did, where they had money from and so forth'.[2]

Organisations received virtually no money from Czech citizens, nor did they seek to establish a fee-paying membership, preferring a handful of active members to passive supporters. It is not surprising therefore that they became almost entirely dependent on external funding and transfers of cash from international parent EMOs or from other foreign donors (Sálek, 1994).

DIVERSITY WITHIN THE MOVEMENT

Not all of the new organisations established after 1989 were political campaigning groups of the kind described above. One of the most influential organisations of the post-communist period has been the Society for Sustainable Living (*Společnost protrvale udržitelný život* – STUJ), established in 1992 by the late Josef Vavroušek after his tenure as environmental minister. Insofar as membership of STUJ is open to professionals working in the field of the environment it resembles the Ecological Section of the communist era. Though STUJ has been highly influential during the entire period, it is not a political campaign group as such: it runs seminars, discussion groups and

public meetings and has become a respected authority on environmental issues. Its members include environmental lawyers, academics and scientists who all command respect and constitute what can be described as a green intelligentsia which even the most robust political leaders cannot entirely ignore. The early 1990s also saw the emergence of organisations set up to provide services to businesses or to the community, or simply to attempt to coordinate the rapidly diversifying and expanding movement.

Within the latter, the most notable organisation is the Prague-based organisation, *Zelený Kruh* (Green Circle),[3] established on the eve of the revolution – and still in existence today – with the objective of seeking to improve communication between the new EMOs, and between the movement and citizens. *Zelený Kruh* was born out of the realisation that the fledgling new organisations needed assistance and support in their activities. They invariably operated from extremely modest premises at this stage and the idea behind *Zelený Kruh* was to provide a basis for press conferences and meetings. The organisation was able to acquire quite spacious offices from Prague City Council, and its first director, Marie Haisová, set up conference facilities, meeting rooms and a small library. In this early period, membership of *Zelený Kruh* went from three to 30 organisations. Member organisations were helped with radio and TV broadcasts, were invited to discussion forums with business leaders and politicians and were encouraged to share information and know-how. *Zelený Kruh* was funded by small grants from the Ministry of the Environment, by donations from the various foreign philanthropic organisations that had set up camp in Prague, and from the small membership fees paid by organisations. In the early 1990s, relations between *Zelený Kruh* and the ministry were good, and the spirit of this umbrella organisation was firmly in line with the thinking of Bedrich Moldan and Josef Vavroušek, who, as former activists turned new ministers, sought a more coordinated and professional sphere of EMOs to assist in the policy process.

Other organisations established in this early period, that were not ostensibly campaigning organisations but which nevertheless formed part of the wider movement, include various educational organisations, whose aim it was to promote environmentalism amongst children and to run 'green' activities within communities. In addition to the long-established organisations such as *Brontosaurus* (which had by this stage split into two separate organisations, Brontosaurus Movement and Brontosaurus Association, the former being more of a campaigning organisation) and ČSOP, new organisations were formed, most notably *Tereza* and *Rosa*.

There were organisations formed at this time offering services to business and the community. These included the Czech Environmental Management Center (CEMC) in Prague whose aim it was 'to disseminate environmental know how throughout Czech industry'.[4] Founded in early 1992 by 32

businesses, CEMC presented itself as a professional organisation providing its members with the information and assistance they needed on the environment and how to adapt to the new legislative framework. The organisation is included here largely because its stated aim was to 'decrease the damage done to the Czech environment by industry, enhancing industry's profits at the same time'. Other organisations were established at this time, invariably set up by international organisations, with the aim of providing EMOs with legal and other advice. *Ecopoint*, established in 1992 by the IUCN (International Union for Nature Conservation) was one such organisation whose aim was to promote conservation through conferences and seminars and to act as a liaison centre for EMOs. Ecopoint produced the first directory of environmental contacts, which proved to be a particularly useful resource for activists within the movement, as well as for journalists and others interested in the Czech environment. The organisation survived the early 1990s because it was entirely funded by the IUCN.

IDEOLOGY, STRATEGIES AND RELATIONS WITH THE STATE

Despite a global ideological focus and a stated reluctance to embrace 'formal' politics, the new EMOs rather quickly acquired western protest strategies, largely through their contacts with western organisations and the exchange of know-how received from international organisations. The larger Prague-based organisations had by 1992 shifted their attention from the global to the national agenda. Their 'radicalism' was due in large part to the fact that such protest activity, almost regardless of its focus and content, was unknown in a country that had experienced decades of hard-line authoritarian rule. As Jehlička notes, 'this type of activity, by standards of Czech political culture [was] entirely unconventional' (2001: 87). Patočka's depiction of these activists as pursuing 'student happenings' is also quite accurate in the sense that they were run by students and their agendas were more esoteric than policy-focused, typical of the more radical campus-based component of western movements (Patočka, 1995: 19). It is fair to say that their amorphous internal structures and their rather haphazard organisation were less a conscious rejection of professionalism and more a reflection of their inexperience.

What was unusual was the fact that, despite their internal disarray at this time, these EMOs enjoyed unusually close links (by western standards at least) with the newly established environmental agencies and their opinions on policy were widely canvassed. This can be attributed largely to the attitude of the new dissident-based political elite. As already noted, the first post-communist Czech environmental minister, Bedrich Moldan, and the new

federal minister, Josef Vavroušek, had both been active in the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences ecological section before 1989 (Waller and Millard, 1992: 170). In their new governmental roles they sought close cooperation with the EMOs and activists with whom they had campaigned months before.

THE GREEN PARLIAMENT INITIATIVE

This sentiment of cooperation and consensus found its most blatant institutional expression in the formation of the Green Parliament in early 1990, a progressive venture designed to establish a new type of relationship between the state and environmental organisations in the post-communist period. The objective of the Parliament was to create a discursive forum for discussion between officials entrusted with making environmental policy and representatives of as many environmental associations as were willing to participate. Such cooperation was sought because of the urgent need to establish new laws and regulations and to begin dealing with the corrosive legacies of the past. At the heart of the Parliament initiative was the belief that all associations, 'from radical green movements, to moderate conservation groups, to scientific foundations, had a role to play and should participate in the development of Czech environmental policy'.[5] For its founders, the Green Parliament was to be the institutional embodiment of a perceived partnership between the state and the non-governmental environmental sector.

The role and function of the Green Parliament were outlined in a document drawn up by the Czech Ministry of the Environment in 1990 entitled *The Rainbow Programme*. The Parliament was described as 'an assembly of NGO representatives, to whom all the Ministry's significant plans shall be submitted for consultation and opinions' (Moldan, 1990: 22). The Parliament was to meet regularly at the Czech Ministry of the Environment in Prague, and although its recommendations were not prescribed as binding on the ministry, there was a sense in which the new officials, lacking experience in policy making and administration, were keen to consult interested parties. Bedrich Moldan, who was largely responsible for establishing the Green Parliament initiative, was conscious of the need to incorporate a diversity of views in the development of an environmental agenda. Moreover, in the Green Parliament idea Moldan recognised the potential opportunity to legitimise the new administration, and to prevent a disparity of activists becoming alienated from the state and the executive apparatus.[6] As the fledgling associations were not used to any form of legal participation, a top down initiative such as the Green Parliament was deemed necessary to 'nurture and persuade' associations into the politics of non-violent and effective dialogue, without attempting to alter ideological convictions in the process.[7] Moldan also emphasised the need for

officials to be sensitive to diverse and radical opinions in the early stages lest the initiative of the Parliament be jeopardised.[8]

In practice, the Green Parliament met regularly and environmental associations were invited to discuss key issues such as nuclear energy as an alternative to coal-fired power stations, and to review policy documents with officials. In the early months of the Parliament, the larger Prague-based groups such as Greenpeace, *Děti Země* (Children of the Earth) and *Hnutí Duha* (Rainbow Movement) benefited most from the Green Parliament and through it enjoyed closer access to the policy process. EMO activists were consulted on legislation, and organisations such as Greenpeace were able to assist in the formulation of what amounted to a relatively radical environmental legal framework.

However, the Green Parliament failed to fulfil the ideals ascribed to it and finally ceased to exist in early 1992, by which time the number of activists attending was far outweighed by officials from the Ministry of the Environment. The failure of such a radical initiative can be explained largely in terms of its rather naïve aspiration to bring unity to a diverse and embryonic movement at a time of such flux, when activists were having to establish their ideological identities and to locate themselves within the new democratic political context. According to Moldan, one of the main reasons for the collapse of the venture was that the Green Parliament initiative tried to bring diverse environmental associations together at a time when the non-governmental environmental sector was highly fragmented and individuals working for associations such as Duha, *Děti Země* and Greenpeace were keen to promote their own work and positions. This desire of EMOs to express their autonomy and to shun cooperation is quite understandable as they were experiencing a period of unprecedented free political expression. There was also the added pressure of EMOs having to compete with each other for external funding. This discouraged cooperation and the sharing of information, particularly as funding was, and remains, project-based.

The greatest problem that was to distract EMOs until the mid-1990s was that the false unity of the environmental movement during the final months of communism had been fractured by the collapse of the old regime in November 1989. Democracy provided opportunities for political expression, but it also served to fragment the movement. The seemingly ideal relationship between the various strands of the movement during the last days of the old regime concealed a number of critical underlying tensions regarding attitudes to nuclear energy, to the economic reform agenda and whether to adopt a global rather than national focus. Activists had now to confront ideological differences and degrees of 'greenness' that had previously been eclipsed by their unifying opposition to Soviet-style communism. As noted above, the movement was also affected by the fact that it had lost a number of key

activists. Many of the movement's leading figures, former dissidents and experts were now either engaged in government or on the fringes of formal political power (for example, Bedrich Moldan, Josef Vavroušek and Ivan Dejmal, who had been key figures within the movement, were now part of the new state environmental agencies). Although cooperation between the new elite and EMOs was close, the involvement and expertise of such figures within the protest movement was difficult to replace. Other former activists had retreated back into academia, science or conservation; others simply left the political arena for the newly reclaimed private sphere.

Though certain EMOs were able to exert a degree of influence on the new policy process through the Green Parliament and to establish close personal links with officials, in general the climate of cooperation and consensus was hindered by the fact that the EMOs were finding it difficult to adjust to the changed political circumstances. Environmental protest had emerged as illegal or semi-legal clandestine opposition movements under authoritarian rule, enmeshed within a submerged and highly politicised 'parallel society'.[9] Inexperienced, poorly-resourced EMOs were now required to enter the formal political sphere and to cooperate and negotiate with the new democratic regime. They were being invited to sit round a table and help draw up a concrete policy framework; they needed to deal in facts and realistic strategies to take responsibility for the amelioration of the ecological degradation of the preceding decades. The only political experience the environmentalists had was clandestine opposition within submerged amorphous structures or within the state conservation groups in the late 1980s.

Despite the ambitions of the Green Parliament and attempts to establish close cooperation between the environmental movement and policy officials, the rapidly constructed framework of environmental legislation was, in practice, established by those within the new agencies with the help of certain activists. Reluctant to work with each other, to widen their support base or contemplate what some activists saw as mundane issues, the EMOs became increasingly detached from the policy process. In this sense the spirit of cooperation of the new political elite had come too early for EMOs who could not take advantage of this open and unique political climate. The dissident turned new political elite was waiting for the young inexperienced EMOs to adapt and take up positions around the negotiating table. Unfortunately, by the time the EMOs had adapted and reformed, their involvement was no longer sought.

THE GREEN PARTY

Any discussion of Czech environmental politics in the early 1990s must include analysis of the controversial Green Party. Across Western Europe

EMOs have tended to establish links with green parties and usually there is some overlap between the two strands of the broadly-defined environmental movement (Müller-Rommel and Poguntke, 2002; Doherty, 2002). The rebirth of the Czech Green Party during 2002 and the positive implications of this for the environmental movement will be discussed in Chapter 6.

However, in the case of Czechoslovakia in the early 1990s, the Green Party was entirely distinct from the environmental movement, with no membership overlap and absolutely no communication or cooperation between the two. Yet it appeared, as Jehlička observes, that 'it was the Green Party rather than environmental groups that immediately after the November 1989 political upheaval became the champions of the environmental cause in the Czech Republic' (2001: 85). The apparent reluctance of EMOs to cooperate with the party seems extraordinary given their support after the revolution and the important link between green parties and EMOs elsewhere. Indeed, whilst the Green Party had an estimated membership of 15000 in February 1990, the number of activists involved in EMOs came to a few hundred, and was in fact in decline. In the environmentally conscious political climate of 1990, the Green Party looked set for electoral success. Able to boast of 11000 signatories on its application for legal status as a new political party less than a month after the collapse of the communist regime, the party also obtained premises and equipment at a time when such other fledgling parties were operating from people's homes and from shared rooms.

However, such an assessment of the Green Party and the decision of EMOs not to work with the party require much closer examination. In fact, the apparent popular support for the party was illusory: most of those who joined in 1990 did so just after it was established (*Děti Země*, 1999). These people were invariably Communist Party veterans who sought political refuge from the new mainstream political elite. It was later revealed that in fact the Green Party was funded and set up by the Communist regime's secret police. The 'activists' involved were entirely unknown to the dissident environmental movement and had not been involved in green politics during the late 1980s. In terms of ideology, the party was to an extent typical of other green parties established across Eastern Europe insofar as it lacked a postmaterialist ideological base. Its activists, in stark contrast to those involved with EMOs both in Czechoslovakia and across western Europe, were former workers with a technical background, the majority of whom had not completed higher education. These people were not middle-class professionals with post-materialist values (Jehlička, 1999; Inglehart, 1990). The party's 'green' rhetoric was based on a notion of the environment as a human health issue, and on this basis attracted the support of reactionary elements of the industrial working classes in Prague and other urban centres across the country. The EMOs were indeed right to shun this chimera.

Most significantly, the apparent electoral support for the party rapidly declined: claims made in the Czech media at this time that the party had up to 80 000 supporters are only explicable on the basis that the party played on concerns about the health risks of pollution generated by the environmental movement in the run-up to the 'velvet revolution'. Initial opinion poll support of around 11 per cent failed to occur: in the first free election of June 1990, the Green Party obtained only 4.1 per cent of the vote and thus did not cross the threshold to gain parliamentary representation. This can largely be explained by the fact that the party's agenda consisted entirely of issues also adopted by other mainstream parties. Support for the party continued to decline throughout the 1990s and by the end of the decade the party had fewer than 300 members (Jehlička and Kára, 1994; Jehlička, 2001: 85). Those who remained involved had no contact with the environmental movement, were Communist Party veterans in their 50s and 60s, and fused their interest in the environment with a reactionary agenda including anti-Roma, anti-western sentiments.

Thus, in terms of understanding the political fortunes of the environmental movement in the 1990s, the Green Party played no positive role whatsoever, if anything quite the reverse. EMO activists were suspicious of Green Party activists and openly refused to endorse the party, preferring to work instead with 'green' politicians from other parties.[10] The absence of a Green Party with parliamentary representation and links to the movement worked against EMOs. The rumours regarding the infiltration of the Green Party by former communists only fuelled the anti-environmentalist rhetoric of the Klaus government. As Jehlička and Kostolecký conclude, 'for the rest of the following decade, the Greens became a party forgotten both by the voters and by the media' (2003: 2).

THE POLITICAL MARGINALISATION OF EMOS: 1992–6

The nature and dimensions of environmental protest and the role of EMOs within post-communist politics had begun to change during the second half of 1991, largely as a result of the break-up of *Civic Forum* and the political demise of the dissident-based elite. As a consequence of the links between environmental activists and *Charter 77* during the communist period, the environmental movement was closely connected to Civic Forum, and embodied the culture of movement politics favoured by Václav Havel and others in the early 1990s. However, as the day-to-day pressures of political decision making became a reality, broad-based movements were seen as inappropriate forms of political organisation in the sense that they were viewed as being plagued by disunity and the product of ideological

compromise. As Civic Forum began to splinter and disintegrate, western-style adversarial and professional political parties emerged from the embers. The environmental movement found it much harder to operate in such a context, not least because, by this stage, its allies within the political elite had largely been removed from power or had simply left the political stage of their own volition and been replaced by a new generation of career politicians with links to business and investors.

However, in terms of understanding the marginalisation of the environmental movement after 1992, it was the electoral victory of Václav Klaus and his right-of-centre coalition in June 1992 that proved to be the critical turning point. The change in political climate was poignantly reflected in the realm of environmental politics and activists became engulfed in the fierce ideological rift between forces on the political right advocating neoliberal shock therapy, rapid wealth creation and a deregulated society, and the non-communist centre–left who emphasised a more gradualist approach, civic rights and environmental protection (Jehlička and Kára, 1994: 159). Instead of dealing with an environmental minister and a set of officials who had themselves been activists and who sought to establish a progressive regulatory framework, the EMOs had now to face a political elite whose expressed objective was the deregulation of the economy and society. The new Minister of the Environment, František Benda, refused to meet EMOs or to set up either formal or informal dialogue. This was the era in which a government was determined to pursue its radical mandate unobstructed by opposition forces. As opponents of unregulated growth, EMOs were immediately identified as political enemies and were portrayed as being communist relics, out of kilter with the modern political climate. It must be acknowledged that public concern over the environment had already begun to decline at this time as the impact of economic restructuring took hold. But it was Klaus's hard-line neoliberal rhetoric that augmented such attitudes and ushered in a climate of hedonistic individualism in which concern for the environment was suddenly politically unfashionable.

Klaus's personal ideological antipathy towards politicised interest associations and civil society in general was bitterly reflected in his attitude and behaviour towards the environmental movement. In various speeches and discussions regarding the environment, he dismissed environmentalists as subversive activists who sought to destabilise the political order and who had little understanding of the issues facing Czech society (Klaus, 1994). In general, he rejected the idea that the environment was a key priority, arguing instead that it was a consideration for later, once the market economy was in place. He famously used the analogy of a cake, the environment being the icing, to be added only once the cake, the market economy, had been 'baked' [ibid.]. He went as far as rejecting the environmental plan for 1995 (a

thoroughly modest document) on the basis that it included the phrase 'sustainable development', a concept he rejected and insisted should not appear in any government document.

To say that EMOs were excluded from the policy process at this stage is to suggest that a process was in fact in place. In reality, no new regulations were drawn up during Klaus's tenure. In fact his administration did not even complete the legislative framework relating to environmental impact assessment and protected landscapes that had been initiated during the earlier period and required final amendments. Act 114 on protected landscapes required an additional clause relating to the setting up of protected areas. This was not completed during Benda's tenure and as a consequence no new areas could be established at a time when the pro-growth ethic and the expansion of foreign direct investment made protected landscapes particularly vulnerable.[11]

EMOs AS THE TARGETS OF SURVEILLANCE

Such antipathy towards the environmental sector reached a nadir in February 1995 with the inclusion of three EMOs (Greenpeace, *Děti Země* and *Hnutí Duha*) on a state intelligence services' list of 'subversive organisations' who were to be the target of surveillance.[12] Reminiscent of the attitude of the communist authorities towards environmentalists in the 1980s, these three campaigning organisations were being portrayed as political subversives. On this supposedly secret list, that would be issued to public authorities and other bodies including schools and local community organisations, the other names were predominantly far-right fascist and skinhead organisations. This, plus the fact that the three environmental organisations included on this list were committed to non-violent protest and to working within the democratic process, provoked political outrage.

President Havel intervened, as did a number of journalists and prominent figures in Czech society. As a result, two of the three EMOs (Greenpeace and *Děti Země*) were eventually removed from the list, but no apology was ever issued. *Duha*, ironically the least radical and most professional EMO in the Czech Republic, technically remained on the list. Moreover, whether the government had commissioned the list in the first place was never fully ascertained (Fagin and Jehličká, 1998). In addition to raising a number of questions about the role of the security services in democratic politics, and the attitude of the government towards civil society and opposition opinion, the incident signified the extent to which the political opportunity structure within which EMOs operated had altered since the halcyon days of 1990–91. What had begun as a relationship based on close cooperation had now descended into one of open hostility and suspicion.

The initial response of the larger, more recently established campaigning EMOs to the changed political climate was to pursue a more radical agenda. Some groups, most notably *Hnutí Duha* and later also Greenpeace (established in Czechoslovakia in March 1992), began to employ a repertoire of action that can most appropriately be described as 'civil disobedience'. The growing influence on the Czech movement of western EMOs, in particular FoE-UK who were themselves embarking on radical campaigns and returning to direct action as a campaign strategy, perhaps encouraged such a response amongst the young cadre of Czech activists.

However, this radical response was short-lived, not least because the strategy alienated a conservative public who were concerned with issues of unemployment, the restitution of property and the general social and economic impact of the neoliberal reform agenda. The excitement and optimism of the immediate revolutionary period had begun to wane and a concern for the state of the environment appeared to be the first casualty of this new political climate. Notwithstanding their more pressing material concerns in the early 1990s, the Czech public were generally unused to political agitation in any shape or form. While the velvet revolution had involved protest marches and demonstrations, traditionally Czechs had shunned direct action and displayed a passivity or subservience most notably characterised by Hašek's legendary *Švejk*, or Hrabal's anti-hero, *Ditie*. Czech political history and the quest for national self-determination during the nineteenth century were characterised, not by radical protest, but by intellectuals periodically mobilising sections of society. In the aftermath of the revolution there was a fear that such protest would destabilise the new democratic system. Perceptions of the role of citizens and of protest within democratic politics were fashioned very much by the authoritarian legacy; democracy was about voting and democratic governments were seen as good and likely to look after the interests of citizens. Whereas protest and direct action have become institutionalised within established western democracies over the past three decades, this was obviously not the case in former communist states in the early 1990s. Older people in particular, encouraged by the pro-Klaus media and fearful that authoritarianism would return, as in 1968, saw environmental activists as little more than covert communists or anarchists who were intent on destroying democracy and the market economy. The image used by communists in the 1980s of green activists as melons, green on the outside but red on the inside, was now effectively resurrected.

Such attitudes soon provoked a reactionary response amongst EMOs. Radical protest and strategies of the immediate post-revolutionary period practically vanished. The number of EMOs had by this stage shrunk as a result of amalgamations and the disintegration of smaller aggregations. Those that remained were now desperate to distance themselves from radicalism and

keen to present themselves as professional organisations, concerned with national rather than global or esoteric ideas, and to emphasise their potential contribution to the policy process. There were of course exceptions, particularly away from Prague and the hub of Klaus's administration. Most notably, the organisation 'South Bohemian Mothers', which operated from the provincial town of České Budějovice, retained its radical campaign against the Temelín nuclear power plant. However, generally, those EMOs that sought political influence, or who still attempted to obtain grants from the Ministry of the Environment, jettisoned their radicalism in favour of a stifling conformity.

Indeed, during much of the 1990s it was virtually impossible to get Czech EMOs to endorse radical tactics, or to openly denounce the controversial Temelín nuclear power plant. Even the Czech chapter of Greenpeace, which is constitutionally bound not to accept state funding and is supported by its international parent organisation, was reluctant to express radical opinions and to campaign on controversial issues. The director at this time, Hana Pernicová, argued that the attitudes of Czech society and the political climate were such that radical strategies and tactics were not permissible.[13] Campaigns, if they were to attract public support, had to relate to issues of concern to citizens, and not appear to contradict the rationale of the market. For much of this period Greenpeace did not campaign actively against the Temelín nuclear plant and resisted attempts by the neighbouring Austrian chapter to embark upon a direct action campaign.

Cast in a positive light, the Klaus era inadvertently strengthened the movement in the sense that it encouraged professionalism and a more nationally focused sphere of EMOs to develop. Reflecting on this era in 1998, Petr Štěpánek, an environmental activist and Director of Public Relations at the Ministry of the Environment during Martin Bursik's tenure (1998), summed up the relationship between EMOs and the Klaus government thus: 'The green movement was Klaus's big enemy. But in a way it toughened up the NGOs – they learned to be tough – some didn't even have lawyers at the start [in 1992]. Now they are better organised … [they] no longer argue with each other'.[14] Although in the short term even the EMOs who travelled furthest along the professionalism route (for example, *Hnutí Duha*) received little dividend in terms of political influence or consultation, such professional and policy-focused EMOs were required and welcomed once the environmental policy process was restarted after Klaus's departure.

However, the impact of this period in terms of political resistance and the ideological diversity of the movement was profound. At a time when critical decisions were being taken regarding protected areas, investment and nuclear energy, the environmental movement was forced into such a reactionary position that it barely uttered a word of disapproval. Somewhat ironically, whereas during the earlier period the movement was criticised for being too

radical and ideological by the dissident-led administration who needed partners in the policy process, the EMOs that survived into the mid-1990s were deradicalised and concerned with professionalism at precisely the time when radical stances were required.

FUNDING AND RESOURCES

The changed political capacity of the environmental movement during this period cannot be attributed solely to the altered political opportunity structure and Klaus's ideological antipathy towards civil associations and the concept of sustainable development. The issue of resources, or lack of them, has been a critical determinant of the capacity of EMOs in the Czech Republic and by the mid-1990s the new campaigning EMOs were in a precarious financial position. They were, generally speaking, entirely reliant on external funding and such funding was unsustainable and temporary in the sense that, as the economic position of the Czech Republic was improving compared to other CEE states, donors such as USAID, Rockefeller Brothers Fund and others began to redirect their support elsewhere. Of particular concern for these donors was the situation in the former Yugoslavia and, as the decade progressed, other social issues such as the dispossession of Roma communities. By 1996, the American Ford Foundation, the US Peace Corps and USAID had completely withdrawn from the Czech Republic; C.S. Mott (USA) had rationalised its assistance and EU money (through the Phare Program) was increasingly being channelled towards projects strengthening the economic infrastructure in view of the prospect of Czech accession to the EU.

