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From Radical Counterculture to Pragmatic Radicalism?

The Collective Identity of Contemporary Radical Left-libertarian Activism in Sweden

In the mass media, radical left-libertarian movement (RLLM) actors—such as anarchists and autonomists—are often portrayed as subcultural deviants and violent troublemakers who primarily engage in disruptive forms of protests.¹ Some of these themes can also be found in academic research, when scholars aim to pinpoint the distinctiveness of RLLM actors vis-à-vis other types of social movements. For instance, some studies tend to describe anarchists, autonomists, and similar movement actors as being more defined by their actions, ways of organizing, or by fluid identities, rather than distinct and stable collective identities.² In contrast, other studies have tended to portray RLLM actors as mainly subcultural or sectarian, having in-group oriented, homogenous, and static collective identities.³

This article takes as its starting point that a collective identity is central for all types of social movements—providing them with a common conception of the past, the present, and the future, as well as a sense of “we-ness”—while simultaneously acknowledging that a movement’s identity is constantly renegotiated and thus evolves over time. By analyzing the RLLM in Sweden and the development of its collective identity between the mid-1990s and

the mid-2010s, we critically engage with common conceptions of radical left-libertarian actors as either having fluid or static collective identities, with the aim of showing a more complex picture of the dynamics of identity construction and transformation within radical movement groups.

By using the analytical term RLLM, we focus on organizations, informal groups, and activist networks that (in Sweden and in other countries) make up a relatively coherent movement milieu.⁴ In this milieu, one finds anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists as well as libertarian Marxists such as autonomists and council communists. In terms of ideology, these groups have their roots in libertarian socialist thought and thus hold anti-authoritarian, anti-capitalist, and anti-statist views, but also criticize power relations not necessarily connected to capitalism or the state—for instance, racism, sexism, homophobia, and speciesism—which makes them potential allies to a wide range of other movements focusing on such issues. Moreover, RLLM actors envision a society based on direct or participatory democratic ideals and seek social change through the decentralization of power.⁵ Apart from ideological affinities, RLLM groups are also linked through joint mobilizations, solidarity campaigns, and movement infrastructures (such as social centers and online networks), and—this article's theme—they share a common collective identity that is constantly renegotiated in both consensual and conflictual forms.

Existing research on contemporary RLLM actors in liberal democracies has primarily focused on southern Europe, Germany, and the United States.⁶ Little has been written about similar movement actors in Sweden and the other Scandinavian countries.⁷ The existing literature therefore does not address how radical and contentious left-wing movements develop in societies marked by consensus-oriented and corporatist state–civil society relations, a persistent dominance of social democracy in political institutions and in the labor movement, and an active but seldom contentious protest culture.⁸ Regarding RLLM actors as such, international research has demonstrated how protests against austerity in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis caused ideational changes in radical left-wing activism across Europe and beyond.⁹ Such protests were, however, largely absent in the Swedish setting. A study of the RLLM in Sweden therefore shows how radical left-wing activism has developed in a context mainly unaffected by the recent transnational wave of anti-austerity protests.

By analyzing interviews with activists and intramovement discussions published in magazines and on the web, we investigate how the Swedish

RLLM's collective identity has developed over time, paying attention to both continuity and change. In the analysis, we deploy a framing perspective that focuses on how activists identify problems and propose strategies for action, and how the resulting collective action frame reflects and transforms the movement's collective identity. We seek to answer three main questions:

1. How has the collective identity of the RLLM in Sweden developed during recent decades? What major transformations and continuities can be identified?
2. How are intramovement boundaries drawn (and redrawn)? Who is constructed as the "other?"
3. What are the main intramovement disagreements—frame disputes—regarding the RLLM's collective identity? How have these tensions affected the RLLM's ideational development and preferred repertoires of action?

Overall, our study shows that the RLLM in Sweden has developed from regarding itself as a milieu of radical direct-action groups in the 1990s, to seeing itself as part of a broadly defined working class in the 2000s, and finally to self-identify as an actor rooted in local neighborhoods and the everyday activities of common people in the 2010s. Parallel to these identity transformations, the movement has partially changed its protest targets and choices of tactics, the latter having become less disruptive. At times, disputes over framing and strategies have led to internal divisions, and some parts of the movement still cherish previously dominant self-conceptions and strategies. Our analysis thus shows that in order to better understand the dynamics of radical movements' identity transformations, it is important to highlight continuity *and* change, or both the fluid and static aspects of a movement's collective identity.

The article proceeds with a section about how collective identity has been discussed in social movement studies, and how it relates to the framing perspective. This is followed by an overview of previous research on the collective identities of RLLM actors, a brief summary of the history of the RLLM in Sweden, and a presentation of the methods and data. The subsequent section presents our frame analysis of the movement's collective identity during three periods between the mid-1990s and the mid-2010s, and this is informed by, and contrasted with, results from data analysis of

RLLM protest events in Sweden between 1997 and 2016. These data show the main tendencies in the movement's public protest actions, regarding protest issues and whether conventional or transgressive tactics have been used, where the latter includes protests challenging established routines, balances or transgresses the borders of legitimacy/illegitimacy and legality/illegality. The article ends with a summarizing table of these developments and a discussion focusing on transformations and continuities as well as the theoretical implications of the results.

