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REPRESSION AND BLOCKUPY RADICALIZATION IN AUSTERITY-DRIVEN GERMANY[1]

INTRODUCTION

On September 17, 2011, American political activists took to Zuccotti Park in New York City's Wall Street financial district to manifest against capitalism. The police carried off the protestors from the park on November 15, 2011. The latter began occupying banks, corporate headquarters, college and university campuses, and other critical infrastructure facilities (Pickerill, Krinsky 2012: 279). The protest gave rise to Occupy Wall Street, a social movement that informed the establishment of European movements which stood up the austerity policies imposed by the European Union and governments after the 2008 financial crisis (Bruckmiller, Scholl 2016: 76; Mullis et al. 2016: 50; Slavina, Brym 2020: 201). Only one anti-austerity movement, German Blockupy (Block and Occupy), took the form of a pan-European alliance (Stolle, Voigt 2014: 184), closely reflected Occupy anti-capitalist ideas (Harrison, Risager 2016: 844; Neumayer, Rossi, Karlsson 2016: 5565), and adopted Occupy repertoire of protest (contentious performances) (Rucht 2016: 121).

Blockupy emerged on May 16, 2012, along with the series of protests organized under the slogan "European Days of Action: Occupy, Block, Demonstrate" ("Europäische Aktionstage: Besetzen, Blockieren, Demonstrieren") (Mullis 2015: 20; Hänska, Bauchowitz 2018: 248). The movement participants are alterglobalists, migrants, jobless, precarious and industry workers, party members (*Die Linke*), and unionists from Germany, Italy, Spain, Greece, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, and France (Blockupy 2012). The movement is supported by activists from various emancipatory groups and organizations, e.g., the interventionist Left, Attac, trade unions, youth and student organizations, the forum of the unemployed in Germany (*Erwerbslosenforum*), the party *Die Linke*, the network peace cooperative (Netzwerk

Friedenskooperative), and the "…Ums Ganze" Alliance (Blockupy 2012; Prosser 2020). On a declarative level, they aim to break the rule of austerity, build democracy from below, manifest solidarity beyond nation-state lines, oppose racist, nationalist, antisemitic divisions, and conspiracy theories to interpret the world. To meet these goals, Blockupy activists use the following means of protest: occupation, protest camp occupations, sit-ins, picketing, demonstrations, public meetings, marches, statements in public media, and activities in commercial and social media (Chatzopoulou, Bourne 2016: 94; Wallaschek 2020: 231).

Although Blockupy was planned to have been launched as a peaceful initiative (Eddy 2012; The Local/hc 2012), immediately after its establishment, the group has become one of the most violent anti-austerity movements in Europe (Rak 2018: 81). Not later than in May 2012, the movement participants seriously injured a police officer and caused nearly €1 million's worth of damage in Frankfurt city center (Longeray 2015; Luyken 2015). Immediately, movement participants started being treated by law enforcement services as the enemies of democracy that infringed public order (Sjolin 2015; Anderl, Wallmeier 2019; Bergmann 2019). Some demonstrations were considered illegal due to disagreement with their organization. The police stance resulted from the principle of militant democracy established in Germany (Ullrich 2019), i.e., the use of legal restrictions on political expression and participation to curb extremist actors in democratic regimes (Capoccia 2013: 207; Tyulkina 2015: 15; Müller 2016: 250).

Noteworthy, Blockupy leaders denunciated and rejected the use of physical violence. Ulrich Wilken, a *Die Linke* politician, who participated in protest organization, emphasized at a press conference, "I want to say that this morning did not go as we had wished. This is not what we had planned... I understand the great outrage... but this is not how German demonstration culture should be" (Luyken 2015). Blockupy spokesman, Hendrik Wester, pointed out that "This is not what Blockupy planned" (An/bw 2015). Finally, the activists felt guilty about their use of physical violence and made attempts to varnish images and information about aggressive incidents. They were afraid of losing supporters and public opinion favorableness. On their official Twitter feed @blockupy, the movement posted pictures of the peaceful protests and largely avoided mentioning fierce clashes (Luyken 2015). These empirical observations have motivated the research questions: why, despite the declared blueprint, did the movement radicalize immediately after its occurrence? What its dynamics of radicalization was? Furthermore, what informed the radicalization processes?

METHODOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS FOR THE STUDY

The body of scholarship on Blockupy focuses on the spread of transnational movement (Chatzopoulou, Bourne 2016: 94), organizational structure (Harrison, Risager 2016: 844), dynamics of protest, the culture of political violence (Rak 2018: 80), and use of social media (Neumayer, Rossi, Karlsson 2016: 5558), but tells little about

their palpable radicalization. In turn, journalists based their explanations on activists' excuses. While Wilken fixed the blame on Troika's policies that made Germans "very angry" (4 News 2015; Luyken 2015), other protest participants indicated provocative police tactics as an incentive to start clashes (An/bw 2015). This work contributes to social movement studies by explaining the nature and sources of physical violence used by Blockupy.

This article aims to identify and account for the dynamics of Blockupy radicalization. It explores the activity of the movement since May 16, 2012, to September 5, 2016. Social mobilization in Germany, which took the form of Blockupy establishment, and their first public protest event mark out the opening caesura of the research (Blockupy 2012). Four years later, on August 25, 2016, the activists published the last internet-based call for action "Blockupy 2016 in Berlin/Germany – Back to work: Exit Austerity – Exit Fortress Europe – Exit Capitalism!" (Blockupy 2016). It was an invitation to participate in the Weekend of action against racism in Berlin, September 2-4, 2016, and support blockade of the Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in the morning, decentralized actions in the afternoon (September 2), open block at the massive demonstration against racism (September 3), and Welcome 2 Stay meeting (September 4) (Blockupy 2016). The last day of the protest event stakes out the research closing caesura because it has started social demobilization. Although the movement has not ceased to exist, foreign and international political subjects have started avoiding supporting Blockupy actions, and protest events have failed to attract a large turnout. The movement has lost its past appeal since the repertoire of goals has broadened, and a set of ideas has got blurred (Kaul 2016).

The processes of radicalization and deradicalization, which took place in the time of social mobilization, are analyzed with the qualitative method of sources analysis. The sources are the information on Blockupy protest events provided by the Federal Ministry of the Interior (Germany) (Müsgen 2017) and the datasets of the Global Database of Events, Language, and Tone Project database (GDELT Project), namely GDELT Event Exporter, and the GDELT Event Database.

GDELT is a project that combines online records of social and political events since 1979 from a variety of news sources around the globe published in 65 languages (e.g., Agence France Press, BBC Monitoring, and the "New York Times") (della Porta 2016). The project transforms them into a computable format and is automatically updated every fifteen minutes (della Porta 2016). The GDELT Event collection contains over 250 000 records (obtained initially from LexisNexis) comprising three decades of political events (from January 1, 1979, to the present) coded across fifty-nine variables (della Porta 2016). The components of the GDELT dataset are PERL, R, and Google BigQuery, which gives a wide spectrum of information from highly diversified German, national, and international media materials (Bodas-Sagi, Labeaga 2016: 38). The sources triangulation pursued the collection of reliable data and enabled a researcher to evade favoring either the state or media narration.

The search criteria that served to generate the first dataset from GDELT EVENT Exporter were: Start Date = 05/16/2012; End Date = 05/09/2016 (the span of Block-

upy activity); Actor1 Country: DEU (location of the event: Germany); Event Code: 14 (the type of event: protest); Event Country: GM (type and state affiliation of the initiator of the action: Germany); Weighting: NUMEVENTS (an aggregation of the CAMEOevent codes into four categories ranging from Verbal Cooperation to Material Cooperation, Verbal Conflict, and Material Conflict) (GDELT 2020a; della Porta 2016). The news set covers 7636 items (GDELT 2020a). The search criteria used to generate the second dataset from GDELT EVENT Exporter were: Start Date = 05/16/2012; End Date = 05/09/2016 (the span of Blockupy activity); Actor1 Country: DEU (location of the event: Germany); Event Code: 14 (the type of event: protest); Event Country: GM (type and state affiliation of the initiator of the action: Germany); Weighting: NUMEVENTS (an aggregation of the CAMEOevent codes into four categories ranging from Verbal Cooperation to Material Cooperation, Verbal Conflict, and Material Conflict) (GDELT 2020b; 2020c; della Porta 2016). The list of events covers 1253 items (GDELT 2020c).