If the political changes of the Klaus era did not directly cause the financial difficulties faced by EMOs, they certainly exacerbated the situation. The hegemonic discourse of individualism, profitability and as small a role for the state as possible did not exactly encourage a culture of philanthropy amongst a population unused to supporting non-governmental organisations. The economic climate did not lend itself to citizens making donations and supporting EMOs financially, or indeed in any sense at all. Most Czechs were faced, to a lesser or greater extent, by the problems of economic transformation. The threat of unemployment and the need to have two or three jobs in order to survive meant that relying on citizens to support EMOs was unrealistic. Those working in the voluntary sector in the Czech Republic, with donor foundations or as sociologists researching structural change in the post-communist period have talked about the lack of a middle class during the 1990s.[15] What they refer to is the absence of a tier of citizens with the time or financial resources to support civil associations in the way that the middle

classes do in western democracies. When asked why they did not concentrate on acquiring a passive fee-paying membership like their western counterparts, EMOs would reply that it was impossible for people to offer significant levels of resources, and no doubt at this time this was probably pretty accurate.[16]

Where the political elite was more directly culpable was with regard to the changes in support offered to EMOs by the Ministry of the Environment and other state agencies at the local and national levels. Local authorities had, in the early 1990s, provided office space or grants for NGOs. This now began to change and the idea of local authorities supporting NGOs of any description was seen as a frivolous waste of resources, politically unacceptable and far too 'socialist'. The first post-communist administration had established the 'State Fund for the Environment'. This was to consist of the revenue from fines and licences paid by polluters. Half of the proceeds were to be made available, via the Ministry of the Environment, to EMOs, and in particular were to help establish an infrastructure within the sector. Organisations such as *Zelený Kruh*, the organisation established to help coordinate the activities of EMOs in Prague and to strengthen the representation of environmental issues within the policy process, were to benefit. However, from 1992 onwards, grants from the Ministry of Environment were directed away from the more politically oriented EMOs, and from projects seeking to strengthen the sector as a whole, towards apolitical conservation projects pursued by the older EMOs and environmental networks as opposed to the new generation of political EMOs. This had the effect of shifting the focus of EMO activity away from political campaigns towards more anodyne conservation activities. It is worth remembering that with the decline of external funding at this time such grants were an important source of income.

Perhaps one of the most blatant attempts on behalf of the government to divert state resources away from EMOs involved the distribution of the 'Fund of National Property' (*Fond národního majetku*). Civil society organisations, including EMOs, were supposed to benefit from this fund, which was essentially a small proportion of the revenue from privatisation. However, distribution was continually delayed throughout the Klaus period and was only finally allocated to EMOs in early 1999, by which time it was in fact worth very little.[17]

It was also revealed in the late 1990s that there had been political interference in the allocation of the revenue raised from pollution fines. Half of this money should go to the State Fund for the Environment from which EMOs were to benefit. However, during the period in which František Benda was Minister of the Environment a substantial proportion of these funds was directed towards schemes initiated by local ODS mayors to build incinerators. The building of incinerators was during this period offered as an 'environmental solution' to the increase in landfills. In fact, the building of

incinerators was a lucrative scheme for local politicians and businesses and was designed for the planned importation of waste from Germany and elsewhere. The capacity of many of these incinerators, such as the one at Malešice, outside Prague, far outweighed domestic production.[18]

EMOs were faced by a situation in which their main sources of funding were in decline. Although the larger EMOs such as *Hnutí Duha* began during this period to cultivate a more professional visage and to replicate some of the activities of their western counterparts, they did not significantly increase their fee-paying members. For example, although membership of *Děti Země* increased from 60 to over 600 between 1990 and 1994, the new recruits contributed very little to the organisation's budget. The amount of revenue Greenpeace Czechoslovakia received from the Czech and Slovak public represented less than 2 per cent of annual income in 1994. In the same period, fee-paying membership of western EMOs was increasing quite dramatically. In the Netherlands, for example, the number of Greenpeace supporters increased from 70 000 to 830 000 in the second half of the 1980s and continued to grow in the 1990s. In Italy, FoE could boast 280 000 members by the end of the 1990s (della Porta and Andretta, 2000: 15). In the UK, subscriptions to WWF constituted 25 per cent of annual income; the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) obtains nearly half its income from donations (Doherty, 2002: 123).

The small band of EMOs that survived this period did so because they relied almost entirely on foreign donations, whether from philanthropic organisations or, in some controversial cases, from multinationals or other commercial sources. The environmental organisation *Tereza*, which works on building environmental consciousness amongst children through education programmes, accepted payments from Coca-Cola for designing a 'green' campaign, and a payment from the Czech energy company and owner of the Temelín nuclear power plant, ČEZ (*České Energetické Závody* – Czech Energy Company), for assistance with its environmental programme.[19] ČSOP, the Czech Union for Nature Protection, accepted 500 000 Crowns from the Czech National Savings Bank.[20] Even the director of Czech Greenpeace, desperate for funding and having to leave the organisation's premises in the centre of Prague, considered commercial sponsorship as a means of financial survival.[21]

In general, EMOs invariably stumbled from one financial crisis to the next, particularly as grant allocations tended to be renewed annually and thus there was a continual sense of brinkmanship that undermined their activities and cast a shadow over their operations.[22] A further consequence of the financial situation was that it resulted in another brain drain from EMOs. It was extremely difficult for EMOs to recruit staff as the salaries being offered were derisory and the contracts offered were short-term. Many talented and able activists left EMOs, thoroughly disillusioned, to work in the private sector.

The organisations were left to operate on the basis of a skeleton volunteer staff comprising student volunteers and young people opting to do community service rather than their obligatory military service.

THE 1996 ELECTION: A POLITICAL RENAISSANCE FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

Just as the fragmentation of Civic Forum in 1991 and the change of government in June 1992 had direct implications for the political efficacy of the environmental movement, so the loss of an overall majority for Klaus's ODS (Občanská Democratická Strana – Civic Democratic Party)-led coalition in the 1996 election marked the tentative first steps towards a new era for EMOs. The election had weakened Klaus's government and, for the first time since 1992, his administration faced a formidable opposition from the centre–left. Tensions between Klaus's ODS and the smaller centre–right parties also weakened Klaus's position within the post-1996 parliament. The ČSSD (Česká Strana Sociálně Democratická – Social Democratic Party) had surprised pollsters and political commentators by securing 26 per cent of the vote. The ČSSD enjoys the unique status in CEE of being a non-communist left party and, under the leadership of Miloš Zeman, who was later to become Prime Minister, the party was now articulating a powerful centre–left critique of Klaus's legacy, including emphasis on the environment.

Jiří Skalický, a respected ODA (Civic Democratic Alliance) politician and fierce critic of Klaus, replaced František Benda as environmental minister. Benda had become a figure of hate for many environmental activists and his departure was highly symbolic. It enabled the formation of a new relationship between officials and the movement after a period in which the Ministry of the Environment, once a bustling centre of green activity, had been boycotted and ignored by activists. The climate of outright hostility was now replaced by a period of tentative cooperation between the more prominent Prague-based EMOs and the new environmental minister. One of Skalický's first acts was to invite representatives from EMOs to a meeting with officials at the ministry. He also called for open dialogue between all experts within the environmental field to assist in the regeneration of the policy process. That his predecessor had flatly refused to meet with EMOs throughout his entire term of office made this a highly significant act.

Skalický was a skilled politician who had previously presided over the voucher privatisation schemes. He had no particular interest or expertise in environmental issues, a fact he readily acknowledged. As deputy chair of the government he was also very busy and was therefore inclined to delegate responsibility to officials and, to an extent, EMOs. In their assessment of this

period, EMOs who dealt with Skalický tend to conclude that, although they disagreed with him on quite fundamental issues relating to, for example, the construction of motorways and ring roads, they found him willing to discuss issues and prepared to listen to alternative opinions. With regard to the issue of motorways, Skalický met *Děti Země* on a number of occasions during 1996 to discuss the controversial plans to extend the country's motorway network and the construction of a ring road around Prague. He also invited Greenpeace to meet officials to discuss energy subsidies, which he abolished in early 1997, much to the delight of Greenpeace who had campaigned on this issue since the early 1990s. The organisations were also asked to supply the ministry with details of research they had conducted into river pollution and the impact of chemical contamination of water supplies. EMOs also met periodically the deputy minister, Bisek, who displayed a willingness to consider the opinions of activists or, to quote Bedrich Moldan, former environment minister, 'was conscious at least of what will upset [EMOs] and what will be acceptable to them'.[23] Generally the contact was sporadic and rather ad hoc. The relationship between the ministry and EMOs during this period was described by a Greenpeace activist as 'not a friendship, but a working relationship rather than the stalemate and deadlock of the past'.[24]

Two incidents during 1997 provide an illustration of the changed relationship between EMOs and the government. The first significant piece of new legislation since the early 1990s was a law governing waste. During the drafting process EMOs were consulted and their recommendations taken seriously, so much so that Greenpeace and other leading EMOs were able to insert a radical clause banning the importation of any product containing PVC into the Czech Republic by 2002. Ignoring the fact that the clause was later removed because it was more progressive than EU law, the incident illustrates the extent to which the attitude of officials towards including and consulting EMOs had altered.

A further incident in June 1997 provided yet more evidence that the political opportunity structure in which EMOs operated had changed. The June issue of the internal police bulletin, *Policejni véstnik*, included a list of 'extremist organisations' including Greenpeace and other EMOs. Reminiscent of the security services list incident in 1995, the article was leaked to journalists and to the civil society development organisation, HOST. The head of the Prague police department apologised for what he described as a 'serious mistake' and said that all those responsible would be reprimanded. He added that the list had been withdrawn. This marked a stark contrast with the response of the Ministry of the Interior after the previous incident. It had taken Greenpeace over five months in 1995 to clear its name and to receive formal notification from the Minister of the Interior that the organisation had been removed from the list. No apology was ever offered and EMOs were told that

they were making 'a fuss about nothing' by Klaus and other government ministers. The 1997 police bulletin incident suggested that in the new political climate it was absolutely unacceptable to portray EMOs as extremists.[25]

This period, during which Klaus's coalition struggled to survive and the environmental issue gradually re-emerged as a political issue to be used by the opposition parties in their attempts to oust the fragmented coalition, saw the emergence of patterns of interaction between EMOs and policy makers that have subsequently become the dominant expression of environmental politics. Speaking in July 1997, Moldan summarised the position of EMOs thus: 'associations are learning how to deal with governmental structures, they are learning what is possible and what is not … but it is the Ministry that sets the goals and groups come in on their terms'.[26] He added that cooperation was based on concrete tasks around the agenda of the UN Global Change Programme. The organisations most readily consulted were those that could offer professional expertise, rather than radical organisations.

Social movement theorists have identified the significance of particular disasters and events in shaping the efficacy of EMOs. The floods that occurred in Moravia during the summer of 1997 certainly exerted an impact on Czech EMOs, not least because this occurred at a time of increasing political crisis for Klaus's coalition, coupled with the fact that the EMOs were the only source of expert advice and practical solutions. Having previously refused to deal with EMOs in any capacity, the Klaus government was now forced to work closely with them over the floods crisis. In the aftermath of the disaster, Greenpeace orchestrated a campaign to encourage the carrying out of repairs to homes and villages with regard to the principles of sustainable development. Known as the 'Phoenix campaign', the ideas and discussion attracted a great deal of popular and political support.[27] President Havel became involved and Greenpeace was awarded a sizeable grant from the Soros-backed Open Society Foundation to work with affected villages. For the first time in post-communist history, EMOs, political leaders and local politicians were working in tandem. While the impact of this on the development of the environmental movement should not be exaggerated, it forced the political elite to reconsider their attitude towards EMOs and to re-evaluate their role and function, particularly in terms of the expertise they can offer in times of crisis. This hailed the tentative new era that was to come into full fruition once the Klaus coalition finally disintegrated.

THE END OF KLAUS AND THE DAWN OF A NON-PARTISAN GOVERNMENT

If the removal of Frantisek Benda from the Ministry of Environment and the

weakening of Klaus's coalition paved the way for a new era of openness and cooperation, it was the crisis that finally engulfed Klaus's embattled government towards the end of 1997 that really altered the political opportunity structure for EMOs. As Shepherd notes, 'it required only a couple of sharp blows to bring the ODS–ODA–KDU–CSL government to an end' (2000: 65). The collapse resulted in the formation of a caretaker government prior to elections in June 1998. This administration, which was headed by the non-partisan Josef Tosovsky, included Martin Bursik as Minister of the Environment, and is widely viewed by many environmentalists as a halcyon era for the movement.

Under Bursik's brief tenure, EMOs enjoyed an unprecedented degree of influence and were granted unrestricted access to the process of drafting and updating existing environmental legislation. This was facilitated largely by the fact that this caretaker government was not bound by party discipline and this marked a significant departure from the approach of previous ministers (and indeed successors to the post), in the sense that, regardless of political complexion, there had since 1992 been a power battle within government between the Ministry of the Environment (seen by both the right and by those on the pro-industry left as insignificant and politically marginal) and other ministries. Such tensions were temporarily lifted within this temporary government. Bursik himself was financially independent and not a career politician dependent on party patronage. His short tenure as minister witnessed the return of former dissidents to environmental politics. Involved with the dissident human rights group 'Movement for Unjustly Pursued People', Bursik had forged links with environmental campaigners such as Ivan Dejmal and other prominent members of the clandestine Ecological Section during the 1980s. Some of those dissident activists were now involved with the Society for Sustainable Living (STUJ) and were invited to assist in the regeneration of environmental policy.

For Greenpeace and other EMOs this was a halcyon age, a lacuna in party politics that offered, however briefly, unique opportunities for influence and cooperation. Activists were dealing with a pro-environment minister who was undeterred by the power and influence of multinational corporations. Not answerable to a party boss, unconstrained by organised political opposition in the Parliament, and with the media obsessed by the fate of Klaus's coalition and the allegations of corruption, Bursik managed to stop the construction of a controversial cement factory at Tman, outside Prague. *Děti Země* had been pursuing what seemed like a hopeless battle for years to stop the German company Heidelberger Zement from building the factory which was supported by local politicians and state officials. In simply saying no to the project on environmental grounds, Bursik set a powerful precedent. He also blocked a planning application by TVX Gold Bohemia, a subsidiary of the Canadian

mining company TVX, to construct a goldmining plant at Kasperske Hory. Environmentalists had identified the ecological impact of the mine, but their attempts to block its progress had been thwarted by the antics of the parent company who had taken local politicians and the media on an all-expenses paid trip to Canada and central America to see how their gold mines operated. Bursik demonstrated how, given the appropriate political context, it was possible to put the environment before the interest of western companies. Less controversially perhaps, though of no less significance, Bursik convinced local mayors in areas devastated by the floods during the winter of 1997 to invest in solar energy, a campaign waged initially by EMOs and taken up by the new minister with a certain degree of vigour. After years in the political wilderness, EMOs could not believe the change in their political fortunes. Apparently hopeless campaigns they had fought in desperation were now being sorted out by a radical new minister.[28]

In terms of actual new environmental legislation, this period produced very little, owing to the fact that Bursik's four-month tenure made it impossible for him to draft new laws and get them through Parliament; indeed, his first day in office was the last opportunity for the submission of draft legislation to Parliament. What was established at this time was the foundation of freedom of information legislation both in the environmental realm and more generally. EMOs had been seriously thwarted during the Klaus era by the absence of data and information. One of Martin Bursik's first tasks on taking his brief was to introduce a 'right to know' policy relating to environmental issues which was drafted and introduced to Parliament and became law by the autumn of 1998. In a separate initiative, Vladimir Mlynař, the Minister without Portfolio in Tosovsky's government, who had broken away from Klaus's ODS in January 1997 and was pro-environment, used his position during this period to draft a general freedom of information law that was eventually enacted in 1999. Both pieces of legislation signified the creation of a new legal opportunity structure that would benefit EMOs in the late 1990s.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT AND THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

The election in June 1998 of a Social Democratic government, which had pledged itself to improve on the environmental record of the Klaus government, suggested that a new era for the movement was about to dawn in which EMOs would enjoy prominent status within a reinvigorated policy process that had been effectively dormant since the early 1990s. However, the reality was, predictably, somewhat short of this idealised vision. Although the renewed link between the political elite and EMOs established during

Tosovsky's interim government was certainly maintained, the new government did not enjoy a parliamentary majority and was only able to govern on the basis of a deal brokered with Klaus's centre–right opposition. Though Zeman's cabinet included a cadre of young pro-environment ministers, such as the vice chair of the party, Petra Buzková, the Minister of the Environment, Milos Kužvart, and others, it also included an old guard of pro-industry social democrats who were opposed to the imposition of environmental restrictions or penalties on Czech industry. The Industry Minister, Miroslav Gregr, repeatedly opposed tighter penalties on polluting industries and supported the completion of the Temelín nuclear power plant on the basis that it would provide employment opportunities in the region. As an advocate of developing the country's motorways and road networks, Antonin Peltram, the Minister of Transport and Telecommunications, also proved to be no friend of the environmental movement.

The new Minister of the Environment appointed by Prime Minister Zeman was Milos Kužvart, a geologist and former member of the Ecological Section. During the communist era Kužvart was actively involved in the underground dissident environmental movement. He took part in prominent campaigns against, for example, the construction of the Červený Kamen hydroelectric power plant in the Krivoklat nature reserve, and the building of a hotel and funicular railway in the Snezka mountains during the 1980s. His brother is a prominent environmental lawyer and the family were active dissidents during the communist period. During the early 1990s, Kužvart was involved in various civil society organisations, including NROS (*Nadace rozvoje občanské společnosti* – Civil Society Development Foundation), the Czech organisation that distributes EU–Phare funds to NGOs. He is also a founder member of the Society for Sustainable Living (STUJ). Like many early activists, Kužvart left active environmental politics during the mid-1990s to work in the private sector. He also studied at the Open University in the UK during this time, before returning to join the Social Democrats. On the basis of his background, he was promoted to chair the party's Environmental Commission, and was effectively opposition spokesperson on the environment during the latter months of the Klaus administration.[29]

More generally, the post-election period witnessed the emergence of a political opportunity structure that was enabling for environmentalists. The political prominence of the Freedom Union (*Mir Slobode*), a breakaway party from the ODS that was pro-environment and pro-civil society, plus other environmentally aware politicians from the centre–right ODA and KDU–CSL parties helped to create a far less hostile political climate for environmental legislation and initiatives.

As Minister of the Environment, one of Kužvart's early acts was to reintroduce the Green Parliament as a forum for consultation between the

ministry and EMOs. He also introduced the idea of a formal arena of consultation between EMOs and policy officials, known as the Legislative Group. The EMOs involved, who tended to be the most professional and institutionalised Prague-based organisations, received draft copies of new laws and were asked to produce comments and suggestions. In general there were clearly parallels with the early post-revolutionary period in the sense that a network of pro-environment politicians, lawyers and environmental activists was now emerging within which an overlap between activists, policy makers and politicians existed.

This new and more open political opportunity structure was developing against a background of two important changes. First, there had emerged by this time an apparent change in public opinion towards EMOs. When asked about environmental organisations in a national opinion poll survey towards the end of 1996, 87 per cent of respondents said they were useful and important.[30] There is also increasing evidence that, since the late 1990s, the public are more inclined to support EMOs financially. Though this is based largely on Greenpeace's experience of direct marketing strategies, it is being echoed by all of the main EMOs and has encouraged the investment of resources in fundraising and marketing. The second change concerns the EMOs themselves. The movement consisted of an array of professional organisations intent on gaining influence at policy level. In this sense they were ready and waiting to make use of the opportunities being offered to them to sit round the table, contribute and negotiate. Ironically, this was in many ways a product of the Klaus era; it also represented a distinct contrast to the early post revolution period.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT OF THE LATE 1990S

By the late 1990s, the environmental movement had changed quite considerably. The altered political opportunity structure described above was both enabling and appropriate for the type of EMOs that had emerged. Radical ideological agendas had been all but expunged from the tier of professional organisations that had come to dominate environmental debate in the media and within the policy process, and the mainstream EMOs appeared to have become entirely enmeshed within the discourse and logic of ecological modernisation. Organisations such as *Hnutí Duha* and *Děti Země* were now engaged in compiling reports and lobbying Parliament; they worked on tangible projects and offered concrete recommendations that squared the need to achieve environmental abatement and future sustainability while not alienating capital investors. They were keen to demonstrate their professionalism as well as their proximity to the policy process and the media.

This was precisely what was being requested of them by officials and politicians, who were now compelled by the EU to update environmental regulations and to restart the process, stalled during the Benda period, of establishing procedures for controlling pollution in line with western norms. EMOs were rewarded for their professionalism, but the terms of the new 'deal' were that any political influence or dividend was granted in return for the provision of a contractual service, namely help with the drafting of new laws, the publication of a report or, most controversially, involvement in the regulatory and monitoring process itself.

By the late 1990s, there had occurred an apparent division of responsibilities amongst EMOs and a level of specialisation. Certain organisations worked on particular issues and were known to do so by other activists. Cooperation occurred when and if necessary and activists from one organisation would support the campaign of another. EMOs also displayed a capacity to adapt their strategies and campaigns according to changing agendas and issues. For example, *Pražské matky* (Prague Mothers), was now working on problems of transportation rather than just on air pollution. Issues that were topical and of concern to the public were much more the focus of EMO campaigns and activity than they had been five years earlier.

Fagan and Jehlička (2003) have depicted the changes that occurred within the movement between 1990 and the end of the decade as a series of shifts:

- a shift to democratic institutions,
- a shift from protest to policy making,
- a shift to professionalism and expert knowledge,
- a shift to diversification and specialisation within the environmental movement, accompanied by increased communication and mutual support,
- a shift towards a more global perception of environmental problems and their complex nature embedded in social, economic and political practices.

The late 1990s saw an additional and significant shift towards a polarisation within the movement between institutionalised elements on one hand, and more submerged grass-roots protest on the other. What has also begun to emerge in recent years is a polarisation between the formal, increasingly institutionalised and professional Prague-based EMOs who work on policy and who appear to enjoy a degree of influence, and environmental activism at community and grass-roots level. The latter is not necessarily about radical agendas and strategies, but has arisen more as a reaction to the institutionalisation and apparent remoteness of the mainstream Prague or

Brno-based EMOs. Such local activism is not easily characterised as it tends to comprise an eclectic mix of ideologies, agendas and strategies. Indeed, from the perspective of 2002, the changes that began to occur in the late 1990s are perhaps best considered as a series of overlapping and interwoven dichotomies that are now beginning to unfold more fully. As the movement has entered a new phase of its development, various overlapping splits and distinctions have become discernible. The most evident distinction is between professional institutionalised EMOs and local community activism. There is also a national versus local dichotomy that overlaps but does not entirely correspond with the institutionalised versus more radical split. A further distinction can be made between those organisations concerned with policy and those focusing on cultural protest with the aim of changing the values and behaviour of society. Such campaigns tend to occur at either the local or community level, rather than amongst the more professional EMOs, though this is not entirely the case. Added to this is the more recent occurrence of urban community activism (anti-capitalist, opposition to supermarkets and TNCs) on the doorstep of the institutionalised EMOs in the Prague municipality. This seems to represent a contrast to the purely ecological or conservationist agendas of EMOs, and combines a focus on policy with attempts at cultural change.

Researching environmental activism in early 1999, the most interesting and potentially challenging new aspect of environmental protest involved what can best be described as local environmental initiatives that fused an eclectic coalition of community interests to protest against development plans that threatened the local environment. A notable example of this occurred in the town of Spalene Porici in North West Bohemia, not far from Pilsen. A coalition of scouts, children's groups, representatives from the Roma community and other sections of the community organised a campaign to prevent the destruction of an ancient road. The campaign led to more affirmative acts such as the planting of trees and the creation of green public spaces in the centre of the town. The activists acquired a small amount of funding from the Via Foundation, one of the main Czech foundations that distribute external funding to community projects and civic organisations.[31]

In other cases such grass-roots or community-level activism comprised breakaway groups from the mainstream EMOs, who rejected the lack of radicalism and institutionalisation of, for example, *Hnutí Duha*. The departure of many of the core activists of the Brno branch of *Duha* in 1997 to form the organisation *Nesehnutí* ('independent social–ecological movement' – *Nezavisle Socialne Ekologicke HNUTI*) was a major crisis for the organisation, which had become the most prominent and professional EMO in the country. *Nesehnutí* activists were prompted by the belief that 'environmental problems

need to be understood together with their social causes and consequences'.[32] Their intention was to campaign on a broader range of issues including human rights and animal welfare. The activists operate at grass-roots level and campaign on more radical local and community agendas than *Duha*. They focus on changing values and behaviour rather than aiming to influence the political elite.

This was not the only breakaway from the mainstream movement. Marie Haisová, who had directed and effectively run the coordinating organisation *Zelený Kruh*, quit to form the more radical ecofeminist organisation, *Agentura Gaia*, a small grass-roots organisation run by women which campaigns on a radical anti-consumption and anti-globalisation agenda. *Gaia* is a reaction as much against the male dominance of the mainstream environmental movement as it is against the lack of radicalism.[33]

The late 1990s also began to witness the emergence of submerged and semi-permanent networks of activists, concurrently involved with other movements and protest networks. Such activists, who tend to have forged international and even global links, were also connected to the more radical elements of the breakaway organisations discussed above. However, in general these young eco-anarchists sought little cooperation with the established EMOs. By the end of the decade a broad anti-capitalist/anti-globalisation network had been established, which became visible for the first time during the demonstrations against the World Bank Summit in September 2000. For many within the formal and institutionalised EMOs the existence of such networks and the extent to which a new generation of Czech environmental activists had been drawn into such activity came as quite a surprise.

The environmental discourse of this new segment of the Czech movement contrasts sharply with that of the formal institutionalised and professional EMOs. Whereas the latter have adopted the language and ideology of ecological modernisation (van der Heijden, 1998), the former articulate their environmental critique through the paradigm of community action and civil society. Whilst eco-anarchist ideology is clearly at the core of some of the more radical submerged activism – involving those who participated in the September 2000 demonstrations against the World Bank summit, for example – there has also emerged a labyrinth of more moderate community-based organisations who equally wish to reject involvement in the formal EMOs in favour of grass-roots activism, and who articulate their critique in terms of community power and influence over a corrupt municipal decision-making process (Zaitchik, 2002). Such aggregations will be considered in detail in the following chapter as part of the discussion of SOS Praha. Suffice it to conclude at this point that this sphere of activism had, by the end of the 1990s, become an important aspect of environmental protest and a dynamic that is increasingly prominent in the current period.

PROTEST STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS IN THE LATE 1990S

In May 1999, the Czech government was to vote on whether to continue with the Temelín nuclear power plant after a series of commissioned reports had been published. The campaign pursued by the institutionalised EMOs such as *Hnutí Duha* reflected their political status and their development.