Social Movements, Collective Identity, and Framing

The development of a collective identity is pivotal for a social movement's ability to engage in various forms of contentious politics. Snow defines collective identity as: "a shared sense of 'one-ness' or 'we-ness' anchored in real or imagined shared attributes and experiences among those who comprise the collectivity and in relation or contrast to one or more actual or imagined sets of 'others.' Embedded within the shared sense of 'we' is a corresponding sense of 'collective agency.'"¹⁰ The shared understanding of what a movement is, does, and should do consequently affects its activists' strategic choices, normative judgments, and day-to-day activities.

A central aspect of the construction of collective identities is the drawing and maintenance of boundaries vis-à-vis "others." Taylor and Whittier find boundary work to be a central characteristic of collective identities and that boundary markers are "central to the formation of collective identity because they promote a heightened awareness of a group's commonalities and frame interaction between members of the in-group and the out-group."¹¹ In this article, we will focus how boundary markers are used to create boundaries both between the RLLM and its surroundings, and between different factions within the movement.

Collective identities are always "under construction."¹² Whether the study of collective identities should focus on the processes of identity-construction and the intra-movement production of common cognitive frameworks or should analyze the products of these processes—the constructed "shared we" to which the movement's sympathizers, adversaries, and potential audiences respond—is a contested issue.¹³ In this article, we focus on both aspects. The

product aspect of collective identity is given prominence when we attempt to capture and analyze the collective action frames, protest issues, and strategies that have dominated certain periods. At the same time, the process aspect is highlighted as we aim to study the intra-movement disputes and dynamics that have shaped and reshaped the movement's collective identity and boundaries in different periods.

In order to grasp both the processes of collective identity formation and the outcomes, or products, of these processes, our analysis will be based in the theoretical apparatus of the framing perspective.¹⁴ The concept of framing refers to the meaning-making processes through which activists 1) identify and formulate perceptions of problems, localize causes, and identify responsible actors (diagnostic framing); 2) propose possible solutions, strategies for action, alternative goals, and visions (prognostic framing); and 3) formulate a rationale for action in order to spread these ideas and mobilize adherents and constituents in the surrounding society (motivational framing). The interactive and dynamic process of framing often results in the forging of collective action frames, which are "relatively coherent sets of action-oriented beliefs and meanings that legitimate and inspire social movement campaigns and activities."¹⁵

In relation to processes of collective identity formation, Snow and McAdam argue that framing "constitute[s] perhaps the most important mechanism facilitating identity construction processes, largely because identity constructions are an inherent feature of framing activities."¹⁶ The framing perspective thus allows for an analysis of how the "we-ness" of a movement is continuously constructed and transformed, for instance, through movement-internal frame disputes between different factions regarding the diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational elements of the collective action frames. This makes it possible to highlight the heterogeneity of a movement and to identify the boundary markers that are used to construct competing conceptions of "we-ness" within the same movement.

Furthermore, the framing perspective makes it possible to study the products of these meaning-making processes and to compare changes in a movement's collective identity over time. Even though frames are constantly negotiated and transformed (i.e., they are processes), they can also be studied as "snapshots" of a movement's overall ideational positioning in different periods (i.e., as products). According to Snow, this aspect is important

because “the product or ‘shared we’ [is] generative of a sense of agency that can be a powerful impetus to collective action,” but also because it is “the constructed social object to which the movement’s protagonists, adversaries, and audience(s) respond.”¹⁷

The Collective Identities of Radical Left-Libertarian Movements

Overall, research on RLLM actors’ collective identity is scarce. One can, however, discern two tendencies in how the collective identities of RLLM organizations or milieus have been discussed. One strand of research tends to characterize RLLM actors as having in-group oriented, homogenous, and static collective identities. This is sometimes seen as a consequence of a high degree of convergence between activists’ political and personal spheres of life, made possible by strong ideological convictions.¹⁸ Other scholars see it as a result of closed or seclusive forms of organization, which is sometimes attributed to the use of illegal and/or clandestine repertoires of action.¹⁹ A second strand of research has instead tended to see RLLM actors as having heterogeneous and transient collective identities, with porous and fluid boundaries vis-à-vis other actors. For instance, Katsiaficas characterizes the German RLLM actors he studies as “a diffuse collection of militant counterculturalists who assemble sporadically and whose identity is far from fixed.”²⁰ Likewise, Juris claims that RLLM identities only emerge during provisory group formations throughout the course of particular mobilizations, fading once the actions end.²¹