The technique of conceptual intertextual qualitative content analysis applies to analyze the pieces of data on protest events sufficient and necessary to identify the dynamics of radicalization and repression (Nassauer 2018: 293). The news retrieved through GDELT Project was analyzed with theoretical lenses. The analysis employs three research tools to account for the sources of the dynamics. The first one, the theoretical framework of the Political Opportunity Theory, defines relationships between the responses the movement meets in its environment (the explaining factors) and radicalization (the factor that is to be explained). The second one, the theoretical model of protest policing, is to measure the explaining factors. Finally, the third research tool, the theoretical model of radicalization, serves to measure the factor that is to be explained. The Political Opportunity Theory informed the research tools and hypotheses.

In line with the first hypothesis, repression might have informed the dynamics of radicalization. The closer the protest policing to the model of escalated force (and farther from the negotiated management) was, the higher the extent of Blockupy radicalization was. Taking on the negotiated management features, the protest policing influenced the movement deradicalization. The value taken on by radicalization depended on the value of repression. Accordingly, despite the peaceful blueprint, the movement radicalized immediately after its occurrence due to the existing dominating model of repressive protest policing, the escalated force. According to the Political Opportunity Theory, the available structure of political opportunities informed radicalism or moderation in the forms of action (della Porta 2018: 464). These opportunities determined the responses of authorities to movement activities (della Porta 2018: 464; della Porta, Reiter 1998: 4; 2006: 13). A protest is a challenge to public order and generates a situation where the police have to defend that order. However, protest policing strategies may be highly diversified (della Porta, Reiter 1998: 4). Broad, brutal, and indiscriminate (hitting both militants and nonviolent activists) repression along with solidarity with those who suffer from repression spark radicalization. When police officers are perceived as overreacting to the challengers, radicalization spreads (della Porta 2018: 464).

The last hypothesis is that the duration of repression might have informed the dynamics of radicalization. According to the Political Opportunity Theory, the long-lasting experiences of physical confrontation with the police produces an image of an unfair state using force against its citizens as well as cranks up myths. Thus, radicalization becomes considered non-alternative (della Porta 2018: 464). The strength of the affective ties between individuals who suffer from the state reaction to radical challenges might influence radicalization (McCauley, Moskalenko 2008: 425).

THE DYNAMICS OF BLOCKUPY RADICALIZATION

This section of the article identifies the phases of Blockupy radicalization and deradicalization in 2012-2016. The analysis considers behavioral aspects of radicalization rather than ideological because the movement has not cultivated any complex ideology. Although the spectrum of the movement's ideas was steadily broadening, anti-capitalist and anti-austerity ideas were relatively persistent and created the core of Blockupy political thinking (Risager 2018: 68; Scholl, Freyberg-Inan 2018: 103; Roose, Kanellopoulos, Sommer 2017: 284). Importantly, at the ideological level, these loosely connected ideas did not take radical forms (cf. Plessner 1999: 47; Norris, Inglehart 2019: 67).

According to the adopted theoretical approach, behavioral radicalization consists in the adoption of violent forms of contention, including categorical indiscriminate force by a challenging group (Alimi, Bosi, Demetriou 2012: 7). Violent forms of contention occur when movement participants use physical force while making a claim and thus intentionally influence the thinking process, behavior, or physical state of other political subjects, despite the lack of authority of the political subject under the influence, to achieve political goals. These goals are the creation, destruction, protection, deprivation of protection, distribution, and abandonment of public goods distribution.

As the analysis of GDELT and police datasets has shown, Blockupy was using the nonviolent internet-based forms of contention during the whole cycle of mobilization. Off-line activities were rare, but when activists decided to take to the streets, protest usually turned violent (GDELT 2020a; 2020c; Müsgen 2017). The first period of Blockupy public engagement lasted from May 16, 2012, to May 20, 2012, and was located in Frankfurt. It was, simultaneously, the first phase of their radicalization. Protestors clashed with police officers, used pepper spray, and damaged properties (saw/dpa 2012; Helbig, Voigts, Nonnenmann 2012). The use of physical violence was, however, episodic rather than steady. Usually, the phases of radicalization did not focus on particular social and political events.