In the days prior to the government announcing its final decision on whether to continue with the ill-fated plant, representatives from *Duha* were invited to brief President Václav Havel (who opposes the Temelín plant). Although ultimately the pro-Temelín lobby within the government won, they did so by a very narrow majority. Media pundits had not predicted that eight members of the government would vote against the completion of the plant, nor that the President, aligned with environmentalists, would intervene. That in the course of the debate, ambivalent ministers in the government had been persuaded to oppose the plans to continue with Temelín was seen as a testimony to the campaign waged by EMOs (Axelrod, 1999). *Duha*, who seemed now to be driving the campaign despite little involvement in the anti-Temelín protests in the mid-1990s, framed its opposition in terms of the financial costs of continuing with the plant and the inefficiencies of such large-scale (and unnecessary) energy production. The campaign was also designed to appeal to the brown coal lobby, a faction who usually have no time for environmentalists. In a highly pragmatic, somewhat Machiavellian move, *Duha* emphasised the extent to which Temelín threatened brown coal energy and how much cheaper such energy was compared to the oversubsidised nuclear power plant. This sophisticated and highly professional campaign reflected a maturity and professionalism within the movement that surprised many.

It was not just breakaway elements from the main EMOs, or the more radical and submerged aggregations of the movement, that displayed a tendency to employ radical tactics and strategies during the late 1990s. This period also saw the return of some carefully orchestrated direct action in the form of street protests and blockades amongst the mainstream EMOs. Although such actions tended to emanate from fringe organisations (and were heavily supported by the eco-anarchist community in Prague), the professional EMOs did tentatively embark upon campaigns designed to mobilise the public after a period during which even the mildest campaign of civil disobedience was shunned. The potential impact of mobilising the community and the ability to gain popular support for such actions began to be acknowledged by the mainstream EMOs as an important strategy used in conjunction with lobbying and elite-level influence without threatening the political status of EMOs within the policy process. To an extent, there has

always been an element of this duality within organisations such as *Hnutí Duha* whose local chapters often pursued far more radical campaigns of direct action than the Brno or Prague offices. However, the difference in the late 1990s was that the reactionary rejection of combined strategies voiced by activists in the mainstream EMOs during the mid-1990s was less readily echoed and the benefits of mobilisation were apparently being recognised.

One of the earliest examples of this new approach was a campaign organised by Greenpeace in 1997 against the Syntesia chemical plant owned by Chemapol in Pardubice. Greenpeace ran river tours during which samples of effluent were gathered and later offered to the public in wine glasses. This strategy of addressing the public delivered significant, and according to Greenpeace rather surprising, results: the 'river tour' campaign, as it became known, received high media attention. Greenpeace revealed to the media that Chemapol had installed a new filtration system but it could not be used because the river water was so polluted that there was a risk of damaging the equipment. Even the police officers called by Chemapol to remove the protestors supported the Greenpeace action, asked to see samples and enquired about the health risks to their families.[34] The company, who had been issued with a licence by the local authority the previous year, were summoned to explain the allegations being made against them. The public were apparently mobilised by the scientific element of this campaign. There was also the sense in which Greenpeace were highlighting the ineffectiveness of 'end-of-pipe' solutions, the chosen strategy of the Klaus government and indeed many politicians in the Czech Republic.

FUNDING AND RESOURCES

It would be easy to conclude on the basis of the changes that occurred within the movement during the late 1990s, particularly with regard to evidence of combined strategies, that Czech environmental protest was, finally, after a shaky period in the mid-1990s, following a western developmental course. It is really only when one focuses on the financial situation and the politics of funding that a realisation of the unique context in which EMOs operate is gleaned. The apparent westernisation of the movement (professionalism, institutionalisation and a certain degree of organisational diversity) is largely superficial and masks a fundamentally different relationship between EMOs, the state and capital, a relationship unique to the context of what Claus Offe has termed the 'triple transition'. Czech EMOs such as *Hnutí Duha* may well have adopted a veneer of western-style professionalism, but their proximity to the policy process, their relationship with the EU and their donor organisations

generally were, and remain, heavily conditioned by the coincidence of political democratisation, neoliberal economic reform and the expansion of the EU.

That most of the foreign donor organisations and foundations that had provided environmental organisations with funding in the early post-revolutionary period had, by the second half of the 1990s, begun to withdraw from the Czech Republic was noted above. By 2000, the donor organisations that remained, such as C.S. Mott and US Information Service, were gradually withdrawing their aid or channelling much smaller amounts into indigenous foundations.[35] The main source of external funding for EMOs was now the EU, either directly as part of the Phare Program, or indirectly through Regional Environmental Center (REC) grants. The Soros Foundation continued to support non-governmental organisations and civil society organisations, though competition for such grants was fierce and EMOs had to compete with a host of needy causes, all requesting funds. Largely in response to media coverage abroad and the infamous wall built around a Roma community in the Ustí region, the 'new' issue was the plight of the Roma, and much funding was being made available to programmes and organisations that proposed education and citizenship schemes. For environmental organisations there was now no money available for what might be termed infrastructure building: staff, equipment and training. The grants that were available were allocated to specific projects outlined by the donor agencies themselves. In the case of EU funding this meant that funding priorities reflected the agenda of the accession process.

A number of Czech foundations had been established, most notably the VIA Foundation and the Olga Havel Foundation, yet in both cases the money being distributed came entirely from abroad and the 'Czech' foundations were merely intermediary bodies administering foreign grants. In the case of VIA, the funds derived largely from the Soros Foundation and the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). The amounts of funding that EMOs can hope to receive from these foundations are small, are declining each year, and are awarded in annual rounds after the submission of proposals. The process is always fiercely competitive, with EMOs pitched against each other. For example, in 1998, the Via Foundation set out to award ten grants of five thousand dollars each to civil society organisations. The money originated from the UNDP. That they received over 300 proposals from NGOs illustrates how desperate the funding situation was. In the end they felt compelled to award 18 small grants to individual organisations.[36]

Whereas the relationship between EMOs and foreign donor organisations in the early 1990s might justifiably be described as enabling, by the end of the decade the relationship was one of dependency. In the absence of other

sources of sufficient or sustainable funding, EMOs were entirely reliant on grants and were as a consequence coopted into the agendas of the donor organisations. The environmental issues identified by the EU or by the UNDP as being urgent or worthy of funding were quickly taken up by EMOs in need of cash. As Flam (2001) observes with regard to the factors shaping the development of social movements in CEE generally, the activity of most organisations is effectively structured by the preferences of the donors. Funders, whether private foundations, western governments or various EU intermediaries, want to see tangible results accruing from their investments. Thus they support projects aimed at awareness raising, education, cooperation with other (private and public) actors, activities that Waller describes as 'integrative' and 'issue-raising' rather than mobilising (1998: 41–2). Waller's description of the involvement of WWF–US in CEE as one of the important sources of assistance to CEE environmental groups provides an accurate summary of the nature of assistance provided by western organisations to the Czech environmental movement by the late 1990s:

> Since the launch of the Environment Training Project (ETP) for CEE, WWF–US's principal role 'has been organising and overseeing conflict resolution skills, training workshops for NGOs, and promoting development of environmental library and information centre networks', the central goal of the ETP being 'to improve the capability of people in CEE to address environmental problems in the context of competitive market economy. (ibid.: 29)

By the late 1990s, Czech EMOs were receiving funding for the following activities:

- public ecological libraries,
- ecological counselling for the public,
- participation of NGOs in environmental decision-making processes, in particular through the environmental impact assessment (EIA) process,
- strengthening of cooperation of NGOs with state authorities and local governments,
- collecting information (for example, mapping installations of renewable energy in a region),
- publications of information brochures and leaflets,
- drafting policy proposals,
- projects on nature conservation.

EMOs were dedicating time and resources to the lengthy process of competing in funding rounds, completing tedious grant applications and devising projects that fitted the agendas of external donors. Political campaigning organisations such as *Děti Země*, desperate for external funds, were now reactive and their

activities had been depoliticised. They worked on issues and campaigns that were in the public sphere at a particular time and were of interest to foreign donors, rather than pursuing long-term campaigns. Acquiring funds from foreign donors had become an all-consuming activity for activists in the larger EMOs such as *Hnutí Duha* and *Děti Země*. For those organisations that resisted this pressure and continued to work on 'unfashionable' issues, such as *Jihočeské matky* (South Bohemian Mothers) or *Přátelé přírody* (Friends of Nature), financial crisis loomed large and their operations were seriously curtailed. Having been rejected by every other foundation, *Jihočeské matky* appealed in desperation to the VIA Foundation for funding in 1998. Activists felt they had been ostracised by donors because of their vociferous and uncompromising opposition to the Temelín nuclear power plant at a time when swathes of the political elite and the public were in favour of nuclear energy.[37]

Dependency on foreign donors in the earlier part of the decade, when funding was available and commitments were being made to EMOs, encouraged a reluctance to develop and foster indigenous sources of funding in the form of passive fee-paying members. There was also the perception echoed by many in the environmental movement that the Czech public were still unwilling and insufficiently resourced to support EMOs financially. However, the reality of the late 1990s was that this situation was changing and EMOs failed to seize the initiative. So engrossed in obtaining influence at the elite level, or in the logic and process of grant applications, EMOs were reluctant to allocate resources to widening their supporter base and to developing sophisticated fundraising techniques. That the capacity of Czech citizens to donate funds to EMOs had increased was evidenced in Greenpeace's effective fundraising efforts in the autumn of 1998. The Czech chapter increased their revenue substantially by enlisting Austrian fundraising expertise and claim to have added 5000 new fee-paying supporters to their list. However, arguably this was only possible because of the particular nature of Greenpeace; the Czech chapter was able to borrow funds from Greenpeace International and use the expertise of the large Austrian branch. Though such facilities are not necessarily on offer to other EMOs, the potential for raising funds from amongst the public still remains untapped. By the late 1990s, EMOs were still reluctant to share donor information despite evidence that donors will commit themselves to more than one EMO, and were generally quite reticent about the prospect of increasing the proportion of their budget obtained from public donations. In 1999, *Hnutí Duha*, by now formally the Czech branch of FoE and arguably the largest and most prominent EMO with a network of local chapters as well as offices in Prague and Brno, claimed to have in the region of 500 fee-paying members.[38]

CZECH EMOS AND THE EU: A CRITICAL RELATIONSHIP

An analysis of the Czech environmental movement of the late 1990s cannot avoid considering the role and influence of the EU both in terms of the direction of environmental policy and also with regard to the funding of EMOs. The EU's involvement dates back to the late 1980s. A rekindled interest in European integration at this time was augmented by the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe during 1989. Thereafter, a recognition of the need to devise environmental solutions at supra-state or inter-state levels, and the EC/EU assuming the role of orchestrating aid and assistance to the former communist states placed the Commission in a dominant position vis-à-vis environmental policy in CEE. At roughly the same time there emerged a new ideological approach to the environment and the control of pollution, in which abatement was discussed and considered in the context of market-based solutions (Bernstein, 2000). The post-communist environmental movement had, through foreign aid and tutelage, been shaped from the outset by foreign organisations and their agendas. In the early 1990s, the EC was part of a large community of foreign organisations offering aid, assistance and tutelage to the fledgling new environmental movement. Though superficially such environmental aid appeared benign and enabling, the agenda of the EC and others was highly ideological and based on subjective assumptions regarding both the most appropriate way of dealing with pollution in late capitalist society and the perceived needs and destiny of CEE within the new global order.

The collapse of the Soviet-style regimes in 1989 happened to coincide with the most significant shift in western environmental governance. The changed approach is characterised by Bernstein (2000) as involving the convergence of environmental and economic norms towards 'liberal environmentalism'. The somewhat ad hoc management of pollution, which had been the approach of western governments during the preceding 30 years, was now challenged by the concept of sustainable development. The 1992 Earth Summit in Rio institutionalised the new norms, which base environmental protection on the promotion and maintenance of the liberal economic order. It was essentially being argued that an environmental dividend was obtainable from neoliberal efficiency, cost–benefit analysis and decentralisation of state power. Insofar as this shift was spearheaded across Europe by the EU, the CEE countries were bound to this new hegemonic discourse, not least because the EU had, by the second half of the 1990s, become the most influential actor shaping domestic environmental policy and politics. It had provided the aid, the know-how and the policy frameworks and, as a consequence of the decline in other foreign sources of funding, the dependency of EMOs on the EU increased.

THE ACCESSION MOMENTUM: EMPOWERMENT OR DEPENDENCY?

By 1999, after the Amsterdam Conference had, for the first time, outlined the specific criteria for future membership, the likelihood of the Czech Republic gaining entry into the EU looked incontrovertible and this fact alone served to greatly augment the influence of the EU in all aspects of legislation as well as in the development of civil society. In its published *Opinions* on the progress made by the Czech Republic in meeting the criteria for entry, the Commission highlighted the gaps in the environmental legislative framework and the need to enhance the role of EMOs in order to assist in the implementation of policy and a change in civic values regarding the environment (CEC, 1998).

However, the assistance offered to EMOs in the late 1990s by the EU has to be seen in the broader context of expansion and, in particular, the economic objectives driving the entire accession process. While entry to the EU potentially offers social and environmental benefit for the Czech Republic, the enlargement agenda is driven by the desire to expand growth by ensuring the deregulation and privatisation of neighbouring eastern markets (Monbiot, 2000: 13). The entire enlargement agenda can be viewed in terms of the desire of European industrialists to ensure easy and unrestricted access, facilitated by the development of EU-funded infrastructure investment (roads, rail links). The protracted process of accession has thus far delivered a sizeable net gain to the corporations located within existing EU member states. Export tariffs on agricultural products, heavy industrial goods and livestock, plus the requirement, ahead of accession, for CEE states bordering the EU to adopt the Schengen agreement on border and customs control, have imposed rigid economic conditions on CEE states and denied them the benefits of free trade. Such hegemonic control over CEE exports and trade relations has, not surprisingly, provoked an anti-EU backlash in certain quarters, though support for accession remains steadfast in the Czech Republic. The key point to emphasise here is that EU environmental aid is an integral part of this controversial economic agenda based on neoliberal free market access combined with elements of protectionism.

Even less controversial interpretations of the motivation for the EU assisting within the realm of environmental capacity attest to the centrality of the overriding economic agenda and the correspondingly haphazard nature of the strategy. Connolly contends that:

> the institutions responsible for most of the environmental assistance to Eastern Europe did not fashion their efforts as a direct response to one particular environmental problem, or even as an explicit answer to a large array of environmental problems afflicting the region. Rather these institutions tended to tack on the additional goal of environmental protection to a broader, largely pre-

> existing set of economic and political development objectives – such as privatisation, market liberalization, and the expansion of public participation in decision making. (Connolly *et al*., 1996: 281)

By 1999, EU involvement, both direct and indirect, in the day-to-day activities of the larger EMOs was all-embracing and extended far beyond the simple tutelage and provision of grants envisaged in the early post-revolutionary period. Funding had become an instrument of control and a vital mechanism for ensuring that a tier of formal, professional and institutionalised EMOs operated within the ideological hegemony of sustainable development and ecological modernisation. It is easy to underestimate the true extent of this dependence on EU funding because accurate and precise information regarding the exact origin of the grants distributed to EMOs by various foundations is invariably not made available. Western foundations operating across CEE have changed their names into local languages. For instance, by the end of the decade the donor organisation Environmental Partnership Foundation was operating as *Nadace Partnerstvi* (Czech Environmental Partnership) and is still widely perceived as a Czech organisation despite the fact that the grants it distributes originate entirely from foreign sources. This is not necessarily the fault of foundations themselves. A change of law in 1998 required donor foundations operating in the country to establish themselves as Czech organisations. By 2000, most, if not all, of the main foundations providing funds for civic associations in the country were effectively dispensing foreign money from the EU, the UN or from individual foundations and charities. Regional organisations specifically designed to assist environmental regeneration that appear autonomous, such as the REC (Regional Environment Center) act as intermediary bodies distributing funds to environmental groups for projects considered by the EU or other donors to be important. The conditions for the distribution of this funding are set by the donor organisations, that is the European Commission, and not the REC or other intermediaries. Confusingly, in the annual reports of EMOs, such money appears in the category 'REC grants'; not 'EU grants'.

Though the EU had become the main source of direct and indirect funding for Czech EMOs by the late 1990s, the overall financial commitment made by the EU to the 'clean-up' of CEE should not be exaggerated. Indeed, one grasps a far better understanding of the relationship between the EU and EMOs on the eve of accession from exploring the initial rationale behind the EU's 'green' commitment to the region set out in the early post-communist period. In essence the approach has changed little.

From the early 1990s the EU, along with other international agencies, made it clear that the cost of ameliorating the environmental degradation of CEE would have to be borne by the states themselves. For the EU, low-cost

solutions based on modifying existing structures and regulatory frameworks was the chosen strategy (Fagin, 1999: 182; 2001). With regard to assistance for environmental organisations, funding has come from the Phare program, which also constitutes the largest single source of external grant aid (as opposed to development loans) available to CEE states (Slocock, 1998: 153). However, it was estimated that through much of the 1990s the proportion of EU–Phare aid designated specifically for the environment corresponded to less than 4 per cent of the calculated cost of environmental regeneration (ibid.: 154). Since 1997, Phare funding has been oriented towards the accession agenda, namely the strengthening of regulatory structures and investment in technical assistance needed to ensure compliance with the *acquis*.

In terms of environmental aid and assistance this has meant an emphasis on improving framework legislation, implementation, the EIA process, regulatory structures and the control of transboundary waste in line with the Basle Convention (CEC Regular Report, November 2000: 82). The overall emphasis is on ensuring that the Czech Republic meets the environmental *acquis*. The increased availability of aid does not therefore necessarily benefit EMOs. Though Phare money has continued to fund what are defined as 'civil society organisations', the main beneficiaries have in fact been public benefit associations (for example, organisations set up to help handicapped children, citizens' advice bureaux, educational groups), the tightening up of funding in line with accession priorities and the identification of new areas of need, particularly the plight of the Roma, has led to a reduction in the amount of funding available for EMOs. As the accession process gained pace, Phare funding became linked to the aims of the Accession Partnership agenda. EMOs are eligible to apply for funding as part of specific projects the underlying aims of which are to promote growth, consumption and which are designed to facilitate investment. These projects increasingly seek to encourage links between environmentalists and business. For example, a recent project to introduce environmental management and auditing systems into Czech companies sought the involvement of EMOs in helping to 'green' the corporate sector.

Pre-accession structural funds such as the ISPA (Instrument structural pour le pre d'adhésion) Programme have recently become the other key element of EU aid for the Czech Republic. A host of infrastructure projects will be funded, including assistance in the development of the controversial R48 Expressway, an 86km, four-lane road running east to west from Prague to the Polish border (ISPA, No. 2001 Cz 16 PPT 012, 001, 003). In addition to funding rail and water purification projects, there are also promises of significant funding for the expansion of Prague airport and other road schemes. While it seems somewhat paradoxical that the EU funds 'environmental' projects, and structural programmes that will undeniably worsen the state of the Czech environment from the same source, this reflects

the 'logic' of ecological modernisation. It also illustrates the inherent rationale of the eastwards expansion process: ensuring that CEE states have a structural, regulatory and institutional framework in place to 'balance' the desired and predicted increase in consumerism and ecological damage.

As already noted, the EU has been able to fashion a compliant environmental movement, unwilling to question the underlying ideological objectives of the environmental agenda of the accession programme, because of the financial dependency of EMOs on EU-derived funding. Rather than diminish as EMOs become more professional, this dependency has actually increased as other foreign donors have withdrawn and organisations have only gradually begun to recruit fee-paying members. The overarching dominance is reflected in the fact that, for the larger institutionalised and professional EMOs, the EU has become synonymous with environmental protection, funding and education.[39] In such a climate, the pejorative dimensions of the EU environmental agenda have become entirely obscured by the reliance on aid and tutelage. Recent research into the impact of the EU on western EMOs serves as a grave warning about the effects of this dependent relationship on the critical capacity of EMOs. It has been suggested that when environmental movements invoke the aid of EU institutions in their battles with national authorities, the balance of their actions is likely to be changed in the direction of a common European repertoire. Moreover, the structure of EU institutions encourages a bias towards conventional forms of activity and against unconventional ones (Rootes, 2001). Western EMOs are nowhere near as dependent on EU-derived funding as their Czech counterparts.

The extent of this dependency is greater than is immediately apparent. As already noted, one of the major sources of funding for CEE EMOs is the Regional Environmental Center (REC) for Central and Eastern Europe with the main office in Budapest and branches in all countries of the region. The REC was established by the USA, the European Commission and Hungary in 1990, with the objective of contributing to the improvement of the environment in CEE mainly through strengthening civil society actors. Individual western national governments, the European Commission and also private companies provide funding for its projects. As noted by Carius *et al.* (2000: 158), the REC has repeatedly supported and reinforced EU activities. Two recent examples include the REC facilitating CEE applicant states' contribution to the 6th Environmental Action Programme of the EU commissioned by the European Commission (2000), and the programme for participation of non-profit NGOs in the process of eastern enlargement of the EU (2001). EMOs find it increasingly difficult to acquire REC funding other than for designated projects for which they must cooperate with other actors, most often local authorities, or the private sector.

Funding for environmental projects linked to the accession agenda comes

from the Phare-REAP (Regional Accession Project) and is administered by the REC. The rubric states that projects eligible for funding from the programme should be aimed at enhancing the participation of NGOs in decision-making processes connected with the environmental dimension of eastern enlargement and, in particular, their cooperation with local government and state authorities and raising awareness amongst the general public regarding environmental aspects of European integration. The programme has the following thematic priorities:

- implementation of the Aarhus Convention,
- awareness raising about EU environmental policy,
- monitoring of the process of the Czech Republic's environmental approximation to the EU,
- identification of areas in which EU requirements are not fulfilled,
- implementation of EU environmental legislation (*The Bulletin*, 2001).

The conditions of the programme and its aims are in several respects important for understanding the dependency of EMOs on the EU. First, the Commission uses EMOs that receive funding as watchdogs over the environmental performance of their national government. While those EMOs allowed to participate are seen by the Commission as allies, they have no say in the formulation of EU environmental policy. Second, the programme obliges the Czech EMOs to function as politically neutral public educators and collaborators of public authorities. Third, activities under the programme have a strictly national scope with no incentive for Czech EMOs to link with their partner organisations either in other candidate or EU member states. Fourth, the programme also underlines the reactive character of the Czech EMOs' activities funded by the external bodies. The programme is thus yet another manifestation of the asymmetrical power relationship between the EU and CEE (Caddy, 1997).

The EU is now in a position where it is able to exercise significant leverage over most if not all of the sources of foreign funding available to EMOs. For instance, the Foundation for the Development of Civil Society (*Nadace rozvoje občanské společnosti* – NROS), with its office in Prague, administers the Czech part of the Phare-ACCESS programme that provides a significant proportion of the funding for EMOs. Other foundations that, as part of their operation, distribute EU money, are Foundation VIA (*Nadace VIA*) and *Nadace Sluníčko* (Sun), a foundation specializing in sustainable energy projects. The only notable exceptions are the Brno-based foundation *Nadace Partnerstvi* that serves primarily as a contact point between US charitable foundations and Czech civil society actors and does not distribute any money from the EU, the Olga Havel Foundation and the Open Society that distributes

Soros funds. Both the latter foundations provide only small amounts of funding for EMOs.

The extent to which EMOs are reliant on EU-derived money is often disguised in the annual reports of organisations. For instance, the annual reports of *Hnutí Duha*, one of the few EMOs to provide detailed information on the sources of its funding, reveal that in 1999 the organisation received the bulk of its 200 000 euros income from foreign donors, of which the REC provided 5000 euros. A further 19 000 came direct from DG Environment, and 6500 from NROS. Their overall budget in 1999 was around 200 000 euros. The following year REC granted *Duha* 5000 euros and the Dutch embassy an additional 1100 euros. Their total income that year amounted to nearly 300 000 euros, of which 91 per cent came from various foundations. Without specifying individual amounts, the 1999 annual report of *Děti Země* lists, among other sources, the following Czech-based and EU environmental agenda-promoting donors: NROS, VIA, Sluničko, REC and the Dutch embassy. The same donors sponsored the organization in the following year. EPS, which offers expert legal advice to civil associations, received 2300 euros from the Phare Program in 2000 out of their total income of 96 000 euros.

While the total amounts coming from the EU or its member states mentioned above may seem relatively small, it has to be realised that these EMOs are among the largest Czech groups with diversified financial sources. For smaller EMOs who depend financially on one or two grants from foundations, the dependency on EU-derived resources is even greater. Furthermore, some major foreign foundations sponsoring Czech EMOs, such as the Dutch Milieukontakt Oost-europa, are themselves financed by the DG Environment. As a consequence it is more than likely that they further promote broadly defined EU environmental agendas and approaches in countries such as the Czech Republic.

A glimpse of the impact of the accession agenda and the control of funding by the EU on EMOs can be obtained by surveying the projects financed since the mid-1990s by two major agencies disbursing EU funding for Czech EMOs: the REC and NROS. Such research reveals that, until 1998, virtually all grants supported information centres, centres of environmental education, environmental literature libraries, conservationist projects in nature reserves, networking, building up registers of toxic substances, and public awareness-raising campaigns. However, since 1998 the criteria for environment-related grants have been made more specific and 'environmental' funding has subsequently been directed towards creating incentives for Czech EMOs to become more actively involved in EU environmental policy, either in the form of grant programmes designed to enlist EMOs as monitors of environmental *acquis* implementation or through the extension of EU structural funds to include the funding of sewerage plants and water purification. The funds

available for the development of EMOs as civic organisations have decreased significantly.[40]

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISTS AND PERSONNEL IN THE LATE 1990S

The types of people involved in EMOs at the end of the 1990s differed quite considerably from the activists who had established the new campaigning organisations in the early post-revolutionary era.