These two characterizations do not necessarily contradict each other. In an attempt to conceptualize RLLM identities as being both fluid and static, by seeing them as both “processes” and “products,” Flesher-Fominaya characterizes the Spanish autonomous movement as having an “anti-identitarian collective identity” that “is based on a series of negations or refusals” and argues that it has as a “central defining characteristic a refusal to have a common central defining characteristic.” She identifies two types of refusals: “First is a refusal to label the self or others because this is seen as prescriptive, reductionistic, and a limit to the possibilities for collective action. . . . The second component is a refusal to subscribe to credentialism and the representative logics of politics as practiced by the institutional left, which is the key ‘other’ that autonomous activists engage with in their boundary work.”²²

Although we share Flesher-Fominaya's perspective on RLLM identities as being both fluid and static, and possible to study as both processes and products, we are not convinced that the characterization of this identity, as mainly based on "negations or refusals," is something that holds for all types of RLLM actors, in all types of socio-political settings. In comparison to other types of radical left movements, such as Marxist-Leninist or Maoist groups, it might be true that RLLM actors are more unwilling to give themselves a static and homogeneous label. This tendency does, however, not equate to a total lack of boundary markers indicating RLLM actors' common characteristics or beliefs. On the contrary, RLLM actors also forge collective action frames that emphasize a specific "we-ness" of the activists involved and thus include some kind of self-labeling.

It is also an open question as to whether "refusal" is the main prescribed strategy of RLLM actors in general. As we will see later in this article, many frame disputes between Swedish RLLM actors have concerned to what extent political strategies should involve refusal and conflict or negotiation and cooperation. This broad repertoire of both conflict- and cooperation-oriented strategies might be a result of the specific socio-political setting that the RLLM operate within in Sweden, in general characterized by more formalized and consensus-oriented state-civil society relations and an overall lower tendency to use contentious strategies among social movements.

Collective identities are sometimes constructed on the basis of politicized social categories (e.g., class, gender, and race/ethnicity) being aligned with activists' personal identities (based in various social categories and personal experiences).²³ This has been a typical topic of study regarding movements that are mainly mobilizing individuals from, and claiming to represent, specific social categories, for instance, the labor, the women's, or the LGBT movements. However, it is important to note that the collective identity of the RLLM combines identity-related ideological elements from several movements. In particular, we argue that the movement has been shaped by the ideological traditions and collective action frames of two broader "movement families"²⁴: the labor movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the "new social movements" of the 1960s and onwards. Although the labor movement's main collective identity was derived from class, the various collective identities of new social movements have been based on social categories such as gender, sexuality, and race/ethnicity or

lacked references to such categories (e.g., the environmental or the animal rights movements).

The Swedish socio-political setting has for long been characterized by a strong and highly institutionalized labor movement, and since the 1970s also by increasingly institutionalized new social movements mobilizing groups such as women, LGBT persons, and immigrants. In such a setting, one might expect that the RLLM's ideological heritage from both the labor movement and the new social movements might create opportunities for alliances and "frame alignment" with other movement actors striving to mobilize and politicize specific social categories or aiming to further these categories' interests. One can perhaps also expect that this dual heritage produces intra-movement frame disputes over whether redistribution-oriented struggles should be prioritized over more rights-oriented struggles concerning the recognition and representation of traditionally subordinate social categories.²⁵

The RLLM's dual heritage provides grounds for intra-movement disputes regarding what social categories should be perceived as beneficiaries and/or adherents. Such disputes typically take two forms: conflicts over the movement's "we-ness" and its boundary work vis-à-vis other movements, and conflicts over how it wishes to be perceived by external actors and audiences. Whereas the former can be seen as disputes over frame alignment processes (i.e., whether or not to link the movement's interests and goals with other movement actors), the latter can be seen as disputes over whether to strive for frame resonance with external actors (i.e., the movement's ability to frame its critique and demands in a way that resonate with external actors' and audiences' concerns).²⁶

A Short History of the RLLM in Sweden

The origins of contemporary Swedish radical left-libertarian activism can be traced back to the labor movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and to the "new social movements" of the 1960s and onwards.

Although the early Swedish labor movement was predominantly social democratic reformist and Marxist, radical left-libertarian tendencies still played a minor role at times. During the first years of the twentieth century, anarchist and anarcho-syndicalist ideas became central for the social democratic party's

youth organization, *Ungsocialisterna* (Young Socialists), which in 1908 seceded from its mother party. The Young Socialists published the journal *Brand*, which still today remains a central anarchist publication. Young Socialist activists furthermore took part in founding the anarcho-syndicalist trade union *Sveriges Arbetares Centralorganisation* (Central Organization of the Workers of Sweden; SAC) in 1910. Smaller groups of revolutionary anarchists were organized in, for example, *Anarkistiska propagandaförbundet* (The Anarchist Propaganda Association), which was the new name the Young Socialists adopted in 1934. Even though it existed until the end of the 1960s, the association only involved a small number of activists and local groups. Still, it contributed to the continual dissemination of anarchist ideas, mainly by publishing the journal *Brand*.²⁷

The high-water mark of organized left-libertarian activism in Sweden occurred during the 1920s and 1930s when SAC had around 37,000 members. The trade union, however, gradually dissociated from revolutionary anarchist ideas and embraced a more reformist brand of libertarian socialism. From being seen as a serious competitor to the main social democratic trade union confederation LO, declining membership reduced SAC to a minor, alternative union after the mid-1930s.²⁸ Despite this, SAC has continued to be the principal continuous radical left-libertarian actor in Sweden during the years.