The phase of deradicalization spanned until the anniversary of the 2012 protest. The second radicalization phase took place from May 11, 2013, to June 1, 2013, in Frankfurt. Just like during the previous phase of contention, most protests were peaceful. The clashes with police officers were sporadic. Then, not unlike it was between

the previous phases of radicalization, deradicalization spanned for a year until the next anniversary protest. Accordingly, the third phase of radicalization was from May 10, 2014, to May 22, 2014, in Frankfurt.

In comparison to the first two phases, the frequency and intensity of the use of physical violence considerably mounted. Activists threw random things at police officers and shot at them (VON 2014). As a result, police officers were injured (VON 2014). Deradicalization lasted until November 20, 2014. The short time of radicalization spanned to November 23, 2014. In Frankfurt, demonstrators clashed with the police and used pepper spray. Police officers were injured, public, and private property damaged (dpa/mak 2014).

The phase of deradicalization was followed by one-day radicalization on March 18, 2015, in Frankfurt, which was the last and most violent contention in the mobilization cycle. Blockupy held a protest against the opening of a new base for the European Central Bank considered a symbol of capitalism and blamed for the consequences of austerity measures. Activists injured many police officers with stones. They also used pepper spray and an acidic liquid when attacking opponents, burnt police cars, tires, rubbish, and damaged a fire engine (BBC 2015).

The analysis has revealed that the stages of radicalization were relatively rare and short. Moreover, from May 16, 2012, the extent of radicalization intensity was gradually growing to take on a peak value of general riots on March 18, 2015.

REPRESSION: BETWEEN THE ESCALATED FORCE AND NEGOTIATED MANAGEMENT

This part of the article introduces a research tool applied to measure repression and provides empirical evidence on the policing of Blockupy protest (Table 1). The values for protest policing features draw on the analysis of GDELT and police datasets (GDELT 2020a; 2020c; Müsgen 2017). The theoretical model is Donatella della Porta's and Herbert Reiter's dual typology of protest policing modified in terms of some indicators and their operationalization (della Porta, Reiter 1998: 4; 2006: 13). According to an adapted approach, the following indicators define protest policing: (F1) the intensity of physical violence used to police protest, (F2) the legal legitimation of police behavior, (F3) the social legitimation of police behavior, (F4) the apprehension of protestors, (F5) the timing of police action, (F6) the ability to make an agreement, (F7) the capacity to adjust to emerging situations, (F8) the predictability of police mode of conduct, and (F9) the professionalism of police officers (Rak 2019: 164). These indicators take on their extreme values for the antinomic models of protest policing.

The essential features of the extremely repressive type, which is the escalated force model, are: the maximally high extent of the intensity of physical violence, legally delegitimate police behavior, considered repressive and unacceptable, protestors arrested, reactive timing of police action, no ability to make an agreement, rigidity in adjusting to emerging situation, the unpredictability of police mode of conduct,

and improvisation over protest policing. In turn, the characteristics of the negotiated management model are: no physical violence, police behavior is legally legitimate, considered non-coercive and acceptable, none protestor arrested, preventive timing of police action, performed ability to make an agreement, flexibility in adjusting to emerging situations, predictability of police mode of conduct, and professional action during protests (Rak 2019: 164; cf. Lydon 2020).

The first indicator covers the intensity of physical violence used to police protest (F1) (della Porta, Reiter 1998: 4). In the escalated force model, the police employ excessive physical force. Protestors are injured or killed (F1 = 1). In the negotiated management model, the police completely abandon using both active and passive physical violence (threat) (F1 = 0) (Rak 2019: 162). This feature took on a value typical of the escalated force during all five phases of Blockupy radicalization (GDELT 2020a; 2020c; Müsgen 2017).