The most evident change was the emergence of a new cadre of employees within the larger EMOs who had not necessarily been activists, but had been drawn to work in the environmental sector on the basis of career opportunities within organisations that were now, in contrast to the mid-1990s, offering reasonable salaries to specialists and professionals, or because EMOs were a quite favourable working environment. In several cases this tends to be women who have taken on administrative and managerial roles in EMOs and for whom childcare concerns make flexible working hours important. Whereas fledgling organisations in the early part of the decade were run entirely by students and young activists, by 1999 the more successful Prague or Brno-based EMOs were employing professionals and people with organisational experience. This marked a stark contrast to the situation during the nadir of the mid-1990s, when organisations were largely run by volunteers. This trend has been maintained and those with responsibility for campaigns, public relations and policy development are invariably aged over 30, with at least a Bachelor's degree and most likely a postgraduate qualification in law, engineering, management or education.[41]

The new director of the organisation *Zelený Kruh* (Green Cricle), Zuzana Drhová, is typical of this new cadre. She was not an activist in the early 1990s, but was drawn to the organisation as a PhD student interested in NGOs. The nature of the work, a degree of flexibility, small setting, non-competitive environment, appealed to her after the birth of her child. Michaela Valentová of *Pražské matky* (Prague Mothers) describes how she became involved in the organisation thus:

> I studied in a college of social law and then … the Faculty of Philosophy at Charles University. Then I was at home with children, later working for a publishing company. There were problems with time when my son went to school and [having worked for a period as a part-time assistant director of documentary films], this has been my work since.[42]

Within the larger EMOs, those running the organisations had often joined as young activists, but now, in their thirties, having acquired degrees, skills

and experience, had taken on new roles by the late 1990s. Such people invariably joined the organisation, or a similar one, just before or after the 'velvet revolution', left to pursue other career ambitions during the mid-1990s and then returned to work in an environmental organisation in some professional capacity. Those with a specific specialism tend to have been drawn to work in EMOs as a consequence of studying natural sciences and other environment-related subjects at graduate level.[43]

The situation tended to differ at the local level where there is a polarisation in the age range of activists, with some local chapters being run almost entirely by young student volunteers (somewhat reminiscent of the early period after the revolution) and retired people. This was found to be the case in a number of local chapters of large EMOs. For example, The Liberec branch of *Děti Země* was run predominantly by high-school students aged between 16 and 18.[44] The Olomouc branch of *Hnutí Duha* drew heavily on the large student population from Palacky University on the one hand, and on retired people on the other.[45] In other cases local branches of EMOs were run by retired professionals and people over the age of 50.[46] Generally it was acknowledged by those working in EMOs at the local level that it was hard to mobilise people between 30 and 50 years of age for local conservation campaigns. This contrasts sharply with EMOs at the national or city level, where political campaigning, lobbying and policy development are conducted almost entirely by this age group.

By the late 1990s there was evidence of gender divisions within EMOs. Those working in main offices, either in Prague or Brno, of larger national EMOs, on political or policy related issues and involved in lobbying and media work were, almost without exception, men in their late twenties and early thirties. Whilst the administrative functions in these organisations were being undertaken by women, the more high-profile activities of EMOs were the preserve of young men. This contrasted somewhat with the situation at the local level, where local chapters of *Hnutí Duha* and smaller grass-roots EMOs tended to be run entirely by women. When men were involved they tended, as noted above, to be older and to take on practical tasks. When asked to describe the membership profile of the South Bohemian women's EMO *Jihočeské matky* (South Bohemian Mothers), Jaroslava Brožová added, 'there are also four men who take part in our activities, which is particularly useful when we need to carry something heavy'.[47]

Gender distinctions were also discernible at the more radical end of the movement, although because of the submerged nature of such activity, any assertions are somewhat impressionistic. Amongst the eco-anarchist contingent, activists tend to be males in their twenties. Women are involved, but rather superficially, undertaking less high-profile, low-risk tasks.[48]

Despite the changes and turmoil within EMOs during the 1990s, and the

changes in personnel as a consequence of increased professionalism, by the end of the decade there was still a community of activists who had, as it were, grown up with the movement. Although they had assumed different roles within their organisations, they nevertheless represented a degree of continuity in a decade of flux.[49]

CONCLUSION

In an attempt to summarise the development of EMOs through the 1990s and with a view to characterising modern Czech EMOs, it is worth returning briefly to Diani and Donati's typology of western movement organisations (1999) discussed in the first chapter. Four theoretical organisational types were identified:

- *Public interest lobby* – professional staff, weak participatory inclinations and emphasis on lobbying.
- *Participatory protest organisation* – participatory emphasis, 'grass roots' subcultural structures and a strong inclination to disruptive protest.
- *Professional protest organisation* – professional activism and the mobilisation of financial resources, use of both conventional and confrontational tactics;
- *Participatory pressure group* – members involved in organisation, that is not just passive, emphasis on conventional tactics rather than protest.

As noted, this theoretical model of organisational types is helpful in the sense that it captures the transformation and the hybridised nature of strategies and organisational logic that have resulted in a breadth of organisational forms in established capitalist democracies. This enables our understanding of EMOs to move beyond the rigid dichotomy between professionalism and grass-roots action that divided earlier research (Lowe and Goyder, 1983; Jordan and Maloney, 1997) and to accept that professionalism and elite-focused strategies can be used in tandem with carefully orchestrated direct action designed to mobilise mass support.

In contrast to Hungary or Slovakia, the 1990s witnessed the emergence of a Czech environmental movement consisting of a core of organisations operating at the national level (*Děti Země*, Greenpeace, STUJ and *Hnutí Duha*). In terms of defining these organisation according to Diani and Donati's model classifications, they fall somewhere between 'public interest lobby' and 'professional protest organisation', depending on the extent to which they

have combined conventional and confrontational tactics (*Děti Země*, for example), or focus on lobbying and elite-level activity rather than mobilising public support (for example, *Hnutí Duha)*. The discussion in Chapter 6 on the contemporary situation will confirm the view that, although recent developments suggest the emergence of more participatory organisations, the mainstream EMOs hover between the 'public interest lobby' and the 'professional protest organisation' models. Though the inclination of the more professional EMOs during the late 1990s to increase fee-paying membership suggested a change in strategy, amongst the institutionalised EMOs there is still a dependency on foreign donors.

What was established during the 1990s was a tier of professional organisations within which there is a division of labour between the centre, usually focusing on political lobbying, cooperation with experts including lawyers, publication of newsletters and magazines, as well as cooperation with their foreign counterparts, and a network of local branches (that usually enjoy a large degree of autonomy) that deal with locally or regionally significant environmental issues. Three prominent EMOs (*Hnutí Duha, Děti Země* and Greenpeace) had by the end of the decade established their status as professional organisations, become recognised experts on specific environmental issues and were pursuing long-term and quite sophisticated campaigns on specific issues, such as energy, forestry, protection of landscape, and quarrying of minerals.

Despite what appeared to be an overarching shift towards professionalism and institutionalisation, the environmental movement of the late 1990s retained a degree of organisational and ideological diversity that has been further entrenched since. In addition to the tier of professional and politically oriented EMOs established in Prague and Brno and which dominated media coverage of environmentalism, there existed small non-professional conservation-oriented groups engaged in regional campaigns focusing on a variety of ecological issues. Examples of this type of organization include Friends of Nature (*Přátelé přírody*) in Ustí nad Labem who concentrate on protection of the Labe river valley, and 'Old Protectors of the Jizerské Mountains' (*Staři ochránci Jizerských hor*) in Liberec whose main concern is the replacement of the spruce monoculture in the mountains with a biologically more diverse forest. One of the most prominent local EMOs, the South Bohemian Mothers (*Jihočeské matky*), who have been relentlessly fighting the construction of the Temelín nuclear power plant throughout the 1990s, will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

There were also a growing number of EMOs specialising in education in the late 1990s, providing teaching for school classes or other groups of children. The late 1990s saw the development of the first alternative ecological institute in the Czech Republic, situated in Brno.

Most fundamentally, perhaps, the 1990s confirmed the extent to which the political process exerts an impact not just on the political capacity of EMOs, but on their internal ideological and strategic focus. The Klaus era did not just exclude EMOs from the formal policy process, it transformed the identity of the movement and its approach to political engagement. The long-term effect of periods of closure and obstruction is often far greater than anticipated. Contrary to implicit suggestions within the democratic consolidation literature, it seems unlikely that access for civil society actors will evolve over time and that political opportunities can somehow be extended once vested interests are established. The early stages of a democratisation process establish precedents, particularly where political reform coincides with economic transformation and new elites and relationships between capital and the state are being forged. The legacy of the 1990s for the environmental movement in the Czech Republic, and indeed other civil society organisations, is that political exclusion and the lack of deliberation between activists and the elite transmute embryonic and nascent organisations which rely on an open political process to assist their development at a time of political and institutional uncertainty.

The other main lesson of the 1990s concerns the issue of funding. In addition to confirming the theoretical assertion that resources are vital determinants of mobilisation, the experience of EMOs during this period endorsed the key hypothesis of this book, that the specific political and economic context in which EMOs are trying to develop (dependency on foreign donors, the shrinking of the state, the hegemonic discourse of neoliberal political economy) imposes particular constraints on the capacity of the movement to acquire resources and to deploy the knowledge, assistance and funding they were being offered in an effective way. Theoretical hypotheses regarding the role of resources in explaining EMO behaviour, based entirely on western experience, do not reveal the full dimensions of the picture in transitional states. EMOs in the west are nowhere near as dependent on foreign donors as their Czech counterparts; they have long-established supporters who protect them from uneasy proximity to governments, foundations or capital interests. New EMOs in unconsolidated democracies operating without such supporters function under entirely different circumstances. Resource endowment does not necessarily empower them or augment their political capacity.

The following chapter will illustrate and elaborate on many of the issues raised here by focusing on a series of case study organisations.

NOTES

1. The term ‘enthusiastic’ to describe this period was first employed by Jehlička and Kára (1994).

2. Interview conducted by Petr Jehlička with an activist from PEN (*Plzeňská ekologická nadace* – Pilsen Environmental Foundation), 21 January 1999.
3. Information on *Zelený Kruh* was obtained from several interviews with Marie Hasiova (director until 1997) during the period 1994–7, and from the organisation's annual reports (1993, 1994, 1995).
4. CEMC publication and interview with its director, Radomir Matyas, Prague, April 1994.
5. Interview with Moldan, April 1994.
6. Interview with Moldan, November 1994.
7. Interview with Moldan, April 1994.
8. Information on the Green Parliament, and Moldan's role in particular, was obtained from lengthy interviews with Bedrich Moldan in April, 1994, November 1994 and June 1995.
9. The term 'parallel society' or 'polis' was used by Havel in his essay 'The Power of the Powerless' to describe dissident activity in the pre-revolutionary period. Activists including musicians, poets, playwrights and environmentalists occupied a submerged clandestine sphere from whence they opposed the formal Party-state system with its heavily controlled 'society'.
10. Information on attitudes of EMO activists towards the Green Party was obtained from interviews with an anonymous activist within Greenpeace CR, April 1994, July 1997.
11. Interview with Petr Štěpánek, former spokesperson to Martin Bursik, and director of the Public Relations Department at the Ministry of the Environment.
12. Also included on the list was the organisation Animal SOS, which equally was law-abiding and committed to non-violent protest. This organisation was never formally removed from the list and found it very difficult to obtain international funding and support. It ceased to exist in 1999 (interviews with Petr Bergman, Animal SOS, July 1997, November 1999).
13. Interviews with Hana Pernicová, formerly director of Greenpeace CR, April 1994, November 1994, July 1997.
14. Interview with Petr Štěpánek, Prague, 23 November 1998.
15. Martin Palouš, Hana Pernicová, Hana Šilhanová.
16. In April 1994 and June 1995 I interviewed 12 EMOs in Prague and Brno as part of an ESRC-funded PhD. Organisations were asked about their membership and their sources of income, and were reinterviewed on several occasions throughout the period.
17. Information on the Fund was obtained from interviews with Hana Pernicová (VIA Foundation), July 1997 and November 1999.
18. Information obtained from a variety of sources, all of whom wish to remain anonymous.
19. Interview with Jana Ledvinova, Director of *Tereza*, 17 July 1997.
20. Interview with Dr Bedrich Moldan, 14 July 1997
21. Interview with Hana Pernicová, June 1995.
22. For example, *Zelený Kruh* stumbled from one financial crisis to the next during this period. It was threatened with the loss of its premises by Prague Municipal Council, who intended to sell the building in Lublanska Street. In the end its offices were saved and the building remained under municipal control, but a period of extended wrangling occurred. The organisation also lost staff during this period, and relied heavily on volunteers. (Interview with Marie Haisová, April and November 1994.)
23. Interview with Bedrich Moldan, 15 July 1997.
24. Interview with Greenpeace activist, Prague, June 1997.
25. Interview with Hana Pernicová, 14 July 1997. Information on this incident was also gained from *Lidove noviny*, 20 June 1997 and *Respekt* (July 1997).
26. Interview with Bedrich Moldan, 15 July 1997.
27. Interview with Hana Pernicová, November 1999.
28. Information obtained from an interview with Petr Štěpánek, Bursik's media spokesperson while he was Minister of the Environment, November 1998.
29. Information on Kužvart gained from a number of sources, from interviews with him in April 1994 and June 1997, and from various government publications.
30. Interview with Hana Pernicová, July 1997; survey carried out by Stem Poll, published by CTK, 10 July 1997.
31. Information obtained from Hana Pernicová (Via Foundation) and from activists involved in

the project in Spálené Poříčí.

32. Information obtained from the organisation's website (*www.nesehnuti.ecn.cz*) and from interviews with activists from the Brno branch, November 2002.
33. Interviews with Marie Haisová (*Agentura Gaia*), July 1997, November 1999, September 2001.
34. Witness account of a Greenpeace activist who 'supplied' two police officers with a glass full of effluent and an explanation regarding its source and health impact.
35. Interview with Jon R. Blyth, Programme Director, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Prague, 16 July 1997.
36. Interview with Táňa Hlavatá of VIA Foundation, November 1998.
37. Interview with Dana Kuchtová, *Jihočeské matky*, Budějovice, November 1998
38. Interview with Vojtěch Kotecký, *Hnutí Duha*, Prague, May 1999.
39. This claim regarding the attitude of EMOs towards the EU is based on interviews with leading activists in *Duha* and *Děti Země*, *Tereza* and ČSOP during May 1999.
40. This survey involved analysing the grant decisions of both foundations from the mid-1990s, identifying the amount awarded and the purpose of the award.
41. I am grateful for access to research undertaken by Petr Jehlička during 1998 into the background and motivations of activists in the Czech movement. I base my conclusions primarily on my own research during 1999.
42. Michaela Valentova was interviewed by Petr Jehlička in February 1999. It is from this interview that the quotation is taken. I also met her in May 1999.
43. Interview with Čestmír Hrdinka, Greenpeace, May 1999.
44. Interview with Simona Jašová, *Děti Země* (Liberec), May 1999.
45. Interview with Hana Konvalinková, *Hnutí Duha* (Olomouc)
46. For example, *Přátelé přírody* (Friends of Nature).
47. Jaroslava Brožová was interviewed by Petr Jehlička in January 1999 and by me in May 2000.
48. Interviews with eco-anarchists in Prague, May 1999 and September 2001.
49. In particular I would mention Daniel Vondrouš and Vojtěch Kostolecký of *Hnutí Duha*, and Jindřich Petrlík of *Děti Země.*

5. Case studies

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter identified general trends and developments within the Czech environmental movement during the period 1990–2000. Though the specific strategies and actions of individual organisations were often referred to, the focus was on the impact of changes in the political opportunity structure and the effects of resource constraints on EMOs as a whole. Observations regarding the interaction between EMOs and the political elite, the impact of resource constraints on organisations and the emergence of new, more radical, aggregations referred to individual cases only to enforce the general argument.

By contrast, this chapter is more descriptive; it recounts the development of three quite different organisations that reflect the diversity of organisational forms within the present-day environmental movement. The objective here is to elaborate on the specific issues and trends highlighted in the previous chapter and to identify how, despite variation in strategies and approaches, they have all grappled with similar constraints over the past decade. In essence, the broad aim here is to reinforce the core arguments and themes of the book by focusing in detail on case study organisations.

The three case study organisations selected reflect the diversity of organisations within the movement: *Hnutí Duha* is best described as a combination of a public interest lobby and professional protest organisation. It has been transformed since the early 1990s from an amorphous aggregation of young activists with an esoteric and global focus to arguably the most high profile professional EMO in the country today. It has branches across the country, is involved in a number of campaigns, has close links with the policy elite and employs a diversity of strategies. By contrast, *Sdružení Jihočeské matky* (The Bohemian Mothers Association) is a non-professional organisation that retains a grass-roots focus. It has remained committed to a single campaign (opposition to the Temelín nuclear power plant) and retains a radical stance on the issue. It has steadfastly refused to become more professional and rejects mass membership as a strategy for increasing its operations. *SOS Praha* was established as an umbrella organisation to coordinate local grass roots NIMBY campaigns in Prague against the construction of the inner and outer ring roads. It emerged in 1998 as a

reaction to the perceived neglect of local issues by the main EMOs such as *Hnutí Duha*.

Despite quite significant differences in strategies and campaigning approaches, the behaviour and development of the three EMOs undoubtedly reflect the specific context of attempting to develop a democratic civil society in a post-authoritarian state, at the same time restructuring the economy according to neoliberal doctrine.

SDRUŽENÍ JIHOČESKÉ MATKY (THE SOUTH BOHEMIAN MOTHERS ASSOCIATION)

Sdružení Jihočeské matky (SBM) is a particularly interesting EMO in the sense that it seemingly contradicts almost every trend and observation one cares to make about the Czech environmental movement. While it is not the only EMO to approach environmental issues from a feminist perspective,[1] or the only organisation to be run by women,[2] it is perhaps the most highly prominent environmental organisation run by women, and the only such organisation to campaign tirelessly against the nuclear power plant at Temelín, the discussions surrounding which are considered by many to be 'male territory'.

As noted in the previous chapter, the environmental movement is dominated by young men who exercise high-profile activities undertaken by EMOs. The women involved in the movement tend to perform administrative or more managerial roles and are less high-profile generally. Thus the presence of a group of middle-aged women involving themselves in a high-profile issue that requires a certain technical and financial expertise in order to grasp the arguments surrounding the controversial plant is extremely novel in the Czech Republic, and no doubt beyond. Moreover, the notion of a group of women educated in the humanities and social sciences interfering in the Temelín issue challenges the technocratic nature of Czech society as well as age and gender stereotypes both within the environmental movement and beyond.[3]

However it is not just the issue of gender that distinguishes SBM from other EMOs. The organisation, unlike other EMOs established after the 'velvet revolution', has remained a small, non-hierarchic grass-roots organisation which despite some engagement with professionalism, can still more appropriately be described, to use Diani and Donati's terminology, as hovering somewhere between a participatory protest organisation and a participatory pressure group. SBM has repeatedly rejected the suggestion of establishing an office in Prague, arguably a decision that has denied it political access and forced it to operate solely within a hostile local political opportunity structure. The organisation is run by a small band of volunteers plus five part-time staff.[4]

Origins and Background of SBM

SBM was established by a group of former school friends in 1991, though its roots date back to the period before November 1989, a time when many new environmental organisations were being formed. It was officially registered as a non-political civil association in 1992. The organisation emerged in response to the threat posed to the environment and human health by the planned construction of a nuclear power plant of Soviet design at Temelín in Southern Bohemia in the wake of the Chernobyl disaster a few years earlier. At the time there was very little interest or knowledge in Czechoslovakia about nuclear energy and its ecological consequences. Many of the environmental activists were concerned with the more immediate issue of air pollution from brown coal-burning power plants and some were even inclined to favour nuclear energy as an alternative.[5] However, with the help of Austrian anti-nuclear activists across the border, SBM gradually grew into an informal, and subsequently more formal, group of female activists who have continually campaigned against the Temelín plant. Throughout its existence SBM has received help and support from both Austrian anti-nuclear campaigners and also from the Austrian government who are equally concerned about the existence of a sizeable Soviet-designed nuclear plant just 50km from the border. SBM's headquarters is in České Budějovice, the capital of the peripheral South Bohemian Region, some 40km from the Austrian border, and near the controversial Temelín nuclear power plant against which it campaigns.

Although SBM's database contains in excess of 2000 names, in reality there are about 150 members who pay 100 Czech Crowns (3 euros) annual membership fee. The constitution of the organisation distinguishes three types of membership: members, supporters and honorary members. The vast majority of the 2000 names on the database are in fact passive supporters, with an active core of 10–15 women 'members' who run the organisation, plan actions and pursue the campaigns. Membership, as opposed to being a supporter, is restricted to women only and includes all ages between 20 and 65, though the core activists tend to be middle-aged. Despite their name, the Mothers accept women without children. Most have secondary level education or are university graduates. However, though České Budějovice is a large university town with a large student and academic population, the organisation has not significantly widened its membership.[6]

Funding and Resources

Though typical of the circumstances in which all EMOs in the Czech Republic operate, SBM's dependency on foreign donors has had a particularly profound

impact on its development and on its capacity to forge links with the local community, expand its membership and embrace other issues. This situation is closely bound up with the physical and ideological proximity of the SBM to the Austrian anti-nuclear movement

In the early 1990s, when all EMOs were being offered foreign donations and grants, SBM was offered funding by the Upper Austrian Anti-nuclear Platform (UAANP) to campaign against Temelín in Czechoslovakia. There followed what members describe as a 'happy time'. The money enabled SBM to rent spacious offices and, in cooperation with the Czech Foundation Against Nuclear Danger, to open an information centre in České Budějovice. SBM activists also decided to expand the range of activities beyond the anti-nuclear campaign, and generally to establish a more robust organisational structure. Able to enlist professional advice and know-how, SBM was able to take part in a series of public inquiries concerning all sorts of environmentally damaging projects throughout the South Bohemian region. However, these activities and the expansion of the organisation were funded entirely by the money received from their Austrian donors, which was actually earmarked solely for the anti-Temelín campaign.

In protest at the way in which SBM had deployed funds towards other campaigns, UAANP curtailed its financial support in 1997 and, as a consequence, SBM ran into serious difficulties that threatened the continued existence of the organisation.[7] Activists were forced to look for more modest offices and reduce the scope of their activities, to close down the information centre and to discontinue their newsletter. Whilst they were able to maintain the core activities directed against Temelín, their strategies and the scope of the campaign were severely constrained by the reduction in funding.

Though the situation in which SBM now found itself was not dissimilar from that faced by other Czech EMOs in the second half of the 1990s, the organisation's outright opposition to nuclear energy and the Temelín plant meant that it found it much harder to secure the support of foreign foundations, many of which endorsed nuclear energy as an alternative to brown coal mining. Similarly, there was no prospect of the organisation receiving any domestic funding from government-sponsored sources while it vehemently opposed Temelín. SBM's response was not to develop its fee-paying membership base, but to concentrate on securing other sources of external funding and as a result, 90 per cent of its funding still comes from abroad.[8] Unlike other campaign issues, it is likely there will always be some funding available internationally for anti-nuclear campaigns, particularly given the geographical location of SBM, bordering a country with a particularly strong anti-nuclear movement. In a sense, as long as Temelín operates SBM will be able to acquire external funding. Nevertheless, such dependency on foreign donors commits the organisation to an uncertain future.

Campaigns and Strategies

As already noted, SBM is the only organisation in the Czech Republic to have actively and continuously campaigned against Temelín.[9] Other EMOs which, at the start of the 1990s vehemently opposed Temelín, ceased campaigning on the issue once government and public support for nuclear power made it an unfashionable issue with which to be associated. Indeed, during the Klaus era, SBM was very much a lone voice battling against national-level apathy and fierce local hostility. Unlike other green activists, SBM refused to dilute or qualify its outright opposition to nuclear energy and the ill-fated plant.[10]

SBM has also become involved in a campaign for the use of alternative energy, and a campaign to protect the South Bohemian landscape. On the nuclear issue, its strategy has mainly been to focus on the legal process demanding, for example, that EIA procedure be applied at least to the changes to the original project (the whole plant has never been subjected to EIA assessment). It has also taken part in public inquires on the location of radioactive waste storage in which it questioned the safety of the proposed alternatives. In the campaign on alternative energy, SBM's strategy has been to organise exhibitions, give lectures at schools, call press conferences and publish articles mainly in the regional press. As one activist commented: 'It became impossible to do just Temelín. It is impossible to fight one great evil and at the same time ignore other evils. We had to do something as well against felling oaks or building an incinerator' (interview, 23/3/99).[11]

SBM also addresses various threats to the South Bohemian landscape arising mainly from private-sector initiatives and foreign investment schemes. Such proposals are usually backed by local politicians and mayors as they potentially offer employment opportunities to local people. Insofar as foreign investment is usually accepted by the local political elite on the basis that liberalisation is a basic tenet of economic restructuring and EU accession, SBM's opposition in the mid-1990s to, for example, the construction of a site for the decontamination of radioactive sludge at Mydlovary, to a Dutch-sponsored scheme to convert a vast area of natural beauty into a recreational and leisure park to attract foreign tourists, and a German-sponsored project for large-capacity poultry farms, which would take advantage of more lenient Czech regulation of poultry farming, pitched this small organisation into direct opposition to the prevailing political and economic climate of the Klaus era and the local ODS-dominated political elite.

What marks SBM out from other EMOs in terms of campaign strategies is the objective of using environmental campaigns as a basis for strengthening the participation of women in Czech politics and public life. Though from the outset SBM activists experienced sexist abuse from their opponents and were simply dismissed as ignorant lay people meddling in the highly technical issue

of nuclear energy, and employing irrational and emotionally laden arguments, this has not deterred the women. Interestingly, when other EMOs started to rekindle their interest in campaigning against Temelín towards the end of the 1990s in view of EU concerns about the plant's safety, and the government's apparent vulnerability on the issue, SBM enjoyed some media attention, though the male activists in the Prague-based EMOs took much of the limelight.[12] While these EMOs have now all but abandoned the Temelín campaign since the government's decision to continue with the plant in May 1999, SBM continues to highlight safety issues and the threat posed by nuclear processing and storage as well as the high cost of subsidies given by the government to CEZ, the Czech energy company that still owns Temelín. While the rest of the environmental movement in the Czech Republic see Temelín as a failed and closed issue, SBM, inspired by its Austrian supporters, continues to pursue what has once again become an unfashionable campaign with which the mainstream EMOs no longer wish to be associated.