The emergence of new social movements and the “new left” in the 1960s and 1970s also affected Sweden by introducing new political issues, conflicts, and actors. The more radical groups of the Swedish “new left” were, however, mainly inspired by Maoism, Leninism, or Trotskyism, and not by libertarian socialism. A few anarchist groups also existed, but these were still marginal within the radical left throughout the 1970s, as was SAC, which was hesitant to join the neo-Marxist student activism of the new left.²⁹ Anarchist and libertarian socialist tendencies, however, influenced the “alternative movement” of the early 1980s, which primarily gathered environmental, feminist, and peace activists. In this broad movement context, libertarian socialist ideas of decentralization, autonomy, local self-governance, and mutual aid were cherished, often through countercultural experiments with new lifestyles and living arrangements. More transgressive repertoires of action were rarely used, although a short-lived squatters’ movement appeared in the late 1970s.³⁰

A more coherent RLLM milieu formed during the second half of the 1980s, partly based in the countercultural environment that had grown out of the politicized punk music scene. As in other Western European countries,

young activists developed a radical left-libertarian identity based on more transgressive repertoires of action, e.g., militant defense of squatted houses, direct action tactics against multinational corporations, and confrontations with the racist skinhead movement. In the Swedish context, such violent transgressive repertoires of action had previously been uncommon.³¹ Thus, and as we will develop below, direct action became a central part of the movement's collective identity.

In the early 1990s, the RLLM in Sweden became a countrywide, countercultural movement scene that connected radical feminists, anti-fascists, social ecologists, squatters, animal rights activists, and other radical left-libertarian activists. New organizations and networks were created within the RLLM, for instance, *Antifascistisk aktion* (Anti-Fascist Action; AFA), *Syndikalistiska ungdomsförbundet* (Swedish Anarcho-Syndicalist Youth Federation; SUF), and *Folkmakt* (People's Power). Such RLLM groups and networks came to function as a radical flank of several social movements, including the antiracist, feminist, animal rights, and labor movements. During the 1990s, the SAC once again became increasingly involved in RLLM activities, partly due to the influence of the SUF.³² Aside from violent and transgressive repertoires of action, the RLLM engaged in educational efforts and cultural events, as well as conventional forms of social movement activism such as demonstrations and rallies.³³

The movement's diverse range of protest issues were bound together by a collective action frame primarily based on two theoretical concepts. The first was the idea of "triple oppression," a multidimensional analysis regarding racism, sexism, and capitalism as interconnected axes of structural oppression. The second was "reactionary mobilization," a materialist analysis that connected increased radical right activism with a general political "turn to the right" through which established political parties and other actors (e.g., media, think tanks, radical right movements) were seen as defending structural inequalities and existing systems of privileges.³⁴

Methods and Material

The analysis presented here is based on interviews and publicly available written material (e.g., from journals, webpages) produced within the RLLM in Sweden. The main interview data consist of 22 semi-structured interviews

conducted between 2008 and 2014 with 30 RLLM activists, using a standardized interview guide.³⁵ This guide covered a wide range of topics, including the activists' characterization of the movement (e.g., its main protest issues, collective action frames, organizational features, preferred repertoires of action, main allies) and how the movement had developed over time. In our analysis, we have also used interviews with 10 further RLLM activists made for other projects but where some similar topics have been addressed, between 2009 and 2012 and in 2017.³⁶ Most activists lived in the Swedish cities of Stockholm and Malmö (some in Lund and Örebro), and were between 20 and 35 years of age; a few of them were older than 40 and the youngest were under 19. The interviewees were either currently, or had previously been, active in various RLLM groups or networks, in particular the SUF, SAC, *Allt åt alla* (Everything to Everyone), Planka.nu (Fare dodge now), AFA, and other so-called Antifa-groups, and *Revolutionära fronten* (the Revolutionary Front). The activists were contacted through their organizations or by using a chain sampling technique where activists from the most central groups of the movement recommended others for interviews.³⁷

In order to ensure a historical perspective on the movement's development, we primarily chose activists with at least a few years' experience of the movement's context. Many of these were ideologically oriented and could be seen as movement intellectuals. Our access to activists belonging to more secretive groups within the movement has, however, been more limited. To compensate for this potential selection bias in the interview data, the debates around divisive topics published in the RLLM's own magazines and websites have been very valuable because they include activists from all parts of the movement.