The second indicator is the legal legitimation of police behavior (F2). The legal legitimation of behavior indicates whether police officers act within the bounds of the law (Rak 2019: 162). If the behavior is within the legal rules established in a particular political structure, the negotiated management occurs (F2 = 0). If it is not, the escalated force emerges (F2 = 1). During the first phase of Blockupy radicalization, police behavior was illegal, and the Frankfurt police had to indemnify to aggrieved protestors. A breach of the right to public meetings occurred (dapd 2012). The following phase was marked by the fact that the police did not abide by the right to the public meeting and overused physical violence (tim 2013). Therefore, the low level of legal legitimation characteristic of the escalated force emerged during the first two radicalization phases. Legal legitimation of police behavior, and thus the negotiated management quality, typified the last three radicalization phases (GDELT 2020a; 2020c; Müsgen 2017).

The third indicator is the social legitimation of police behavior by participants of protests (F3). The new approach does not follow the original della Porta's and Reiter's distinction between repressiveness and tolerance because they are not antinomic features and as such, they are useless as a homogenous criterion for differentiating between the antinomic models for one indicator (della Porta, Reiter 1998: 4; Rak 2019: 163). Protestors find protest policing repressive and entirely unacceptable in the escalated force (F3 = 1). In turn, in the negotiated management, it is perceived as non-coercive and entirely acceptable (F3 = 0). Since activists denounced police behavior during the whole cycle of mobilization, this indicator took on the value of the escalated force for every phase of radicalization (GDELT 2020a; 2020c; Müsgen 2017).

The fourth indicator addresses the apprehension of protestors (F4). In the escalated force, protestors are punished by arrest for taking part in protest (F4 = 1). In the negotiated management, none protestor is arrested (F4 = 0) (Rak 2019: 163). During all radicalization phases, police officers arrested activists, which means that this feature took on the value of the escalated force for them (GDELT 2020a; 2020c; Müsgen 2017).

The timing of police action is the next indicator of a type of protest policing (F5). It is preemptive/preventive for the negotiated management (F5 = 0) and reactive for the escalated force (F5 = 1) (della Porta, Reiter 1998: 4). The theoretical approach created for this article adopts della Porta's and Reiter's approach in its current form to address the time when the police act. Here, it is beneficial to evaluate the timing of police action in a broader perspective of the event that preceded the first phase of Blockupy radicalization (GDELT 2020a; 2020c; Müsgen 2017).

On March 31, 2012, in the organizational framework of the first European Day of Action, political activists held an anti-capitalist demonstration M31 (March 31st) in Frankfurt. Demonstrators, a bystander, and police officers were injured, some activists arrested, and properties damaged. The police might have expected that those who had supported the idea of M31 would have been interested in joining Blockupy because of shared goals. The harbored resentments resulting from unsatisfied claims and experienced repression were expected to have flared up on May 16, 2012. Whereas the span between anti-capitalist protest was relatively short, radical attitudes were thought to have prevailed once awaken. As a result, on May 16, 2012, the police overreacted rather than fulfilled preventive goals. They started policing the initially peaceful protest, just like it was the follow-up of M31. Therefore, reactive protest policing met the criteria for the escalated force model immediately after the Blockupy inception.

The sixth indicator concerns the ability to make an agreement (F6). In the escalated force, the police do not pursue making an agreement but confront protestors (F6 = 1). In the negotiated management, the police communicate with protestors to make a mutually acceptable deal (F6 = 0) (Rak 2019: 163). During the whole cycle of mobilization, this indicator had the value of the escalated force. Police officers used force to establish public order and mental violence to shame demonstrators into toeing the line. According to the available reports, the use of mental violence consisted in fierce quarrels between police officers and protest participants (GDELT 2020a; 2020c; Müsgen 2017).

The degree of "adaptability" understood as a capacity to adjust to emerging situations is the next indicator (F7) whose extremes are rigidity and flexibility (della Porta, Reiter 1998: 4). Charles Tilly (2006: 44) and Takeshi Wada (2016: 449) developed this approach by specifying the values taken on by the indicator. According to them, rigidity, typical of the escalated force, appears when the police use a single action form over and over again (F7 = 1). Negotiated management is distinguished by flexibility. It means a repertoire of action in which various forms are in use, and previously employed forms do not predict the next (F7 = 0) (Wada 2016: 449). The new approach accepts Tilly's and Wada's set of values for the indicator of a capacity to adjust to emerging situations.