Dependency on foreign donors has clearly influenced the way SBM has developed and the campaign strategies it employs. Whereas initially the organisation was a purely participatory protest group engaging in non-violent direct action (such as demonstrations at the Temelín site), endowed with substantial resources, the organisation seemed to be moving towards the professional protest organisation type as identified by Diani and Donati (1999). Grass-roots participation seemed to be giving way to professional activism. By the mid-1990s, SBM was employing a broad range of activities, from lobbying to demonstrations. Apart from publishing its own newsletter, it ran seminars on renewable energy, including wood-burning boilers and small hydropower plants. It also organised excursions for mayors to places where renewable energy was already used. At the same time, however, it was still organising demonstrations against Temelín in České Budějovice or at the Mydlovary reprocessing site.

Thanks to the close cooperation with several groups from the Austrian environmental and anti-nuclear movements in the early 1990s, SBM was seemingly able to adopt their know-how and thus speed up the learning process that was taking the majority of regionally based EMOs a great deal longer. The organisation has cooperated closely with the Freistadt Mothers, an Austrian women's environmental movement opposing nuclear energy. SBM activists were also influenced by the British organisation, Women's Environmental Network.

However, such contacts did not bring forth substantive changes within the organisation and both the apparent shift towards professionalism and the campaigning know-how acquired through contact with foreign organisations were somewhat superficial. The specific context in which SBM functioned (dependent on external funding and lacking a sizeable constituency of local

supporters able to sustain the organisation) acted as a constraint on the organisation's development as a professional protest organisation able to mobilise resources and establish a prominent political status within the country. The hollowness of such professionalism is recognised by SBM's leading activists who, when interviewed in 1999, noted that beneath the veneer of professionalism the organisation had throughout the decade lacked not only organisational skills and the ability to work effectively with the media, but also technical expertise. Viewed quite cynically, SBM was funded, advised and 'professionalised' just enough to fulfil the objectives of the Austrian anti-Temelín movement, which saw the benefit of a Czech EMO operating in the vicinity of the plant.

Discussion and Analysis

The case of SBM illustrates a great deal about the constraints under which EMOs operate in the Czech Republic and how their capacity is mediated by both the lingering legacy of authoritarianism and the underlying neoliberal economic logic. Of course the case of SBM also informs a more general understanding of the variables that determine EMO behaviour.

First and foremost, the actual campaign issue being addressed is critical. Despite declining enthusiasm elsewhere in Europe, nuclear power has its supporters in the Czech Republic, amongst both the public and the political elite, on the basis that it offers an alternative to brown coal power plants. Although, as Petr Pithart, the first post-communist Prime Minister, observed with regard to the decision of the post-1989 administration to continue with Temelín 'we let ourselves be led too far by the old totalitarian megalomania', the issue was also deeply embedded within the logic of the new economic order. The Klaus government was encouraged to continue with Temelín by the United States, who supported Westinghouse's bid to secure the Temelín contract. According to Axelrod, 'the United States told the Czech government that if Westinghouse won the contract, it would encourage increased co-operation between the United States and Czech firms in nuclear and other industries' (1999: 286). The mantra of foreign direct investment as the key to economic regeneration was the powerful dynamic that drove the Klaus government.

The attitude of the Czech public towards nuclear energy has always been somewhat ambivalent: public opinion surveys conducted by the Institute for Public Opinion Research in Prague in 1993 and 1995 suggested that a majority of citizens trusted the government to make the right decision on nuclear power (ibid.: 294). Yet the same survey also revealed that 65 per cent of respondents agreed with the demonstrations against Temelín. At the local level where SBM operates, attitudes towards Temelín have been divided: a substantial

proportion of the population is willing to support the completion of Temelín on the strength of job opportunities, whilst a smaller proportion is concerned about the long-term health implications.

It could be argued that a degree of ambivalence towards such a controversial issue potentially offers an opportunity for campaigners such as SBM to exert an impact. However, this overlooks the extent to which the attitudes of the public towards politics and of policy makers towards the role of protestors and civil society are heavily path-dependent. It is such a legacy that determines the capacity of EMOs to mobilise support and resources in the post-communist era. Although to an extent the technocratic culture and attitudes towards women pre-date communist socialisation, they were, despite the egalitarian rhetoric, reinforced by four decades of a materialistic and technocratic system based on the Leninist model of democratic centralism. Despite a brief democratic interlude during the First Republic, the notion of protest and criticism of officials and politicians by groups of citizens is a new behavioural phenomenon in the Czech Republic. More familiar in Prague and Brno, the notion of campaign groups in local areas is even more peculiar. Added to this of course is the fact that SBM is a women's organisation.

Of particular interest is the extent to which SBM was disadvantaged by its decision to operate within the local political opportunity structure, which proved to be far more closed and hostile than the national political structure that *Hnutí Duha* and others were able to exploit quite effectively. Local ODS politicians desperate to secure investment in their region and away from the media spotlight of national politics were far more hostile towards campaigners than the national political elite, where party competition and media focus ensures a greater degree of openness. The theoretical discourse on social movements emphasises the dividend of decentralisation and the value of local access (Kriesi, 1995). What it fails to acknowledge is that, in a new democracy in which decentralisation of power has yet to be consolidated and where authoritarian legacies linger at the local or regional level far longer than in cities, the local political opportunity structure can be far more inhibiting and constraining than the national. Political legacies of the communist and pre-communist past transmute theoretical assertions regarding access. Despite administrative reform and the devolution of planning responsibilities to local and regional officials, the Czech state is highly centralised. This has as much to do with the tenacious legacy of democratic centralism as with the workings of modern political economy and the way large contracts involving foreign direct investment are negotiated. Over an issue such as Temelín, the involvement of neighbouring states, the EU, TNCs and other agencies ensured that the decision-making process was centred in Prague.

During the whole decade in which it campaigned against Temelín, SBM did not expand its operations beyond the South Bohemian region. Though it

adopted lobbying as a strategy in the campaign, political lobbying in the highly centralised Czech state is effective only if it is systematically employed in Prague. This proved a fundamental strategic barrier to the success of SBM in the anti-Temelín campaign, given that all institutions involved in the decision making process on Temelín (the Czech energy company, the Ministry of Trade and Industry which is the regulator of the energy sector, the State Office for Nuclear Safety and the government and Parliament) are based in Prague. As one SBM activist acknowledged:

> We rarely manage to penetrate national newspapers because … if you are not in Prague and do not know the right journalists, you simply won't make it into [Prague- based] papers. You may send out a hundred faxes, we tried to hold a press conference in Prague, but if you don't have contacts that you cultivated for years, you have almost no chance. (Interview, 23/3/99)[13]

In the absence, until 2002, of regional councils, the decision of SBM activists to focus their campaign at the local level enmeshed them within a particularly narrow and hostile political elite in Č̌eské Budějovice, large sections of whom are in one way or another linked with Temelín. For example, the mayor of Č̌eské Budějovice is a former employee at Temelín and council members have business links with companies involved with the plant. This means that SBM encounters deeply rooted hostility even when campaigning on other issues. Local power holders do not miss any opportunity to close access for SBM and prevent it from participating in regional or local environmental conflicts. The situation was summed up by an SBM activist:

> A commission that is supposed to supervise the preparation of the plan of strategic development of the South Bohemian region has recently been established. It is connected with the European Union's structural funds and will affect the development of the whole region on a long-term basis. We as SBM wanted to be a member of the commission ... but the reaction of the mayor of Č̌eské Budějovice was: from ecological groups anybody except SBM. (Interview, 23/3/99)

Of all the issues raised by the case of SBM, the impact of financial dependency on the capacity of this EMO to expand and develop financial and political roots is most disturbing. As noted above, the dependence of SBM on foreign donors took away the need to mobilise Czech domestic resources and to locate its activities within the community. In over a decade of activity, SBM has not managed, nor has it made a serious attempt, to expand the membership of its organisation. It still has fewer than 200 fee-paying members in what amounts to quite a large, relatively prosperous region, in which there are many academics, students and others likely to be concerned about environmental issues. SBM's dependence on mostly Austrian sources of funding diminished its ability to integrate itself into post-communist Czech politics. It discouraged

the organisation from moving beyond the region (its centre of gravity was in many respects Austria rather than Prague), and allowed it to function without the support of fee-paying members. Furthermore, while it was offered expertise on nuclear energy from abroad, there was little need to tap local research potential in České Budějovice.

HNUTÍ DUHA (RAINBOW MOVEMENT), FoE–CR[14]

Origins and Background

In 1994, *Hnutí Duha*, which translated from the Czech means Rainbow Movement, was accepted as the Czech chapter of Friends of the Earth International (FoE–I), and is perhaps the most prominent and successful EMO in the country today. The organisation has also gained international notoriety within the global environmental movement network by being asked by FoE to coordinate the international organisation's anti-nuclear campaign.[15] What began as a local initiative in the city of Brno has grown into an influential national organisation with 15 active local chapters all over the Czech Republic. Its activists appear regularly in the media, and the organisation now recruits relatively highly-paid professionals to run its various campaigns. *Duha* is widely recognised as the main voice of environmentalism in the country. Its publications and reports are widely read and cited. Compared to other EMOs that emerged on the eve of the revolution, *Duha* is unique in the way it has developed, particularly in its internal organisation and strategy. In less than a generation, it has moved from being a radical amorphous non-hierarchic movement to a highly professional mainstream organisation employing conventional strategies. *Duha*'s 'professionalism' is in part due to its international links but also due to particular strategic choices. What distinguishes its campaigns from those of other EMOs is its capacity to link environmental issues to financial and social problems, while at the same time emphasising the ethical dimension of environmental degradation.[16]

Yet, despite many of the trappings of a western-style professional protest organisation, *Duha*'s strategies and internal organisation still reflect the context in which the organisation emerged and in which it operates. The legacy of authoritarian rule and the circumstances of its collapse, the particular nuances of post-Communist Czech political development (particularly the legacy of the Klaus era), the funding situation and the relationship between the indigenous environmental movement and international western-based EMOs have undoubtedly shaped *Duha*'s development.

Established in Brno, the second largest city in the Czech Republic, during the summer of 1989, just prior to the 'velvet revolution', *Duha* was typical of

environmental organisations during this period. It comprised a few young activists (secondary school students) who had previously been involved in party-sanctioned conservation organisations such as CUNP (Czech Union of Nature Protection) or *Brontosaurus* (affiliated to the youth section of the Communist Party). In the months prior to the revolution these activists formed part of the growing chorus of discontent that surrounded the decomposition of the party's political authority. What distinguished *Duha* from the rest of the fledgling EMOs was its stated intention to address the causes and not just the consequences of unpropitious human actions. Though it was still some way from becoming a professional protest organisation, this immediately set the organisation on a distinctly political course.

Funding and Resources

Although *Duha* has experienced periods of financial uncertainty, in recent years it has managed to establish relatively stable levels of income derived largely from a steady flow of external funding. In contrast to the early 1990s, and indeed to other smaller EMOs today, *Duha* is able to offer reasonable salaries to its employees and is thus able to recruit highly-trained and skilled professionals to work in the Brno and Prague offices. Local chapters are often small, self-funding operations that rely entirely on volunteers.

Yet, despite the organisation's expansion and professionalism compared to other Czech EMOs, *Duha* still remains heavily dependent on external donors and on EU money in particular. Though it has always raised revenue from its professional activities and services, the organisation has only recently embarked upon establishing a fee-paying membership amongst Czech citizens and has begun to employ direct marketing techniques.[17] It is now firmly acknowledged that, in order to maintaining *Duha*'s position in light of the threatened withdrawal of foreign donors willing to support EMOs, the organisation requires a passive fee-paying membership able to sustain the organisation in the future. Whereas in the past *Duha* activists had argued that a financial strategy based on donations from the Czech public was not realistic, it is now recognised that, almost a generation after the collapse of communism, levels of disposable income amongst sections of society most likely to give donations (public sector professionals, middle classes) make such a strategy more feasible.

However, *Duha* faces the same constraints as all other EMOs trying to reorientate their funding strategy, namely the absence of readily and cheaply available know-how. Whilst being part of an international organisation means that fund-raising expertise is more readily available to *Duha* than to other EMOs, the greatest constraint is the lack of capital to invest in fundraising. As a leading *Duha* activist noted: 'It is expensive for us to employ a person just

to work on [fund-raising]. There is no immediate benefit and we cannot get funding [from foreign donors] specifically for this.'[18]

Internal Organisation and Strategies

From the perspective of 2002, and depending on the aspect of the organisation on which you focus, *Duha* can appear as either professional protest organisation or public interest lobby. At the community level the organisation seems more radical in terms of both strategies and campaign tactics, whilst at the Prague or Brno level *Duha*'s activities appear professional and elite-focused. This may be evidence that the organisation has embarked upon the sort of combined strategies that western EMOs have adopted. However, Duha's key activists remain keen to distance the organisation from its radical past in the early 1990s. What cannot be denied is that the organisation has been transformed in the ensuing period and that *Duha* today bears little resemblance to the submerged and amorphous organisation of 1990.

Initially, *Duha* activists rejected a formal hierarchic organisational structure and the notion of non-active supporters, preferring activists to work independently on particular issues that were broadly defined by the 'centre of operations' in Brno. The organisation favoured direct action as a campaign strategy and an amorphous cell-like internal structure. The organisation resembled, or at least appeared to be moving towards, the participatory protest organisation as identified by Diani and Donati (1999). Rather than lobbying parliament and a campaign agenda based on national policy and issues, *Duha* activists focused on global environmental issues.

By the mid-1990s this had altered quite significantly and *Duha* was now most appropriately described as somewhere between a professional protest organisation and a public interest lobby. It developed its activities around two basic pillars: centres in Brno and Prague whose task was to coordinate nationwide political campaigns, lobbying and media work, and a web of local groups involved in particular local issues. This enables the organisation to pursue grass roots protest campaigns alongside lobbying and participation within the policy process.[19] The transformation of the organisation during the 1990s was quite remarkable. Rather than radicalise the organisation, *Duha*'s response to the demise of movement-based politics from mid-1991 and the adversarial political climate of the first Klaus administration was to adopt a strategy based on lobbying on less controversial issues, to deny that it was a political organisation, and to seek closer contacts with the political elite. Such a strategy was pursued despite the lack of a political dividend and the denial of political access to EMOs for much of the Klaus era. A more hierarchical structure was adopted, based on a clearly defined division of labour and an agenda of policies and issues on which the organisation would focus. It was

decided that the national centre in Brno and the Prague office deal with political campaigns whilst local offices would develop links with the public as well as working within local political structures. The 15 local branches, the smallest of which is in Susice and run by one person, retain a degree of autonomy and they operate within the confines of national campaigns and strategies. In 1999, *Duha* had 14 full-time employees, by 2002 this had risen to 21, three in the Prague office and 18 in Brno.

During the mid-1990s the focus of *Duha*'s campaigns became less esoteric and more focused on policy and regulation at the national level. It campaigned to save and protect forest land and nature reserves; opposed gold processing and the activities of mining companies in Kasperske Hory; fought to save railways and opposed motorway construction. Reflecting its close involvement with FoE International, *Duha* has sought to relate 'global' campaigns such as ozone depletion to the specific 'local' context: the enactment of Czech legislation regulating the use of CFCs. Indeed, what has come to distinguish *Duha* from other Czech EMOs is the extent of its international contacts, largely with other national branches of FoE (particularly FoE–UK) but also with Greenpeace Austria. *Duha*'s carefully developed management of its campaigns is modelled on FoE–UK; it now has strategic plans that are subject to updating every three years, and which form the basis of their campaign strategy. The strong influence on *Duha* of a particularly British type of environmentalism is clearly evidenced by regular features in its monthly journal reprinted from *The Ecologist*.

In contrast to its approach in the early 1990s, the organisation is now more willing to cooperate with other indigenous EMOs, and *Duha* activists all express the benefits of cooperation and an informal division of labour amongst EMOs. This change in attitude reflects *Duha*'s confidence in its own strengths and also its strong individual identity within the Czech environmental movement. It is no longer a 'catch-all' environmental movement searching for agendas and alliances.

Duha's strategy centres on lobbying and challenging environmentally damaging actions through the publication of scientific reports and through participation in the EIA process. Indeed, it differs from the rest of Czech EMOs on the basis of its close links to social science academic circles, mainly in Brno. Most activists working in *Duha*'s main office in Brno are past or current students of sociology, political science or law. Leading Czech academics working in the field of environmental studies within various disciplines of social sciences regularly publish articles in *Duha*'s monthly journal.

The organisation's effort to shed its image of radicalism and become a professional lobbying organisation is reflected in the activities of the Prague office. Staff are recruited for their professional skills and, as a result, the

organisation has become particularly adept at lobbying and holding press conferences. The inclusion within *Duha*'s council of patrons of well-known artists, journalists and scholars, plus the internationally renowned Czech writer Ivan Klima, is also indicative of the organisation's aspiration to be the leading professional environmental organisation, enmeshed within the institutional structure of the political process. Two former *Duha* activists are now working for the government: Daniel Vondrouš is policy adviser to the new Minister of the Environment, Libor Ambrozek, and Karolína Šůlová, formerly press officer for *Hnutí Duha*, is now working in the same capacity for the ministry.

Leading figures in *Duha* frequently discuss issues of radicalism and pragmatism in the monthly journal, whose change of name in 1998 reflects the concerted effort of the organisation to build for itself an image more acceptable to the general public and the media. The original title 'The Last Generation' (*poslední generace*) was replaced by the less controversial, 'The Seventh Generation' (*sedmá generace*). Writing in 1999, the former chairman and co-founder of the organisation, Jakub Patočka, addressed a long-term dilemma with which *Duha* continues to battle: whether to operate within or outside the system (Patočka, 1999). The dilemma resurfaced with increased poignancy in the aftermath of the leak of the 1995 list of extremists that included *Duha*. The answer that Patočka gave is 'to sit on the fence' and do both blockades of Temelín as well as lobbying Parliament and publishing expert reports. In practice, and despite the growing wave of direct actions employed by EMOs elsewhere in Europe, *Duha* has been reluctant to organise such campaigns in the Czech Republic, though it will support direct actions initiated by other EMOs. What the organisation seems to have decided is that it should operate at two levels, though it must be ever cautious about becoming associated with campaigns and strategies that could harm its political image at the elite level.

The Temelín Campaign

Duha's campaign strategy in the run-up to the government's decision on whether to continue with Temelín in May 1999 reflected just how professional the organisation had become since the early 1990s. The ability to frame an effective and pragmatic campaign that maximised political impact and public support astounded journalists and activists who had perhaps underestimated the ability of this relatively young EMO. Though *Duha* has remained resolutely opposed to the expansion of nuclear energy during the mid-1990s, it had rejected campaigning actively against Temelín in favour of supporting NIMBY campaigns by local activists and citizens opposed to the storage of nuclear waste in designated locations across the country.

During 1999, the debate on Temelín took a radical turn with the ČSSD minority government being forced to make a critical decision on the future of the plant. *Duha*'s high-profile campaign focused on the economic arguments against further state subsidies for the plant and argued that there was no need for the extra energy capacity. This approach was justified on the basis that only moderate levels of public support for the anti-nuclear campaign exist. Even in the area surrounding the plant, the completion of Temelín is popular as it potentially offers job opportunities to local inhabitants. *Duha* also quite rightly identified a general lethargy amongst campaigners with regard to the issue and the need to reframe the campaign in order to mobilise sections of the movement as well as the general public. Particularly revealing is that, despite having previously mounted a campaign against the polluting effects of coal production, part of *Duha*'s campaign focused on the economic impact that the completion of Temelín would have on northern Bohemian mining communities in terms of job losses. This brought on board communities and interests that had previously opposed the environmental movement.

The 1999 Temelín campaign also revealed the extent to which *Duha* had become a professional organisation and its proximity to the political elite. When President Havel decided to intervene openly in the debate concerning the future of Temelín, *Duha* activists from the Prague office provided him with information. They were also consulted widely in the media and their arguments formed part of the general discourse within which the debate occurred.

Discussion and Analysis

The departure of many of the core activists within the Brno group in 1997 to form their own 'independent social–ecological movement' (*Nesehnutí*), seemed to suggest that *Duha*'s transformation from radical grass roots organisation to professional EMO has not been acceptable to all within its ranks. Activists had become deeply dissatisfied with the organisation's lack of a radical edge and its reluctance to embrace sufficiently both local agendas and issues, and to broaden its political focus to address the socioeconomic causes of the ecological crisis. There was a sense that the organisation had moved too close to the political elite and lost sight of grass roots campaigns.[20] Although *Duha* survived the split and has in the ensuing period maintained its position as the most prominent EMO, the issue of radicalism and elite versus local focus is a thorny one that potentially threatens the organisation in the future. According to one activist, *Duha* has recently started to experience a decline in its activities largely because of the reduction in money from foreign foundations, but also because the organisation does not work on enough issues or indeed the sort of issues that attract a new generation of activists.[21] Indeed, the campaign to persuade the government not to go ahead with Temelín in

May 1999 seemed to be a high point in the organisation's developmental history. *Duha* employed extra staff, of which eight were working on the campaign, and the media profile of the organisation was at an all time high. With the campaign over, it was forced to sack seven activists in light of the worsening financial situation.

Notwithstanding such concerns at the local level, the proximity of *Duha* to the political elite has increased in recent months, largely in response to changes at the Ministry of the Environment since the June 2002 election. That the organisation is growing at one level yet declining at the other is by no means inconceivable. Yet, if *Duha* is to mobilise sufficient resources once foreign donors withdraw from the country, it must strengthen its links at community level. Elite-level access without a sustainable base of supporters is not a strategy for an EMO lacking a substantial number of fee-paying members.

The concern of activists that the organisation is too closely enmeshed within this discourse of ecological modernisation and the agenda of the EU is hard to dispute on the basis that *Duha* receives a substantial amount of its funding from EU-derived sources and, when interviewed, activists are generally positive about the impact of the EU on the Czech environment.[22] That *Duha* no longer represents the radical edge of environmental protest in the Czech Republic is further evidenced by the number of small community-based organisations, such as *SOS Praha*, *Arnika* and *Nesehnutí* that have emerged in reaction to the institutionalisation of the mainstream movement of which *Duha* forms a major part.

Yet it would be wrong to conclude that *Duha* has entirely lost its radical edge and ideological integrity. In 1998 the organisation was the most vocal opponent of the intention of *Nadace partnerstvi* (Partnership Foundation), one of the main source of funding for Czech EMOs, to accept grants from *Monsanto*. *Duha* launched a high-profile campaign, accusing *partnerstivi* of betraying basic principles of the environmental movement. In a cash-strapped environmental movement, this was a particularly controversial conflict and *Duha* deserves credit for opening the debate.

It would seem that *Duha*'s non-radical and institutionalised image stems from its involvement in policy debates and its relative influence at elite level, which it sees as a crucial component of its overall strategy. Amongst more radical activists this seems to tarnish its reputation as a radical organisation, yet there is no reason why the organisation should not develop in both spheres. Such a viewpoint seems to be born of a rather narrow and somewhat dated categorisation of EMOs: a belief that organisations are either grass roots radical organisations or elite-level policy-oriented interest groups. *Duha* employs a wide repertoire of tactics and strategies and, as noted above, focuses on both elite and community levels. The organisation is often behind non-violent direct action campaigns such as the action to stop the felling of

trees in the Šumava Mountains in 1999. If the organisation does not involve itself with certain campaigns this is due to the acceptance of a division of labour in the movement, which means that *Duha* does not get involved in what are often popular campaigns such as actions against roads and transport. *Duha* works with local groups, both through its own local chapters and through the Brno and Prague offices, yet this is often quite covert. For example, in Prague, it is a member of *SOS Praha* and has lent support and resources to local campaigns against the internal ring road scheme. In Brno, the organisation has recently established a project entitled 'School for Civil Initiatives' the objective of which is to educate people in local NGOs across the country regarding how to campaign and deal with the media through a series of monthly seminars.[23]

What is significant is that, despite the professionalism of *Duha* in terms of lobbying, dealing with the media and publishing reports, the organisation has been extremely slow to develop its membership and still relies heavily on foreign donors. Though it accepted the idea of passive fee-paying members some time ago, it has only recently begun to recruit more members and to increase the proportion of its revenue received from Czech citizens. In late 2002 there were approximately 1000 fee-paying members of the organisation who paid an annual subscription. Of these most had been recruited during the previous 12 months. In comparison with Greenpeace CR, which has been developing its passive supporter base for some time, and can now boast 12 000 members, *Duha* has some way to go, particularly as revenue from this source still equals less than 5 per cent of the total budget.[24] The organisation has conducted direct mailing exercises and face-to-face fundraising, though this is very much in its infancy and there are no plans to employ a fundraising consultant. It is with regard to the issue of funding that parallels with SBM can be drawn. The dependency of both organisations on income from European and US foundations has clearly delayed the development of fee-paying memberships, which has both exerted an ideological impact on the organisation and affected strategy choice. The provision of external funding has enabled *Duha* to develop its lobbying skills as well as specialisation in specific policy areas. Throughout much of the 1990s, the organisation could afford to ignore local campaigns because there was not the imperative to develop financial links with communities.

SOS PRAHA, *SPOJENÁ OBČANSKÁ SDRUŽENÍ PRAHA*[25]

Origins and Background

SOS Praha is less an EMO in itself and more an umbrella organisation with

the aim of co-ordinating and facilitating local campaigns against the outer and inner ring roads in Prague. It is included as a case study because it represents the desire amongst a section of the Czech environmental movement based in Prague to connect local campaigns around similar themes and issues, and to bring forth a transfer of knowledge and assistance from established EMOs to grass roots and community protest aggregations. It also represents the belief that environmental issues are best fought at the local level and that the way to mobilise citizens around environmental issues in a new democracy is to work on tangible issues and support campaigns against, for example, the development of road networks and the building of hypermarkets, issues that are not ostensibly about the environment, but have a definite green dimension and a capacity to mobilise support. SOS Praha emerged as a response to the perceived reluctance of the mainstream movement during the 1990s to engage with local campaigns to any significant degree and to focus instead on influencing the policy elite. SOS Praha sets out to work at both levels: to augment the capacity of local activists to challenge municipal decisions and to mobilise support within the community effectively.