The written materials are taken from two magazines and one website that were central within the RLLM during the studied period, 1997–2016. These were the magazines *Direkt Aktion* (published 1996–2012, by the SUF) and *Brand* (the main anarchist journal in Sweden, founded in 1898) and the website and online newsletter Motkraft.net (active 1997–2015 and oriented towards publishing reports sent in by RLLM groups from across the country).

Finally, we use a protest event database to contrast and complement our qualitative analysis with protest statistics. The article uses data on 3,836 protest events staged by RLLM groups, either solely or together with external allies, between 1997 and 2016. Information about these events was derived from

Motkraft.net and other RLLM media, both print- and web-based (including open Facebook groups and YouTube videos), and then coded in the dataset according to variables such as protest tactic or main protest issue.³⁸ This choice of sources has made it possible to cover a much wider variety of protest events than using data collected from mainstream media.³⁹

The protest event data shows the main tendencies in the movement's public protest actions, and help us discuss whether internally driven frame transformations are reflected in altered protest patterns. Regarding protest tactics, we also gave attention to whether they were conventional or transgressive, where the latter includes violent and/or illegal protests (e.g., physical attacks on individuals or property damage) as well as protests that are balanced on the borders of legality/illegality and legitimacy/illegitimacy.⁴⁰ The data for protest tactics also include separate figures on whether violent confrontations (between activists and the police or counter-demonstrators) or property damage were reported during otherwise nonviolent protest events.

Analyzing the Changing Collective Identity of the RLLM in Sweden, 1997–2016

The presentation of our empirical analysis of how the RLLM's collective identity has developed is structured into three time periods, which corresponds to the years when certain collective action frames were more salient for the movement's activities and discussions. The periodization is based on our qualitative analysis of activist interviews and written material published by movement groups. This is a simplified representation of a complex and nonlinear development, and concerns shifts in major collective action frames that many times takes several years, but nevertheless the periodization allows us to highlight broader patterns during specific periods, as well as the changes and continuities between them.

Although the periodization has its basis in the qualitative analysis, we also use quantitative data in this section. First, we give an overview of the main tendencies in RLLM protest activities, regarding the annual number of protests, and the most common protest issues and tactics during the overall period 1997–2016 as well as during each of the three intervals of the periodization.

Table 1 shows the main issues addressed during the protests of each period, and Table 2 shows the protest tactics that were used in each period. In relation to this article’s analysis of collective action frames within the RLLM, the figures for the most salient protest issues can be seen as a result of the overall political priorities of the movement, which is an aspect of its diagnostic frames, whereas the figures for protest tactics show the main strategies being used by the movement, which is an aspect of its prognostic frames. Figure 1 shows the total number of protests staged by the RLLM during each year, and whether the protest tactics used were conventional, transgressive, or violent. Even though this figure does not show the size of each protest (in terms of participants), it indicates changes in the movement’s overall ability for mobilizing public protests over time.

During the first period (1997–2001), the number of protests peaked in 1998 and then declined to a low point in 2001. The most frequent protest issues were anti-fascism, feminism, and animal rights, issues that had been central for the movement throughout the 1990s. One of the most frequent

Table 1. Protest issues during RLLM protest events in Sweden, 1997–2016

Protest issues (percent)	1997-2001	2002-2009	2010-2016	Entire period	Total (N)
Racism/fascism	23	29	16	24	930
Labor market/workers' rights	8	25	18	18	703
May Day	10	8	10	9	337
Feminism/women's rights	16	5	7	8	324
Housing/city planning	3	7	11	7	261
Migration/immigration	4	5	10	6	226
Public welfare	3	5	8	5	191
Animal rights	12	0	0	3	129
State repression	5	2	2	3	123
Public transport	0	2	4	2	89
War/military	0	5	0	2	86
Other issues	17	7	14	11	437
Total (percent)	100	100	100	100	–
Total (N)	1,040	1,817	979	3,836	3,836

Figure 1. The number of RLLM protest events in Sweden, per year, 1997–2016.

protest tactics of the period was property damage, such as sabotage actions against the facilities of industries involved in fur production, local sites of multinational corporations, stores selling pornography or fur products, and neo-Nazi groups' premises. At the end of this period, one finds the riots during the demonstrations against the EU summit meeting in Gothenburg in 2001. Because of RLLM activists' involvement in the riots, the overall movement drew criticism from both allies and adversaries, and the aftermath of these events fueled internal strategic discussions in large parts of the movement.⁴¹ In our periodization, this marks the closure of the first period.

During the second period (2002–2009), anti-fascism became an even more salient protest issue, but workers' rights also became much more central whereas animal rights and feminism became less so, indicating a shift in diagnostic frames towards class-related conflicts. Regarding protest tactics, blockades became more frequent, as did attacks against individuals; whereas almost half of the former were related to work-place conflicts, the latter were almost totally related to anti-fascist activism aimed at neo-Nazis and radical right parties. The number of protests peaked during the year of the parliamentary election in 2006, when various campaigns and protests against labor-market reforms were carried out. At the end of this period, the experiences of the 2006 election year campaigns, and some specific protest events in 2008 and 2009, came to fuel internal discussions over strategies and tactics.