On May 16, 2012, police officers were unprepared to police a peaceful protest. Unexpectedly to them, Blockupy mobilization was qualitatively different from M31, mostly due to the new organizational framework and leaders who aimed to avoid turning violent. Police officers adapted the mode of protest policing to a new context no sooner than during the third phase of Blockupy radicalization. Until this phase,

the violence escalated, and police behavior contributed to creating an image of unfair and aggressive police. Thus, the police capacity to adjust to emerging situations was remarkably low during the first two phases of radicalization, then it grew and was constant until the movement demobilization. On the level of the ability to make an agreement, protest policing changed from the escalated force to the negotiated management model (GDELT 2020a; 2020c; Müsgen 2017).

Table 1

The dynamics of repression during Blockupy protests in 2012-2016

Phases of radicalization Protest policing features	1st phase: 16-05-2012-20-05-2012	2nd phase: 11-05-2013-01-06-2013	3rd phase: 10-05-2014-22-05-2014	4th phase: 20-11-2014-23-11-2014	5th phase: 18-03-2015
(F1) the intensity of physical violence used to police protest	1	1	1	1	1
(F2) the legal legitimation of police behavior	1	1	0	0	0
(F3) the social legitimation of police behavior	1	1	1	1	1
(F4) the apprehension of protestors	1	1	1	1	1
(F5) the timing of police action	1	1	1	1	1
(F6) the ability to make an agreement	1	1	1	1	1
(F7) the capacity to adjust to emerging situations	1	1	0	0	0
(F8) the predictability of police mode of conduct	1	1	0	0	0
(F9) the professionalism of police officers	1	1	1	1	1

0 – negotiated management model
1 – escalated force model
Source: own study based on the GDELT Project datasets: http://www.gdeltproject.org/ (access 10.01.2020).

The eighth indicator is the predictability of police mode of conduct (F8). In the escalated force, police mode of conduct is unpredictable, and thus protestors do not know how police officers will respond to base motives (F8 = 1). At the other extreme, the negotiated management, police mode of conduct is predictable on the basis of previous behavior and the upheld law (F8 = 0) (Rak 2019: 163).

In general, protest policing in Germany was highly repressive (Earl 2006; della Porta, Reiter 1998; Behrendes 2020). During the 2012-2016 phases of radicalization, police officers used the kettle (also known as kettling, containment, and corralling).

The kettle is a police tactic for controlling large protesting crowds. It consists in the creation of big cordons of police officers that then move to contain protestors within a limited area. Those cordoned off are prevented from leaving, divested of access to food, water, and toilet facilities for a period staked out by police forces (Neal, Opitz, Zebrowski 2019: 1045; den Heyer 2020: 59). Moreover, the police often overused batons, water cannons, and pepper spray (SZ.de 2013). Blockupy activists might have expected violent police behavior, but also required abiding by the law (Ullrich 2020). Police officers were considered unpredictable during the first two phases of radicalization, but then the predictability level increased. It determined the dynamics of protest policing that ranged from the escalated force at the beginning of mobilization to the negotiated management at the end (GDELT 2020a; 2020c; Müsgen 2017).

The last indicator is the professionalism that covers the qualifications of police officers for carrying out their tasks and effective utilization of means to reach goals (F9). Improvisation typifies the escalated force and consists in building unqualified police officers into protest policing and the incommensurable use of measures to perform their rights and duties during a protest (F9 = 1). The professional action is a hallmark of the negotiated management. It is based on the employment of well-qualified police officers to police protest and the commensurable use of means to fulfill their public role (F9 = 0) (Rak 2019: 163). Although well-qualified and experienced police officers policed Blockupy protest, they undertook incommensurable measures. Their overreaction was criticized for being inadequate to the extent of physical violence used by demonstrators. The situation typical of the escalated force model occurred during all the phases of radicalization (GDELT 2020a; 2020c; Müsgen 2017).