Established in May 1998 by activists involved in two environmental movement organisations, *Pražské matky* (Prague Mothers) and *Zelený kruh* (Green Circle), SOS Praha is now a coalition of 56 civic associations ranging from established EMOs (for example, Greenpeace, *Hnutí Duha, Arnika, Gaia*) to local Prague-based citizens' organisations and conservation groups. Some of the larger environmental organisations, such as *Pražské matky*, have considerable protest experience dating back to the late 1980s; others are newly formed groups of activists. The majority of those involved are volunteers who are potentially directly affected by the schemes that they oppose. What unites all of these groups is opposition to the urban plan for Prague proposed in 1991 and passed by the city council in 1998. Schemes to build new link roads or construct shopping centres on protected landscapes, agricultural land or park areas which have spawned the network of local campaign groups in fact stem from an underlying development plan for rapid investment in and expansion of the urban infrastructure. The aim of SOS Praha is to 'coordinate constructive criticism of the urban master plan and open public discussion'.[26] Through their involvement in SOS Praha, the various activists opposing road schemes, the development of protected areas and the usurping of the planning process by transnational corporations (TNCs) have been able to link their NIMBY campaigns to similar campaigns being pursued by activists in other parts of the city. They have also been able to gain access to campaign know-how and resources that would otherwise have been denied to them. In some cases (Flora and OPTIM-EKO), membership of SOS Praha has encouraged organisations to embrace a broader political campaign agenda, including a

critique of privatisation. The rationale of SOS Praha is thus based on a recognition of the fact that, in the Czech Republic as elsewhere in CEE, grass-roots activists and citizen organisations invariably lack resources and campaign experience and that there is potential benefit in cooperation between established NGOs and local grass roots activists. Membership of SOS Praha enables the sharing of information and campaign tactics as well as providing basic resources – office space, access to the Internet, telephone and fax. SOS Praha also provides member organisations with legal advice and other professional services.

Whereas the large NGOs within Prague increasingly tend to be staffed by experienced professionals rather than the political activists who started these organisations in the early 1990s, campaigners within local citizens' organisations tend to reflect more the diversity and socioeconomic character of the particular locality. Generally, however, grass-roots activists tend to be people with time to dedicate to such activities. For instance, the majority of those involved in OPTIM-EKO are women or retired men. In other cases, professionals with specific expertise have been the driving force behind establishing an organisation. The organisation Flora, set up in the Vinhorady district of Prague to oppose the development of a water plant site, is essentially run and almost entirely funded by a local doctor. Typically the organisations will involve around 20 activists from the community, many of whom have not previously been politically active.

Funding and Resources

With regard to resources, SOS Praha receives 90 per cent of its funding from the individual organisations. Though contributions are voluntary and there is no joining fee, the larger organisations make donations. Various Czech foundations and funding organisations have also made donations, including 100 000 Crowns ($2800) received from the Open Society Fund (Soros) for media and communications provision. They have received small amounts from the VIA Foundation, which funds civil society development, and also from the EU through NROS (the Foundation for the Development of Civil Society). In 2000, the US Rockefeller Brothers Foundation committed $70 000 to SOS Praha over a three-year period which will be used to maintain the legal service which is critical for the organisations involved. A funding application was made to the Soros-backed Open Society but was rejected on the basis that SOS Praha did not provide a five-year plan. This is a problem faced by many EMOs applying for grants, in the sense that it is difficult to predict future development as much depends on the political context and issues that arise.

It is important to note, however, that the amount of funding received by

SOS Praha does not correspond to the costs of running the organisation. Most of those involved provide their services on a voluntary basis and the premises used are provided free by *Zelený Kruh.*

Campaigns and Strategies

With regard to the 56 individual organisations that belong to SOS Praha, it is difficult to make generalisations about strategies, objectives and ideology, though there are certainly common themes and approaches shared by many of these groups. It is the desire to disseminate information regarding the ecological and social impact of the ring road within the affected community, and to mobilise local citizens to use all available means to oppose the scheme, that is the common denominator uniting the individual organisations and the key characteristic of SOS Praha in general. Many of the organisations thus set out to provide Prague residents with details of planning decisions as well as informing the public about the somewhat opaque links between city commissioners and big business. The absence of even basic information appertaining to assembly members and their activities is seen as a critical democratic deficit that must be addressed.

Indeed, the provision of information has become the dominant strategic theme of SOS Praha. For example, one of the organisations involved in SOS Praha, *Oziveni* (Bohemian Greenways), has produced, in conjunction with the Party for Open Society, a database listing the commercial interests of city assembly members and commissioners directly involved in specific development schemes. On the basis of this information, which is available to all member organisations as well as to the public, one local initiative, *Flora*, was able to get a local commissioner fired from a party position because of his links with the development company Trade Center Prague, which was set to benefit from the contract the commissioner was trying to enact.

Another organisation involved with SOS Praha, OPTIM EKO, established to oppose the building of a ring road linking the D1 and D8 motorways through the southern district of Petrovice and the peripheral town of Jižní mesto, provided local residents with information about decisions regarding the scheme, as well as exposing the vested interests of the former mayor of Prague, Koukal, who at the time a decision on the scheme was being made was in a paid position within Eurospectrum, one of the main companies likely to benefit from the road plans. Following the revelations, Koukal resigned his position in the company and the planned link road has been delayed until 2010. The organisation *Hnutí Pražské matky* (Prague Mothers), a long-established campaigning group against air pollution which was active during the last years of the old regime, provides data and information regarding NO_x levels in the city. Unlike the data released by the Ministry of the Environment,

the figures for NO_x levels differentiate between mobile and statutory sources in order to reveal the rapidly increasing environmental consequences of car use and road building schemes.

Other organisations seek to expose the extent to which legal processes are ignored or usurped. The issue is often not simply the way decisions are made, but the inefficiency of granting contracts to certain companies on the basis of cronyism. For example, the organisation *Obrana životního prostředí* – ('Defenders of the Environment'), which is a member of SOS Praha, successfully sued the city council for failing to provide citizens with information under the right to know legislation about the issuing of contracts for ancillary services to the French company JC Decaux. It was claimed that the contract, which was financially disadvantageous to Prague taxpayers, was granted on the basis of political cronyism rather than efficiency. In a similar case, *Sdružení občanů postižených severojižní magistrálou* ('Citizens affected by South West Freeway'), managed to stop a hugely expensive and controversial plan to construct a highway exit at Pankrač on the basis that the building permit had been issued illegally. It was argued that the planned exit made little strategic sense other than to meet the commercial interests of certain companies. The strategy of questioning the commercial and financial viability of road schemes appears to have been effective. In recent months the municipal commissioner responsible for both the inner and the outer ring road schemes, sections of which have already been constructed, has suggested that the cost of completion may be too high and that other alternatives should be considered. Such a statement was inconceivable even two years ago, despite the fact that the council has been unable to explain where the proposed money for the scheme was going to come from.[27]

In addition to providing information and 'outing' the vested interests of commissioners, the tactics used by many of the organisations are quite conventional and include lobbying, protest marches, leaflet campaigns and petitions. OPTIM-EKO uses petitions and peaceful demonstrations as key strategic tools in its campaign. *Ždravý život* ('For a Healthy Life'), campaigned outside the Ministry of the Environment about the proposal to allow Carrefour, the French supermarket chain, to build a supermarket on parkland literally outside the ministry.

Though the majority of the organisations within SOS Praha pursue campaigns against actual planning proposals and decisions, and focus their campaigns directly on the political process, some of the larger environmental organisations pursue more symbolic protests, though still based on the theme of exposing corporate arrogance or malpractice. For example, the Prague branch of *Děti Země* (Children of the Earth), a long-established professional environmental movement organisation, campaigned to force McDonalds to remove a sign it had placed in Carka park in Prague 6 without permission.

Discussion and Analysis

SOS Praha undoubtedly represents a very interesting and challenging aspect of environmental movement activity in the Czech Republic. It challenges the trend amongst EMOs, during much of the 1990s, to invest little time and energy in cultivating community links. As noted with regard to the other two case studies, on the one hand the availability of foreign grants took away the need to cultivate such links, and the agendas of the funding foundations invariably drew EMOs away from local campaigns. This was invariably justified on the basis that the Czech people had little aptitude for environmental campaigns, were concerned with economic issues and generally in favour of growth and foreign investment. When local campaigns did emerge, EMOs expressed a reluctance to engage with them to any significant degree, on the basis that they were NIMBY campaigns. Whether or not such perceptions were accurate during the 1990s, the emergence of SOS Praha has challenged the view that the capacity to mobilise communities around environmental issues, and to transform NIMBY campaigns into more substantive political protest, is limited. As Petr Štěpánek, the force behind SOS Praha noted, the initiative is about putting 'the local back into environmental politics': recognising the capacity of local issues, that may not ostensibly be environmental, to mobilise communities and build awareness of the need to protect open space and to challenge political and economic decisions.[28]

The experience of SOS Praha also casts light on some of the assumptions held regarding the ability and willingness of local communities to sustain environmental protest and provide adequate levels of resources. While the SOS Praha initiative has received grants from foreign donors, the bulk of its income comes from donations from indigenous sources – citizens and organisations within the community directly threatened by the ring road scheme. That SOS Praha and its composite organisations have obtained free accommodation, gained access to basic resources and rely on a band of committed volunteers suggests that there is clearly untapped potential for the larger EMOs to exploit. The argument of the 1990s, that people were neither able nor inclined to become involved, seems to have been contradicted.

SOS Praha is also significant with regard to the broader issue of democratic consolidation in the Czech Republic. Its challenge to the democratic deficit of municipal politics and the evident corruption of decision-making processes regarding the granting of contracts to large companies and the conflicting interests of elected public servants relates to fundamental issues regarding civil society and the robustness of democratic procedures. It has been argued elsewhere in this book that the mantra of welcoming foreign direct investment with open arms has serious implications for democratic processes, particularly

when coupled with legacies of the communist past such as the absence of information relating to decision making and a general aura of secrecy surrounding the political process. SOS Praha represents a serious challenge to this situation and, reminiscent of the role of environmentalists in the late 1980s, uses the environment as a platform for challenging fundamental political weaknesses within the system.

Conclusion

What do these three case studies reveal about the Czech environmental movement and its development since 1990? The most important issue raised here is the financial dependency of EMOs on foreign donors and the implications of this for strategies and campaign agendas. This also affects the link between EMOs and local communities. The extent to which such funding is unsustainable was highlighted in the case of SBM and *Duha*. EMOs cannot continue to rely so heavily on foreign sources of income if they are to continue to develop, or indeed exist at all. What they are currently doing to address the decline of foreign grants and the threatened withdrawal of key funding organisations post-EU membership is undoubtedly too little, too late. For most EMOs there is an urgent need to alter radically the balance of their income sources in favour of fee-paying memberships.

The case of SOS Praha casts a somewhat different perspective on the situation and suggests that community mobilisation can be effective with quite limited resources. While it would be wrong to conclude from this that EMOs do not need to develop their professionalism, the overriding objective, throughout much of the 1990s, of being considered as partners within the policy process and not alienating the political elite, has perhaps obscured the value and importance of mobilisation and local action. For the environmental movement to challenge deleterious planning decisions and the aggressive antics of foreign investors successfully, both professional elite-focused EMOs and locally enmeshed organisations such as SOS Praha are needed, both to reinforce and support each other, and to maintain pressure at a variety of levels. It is important not to fall into the trap of categorising EMOs and their activities according to narrow dichotomies based on elite versus grass roots focus, or professional versus protest strategies. Such distinctions ignore how modern environmental movement organisations function elsewhere, and the dynamics of successful campaigns in established democracies.

The other main observation that has been reinforced in this chapter is the impact on EMOs of changes and variation in the political opportunity structure. What the case studies suggest is that the effects of relative closure or openness are indeed quite profound, but also somewhat unpredictable in a new democracy. The legacy of the Klaus era, during which the political

process was closed to EMOs, was in fact to propel *Duha* and other EMOs towards greater professionalism. The case of SBM illustrates two things with regard to the impact of the political process on EMOs. First is the extent to which organisations have to be inclined to use the political opportunities open to them for change to have an effect. The interaction between an organisation and the political process is not simply a rational decision, but can be heavily influenced by other factors, in this case the dependency of the fledgling organisation on Austrian donations. Second, there can be great variation between local and national opportunities and to conclude, as many theorists seem to do, that decentralisation and local access are necessarily positive is dangerous in the context of a new democracy, where the legacy of authoritarianism is likely to be more tenacious at the local level and old attitudes linger long after elite transformation.

Finally, the case studies all suggest that the apparent general trends of the 1990s, towards professionalism and the abandonment of radicalism, are always somewhat exaggerated and run the risk of obscuring the diversity that is so crucial to any social movement. In this sense at least, the Czech environmental movement appears not to be entirely out of kilter with other European movements.

NOTES

1. The organisation *Agentura Gaia* is an eco-feminist organisation and arguably more radical in its ideology.
2. The Prague Mothers is an organisation that was set up before 1989 to campaign against the health effects of air pollution on young children. The organisation still operates today, though it is less politically engaged than SBM.
3. For example, the chairwoman is a secondary school teacher of foreign languages and a freelance translator.
4. As a consequence of the severe reduction in its external funding, SBM has recently had to cut back on the number of employees to five, three of them part-time.
5. The disputes that occurred within the Green Parliament of the early l990s involved attitudes of activists towards nuclear energy. Greenpeace, who unequivocally oppose nuclear power, withdrew from the Parliament for this reason (interviews with Bedrich Moldan and Hana Pernicova, June 1995).
6. This is a marked contrast to, for example, the Olomouc branch of *Duha*, which is run almost entirely by student volunteers from the large multidisciplinary Palacky University in the town.
7. Whilst UAANP has continued to provide some money for SBM, this is on a much-reduced scale and strictly on a project basis.
8. The sources are quite diverse. Apart from UAANP, the Dutch foundation Milieukontakt OostEuropa provides a certain proportion of overall SBM funding, as well as a Swiss association of Christian women and an ornithological society from Germany. The Czech foundation *Nadace Partnerstvi*, whose sources of funding all originate abroad, has recently granted 150 000 Czech Crowns for SBM's participation in public inquiries (interview, SBM, 23/3199).
9. This is in contrast to other EMOs (such as Greenpeace CR and *Duha*) which did not

campaign actively against Temelín through much of the 1990s. In the case of *Duha*, its more recent campaigns have tended to stress the economic and fiscal problems of the power plant.

10. Other EMOs, such as *Děti Země*, which had opposed nuclear energy in principle in the early 1990s, peddled a more pragmatic line during the mid-1990s, campaigning against the storage of nuclear waste in particular regions.
11. Interview conducted by Petr Jehlička.
12. *Hnutí Duha*'s Prague office seemed to head the campaign and the activists were able to exploit their political links to the full. SBM's refusal to set up an office in the capital was seen by some as a strategic error, particularly in light of the hostile local political climate.
13. Interview conducted by Petr Jehlička.
14. The information obtained on *Hnutí Duha* was obtained from several interviews during the period April 1994–November 2002 with activists.
15. *Bankwatch News* (July 2002) (http://www.bankwatch.org/overview/hnut_*Duha*.html).
16. For example, its campaign against Temelín in 1999 successfully emphasised the financial cost of Temelín to the Czech taxpayer. It portrayed the troubled plant as an inefficient example of old-style communist investment that made little economic sense.
17. *Hnutí Duha* has about 500 fee-paying members at present.
18. Interview with Vojtěch Kotecký, Prague, September 2000.
19. For example, the local Olomouc branch of *Duha* runs campaigns against Schweppes for no longer using returnable bottles and generally involves itself in community issues, whereas the Brno and Prague offices are engaged in lobbying and policy (interview with activists from *Duha*, Olomouc, May 1999).
20. Interview with Nesehnutí, Brno, 4 November, 2002.
21. Interview with *Duha* activist who wished to remain anonymous, November 2002.
22. Interviews with Vojtěch Kotecký and Eva Navratilová, *Hnutí Duha*, 4–6 November, 2002.
23. Interview with Eva Navratilová, *Hnutí Duha*, Brno, 4 November 2002.
24. Information from Greenpeace CR, Prague, September 2000.
25. The information on *SOS Praha* was gained from interviews with Petr Štěpánek, Spokesperson for the organisation in November 2000, September 2001 and November 2002, and with Soňa Dederová from OPTIM-EKO (September 2001). Other organisations within the coalition were contacted and provided detail to substantiate the information obtained from the main interviews.
26. SOS Praha (www.sospraha.cz/angl/ahome.html).
27. Interview with Marie Petrová, SOS Praha, 4 November 2002.
28. Interview with Petr Štěpánek, Prague, 14 May 1999.

6. The Czech environmental movement in 2003

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will analyse developments that have occurred within the community of EMOs and the environmental movement from 2000 until the time of writing, early 2003. The discussion will return to what have been identified in the previous chapters as key determinants of EMO capacity: the political opportunity structure and process, resources and the issue of foreign donors, and the specific relationship between EMOs, global capital, multilateral and supranational agencies and the Czech state.

The first issue to be considered is the extent to which EMOs remain dependent on foreign donors. This problem has started to be addressed by organisations themselves and the donor foundations that distribute US and EU-derived funding in the Czech Republic. This is undeniably a critical issue on which the future existence and capacity of EMOs ultimately depends. As foreign donors withdraw, the need to increase indigenous funding dramatically through fee-paying memberships is an imperative that EMOs have been slow to address.

The second issue is one that was referred to in the previous chapter, but the full extent of the problem, corruption, has only been realised quite recently. In both theory and practice, the perceived benefits of a conducive political opportunity structure, access to decision-making arenas and support from within the political elite for environmental issues and campaigns are negated by political corruption. The practice of granting public contracts without environmental audits and the development of road schemes in order to favour and protect the commercial interests of local politicians make a mockery of open decision-making procedures and attempts to involve EMOs formally in the policy process. The extent of such activities at the municipal level in Prague is quite extraordinary.

The third issue to be discussed relates to developments within the mainstream EMOs and the emergence of new approaches to environmental protest and mobilisation. The emergence of two new breakaway organisations (*Arnika* and *Nesehnutí)* will be examined. The breaking away of *Nesehnutí*

from *Hnutí Duha* was referred to in Chapter 4; the subsequent emergence of *Arnika*, a breakaway movement from the oldest of all the 'new' EMOs, *Děti Země*, suggests a level of disenchantment and frustration with the established and institutionalised EMOs. The splits emerged over ideology and strategy, but also regarding the need to put community into environmental politics, to approach campaigns and issues from the perspective of citizens and to focus on public concerns in an attempt to gain support and legitimacy. The success of *SOS Praha*, discussed in previous chapters, in bringing together local activists and community campaigns, to move beyond NIMBY protest and to fuse links between communities and issues also requires more detailed analysis from the perspective of 2003: this umbrella organisation now includes 56 local initiatives and larger EMOs, enabling a transfer of knowledge and resources between established national organisations and small local campaigns.[1] The linkage between environmental activists and community politics represents a sharp contrast with the earlier post-communist period in which the movement was elite-focused and appeared detached from local communities.

The final issue to be discussed relates to the rebirth of the Green Party and the involvement for the first time of environmental movement activists within the party. The total separation between the party and EMOs weakened the political access of activists and denied them an important potential link with the political process. Throughout the 1990s the party was run by a host of unknown people with no connection to EMOs. Since April 2002, this situation has changed considerably, with potentially significant implications for EMOs.

FUNDING AND RESOURCES

American and European donors have been threatening to withdraw from the Czech Republic in order to concentrate on projects further east. The situation in early 2003 is that, apart from the C.S. Mott Foundation, which intends to continue funding NGOs in the Czech Republic albeit on a much reduced scale, other donor foundations such as Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the Skoll Foundation, the German Marshall fund, the Soros Foundation and the Ford Foundation will not be introducing new funding schemes in the Czech Republic after 2003. The Soros-backed Open Society Fund has explicitly stated that it will no longer be active in the country once the Czech Republic is part of the EU in 2004.[2] It is predicted that other foundations will adopt a similar strategy and withdraw once the accession process is completed. This is understandable in the sense that, as an EU state, the Czech Republic will be eligible for EU assistance, whereas non-EU former communist states will not. The immediate impact of this on EMOs will be an even greater reliance on

EU-derived funding. However, in the longer term they will have to acquire alternative sources of funding as the EU is unlikely to provide levels of funding comparable to that received from US and other foundations. The issue of donors withdrawing once the country is part of the EU is an unforeseen negative consequence of EU membership.

Setting aside exactly when the large US and European foundations will withdraw from the Czech Republic, of more immediate concern is the increasingly fierce competition for the funding that is available, the narrow and highly specific agenda of projects that donors are willing to fund, and the amount of resources an EMO has to deploy in order to compete in the process of applying for such funding. Even when successful in such bids, EMOs invariably receive only 80 per cent of the total cost of a project that is conditional on their matching the grant with 20 per cent funding from alternative sources. It is becoming increasingly difficult for EMOs to find such additional funding. Grants are also received only for a one-year or (occasionally) two-year period. This makes long-term development and future sustainability incredibly difficult. A successful project, for example, that protects forest land is always a pyrrhic victory for the EMOs involved, in the sense that the forest may well be felled in the future when there is no money available to campaign, when the funding issue agenda has changed. This makes it all the more important for organisations to be able to secure long-term sustainable funding.

The threat of the large foundations withdrawing is tempered somewhat by the emergence of new funding sources as well as the renewed commitment of other smaller sources.[3] For instance, the organisation *Arnika* depends for over 80 per cent of its revenue on a host of US and European donors, including some that are new to the Czech Republic, such as the Jenifer Altman Foundation and the Mitchell Kapor Foundation. These linked American private foundations support ecological and social programmes with the broad aim of promoting sustainable development. Other sources of support include DANCEE, the Danish environmental Assistance for Eastern Europe, the Netherlands Embassy grants project and the Swedish organisation Acid Rain.[4] Though the availability of such grants is encouraging – particularly from foundations that have not previously been involved with EMOs in the Czech Republic – the amounts of money made available are small and the projects supported are very specific.

Fundraising and the Recruitment of Passive Supporters

In 2000, the large national EMOs such as *Hnutí Duha* and Greenpeace had tentatively begun to address the issue of fundraising. This essentially involved accepting, somewhat reluctantly, passive fee-paying members and allocating significant resources to fundraising activities. This marked a turning point for

the larger EMOs which had rejected such a strategy throughout the 1990s both on ideological grounds (they preferred activists to passive members) and on the basis that they lacked the resources to make the initial investment. It was also argued that fundraising was a waste of time as the Czech public lacked the capacity and inclination to donate to EMOs, and that the activity was a distraction from their real purpose, which was to campaign against pollution.

Very gradually over the past 18 months *Hnutí Duha* and others (for example, *Arnika* and Greenpeace) have begun to divert resources into fundraising and to acquire the expertise to increase revenue from the Czech public. This has largely involved small-scale direct face-to-face marketing (*Duha*) and allocating the responsibility for fundraising to specific members of staff who are then sent on training courses (*Arnika*). Most EMOs interviewed emphasised the importance of increasing fee-paying members, of keeping databases and acquiring the skills necessary to raise funds effectively. However, it is also widely acknowledged that the process of obtaining such know-how and expertise is constrained by a number of interlinked factors. These include the following:

1. *A lack of available know-how in the Czech Republic*: though some organisations (such as Greenpeace) have been able to acquire fundraising expertise from abroad, this is extremely expensive and not always practical. It is really limited to EMOs that are part of an international organisation or who can obtain the know-how from other national chapters. *Arnika* sent staff to the UK for an intensive course that activists found useful, but it is widely acknowledged that locally available expertise is needed to support EMOs through the process of transforming their funding.
2. *The cost of the initial investment:* most EMOs do not have the capital to invest in acquiring fundraising expertise. The costs must also be seen in terms of time as well as financial resources. For many the idea of dedicating such a substantial amount of the organisation's budget without an immediate financial benefit is simply unfeasible. The income and capital that an EMO has fluctuates considerably, depending on the time of year and the projects it is working on. To make a capital commitment to invest in fundraising is therefore extremely difficult as there is no way of predicting what resources will be available in a year's time.
3. *Unsustainable funding and provision:* as noted above, the income of EMOs is almost entirely short-term, renewed annually after a grant application, or the emergence of a new agenda of funding. This is also a problem for the Czech foundations dispensing money to EMOs. Whilst the large foundations such as VIA and NROS[5] are now providing training for EMOs, these foundations are at the mercy of the donor organisations

from which they obtain all their revenue. This means that, while the EU, through the Phare Program, intends to promote fundraising skills amongst NGOs during 2003–4, this will be a short-term project and will be replaced thereafter by the next perceived urgent need. Providing EMOs with fundraising expertise is a long-term project rather than a quick short-term scheme.

There are also additional constraints that can best be described as relating to attitudes and lingering legacies of the communist period. Some EMOs express a concern about expanding membership for fear of recruiting individuals who will subvert the organisation or who will be undercover members of the security services. This concern is perhaps born of the fact that the Green Party of the early 1990s was composed of ex-security services officials with links to the communist elite, and the more recent security services list incident in the mid-1990s discussed in the previous chapter. Whilst all political organisations across Europe fear such infiltration, there is certainly a heightened consciousness amongst Czech EMO activists regarding the possibility of deliberate attempts to subvert their activities.

Several EMOs still claim that fundraising will bring little reward because Czech citizens lack the resources and inclination to support organisations financially to any substantial degree. It is often claimed that the bulk of citizens are in favour of the development of roads and supermarkets and find the campaign agendas of EMOs anathema to modern values and beliefs. Yet there is evidence to suggest that this situation has changed and that carefully framed campaigns will mobilise popular support and potentially lead to an increase in funds from citizens. This does, however, involve EMOs engaging with local issues and community campaigns that are essentially NIMBY in their focus. However, as *SOS Praha* has demonstrated (see Chapter 5), it is possible for EMOs both to fuse links between NIMBY local campaigns and to link local issues with broader agendas. The case of *Přátelé přírody* (Friends of Nature), a small EMO based in Ústí nad Labem, demonstrates that there is clearly potential for effective fundraising. Despite being based in what was a heavy industrial area that has experienced high levels of unemployment, the organisation has succeeded in expanding its passive fee-paying membership amongst a population with less than average capacity to give financial support. Between 1995 and 2000, their membership had risen from 12 to 1000 people, and revenue from fees constituted one-third of their total annual income (compared with on average 2–5 per cent for other EMOs). In 2002, membership has more than doubled, with each individual paying an annual subscription of 500 Crowns (16 euros). Over 40 per cent of the EMOs budget is now derived from fee-paying passive members, who commit themselves financially to the organisation, but in general are not actively involved in

campaigns. The aim is to break the dependency on foreign donors within the next few years.[6]

Evidence suggests that there is a potential dividend in attempts to increase the percentage of domestic funding. The larger EMOs have certainly begun to address this task, though there still requires a change in attitude and a greater commitment to accepting passive fee-paying supporters or members. The relationship with foreign donors is essentially a vicious circle: EMOs depend on the grants offered and would be in financial crisis without them, yet the provision of such support dissuades EMOs from investing time and effort in fundraising. The real danger lies in the uncertainty of foreign grants in the future. European and US foundations threaten to withdraw completely (and many have already pulled out of the country), yet the threat is not perceived by EMOs as serious enough to bring about a concerted effort to increase their fee-paying membership.