During the third period (2010–16), the number of protest events per year was lower than in the previous periods. Workers' rights became the most salient protest issue, followed by anti-fascism. Both of these issues, however, were less salient than during the preceding period. One can also notice an increase in protests about housing and city planning issues (e.g., through squatting), but also in protests regarding public welfare and migration policies. When it comes to protest tactics, the period is overall marked by an increasing share of conventional forms of protest and a decreasing share of violent protests, as attacks against individuals and property damage became less frequent.

In the following sections, this brief overview of the development of RLLM protest activities in Sweden will serve as a background to the qualitative analysis of the changes of the movement's collective identity.

1997–2001: A Countercultural Direct Action Network

By the late 1990s, many of the issues targeted by the RLLM had lost their mobilizing potential. New and harsher protest policing strategies halted the wave of house occupations early in the decade, the international struggle against apartheid ended with the free election in South Africa in 1994, and at the turn of the century the Swedish neo-Nazi movement had become marginalized and faced increased state repression.⁴² Parallel to the decreased importance of several previously prominent protest issues, the RLLM's collective action frame had also expanded to include further forms of oppression, such as speciesism and homophobia (compare Table 1). The concept of triple oppression—focusing on class, gender, and race/ethnicity—had become a central diagnostic framing within the movement, and the types of oppression it referred to had gradually expanded. At this time, the movement was mainly defined by direct action-based struggles against a number of “interconnected forms of oppression.” One of the activists, at the time engaged in AFA, recalls: “The analysis of intersecting forms of oppression, or triple oppression, or intersectionality, was based upon the idea that ‘we are a movement by being against sexism, racism, capitalism, homophobia, and being for animal rights and so on.’ We just added a lot of issues, and then topped it with militancy. Each of these issues demanded their own acknowledgment—their own form of identity politics.” The “triple oppression” framing not only led to a

critique of power structures in society at large, but also within the movement itself. From the mid-1990s onwards, frames increasingly focused the reproduction of privileges, behaviors, and systems of subordination within the movement regarding gender, class, ethnicity, sexuality, and animal rights. The activists aimed to create a countercultural movement scene free from oppressive structures, ideas, and behaviors. In the process, elusive structural phenomena were individualized, recognized, and made possible to deal with. Emphasis was put on prefigurative politics—to let one's own actions embody the kind of social change one wants to bring about. One activist engaged in SUF recalls: "It was not a struggle where we were acting on someone else's behalf. It was this idea, that it all concerned us as individuals. Based on who you are and where you are positioned." By the late 1990s, triple oppression theory became increasingly questioned and was regarded as an analysis leading to disputes and divisions within the movement. Another activist engaged in AFA at the time recalls: "It was like an ideological motivator for war within one's own organizations. . . . In the 1980s, you had clear enemies, like the multinational corporation Shell for instance. We had nothing to do with this awful, external colossus. But in the 1990s it was more like, racism and sexism is also something that we have internalized. We had a hard time prioritizing whether we should work with ourselves and our comrades or fight neoliberal crisis politics."

According to the critics, the movement's politics had become individualized and elitist. The preoccupation with reproduction of oppression within the movement itself had fostered what was referred to as "lifestylism," a form of prefigurative politics focusing on the transformation of oneself and one's immediate vicinity. Another internal dispute consisted of a critique of the movement for having developed a collective identity based on specific types of activism. According to the critics, this type of collective identity consisted in seeing oneself as a specialist in, and an essential force behind, social change. Thus, "activists" distanced themselves from people outside of the movement and only identified with other activists sharing similar ideals and lifestyles. The activist identity had, therefore, made it harder for the movement to interact with the rest of society and to engage in wider social struggles, or so it was claimed. One of the long-term anarchist activists recalls: "As I experienced the transition from the 1990s, much of it was a reaction to . . . this thing with creating a movement that's free from oppression and oppressive

structures. At that time, we wanted to distance ourselves from animal rights, from feminism, and so on.” The equal weight given to oppression based on gender, race/ethnicity, sexuality, speciesism, etc., was questioned in favor of a framing primarily focusing on capitalism. The critics claimed that the analysis of the 1990s had neglected issues related to the capitalist mode of production. As an outcome of this dispute, social class gained importance as a central category for understanding and engaging in urgent societal problems. An illustrative example of this class-oriented position is found in the anarcho-syndicalist journal *Direkt Aktion*: “When the class struggle is given primacy, ordinary people—the working class—are given primacy. You emphasize what is common more than what divides—the working class include the largest majority of people around the world. Suddenly, libertarian socialist politics are less about distinguishing oneself, something anarchism has been about at least since the days of punk, and more about sharing the everyday life and struggles of working or unemployed people on equal terms.”⁴³ The disputes around triple oppression, “lifestylism,” and the “activist identity” formed the basis of an emerging divide between “lifestylists” and “workerists.”⁴⁴ This dispute continued to shape intra-movement dynamics throughout the following decade. On the one hand, the “lifestylists” were negatively portrayed as “identity-based” and “individualistic,” with little interest in working against the capitalist mode of production. On the other hand, “workerists” were accused of shunning personal responsibility, acting oppressively, and simply adopting a new identity and lifestyle based on stereotypical notions of working-class behavior.