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis has revealed that during the first two phases of Blockupy radicalization, the police took on an extremely repressive protest policing type, which was the escalated force model. It means that the intensity of physical violence was maximally high, police behavior was delegitimate, considered repressive and unacceptable, many protestors arrested, reactive timing of police action, no ability to make an agreement, rigidity in adjusting to emerging situation, the unpredictability of police mode of conduct, and improvisation over protest policing emerged. Since the third phase of radicalization, the model took on the three characteristics of the negotiated management model. The police behavior was legally legitimate, flexible in adjusting to emerging situations, and the police mode of conduct became predictable.

As the research has shown, police repression informed the dynamics of Blockupy radicalization. The relationship between these factors was, however, not as simple as it may seem. Both the police and activists used political violence not as a direct response to a current situation but to an anticipated one. These political subjects formulated their strategies so that they were appropriate to deal with the irrevocably past situation considered either failure or requiring reformation. The closer the protest

policing to the model of escalated force (and farther from the negotiated management) was, the higher the extent of Blockupy radicalization was. Still, the increase in radicalization occurred in the following phases of contention rather than immediately. The high extent of radicalization was not a direct response to repression but occurred in the following phases of radicalization. Accordingly, despite the peaceful blueprint, the movement radicalized immediately after its occurrence due to the existing dominating model of repressive protest policing in Germany, which is the escalated force. The available structure of political opportunities informed radicalism in the forms of action. Police officers were perceived as overreacting to the challengers, which contributed to the spread of radicalization.

The next hypothesis also cannot be accepted without reservations. Taking on the features of the negotiated management and eliminating those of the escalated force, the protest policing did not influence the movement deradicalization. The long-lasting experiences of physical confrontation with the police shaped an image of the unfair state using force against its citizens and initiated myth-building processes. It determined the strict division between the movement that suffered from severe repression and ruthless police officers. The division confirmed and strengthened the division that inspired the movement, an image of rivalry between the beneficiaries and victims of capitalism and austerity policies. Thus, radicalization became considered non-alternative. The strength of the affective ties between individuals who suffered from the state reaction to radical challenges influenced radicalization. The increase in radicalization intensity was an expression of solidarity with other movement participants who got damaged in violent clashes. The existence of a Blockupy collective identity additionally strengthened the ties. It means that the last hypothesis that the duration of repression might have informed radicalization dynamics can be accepted.

This research contributes to the body of scholarship about contentious politics in times of austerity. It explains the dynamics of relationships established by the law enforcement service and social activists. The study delved analytically into repression and radicalization processes that revealed mutual interaction between militant democracy and contentious politics. This approach may benefit from further studies on the discursive legitimization of the movement and the police and their mutual discursive delegitimization. It may be a crucial factor to understand the role of enemization in the dynamics of contention in contemporary militant democracies.

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ABSTRACT

The research aims to identify and explain the dynamics of Blockupy radicalization. It explores the activity of the movement during the whole cycle of anti-austerity mobilization. The analysis addresses the research problems of why, despite the declared peaceful orientation, the movement radicalized immediately after its rise, what its dynamics of radicalization was, and what informed the radicalization processes.

Research hypotheses are theory-driven and draw on the Political Opportunity Theory. According to the hypothesis, repression might have informed the dynamics of radicalization. The closer the protest policing was to the escalated force model, the higher was the extent of Blockupy radicalization. The adoption of features of negotiated management by the protest policing influenced the movement deradicalization. Finally, the duration of repression might have informed the dynamics of radicalization.

The research uses the qualitative method of sources analysis and the technique of conceptual, qualitative content analysis. The sources are the information on Blockupy protest events provided by the Federal Ministry of the Interior (Germany) and GDELT datasets.

The analysis revealed that during the first two phases of Blockupy radicalization, the police employed an extremely repressive type of protest policing, which was the escalated force model.

Since the third phase of radicalization, the model took on the characteristics of the negotiated management model. The fact and duration of police repression informed the dynamics of Blockupy radicalization. The closer the protest policing was to the escalated force model, the higher was the extent of Blockupy radicalization. Still, the increase in radicalization occurred in the subsequent phases of contention rather than immediately. Despite the peaceful blueprint, the movement radicalized immediately after its rise due to the existing dominating model of repressive protest policing in Germany.