POLITICS, POLICY AND CORRUPTION

The Election of 2002

As illustrated in Chapter 4, changes in the political landscape (new ministers and governments) have exerted a profound impact on the capacity of EMOs. The realm of environmental politics has in many respects acted as a litmus test for government attitudes towards civil society, regulation and styles of policy making. The result of the parliamentary election of 2002 is generally seen as potentially having a positive effect on the environmental movement. At a superficial level the election appeared to change the political context very little: a rather lacklustre campaign resulted in the return to power of the ČSSD (Social Democrats). Yet the key difference as far as EMOs are concerned is that the much-despised agreement between the ČSSD and Václav Klaus's centre–right ODS (Civic Democratic Party) fused after the 1998 election by the two political foes and which had maintained Miloš Zeman in power is now over. This *cohabitation* was deeply problematic and resented by many within the ČSSD who felt that the agreement weakened the capacity of the ČSSD to fulfil its election pledges and provided Klaus with the power to exert a degree of control over his political rivals. It also became increasingly unpopular amongst voters and there was a general sense of relief that this strange political accommodation, for which no rules were set, was now over. For the environmental movement, what appeared to be the final political demise of Klaus was seen as highly significant: his antipathy for EMOs is widely known and his lingering political presence cast a neoliberal anti-regulation shadow over environmental politics throughout the last

Parliament. That he is to now president dashes any optimism. Although it is still uncertain what he will make of the largely ceremonial post, Klaus will certainly remain a key political player and an ardent opponent of environmentalists and other politically oriented civil society activists.

The post June 2002 government consists of the ČSSD in coalition with the centrist KDU–ČSL (Christian Democrats–People's Party) and the centre–right SU-DEU (Freedom Union). The SU-DEU is a minority partner in what is otherwise a centre–left coalition. The new Prime Minister, Vladimir Špidla, is a relatively young former academic with a reputation for managerial excellence and a clean political image. In contrast to the last CSSD administration, Špidla's cabinet is made up of young career politicians. The old pro-industry left represented by the likes of former industry minister, Miroslav Grégr and the transport ministers Antonin Peltram and Jaromír Schling,[7] have been replaced by a new generation of ministers committed to updating environmental policy in the run-up to EU membership in 2004.

However, old antagonisms between industry and the environment still remain. Despite an apparent degree of political consensus regarding the importance of environmental regulation and the responsibility of the state to ensure that the Czech Republic complies with EU standards and regulations, the antagonism between pro-growth agendas pursued by the Minister of Transport, Milan Šimonovsky, who is in favour of the construction of highways, and Jiří Rusnok, Minister of Industry, who is close in thinking to Grégr, and Minister of Agriculture, Jaroslav Palas who is in favour of intensive farming, represent a significant constraint on the capacity of the new Minister of the Environment, Libor Ambrozek, to bring forth significant changes.

A New Minister of the Environment

The appointment of Libor Ambrozek was greeted with a degree of cautious optimism amongst EMOs. A member of the KDU–CSL since 1990, Ambrozek is the first environmental minister since the early 1990s to have a specific personal interest and expertise in the environment. In addition to having been involved in the Czech Union of Nature Protection (CUNP), he has been spokesperson for the KDU–CSL on the environment, shadow environmental minister during the previous administration, and was also, until taking office, a member of the Board of Directors of the Institute for Environmental Policy and a member of the Committee for Public Administration, Regional Development and the Environment. In this capacity he had particular responsibility for landscape protection. He is the only Minister of the Environment to hold a degree in the natural sciences and to

have actually worked in the field of environmental protection, as a naturalist in Masaryk Museum in his home town of Hodonin.

At the time of writing (early 2003) it is still rather too early to judge Ambrozek. Within his first hundred days in office he appeared to have set out his environmental agenda: opposition to the further development of nuclear energy in the Czech Republic[8] and, in accordance with his personal interest in nature protection, the expansion of protected landscapes. However, there is a sense amongst EMO activists that Ambrozek may lack the political skills to overcome the opposition within the cabinet that he is likely to face and, like his predecessor Milos Kužvart, may weaken under such pressure. It is claimed by some within the environmental movement that his interest in conservation and 'small ecology' will perhaps prove to be a distraction from the need to deal with the political ecology issues (transport, carbon emissions, waste) that EMOs are concerned about. For those activists that have been involved in Czech environmental politics since the early 1990s, the personality and political skills of the environmental minister are seen as all-important in light of the inevitable opposition from political opponents within the government.[9] On a positive note, Ambrozek has clearly fused links with the environmental movement: his press officer, Karolína Šůlová, was formerly the press officer for *Hnutí Duha*. His adviser, as noted in the previous chapter, is Dan Vondrouš, a former long-standing activist and political lobbyist also for *Hnutí Duha*. Yet it is worth remembering that Kužvart had also established links with EMOs and had been involved in the non-profit sector.

Changes in the Legal Framework

Changes in the law relating to the environment have the potential to exert a significant impact on EMOs. The dearth of new legislation during the 1992–7 period removed the basis for any cooperation between the movement and the state. Yet the enactment of environmental impact assessment (EIA) legislation in 1992 legitimized the role of EMOs and provided environmentalists with a formal role in the decision-making process despite the Klaus government's hostility. The long-awaited revisions to the Waste Law to bring it in line with EU standards and to stem the increase in the expansion of landfills is now firmly under way. The Klaus government refused to update the existing legislation governing waste that dated back to the communist period. In the second half of 1996, a hastily drafted set of amendments was passed under pressure from the OECD and the EU, but the revisions did not go far enough (Fagin, 2001). EMOs are involved in the drafting of the new law and are being consulted on various aspects. Their expertise is apparently being recognised and regular formal and informal exchanges between officials and EMOs take place.

The EIA process which was one of the final pieces of progressive legislation enacted by the dissident-led government of Petr Pithart (1990–92) has, as noted above, provided environmental activists and citizens with a formal status within the decision-making process regarding controversial development schemes. Though the legislation had its weaknesses – it arguably should have involved the public earlier in the process, and local authorities should have been legally compelled to advertise the process (Fagin and Jehlička, 1998: 119–20) – it was actually more far-reaching than the EU standard which the Czech Republic is bound to meet. As a consequence, changes to the EIA law in the Czech Republic were made in 2001, reducing the role of the public in line with practice elsewhere in the EU.

Corruption

As EMOs in the cities and large towns have become increasingly involved in local transport issues, opposing road schemes, and out of town developments, in addition to their national campaigns, the issue of political corruption, particularly at the local government level, has been highlighted by activists as a key constraint on the capacity of EMOs to exercise influence. EMOs working with small community organisations on local issues are confronted by corrupt practices surrounding the issuing of public contracts, the power of large corporations, both domestic and multinational, and the extent to which the financial and personal interests of the political elite are detrimental to decision making.

The true extent of the problem is hard to gauge as there is no law in the Czech Republic to force politicians to reveal their personal and financial interests. In a study of the Czech Republic in 2001 undertaken by Transparency International, the country was alongside Bulgaria and Croatia in terms of political corruption (Zaitchik, 2002). In a separate initiative, SOS Praha compiled the only detailed list published of the business interests of Prague city commissioners and their financial interests. The study reveals an extraordinary degree of overlap between the political elite and business interests in the city. Practically every commissioner has a direct link with a construction firm that benefits, or is likely to benefit, from controversial development plans.[10]

That much of the corruption involves both the granting of public service contracts to private companies to construct infrastructure programmes such as highways, and granting planning permission for the development of controversial shopping malls means that environmental activists are directly affected. The awarding of a lucrative contract to a company on whose board sits a commissioner or local politician makes a mockery of the planning and EIA processes. Despite its poor performance overall in the June 2002 election,

the ODS dominates local politics in Prague, Brno and other towns. The party is undeniably the party of business in the Czech Republic and many of its leading figures have commercial rather than financial interests. Many of the links forged between business and politics date back to the mid-1990s, an era when Václav Klaus announced that there was no such thing as 'dirty money'.[11] A recent survey of 63 state-issued contracts undertaken by the independent city councillor and former environmental minister, Martin Bursík, revealed that only three went through a legitimate process.

The extent of the problem led to the resignation of the ODS mayor of Prague, Jan Kasl, in spring 2002, just prior to the election. In explaining why he resigned, Kasl claimed that 'it does not matter which Prague district you look at … you'll find corruption everywhere'.[12]

PUTTING COMMUNITY INTO ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGNS

The political profile of the large national EMOs, such as *Hnutí Duha* and Greenpeace, has remained high since the late 1990s. The campaign against Temelín was, in many respects, a 'coming of age' that set a seal on their professionalism and integrity. The role of EMOs as experts and professional partners in the policy process was confirmed after the floods of August 2002, the worst in the country's history. EMOs quickly became involved in assisting the government with strategies and provided a critical but constructive commentary on the deployment of resources. In Prague and Brno, the larger EMOs such as *Duha*, Greenpeace and *Arnika* have a well-established political as well as social presence: representatives from these organisations regularly appear in televised and radio debates, and their initiatives and campaigns appear to receive positive media coverage, their premises having become recognised locations for the media and, to a lesser extent, for the public.[13]

Commenting on the issues and challenges for the environmental movement in the twenty-first century, a leading figure in *Hnutí Duha* observed that 'we know the shortcuts to politicians but not to the people'.[14] The need to establish links with communities is an issue that has led to splits within EMOs and culminated in the formation of new organisations. Indeed, the emergence of a new generation of small EMOs committed to community issues and local campaigns has forced the more established EMOs to consider their strategies and campaign focus. Supported by foreign donors throughout the 1990s and concerned with gaining greater elite-level access, EMOs were, by their own admission, inclined to neglect the link with communities.

The two most significant developments to have occurred within the EMO sector in recent years – the emergence of breakaway organisations from the

main EMOs, and an attempt to fuse social and community issues with environmental agendas – are essentially interlinked. Activists within *Duha* and *Děti Země* left these established and prominent mainstream EMOs to form Nesehnutí and Arnika, respectively, in an attempt to redress the lack of a local focus within environmental campaigns, to approach ecological issues from the perspective of communities and, in the case of Nesehnutí, to widen the focus of campaigns to include social and economic issues.

Nesehnutí: Five Years of Radical Alternative Protest?

The emergence of Nesehnutí (*Nezavisle Sociálně Ekologické Hnutí* – Independent Social and Ecological Movement) in 1997 was discussed in the previous chapter. Five years after the organisation was established, it has remained loyal to its founding principles, campaigning on local environmental concerns alongside human rights, animal welfare and gender issues. The organisation also campaigns against global issues, such as opposing the war in Chechnya and China's occupation of Tibet. At the time of the IMF and World Bank summit in Prague in 2000, Nesehnutí called for the abolition of both institutions and the cancelling of third world debt.[15] Activists have also campaigned against the international arms trade. Despite such an international focus, they have no international links other than with the foundations that provide grants.

Within Brno, Nesehnutí has led a campaign against racist attacks and the treatment of the Roma population by the police. In terms of the environment, activists have campaigned against the city council's decision to remove pedestrian crossings on major roads. This has involved working with affected citizens in particular neighbourhoods. Through a leaflet campaign local people were selected and informed that the council had conducted absolutely no research prior to removing crossings. The campaign was funded by the Open Society (Soros) and has gained Nesehnutí a degree of local popular support.[16] The Brno branch is the main office and the largest chapter. Small local branches of the organisation work on particular local issues and seek to combine social concerns with environmental campaigns.

In terms of campaign strategies, Nesehnutí employs a combination of conventional methods (petitions, information campaigns, appeals to local politicians and participation in EIAs) and, less frequently, non-violent direct action. The most radical example of the latter occurred at the time of the Russian invasion of Grozny. Activists threw red paint at the Russian consulate and were arrested and given community service. Nesehnutí activists joined other EMO campaigners in a non-violent blockade of a part of the Šumava forest destined to be cleared. In late 2002, when activists from the organisation were last interviewed, they were contemplating painting their own pedestrian

crossings if they failed to stop the local transport office removing existing ones.

Despite Nesehnutí's rejection of an elitist or hierarchic internal structure, it is not an eco-anarchist organisation, nor does it have formal links with local anarchist groups.[17] Yet Nesehnutí's strategy of mobilising sections of the community, its focus on local campaigns alongside the pursuit of national and international agendas, and an attempt to deal with ecological issues in the broader context of social problems represent a contrasting and somewhat radical approach compared to the larger EMOs. The organisation's capacity to succeed, however, is still dependent on funding. At present 99 per cent (if not more) of their income is derived from foreign foundations. Their main sources include *Nadace Partnerstvi* (Partnership Foundation), NROS, Via Foundation, Open Society, REC and ALERT (Netherlands).[18] Though the availability of such funds cannot be relied upon in the future, Nesehnutí currently has more money than at any point in the past five years. The organisation does not feel threatened by the fact that one of its main foreign donors, the Soros-backed Open Society, has threatened to withdraw from the Czech Republic in 2004, nor does it seem to waver in its decision to reject the idea of a passive fee-paying membership. Indeed, in stark contrast to the mainstream EMOs, none of the five Nesehnutí branches across the country (Brno, Bystřice, Napajedla, Vysokě Mýto, Kojetín) embarks upon fundraising in their localities. No attempt has been made to acquire fundraising know-how. They use the legal services provided by *Ekologický právní servis* (Ecological legal service) in Brno and do their accounting in-house.[19]

Nesehnutí's strategy is a blatant rejection of what *Duha* and others have embarked upon. It intends to continue widening its campaign focus in an attempt to secure whatever foreign funding is available. In other words, even though the large foreign donors may withdraw their support for specific environmental projects, there will always be money available for issues concerning human rights, gender and domestic violence. The organisation is therefore staking its future on a capacity to combine ecological protest with a wider social agenda and to win public support, not on the basis of membership and fees, but in terms of active participation in campaigns. This strategy is reflected in the eclectic mix of Nesehnutí's activities: for example, it runs monthly seminars on gender and feminism in Brno and is the only organisation involved in these issues.

The significance of Nesehnutí lies in its rejection of the shift towards professionalism amongst mainstream EMOs. In stark contrast to *Hnutí Duha*, Nesehnutí rejects the idea of an elitist and hierarchic internal structure, favouring a democratic constitution in which all those formally involved are eligible to vote on campaign issues and management of the organisation. Though there are four salaried staff in the Brno office, the bulk of activists are

volunteers and, what the organisation terms, 'voters'. There are no passive fee-paying members. To be involved in the organisation one has to be committed to active engagement with campaigns and in return one receives the right to vote on issues and proposals. The difficulty of such an approach lies in recruiting sufficient numbers of people prepared to take an active role in the organisation. There are at present around 30 such 'voters' across the country, but recruiting people on this basis is difficult. In this respect Nesehnutí resembles the EMOs of the early 1990s: staffed by young (aged 17–25) volunteers, mostly students whose involvement is transitory. The organisation acknowledges that it has problems recruiting and retaining activists and that the turnover of people is quite high. While long-term involvement in Nesehnutí as a paid employee is unsustainable – salaries are very low, even compared to those offered by other EMOs – the organisation also has difficulty in recruiting young volunteers, the mainstay of grass-roots EMOs in the past. Filip Fuchs, a leading activist in the Brno branch of Nesehnutí, argues that the attitude of young people towards voluntary work in EMOs has changed. The pursuit is no longer seen as a fashionable activity, as it once was, nor is it seen as being worthwhile by students who increasingly seek careers in the commercial sector or plan to study and work abroad. Organisations like Nesehnutí, that are non-professional and survive on donations from foreign foundations, rely on a shrinking pool of young volunteers. Part of Nesehnutí's motivation for extending the focus of its campaigns beyond environmental issues lies in a belief that, by broadening its appeal, the organisation may increase the number of volunteers and activists.

Nesehnutí operates in what can only be described as a hostile local political opportunity structure. The political elite in Brno is dominated by the centre–right ODS which champions a populist agenda on issues such as the Roma and the building of new hypermarkets, and articulates a pro-car transport policy. Nesehnutí believes that the local political establishment has made deliberate attempts to besmirch the reputation of the organisation and to portray activists as terrorists.[20] There is little constructive interaction between Nesehnutí and the local political elite. A leading activist in the organisation summarised the relationship thus: 'There is a pattern in the relationship between local councils and Nesehnutí: it starts off as neutral when Nesehnutí do conservation campaigns, but once we start opposing shopping centres it gets more bitter.'[21]

The local council and police officials appear reluctant to engage with Nesehnutí at a formal level. For example, the organisation has been actively involved in the European Car Free Day project, organising the event in Brno which involved riding bikes through the town. As there had always been some uncertainty about the legality of this action in the past, Nesehnutí decided in 2002 to approach the police and the council to discuss the route and agree a

plan for the day. The council's response was to say that the protest was illegal, even though there is no legal stipulation in Czech law prohibiting such action. Nesehnutí challenged this decision in the courts and won.

Arnika

Arnika has become one of the most high-profile EMOs in the Czech Republic today. Its roots lie in *Děti Země*, the first EMO to be established in the late 1980s and a prominent campaigning organisation throughout the 1990s. Insofar as Arnika is a breakaway organisation from *Děti Země*, there are obvious comparisons to be made with Nesehnutí. The relative success of the organisation since the split in September 2001 suggests the possibility of a gulf between the older institutionalised EMOs of the 1990s and new organisations operating at community and local level. This hypothesis needs to be tested carefully: it should not be assumed that Arnika and Nesehnutí are necessarily similar just because they are both breakaway organisations.

The activists who left *Děti Země* to form Arnika sought to develop both national and local campaigns, and to ensure a degree of continuity between the two without compromising the need to work on community issues. In a sense the split was about more professionalism rather than less, but combined with a stronger commitment to effective local action. In contrast to Nesehnutí activists, who sought greater internal democracy and a non-hierarchic organisational structure, dissenting voices within *Děti Země* had, since the mid-1990s, called for a tighter and more cohesive internal organisational structure. *Děti Země* had embraced professionalism to a certain degree but less so than *Hnutí Duha* or Greenpeace. Although, in the early 1990s, the organisation typically adopted a global focus, an amorphous internal structure and expressed a reluctance to embrace local issues or agendas,[22] by the second half of the decade it had begun to work on local campaigns as part of EIA processes and pursued specific campaigns on ozone depletion and other conservation issues. *Děti Země* was less involved with the policy process than the other main EMO at this time, *Hnutí Duha*, and activists became more interested in information campaigns designed to expose malpractice and the flouting of pollution standards in particular.[23] However, as the decade progressed, the local chapters seemed to diverge from the centre, often pursuing individualistic and rather idiosyncratic campaigns that did not necessarily correlate to local community issues. The distinction between national campaign agendas and local issues was becoming increasingly blurred. The decision to split culminated in one-third of board members, including the chair and two vice-chairs, leaving *Děti Země*. The three most active branches, Prague, Decin and Ostrava, left the organisation. Branches of *Děti Země* in Brno, Plsen, Liberec and Beron still exist, along with some

breakaway activists in Prague. The split was thus far more serious and extensive than the formation of Nesehnutí and the split within *Duha*.

In contrast to Nesehnutí and indeed to *Děti Země*, Arnika is entirely committed to increasing its fee-paying membership. The organisation has two categories of members, those who pay a 200 Crown membership fee (6 euros), are actively involved in the local organisation and can vote on internal matters at the annual general meeting, and 'financial supporters' who do not vote and are generally passive. The total number of members is 120, of which less than half are passive financial supporters, the revenue received from this source remaining small. Indeed, Arnika receives over 80 per cent of its funding from an array of foreign donors, some of which are relatively small and have only recently begun providing funding to organisations in the Czech Republic. It is worth noting, however, that after more than a decade of activity *Děti Země* had 400 members in 2001, the revenue from which was a fraction of the organisation's total budget.[24]

Arnika's quest for an increase in fee-paying members is constrained by the lack of initial capital to invest in training and expertise. It has resolved to acquire in-house fundraising knowledge and to this end activists attended recent training courses provided by VIA Foundation. In 2001, the organisation also sent activists on a week-long training course in the UK organised by *Nadace Partnerstvi*. As yet they lack the capacity to engage in direct marketing techniques or other more sophisticated fundraising exercises. However, of all the EMOs interviewed in 2002, Arnika appeared the most committed to increasing its fundraising capacity and revenue.

In terms of linking environmental campaigns with the community, Arnika's decision to set up the Centre for Citizenship Support in Prague 6 is a crucial development. The centre offers advice, resources and support for local people involved in or wishing to challenge environmentally negative planning decisions in their area. It offers practical assistance with regard to participation in the EIA process as well as information regarding other means of redress at municipal level. Citizens are also provided with details of similar campaigns across the city.

One of Arnika's main objectives is to fuse links with communities and local people. The organisation emerged in response to a perceived failure of *Děti Země* to forge such links and to root itself within society. Asked why the split with *Děti Země* had occurred and how Arnika was different, one of the leading activists in Arnika observed: 'they [*Děti Země*] were well-known, but nobody knew what they did … They were just seen as opposing things and working too much on legal issues rather than achieving goals. They [*Děti Země*] forgot about people'.[25]

In a relatively short period of time, Arnika has become a prominent organisation. In terms of its approach to campaigning and attitude towards

fundraising, the organisation represents a challenge to the dominant trend towards professionalism and dependency on foreign donors that was characteristic of Czech EMOs in the late 1990s. The recognition by both Arnika and Nesehnutí that campaigns must make links with communities marks a distinct departure from the attitude of EMO activists in the mainstream organisations, who until very recently were uninterested in making such links. Arnika's objective of increasing fee-paying membership as the most appropriate response to the dependency on unsustainable grants from foreign donors also suggests a new approach to the issue of funding. Although the task it faces is sizeable and there are numerous constraints, at least the organisation recognises that continued dependency on foreign donors is not a viable strategy for the future.

THE REBIRTH OF THE GREEN PARTY

Across Europe the relationship between the environmental movement and green parties has proved extremely important in terms of providing EMOs with access to the political elite as well as representing environmental agendas within the policy process. West European green parties emerged from within extraparliamentary movements to become enmeshed professional parties that, in the case of Germany, form part of governing coalitions (Doherty, 2002: 93).

As noted in Chapter 4, throughout the 1990s the Czech case was strikingly different. The Green Party was largely irrelevant to the environmental movement, it had no historic links with the movement, and those involved in the party were revealed to be ex-communists, many of whom were believed to have links with the security services. Until mid-2002, the environmental movement had no contact whatsoever with the party, whose poor electoral performance gave it no parliamentary prominence and led to its temporary withdrawal from national politics in 1996. Though the electoral fortunes of the party improved slightly towards the end of the 1990s, particularly following the creation of self-governing regions (*Kraj)* and an apparent growth in support for the party in certain industrial urban areas such as Mladá Boleslav, Karlovy Vary, Chomutov and Brno, the electoral fortunes of the party at the start of 2002 were bleak. It had 239 members and a debt of 12 million Czech Crowns (400 000 euros) (Jehlička and Kostelecký, 2003: 2–3).[26] The party was also beset by serious allegations of corruption surrounding the decision to pay Miroslav Bachulka, an old-guard vice chair of the party, a salary of 2 million Crowns despite the party's serious financial crisis. The party's internal administration was in chaos, and there was a distinct lack of transparency with regard to membership data, financial records and decision-making processes.[27]

The Green Party, Civil Society and Democracy

If, as argued throughout this book, the evolution of the environmental movement has been a metaphor for the process of transition, then the events surrounding the rebirth of the Green Party in 2002 once again confirmed the interconnectedness of the environment, civil society and democracy in the Czech Republic and the extent to which broader political events and issues are deeply reflected within the realm of environmental politics.

The changes that have occurred both within the Green Party and between the party and the environmental movement are part of a wider current dynamic to strengthen democratic deliberation and enhance the role of civil society. The rebirth of the Green Party can be traced to the end of 2001 and the formation by a group of civil society activists of the Brandys Forum, which included environmentalists and former dissidents within its ranks. With a general election in sight, they were motivated by the belief that the 'opposition agreement' between Klaus and the Zeman had stifled democratic politics and excluded civil society activists from the political arena. They sought to establish the kind of vibrant discursive political sphere that seemed to have evaded the Czech Republic during the 1990s despite the protestations and attempts of Václav Havel and other dissidents.[28] It was felt that, since 1998, both the ČSSD and the ODS had done their best to weaken small parties, particularly liberal-leaning centrist parties, which had had a significant impact on the political capacity of the environmental and other social movements. Smaller parties, such as the Freedom Union, People's Party and Democratic Union, that had emerged as breakaway parties or had formed in reaction to the policies of Klaus and Zeman towards civil society, democracy and the environment were, during the second half of the 1990s, keen to court the environmental movement as the most visible expression of civil society and political activism. The marginalisation of these small parties was clearly affecting the political efficacy of EMOs, prompting activists to realise the need to align with political forces in parliament and to assist in strengthening the band of small parties that were become increasingly sidelined during the 'opposition agreement' period.

The role of the Party for Open Society is critical to understanding the rebirth of the Green Party and also the fusing of new links between the environmental movement and the political elite. The party emerged out of Civic Movement, (*Občanské Hnutí*), a small breakaway party from Civic Forum formed by the dissident Jiří Dienstbier in the early 1990s. This later became the Free Democrats, a left-leaning party that included prominent intellectuals such as Martin Palouš, one of the first signatories of Charter 77, a prominent academic, philosopher, former deputy minister for foreign affairs and now Czech ambassador to the USA. From the outset the Free Democrats had

attracted former dissidents and environmentalists because of the emphasis placed on civil society and green issues.