The dispute between workerists and lifestylists marked two distinct ways of understanding the social base for the movement’s collective identity. The dominant frame of the 1990s was that of a movement based in activist counterculture, prefigurative politics, and direct-action tactics, engaging in a wide range of issues as a visible radical flank with the aim of heightening levels of contention. The new more Marxist-based frames increasingly focused on class position as the basis for action and self-understanding. Although both identities were based on the politicization of the activists’ own experiences, the turn to “workerism” shifted the focus toward everyday life workplace resistance and class struggle.

In the midst of these internal disputes, RLLM groups participated in the mobilizations of the Global Justice Movement, which introduced the RLLM

to new tactical repertoires, new international contacts, and new theories.⁴⁵ If the 1990s had been characterized by frames and tactics developed by German autonomists and anti-fascists, the 2000s saw an increasing influence from the Italian radical left, especially the autonomist Marxist tradition. Both German and Italian influences could be seen during the demonstrations against the EU summit in Gothenburg in June 2001. Whereas the masked and uniformly dressed “black bloc” used disruptive protest tactics associated with the German autonomous movement of the 1980s and 1990s, the rubber-padded “white overalls”—inspired by the Italian *Tute Bianche*—had planned for transgressive and visually spectacular, but open and nonviolent, protest tactics. The EU summit meeting in Gothenburg, however, erupted in riots in which three activists were shot and wounded by the police, 385 protestors were detained, and 80 were sentenced.⁴⁶ In the subsequent public debate in Sweden, these events were more or less regarded as an attack on a long-standing national political culture based on inclusive state–civil society relations and peaceful protest traditions. Although Sweden had witnessed some riots during postwar times, they had never been on the scale as those during the EU summit, and live ammunition had never been used against protestors since the military opened fire on a trade union demonstration in 1931.⁴⁷

The Gothenburg events had important consequences for both individual activists and the movement as a whole. With the mainstream press, political parties, and former allies blaming parts of the RLLM for the riots, and many activists detained, awaiting trial, or in prison, the RLLM entered a period of self-reflection and reorganization.⁴⁸

2002–2009: “Micro Struggles” and the Invisible Resistance of the Working Class

Following the 2001 Gothenburg events, many activists of the 1990s’ generation either left or sought new roles within the movement. This partly led to a generational shift, as new activists, some attracted by the attention and controversy surrounding the RLLM, were drawn to the movement. The young activists often strongly emphasized class identity, class struggle, and militancy, and distanced themselves from the activism of the 1990s. These developments deepened intra-movement divisions, and led to splintering

and the formation of new organizations. Two activists recall the polarization of this period:

Everything that took focus away from class struggle was almost considered a threat. Like anti-racism, feminism, LGBT, animal rights, etc. It was not just considered as the individual's choice, but also something that one should ridicule. All because it was seen as a distraction, and that it was bourgeois. (Anti-fascist and animal rights activist)

. . . New subcultural attributes became important—to dress “normally” in casual football clothing, to eat meat, to get a regular job, and so on. It was a reaction against the generation of the nineties, with its black clothing and veganism. . . . There was no more punk and hardcore; we listened to other types of music, had other types of parties, and so on. (Anti-fascist activist at the time)

Internal divisions aside, there were also more overall developments. Claiming that the movement had turned into a politically irrelevant subculture, many activists argued for a new prognostic frame focusing interventions in conflicts in the activists' own workplaces, schools, and neighborhoods. Together with new frames that emphasized locally based activism, these developments encouraged what the activists called “the turn to everyday life.”⁴⁹ At the center were small-scale acts of disobedience (e.g., obstructions, absenteeism, slow work) that activists identified as part of the working class's everyday resistance. These forms of disobedience were variously referred to as “faceless” or “everyday” resistance and “micro struggles.” These general ideas soon spread into other arenas, as activists promoted shoplifting and fare dodging, and encouraged systematic copying and sharing of course books for students. In the magazine *Brand*, activists reflected upon the strategy as it pertained to their workplace: “The methods of struggle we used were, in most cases, those that we had learned at other jobs or from other workers. These methods of struggle are seldom written about because they aren't as spectacular as strikes or occupations. I would, however, argue that it is the direct, non-unionized everyday resistance that is the fundamental struggle, and without it, neither unionized nor representational ‘struggles’ can be successful.”⁵⁰

The idea of faceless (or everyday) resistance strengthened the transformations of frames that began during the previous period. In terms of diagnostic

framing, the class struggle was now given primacy over other social conflicts. Autonomist Marxist concepts such as “the social factory” and “immaterial labor” expanded the analysis of labor and exploitation to all spheres of society (including, e.g., education, housing, transportation) and introduced a wider definition of the working class that encompassed workers, students, tenants, the unemployed, and others.⁵¹ The corresponding prognostic frame made previously unnoticed forms of activism central and highlighted individuals’ potential to resist capitalist domination in their everyday lives.⁵² During this period, protests regarding workers’ rights also became more salient (see Table 1).