From the demise of the Free Democrats in 1998 emerged the Party for Open Society and, four years later, it has offices in 11 of the country's 14 administrative regions and holds seats on several municipal councils, including Liberec, Pardubice and Olomouc. The party's three main policies are sustainable development, support for civil society and developing a sense of international awareness in the Czech Republic (Zaitchik, 2002: 10). In practice the party adopts a local focus in line with its belief in participatory democracy and subsidiarity – decisions resolved at the lowest possible level closest to communities. The party's green and community ideology has attracted environmentalists and civil society activists, most notably Petr Štěpánek, a former dissident and the driving force behind two prominent local EMOs, SOS Praha and Bohemian Greenways. It also has on board Martin Bursík, independent Minister of the Environment after the collapse of Klaus's coalition in 1997 and a philanthropist who has been involved with a variety of civil initiatives.

In the run-up to the city elections in Prague, the party decided to approach the Green Party with regard to forming a coalition. This occurred only because of developments within the Green Party, namely the election of a new chair of the party, Miroslav Rokos, a Brno-based party veteran who, at 37, is significantly younger than his predecessors and the 'old-guard' vice chairs, Eduard Zeman and Jiří Česka. He is also within the age range of key figures within the environmental movement. Though he had not been involved in the environmental movement, he had worked for the Ministry of Environment in Brno and had worked closely with Brno-based EMOs. The election of Rokos was seen as bringing a new lease of life to the party and, for the first time since 1990, environmental activists were making links with the Green Party. The leadership of the Party for Open Society also made contact with the Brandys Forum in the interests of strengthening electoral success at the municipal level for environmental and community orientated agendas. The agreement entailed the Party for Open Society placing Forum members and Green Party activists on their list in order to top up the list of candidates and therefore improve the chances of representation under proportional representation.

The activists in the Forum and the leadership of Party for Open Society were still clearly quite cautious about dealing with the Green Party and this is reflected in the terms of the agreement. It was stipulated that, if the party obtained more than 1·5 per cent of the vote, it should donate 500 000 Crowns to the Forum's foundation for the promotion of civil society and to plant a tree for every vote received (Jehlička and Kostelecký, 2003: 4). In terms of ideology, the Green Party was less radical than the Party for Open Society and has yet to grasp the importance of community and local decision making, and

the development of detailed alternative plans for the construction of ring roads and other environmentally deleterious projects.

However, the coalition agreement resulted in a transformation of the Green Party. It encouraged a number of veteran movement activists, such as Marie Haisová of *Gaia* and Karel Jech of the Society for Sustainable Living to stand as candidates in Prague. During the spring of 2002, 150 people, including well-known intellectuals and civil society activists who had previously shunned the party, joined and became active. This occurred largely thanks to the efforts of Jakub Patočka, the founder of *Hnutí Duha* and a prominent environmental movement activist, whose 'Green 50' initiative sought to transform the crisis-ridden and reactionary Green Party by flooding it with civil society activists. Opinion poll surveys suggested that the party was attracting first-time voters and the well-educated, including an estimated 9 per cent of university students intending to vote for the party (ibid.).

In Prague the profile of the Green Party was heightened by its inclusion within the relatively successful *Móderni Město* (Modern City) coalition.[29] As the municipal elections approached, the coalition's fortunes were enhanced by the inclusion of the city's Independent Bloc (*Sdružení nezávislých*). There was also close contact and cooperation between individuals in the Party for Open Society and the KSCM, the Communist Party, who were campaigning on green issues under the direction of a young, new left-leaning activist, Mirek Prokeš.[30]

What emerged was 'a movement for change involving the broad spectrum of Prague's progressive community' (Zaitchik, 2002: 10). Certainly the fusion of environment and community interests against the pro-road, pro-car and development agenda of the main parties, and the forging of links between EMO activists, the Green Party and other small parties represent a significant turning point for environmental politics and the environmental movement. It has long been argued by Petr Štěpánek and other voices in the environmental movement committed to local campaigns and working with communities that environmental campaigns that focus on local issues and address concrete policies have the capacity to mobilise community support and to appeal across political lines. The Prague elections of 2002 seemed to confirm that view.

For the Green Party the linkage with the Party for Open Society proved extremely beneficial. The party suddenly found itself the subject of media attention for the first time in over a decade. It also appeared to be welcomed into the European green political fold: the party was visited by two prominent green politicians, Renate Kunast from the German Green Party and the French green MEP, Daniel Cohn-Bendit. That the chair of the Czech Green Party should invite such people to Prague and that they should accept his invitation was quite amazing.

Since the election activists and leading figures within the environmental

movement have staged what can most appropriately be described as a coup. Ivan Dejmal, a former minister of the environment in the early 1990s and a highly respected figure within the environmental movement, has joined the Green Party along with the left-wing former dissident and political activist Petr Uhl and the liberal Slovak intellectual, Fedor Gal. This is of tremendous significance in the sense that, throughout the 1990s, the party was entirely isolated from its natural constituency (educated, urban voters with a concern for the environment) and operated in isolation from the community of EMOs. That so many leading figures from the environmental movement have now endorsed the Green Party can only benefit EMOs in the long term; there is now, for the first time since the early 1990s, the prospect that the Green Party could at some point in the future enter a governing or opposition coalition, thus providing the movement with the political link that it has hitherto been unable to establish.

However, there are two potential threats to such a positive scenario. As Jehlička and Kostelecky conclude, much 'depends on the ability of Brandys Forum activists and other like-minded people who have recently joined the party to outmanoeuvre the faction of party traditionalists' (2003: 5). This is a particularly thorny issue given the allegations of corruption and debt within the party, which was in dire crisis at the start of 2002. The other issue is a more long-term consideration and concerns the extent to which the emergence of a prominent and influential Green Party may indeed aggravate the 'fundi–realo' divide within the Czech movement. The experience of Joschka Fischer and *Die Grünen* in Germany suggests that prominent civil society activists who enter green parties are not necessarily inclined towards radical solutions (Doherty, 2002: 105–8). It would be a shame indeed if the big push to link environmental campaigns with local communities and issues in the Czech Republic were to be sacrificed on the pyre of party politicking.

CONCLUSION

From the perspective of early 2003 the most positive developments within the environmental movement are the existence of grass-roots organisations determined to campaign at the local level, alongside a tier of professional organisations with a national policy focus. The two elements coexisting was not a feature of environmental politics at any point during the 1990s. The rebirth of the Green Party suggests a potential future dividend in terms of a linkage between EMOs and the political elite. The post-election political opportunity structure is undoubtedly more open and enabling for EMOs, particularly with regard to the demise of the hated 'opposition agreement' between Klaus and Zeman which stifled political debate. The election of Klaus

as president does undoubtedly cast a shadow over the recent political efficacy of the movement. Klaus is known to dislike the political 'interference' of EMOs and views them as the most blatant expression of a rent-seeking civil society, which he abhors.

But perhaps the greatest threat remains, as ever, the issue of funding and the undeveloped fundraising capacity of EMOs. Over a decade of dependency on foreign donors has not only weakened their capacity to realise other sources of income, it has also incurred an ideological cost, most blatantly expressed in terms of the attitudes of activists towards the EU, which tend to be overwhelmingly positive. EMOs are forced to react to the agendas of foreign donors and it is the latter who define the issues and determine the campaigns. Despite the negative consequences of such dependency, EMOs remain heavily reliant on foreign donors. Though there is evidence of small-scale new funding from American and European foundations, the long-term prospects for sustainable foreign donations look bleak. Unless EMOs take drastic action to redress the imbalance in the source of their income, their activities will be seriously curtailed after May 2004.

The other key issue limiting the capacity of EMOs is corruption. The full extent of the political favours and business–political overlap at local and municipal level has only recently been documented, courtesy of SOS Praha. Such corruption at this level particularly affects EMOs whose efforts are thwarted by the antics of business and corporate power. Environmental audits and political processes designed to ensure representation of interests are a mere sham whilst blatant clientelism dictates the awarding of lucrative contracts to corporate giants and local businesses alike. Not surprisingly, this issue will be picked up in the concluding chapter of this book.

NOTES

1. Interview with Marie Petrová, SOS Praha, 4 November 2002.
2. There has been some concern expressed within the Open Society, an important source of funding for Czech EMOs, regarding the success of some of the environmental projects it has supported over the past 10 years (information obtained from an activist with links to the foundation who wishes to remain anonymous).
3. For example, the Swedish organisation, Acid Rain, which has recently made a donation to the eco-feminist organisation Gaia (interview with Marie Haisová of Gaia, 4 November 2002).
4. Information on *Arnika* obtained from their website at http://arnika.org/sponsors.shtml and from an interview with Lenka Mašková (*Arnika*), 6 November 2002.
5. NROS is the Civil Society Development Foundation. It distributes Phare funding in the Czech Republic.
6. I am grateful to Petr Jehlička for information on *Přátelé přírody*.
7. Schling had publicly declared, a few weeks before the election, that the Ministry of the Environment should be abolished.
8. Much to the delight of the Austrian environmental movement as well as Czech activists

opposing the Temelín nuclear instalment in Southern Bohemia, Ambrozek announced in November 2002 that there will be no further development of nuclear energy (Ekolist, November 2002).

9. Interview with Vojtěch Kotecký of *Hnutí Duha, Prague*, November 2002.
10. SOS Praha has published a database detailing the commercial interests of city commissioners. The database is available via the organisation's website: www.sospraha.cz.
11. Klaus made this comment repeatedly in a number of interviews during the mid-1990s, the heyday of his neo-liberal, anti-regulatory stance.
12. *Prague Business Journal*, May 2002. Also cited in *The Prague Pill*, 1–15 August 2002.
13. In Prague, Lublanska 18 (in Prague 2) is the centre of 'green' activity and several of the EMOs have had offices at this location for many years. In Brno the 'green house' at Bratslavska performs a similar function, housing *Hnutí Duha* and the *Ekologický právní servis* (Ecological legal service). I base my claim regarding media coverage on comments made by activists within EMOs.
14. Vojtěch Kotecký, Prague, November 2002.
15. Press release issued by Nesehnutí, 23 September 2000.
16. Interview with Filip Fuchs, 5 November 2002. Filip reported that several local people whom they contacted said to Nesehnutí activists that the pedestrian crossing campaign marked the first time that they had agreed with the organisation and that this had made them recognise the role of EMOs in the local community.
17. Individual activists within Nesehnutí have personal links with anarchists in Brno, and there is also a recognition that the assistance of eco-anarchists in protests is useful.
18. They have also received, quite surprisingly, a small amount of funding from the Ministry of the Environment to oppose the building of a large hypermarket in Brno. When asked why he thought they had received this money, Filip Fuchs stated that it was probably due to the influence of officials within the ministry sympathetic to the cause.
19. Interview with Filip Fuchs, 5 Novemeber 2002.
20. Activists cite an incident after the terrorist attacks in America on 11 September 2001 as evidence: the local mayor's office contacted Nesehnutí to find out their opinion of the attacks.
21. Interviews with Filip Fuchs, 5 November 2002.
22. Interview with Jindřich Petrlík, August 1993, April 1994.
23. This assertion is based on several interviews with Jindřich Petrlík of *Děti Země*, most notably in April 1994, June 1995 and July 1997.
24. Information on *Děti Země* was obtained from Lenka Mašková (Arnika and formerly *Děti Země*) and Jindřich Petrlík, Prague, 6 November 2002.
25. Interview with Lenka Mašková, Executive Director, Arnika, 6 November 2002.
26. Interview with Karel Jech, Green Party candidate, 6 November, 2002
27. Ibid.
28. Havel's defence of civil society and the need for substantive improvements in democratic practice are legendary. He clashed publicly with Klaus over the issue, most notably in a television debate broadcast on 25 May 1994 and later published in the Polish daily *Gazeta Wyborcza* (14–15 January, 1995).
29. The outcome of the election was that *Móderni Město* (Modern City) obtained 5 per cent of the vote and nine seats in the three out of five election districts in which it led the campaign; the Independent Bloc, which campaigned in the other two districts, obtained two seats.
30. Interview with Petr Štěpánek, SOS Praha and member of POS, 6 November, 2002.

Conclusion

This study of the Czech environmental movement endorses many of the conclusions reached by other studies of social movement development in CEE (Flam, 2001). In terms of general trends there is substantial evidence to confirm the view that social movement organisations in CEE are primarily concerned with professionalism, gaining access and influence at elite level, and disinclined to mobilise and enlist significant numbers of supporters However, this research also mounts a challenge to such perceptions of low levels of mobilisation, a passive and conservative civil society reluctant to engage with activism, and the cooption of EMOs within the hegemonic discourse of ecological modernisation. Had the study been concluded in the late 1990s, it would have endorsed entirely the view that mobilization and protest were largely absent, having reached their peak in the early 1990s during the era of movement-based politics and the heyday of dissident politicians. Until very recently, the quest for institutionalisation and for partnership within the policy process seemed to be the main focus of EMO activity. It was almost impossible to find support amongst EMOs for radical agendas and non-violent direct action. As illustrated in Chapter 4, the main EMOs all sought greater elite access and a process of institutionalisation had certainly taken place during the second half of the 1990s.

From the perspective of 2003, nearly a generation since the collapse of communism in 1989, it would be a misrepresentation to conclude that the Czech environmental movement is entirely in transit towards institutionalisation and increased professionalism, or to suggest that radical agendas encompassing an ecological critique of late capitalism are not present. Grass-roots activism and radical agendas are evident and apparently growing. Environmental activists have fused links with community action campaigns and have worked with NIMBY campaigners in an attempt to develop an awareness and support for environmental campaigns amongst sections of Czech society who, until very recently, were disinclined to support green organisations. To speak of a dichotomy having opened up between the institutionalised EMOs and such grass-roots activists would be, as yet, too strong, not least because the more radical actions and agendas often emerge from within local chapters of the main EMOs. However, a challenge to the professionalism and institutionalisation of the main EMOs has clearly been mounted and may well alter the direction of the movement in the future.

A cynical view would suggest that today's radicals will be the institutionalised lobbyists of the future, who will in turn face a challenge from radical activists. A different interpretation suggests that the emergence of a confrontation between institutionalised campaigners and more radical activists is a sign that the movement has reached a degree of maturity, that diversity in terms of ideology and strategic choices is an entirely healthy sign that has arguably sustained western movements over several decades. It can perhaps be seen as a positive developmental stage in which the movement's capacity to challenge economic and political power is being augmented.

Yet such conclusions must be drawn with a certain degree of caution lest they present a rather superficial analysis of what is occurring and obscure critical constraints and the unique contexts that shape EMO behaviour quite decisively. Insofar as the aim of this study has been to analyse the development of the Czech environmental movement since 1990 as a lens on the process of democratisation and the development of civil society in a new democracy, conclusions should be framed within such a context.

DEMOCRACY AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT: A CONCEPTUAL CHALLENGE

What is unequivocally evident from the empirical research is that the movement has changed considerably since 1990 and the onset of democratisation. From a small network of inexperienced activists, whose political experience involved clandestine opposition to the communist regime, the movement has grown into a labyrinth of eclectic organisations ranging from professional protest organisations to conventional lobbying groups and submerged networks of grass-roots activists. The movement has acquired know-how and expertise and it has learnt how to articulate its campaigns in the media and how to employ a variety of strategic choices.

However, to suggest that the development of the movement has been a linear process whereby EMOs have, as a consequence of political democratisation, gradually gained influence and political access (the notion that democracy provided a green light for previously submerged activists) is to misrepresent what has occurred. The extent to which the process of democratisation was in fact debilitating for social movements unaccustomed to the logic and institutional structures of authoritarian systems cannot be overlooked. The experience of the environmental movement during the early 1990s illustrates how adaptation to democratic procedures can initially be disenabling for activists. As illustrated in Chapter 4, environmentalists lacked the expertise, experience or indeed inclination to take on the partnership function that was being required of them immediately after the revolution.

Internal divisions, ideological differences and the removal of the movement's upper tier inhibited the reinvention of movement activists as democratic partners. The real difficulty, particularly for the more radical elements of the movement, has been the progression from opponent under communism, to partnership within the democratic policy process, to opponent within the new democratic context.

The capacity of EMOs to adapt to democratic politics has been limited by both the absence of what resource mobilisation theorists refer to as 'issue entrepreneurs', individuals who mobilize actors and orchestrate campaigns, and by the lack of *real* openness in the post-1990 political system. Both constraints suggest that the impact of democratic processes on social movements is dependent on the existence of social capital: attitudes and behaviour of elites, resources and know-how, and the ability of the movement to mediate internal ideological conflicts in order to operate within the new structures. That protest still remains far less institutionalised in the Czech Republic than in established democracies, and that public perceptions of the role of civil society activists are still conditioned by the authoritarian legacy, continues, intercepts and transmutes the impact of democratic structures on the environmental movement.

It is equally erroneous to assume that a veneer of professionalism and apparent westernisation does not mask substantive disparities between western EMOs and their Czech counterparts, in terms of political behaviour, influence and capacity.

In acknowledging that the movement's evolution has been path-dependent, it is also important to recognise, in addition to the authoritarian legacy, the impact of the modern political and economic context: the political efficacy of EMOs was as severely affected by the antipathy of the Klaus administration towards civil society during the mid-1990s as it was by the socialisation of activists under authoritarianism. The ideological hegemony of neoliberal reform and the unequivocal endorsement of foreign direct investment and import-led reform by all sections of the political elite condition the interaction between state, capital and the environmental movement. The weakness of the Czech state, both in terms of its relationship with other western states and the EU and in terms of its incarnation since 1990 as a vehicle for ensuring the flow of capital and the protection of western interests, in turn weakens the capacity of EMOs.

What does this suggest about the process of democratisation? It immediately challenges notions of a single model, or indeed a conceptualisation of democracy in the Czech Republic drawn solely from western experience. The combined impact of the authoritarian legacy and the unique context of economic and political transformation on social movement development is not merely a temporary stage in the development of civil

society. The strategic choices, repertoires of action and interactions of EMOs reflect, and are the product of, the particular relationship between state, society and capital in the Czech Republic.

SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY AND THE CZECH ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

In addition to challenging our understanding of the democratisation process in the Czech Republic, using the lens of the environmental movement also calls into question many of the theoretical certainties of the social movement literature. As noted on several occasions in the book, the theorisation of social protest is heavily western-centric, or at least is drawn from the experience of protest in established liberal democracies. It must be recognised when applying such a theoretical framework to a new democracy in CEE that conclusions about the impact of resources and political processes on SMO behaviour are likely to be somewhat different.

This study wholeheartedly endorses the claim made by resource mobilisation theorists (RMT) and others that the existence of grievances alone does not explain social movement efficacy. There has certainly been no shortage of environmental issues in Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic since 1990; increased car ownership, growth in packaging and consumer waste, nuclear power, energy inefficiency and low levels of investment in water purification are just the tip of a huge iceberg of issues that could mobilise and radicalise Czech society. Clearly other factors dictate social movement behaviour and the incidence of protest mobilisation.

The importance of resources is also a key theme of the book and is identified early on in the study as a critical determinant of EMO activity. Yet this is not simply an endorsement of RMT. The impact of resources on Czech EMOs is far more complex than might be assumed. If the period since the collapse of communism is taken as a whole, there has been an abundance of resources available to EMOs and other non-governmental organisations in the country. Knowledge, assistance and funding have poured into the country during the past 13 years and EMOs, as a whole, have been the recipients of sizeable amounts of resources. If the *availability* of resources alone determined EMO development, then the periods of flux, of political isolation, as well as the inefficacy of some EMOs compared to others would be inexplicable, or at least would indicate the fault of EMOs for not perhaps using the resources effectively. What the empirical research suggests is that it is the fact that resources for EMOs have been almost entirely provided by international organisations, foundations and charities that is problematic.

As illustrated in Chapter 5 with regard to the South Bohemian Mothers,

external funding fosters dependency; it removes the need to mobilise sections of society, to foster links with communities, and often leads to a situation in which EMOs merely transmit the ideology, values and agendas of funding donors into the political sphere rather than channelling societal opinions. Such resources are also unsustainable and this weakens the long-term development of the movement. Dependency on foreign donations that might not be available next year is not the basis for strengthening EMOs and developing their internal structures. Grants to EMOs are highly competitive and project-based. As well as encouraging competition and a divisiveness amongst EMOs, the process also forces activists to work on campaigns that they would not otherwise have worked on, and that might not be the most pressing concern for the wider population. Time and effort is spent by EMOs completing complicated grant application forms. Though the research suggests that 'issue entrepreneurs' have emerged and play an important role in mobilising activists, the funding regime has not encouraged this – grants are only made available for distinct projects and it is only very recently that donors have focused on training and building expertise in the sector.

The extent to which the particular funding relationship and the provision of resources by foreign donors has an impact on levels of mobilisation and the ideological or policy focus of EMOs is evidenced by the fact that, as the availability of such funding looks increasingly uncertain post-EU accession, EMOs have begun the slow process of building up their membership base and recruiting more 'friends', 'supporters' or passive members. There is also an increasing number of voices within the elite-level EMOs, that seemed so aloof and separate from civil society in the mid-1990s, now calling for greater links with community activists and local NIMBY campaigns. The motivation for this is the recognition that changing patterns of funding will necessitate working much more closely with communities, and the establishment of indigenous constituencies of supporters who will provide funds once external donors have withdrawn.

The findings of this study also endorse the importance of the political process as a determinant of EMO behaviour. Changes within the political elite at various stages of the post-communist era have undoubtedly impinged upon EMO access and have to an extent conditioned the behaviour of activists. However, as with the issue of resources, the impact requires careful qualification. What alters the impact of changes in political institutions, in new laws, and the emergence of a different political elite is the time factor: in a new democracy processes need to become institutionalised in order to exert the kind of impact prescribed by social movement theorists. In its models and theoretical assertions regarding openness and closure, the political opportunity structure (POS) approach places too much emphasis on structural relationships and constitutional settings based on the experience of SMO activity in

established democracies. In the Czech case, such factors do not act as independent variables; rather, their impact is dependent on levels of institutionalisation, political and bureaucratic attitudes and behaviour, as well as on perceptions of the system and opportunities held by activists themselves.

However, this is not simply a question of biding time, waiting for institutionalisation and structural relationships to become enmeshed. It is in fact a matter of recognising the importance of path dependency and recognising that, in both established democracies and transitional states, the political opportunity structure is the product of more than just constitutional settings and legislative and institutional frameworks. In this sense, the legacy of the Klaus era, the preponderance of bureaucrats socialised by communism and, more importantly, the perpetual replication of those values during the present period, exerts a more profound influence on political access for EMOs than new laws and processes such as environmental impact assessment (EIA). This is not to suggest that political opportunities will not alter over time, but that change will be path-dependent and the real 'opportunities' for access may be divergent from the 'structures'.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT AND NEOLIBERAL CAPITALISM

The final contention raised by this study of the Czech environmental movement that appears to offer a theoretical challenge to the social movement literature relates to the economic context in which EMOs operate. This issue has been a recurrent theme throughout the book and is, arguably, the key to understanding why Czech EMOs behave in the way they do. In a sense it brings all the other determinants together, the final piece of the puzzle that completes the picture. The ideological hegemony of neoliberal capitalism, which all sections of the political elite in the Czech Republic steadfastly endorse, must be seen for what it is, an extreme and ruthless variant of nineteenth-century capitalism. As applied in new democracies of CEE, this form of radical capitalism intentionally weakens the regulatory capacity of the state in the interests of capital injection and import-led recovery. Policies of fiscal rectitude impoverish the state and remove its inclination or capacity to establish and support civil society, whether charities and foundations or political organisations. This of course forces SMOs to rely on foreign donors and, in some cases, the private sector. While we may recoil from the suggestion of state support for civil society in a new democracy, it is worth remembering that civil society in western democracies grew and expanded, not at the expense of the state, but during the twentieth century, when the state itself was growing rapidly. In the post-1945 period, western states pursued a

Keynesian-inspired welfare capitalism. Scarred by the poverty and instability of the 1930s and the horrors of Fascism, Europe was preoccupied with social justice and protecting vulnerable sections of society. What we term rather loosely and sloppily today, 'civil society' was the main benefactor of this protective spirit of postwar liberal capitalism. The financial status of the voluntary sector in Britain and the fiscal laws governing non-profit organisations all bear witness to the commitment of the state to enhancing civil society, not, it must be said, for entirely philanthropic or benevolent reasons. Nevertheless, the key point here is that the growth of civil society depended on the expansion of the state, not, as has been the case in CEE since 1990, on the shrinking of the state.

The economic climate created by this variant of neoliberal capitalism has exerted a profound impact on social movements. Rather than stimulate protest and mobilisation, job insecurity, high unemployment, rising inflation and the continual decline of social welfare have deterred social movement activists from making radical demands. As Flam (2001) notes, those social movements in CEE that have enjoyed any measure of success are those that existed prior to 1989, or are well supported and entrenched. Even in such cases, mobilisation is rarely the chosen strategy for defending political influence or traditional identities. Certainly in the earlier post-communist period, conservative views regarding social protest were reinforced in the Czech Republic by economic crisis. EMOs frequently emphasised that citizens were ill-equipped and ill-disposed to supporting their endeavours. The rhetoric of making sacrifices today in order to prosper in the future, which ironically was the hallmark of Soviet communism, dissuaded the public from political contestation. Political and financial corruption, authoritarian practices and the unregulated antics of TNCs were seen as a necessary medicine to cure the ills of communist inefficiency. The political polarisation between pro-democracy/market on the one hand, and old-guard supporter on the other, constituted the underlying political structure in which EMOs began to operate.

From the perspective of 2003, the overriding relevance of neoliberal capitalism for understanding EMO activity remains unchallenged. Dependency on foreign donors, the ephemeral role of the state and the sovereignty of TNCs continue to structure the interactions of EMOs. However, at the fringes of the environmental movement, amongst grass-roots activists, groups of citizens defending public services, their green space, or their local areas from TNC investment, the capacity of environmental issues to mobilise a broad-based challenge to capitalism is evident. The more established EMOs with their political linkage and elite representation are beginning to respond, by talking in terms of combined strategies, fusing links with local activists and reinventing themselves as the supporters of community agendas. That ultimately the efficacy of the Czech environmental movement

is conditioned by the logic and dynamics of neoliberal capitalism may well serve to reinvigorate the movement politically after an era of apparent marginalisation and cooption.

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