The culmination of “invisible” or “faceless” resistance came with the campaign *Osynliga partiet* (the Invisible Party), launched before the national election in 2006. The campaign name was used in connection to both disruptive direct-action protest tactics (such as vandalizing offices of the center-right parties that had proposed changes in labor laws for young people) and more conventional tactics (e.g., sit-ins, demonstrations, and information campaigns), including the collection and diffusion of workplace diaries and other stories of “micro conflicts.”⁵³

The end of the Invisible Party in late 2006 was followed by lengthy internal reflections on “faceless resistance” as a general strategic concept. For some, the experiences of the campaign showed the limitations of “microstruggles,” direct action, and campaign forms of organization. Echoing the disputes of the late 1990s, activists saw tendencies to self-marginalization and a failure to go beyond the movement’s activist identity: “[Our] reluctance to act on the political level risked that all our actions, happenings, and discussions played into the hands of the right wing. Because of our own silence, we allowed all of our actions to be interpreted and mediated through the frames of the right wing. . . . The everyday practices that we wanted to communicate and connect drowned in activism. . . . Another problem was that informal organizing works best at the exact moment when something is happening, but it hardly maintains a long-term struggle over periods of decline.”⁵⁴

The experiences from the Invisible Party, as well as from other discussions about “invisible” forms of resistance (such as the French anarchist “Invisible Committee,” which in 2007 called for “faceless” insurrection),⁵⁵ contributed to a gradual transformation of frames during the subsequent years. Although the diagnostic framing basically remained the same, emphasizing class relations and the expansion of capitalist logics in society at large, the prognostic frame

was gradually altered. Many activists questioned the efficacy of faceless forms of direct action, and criticized the tendency to primarily mobilize *in reaction* to perceived opponents. Instead, the argument ran, the movement ought to take a proactive stance to social and political struggle, building lasting, transparent, and inclusive organizational structures in closer relation to other organizations and movements belonging to the broader political left.

By the end of the 2000s, some activists began promoting the idea of neighborhood organizing, transparent organizations, and pragmatic strategizing as ways to create lasting and proactive engagement within social conflicts. These tendencies had existed since the 1990s, but they now became central for the movement's practices, and marked a gradual shift in its overall collective action frames. In contrast to the shift around the years 2001–2002, this transformation occurred over some years. During this transitional phase, the Invisible Party campaign was a recurrent reference, as were the experiences of certain protest events in 2008 and 2009. On the one hand, this concerned a few protest events with confrontations between demonstrators and police (e.g., in connection with the European Social Forum in Malmö 2008 and during protests against a tennis match involving Israeli players in 2009), which was seen by some activists as a regression to previously dominant protest tactics. On the other hand, events such as *Ockupationsfestivalen* (the Occupation Festival) in 2008, which combined transgressive but nonviolent tactics with more transparent organizational forms in order to reach out to broader audiences, was regarded as a promising innovation in protest tactics.

2010–2016: Organizing the Neighborhood: A Turn Towards Openness and Pragmatism

Although still maintaining a radical analysis and critique, around the turn of the decade the movement's practices became more transparent and inclusive than the direct action activism of the 1990s and early 2000s had been. The transformation was partly made possible by disassociating the notion of militancy from disruptive forms of protest.⁵⁶ Movement spokespersons appeared in the media, books and magazines intended for a broader audience were published, public debates were organized, and actions of nonviolent disobedience were carried out publicly—for instance, guided “bus safaris” in

upper class areas, or temporary “invasions” of exclusive shopping malls. As a consequence, RLLM groups and organizations that were publicly associated with violent militancy were often seen as less suitable vehicles for mobilizations. Instead, new organizations and networks were formed.

The changed prognostic frames, in turn, led to transformations of diagnostic frames, in particular regarding the movement’s conception of class and capitalism. Instead of being an “invisible” force carrying out subversive acts of resistance, the RLLM was now framed as a key actor for making visible, connecting, and strengthening open struggles against capitalism. At the center of such struggles, primarily located at the local level, was conflicts over the privatization of public spaces, the shortage of rentable housing, the precarization of work, etc. The adversaries identified by the movement were often local politicians or other local elites, such as influential entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, housing companies, or influential civil servants. One interviewee recalls the broadening of issues:

We have also been trying to open up the extra-parliamentary left and connect to other groups struggling to change society. . . . If they are striving for change, we try to connect and to aid in their cause. . . . One can see it as a continuation of the turn to everyday life—that we are departing from our own experiences. Like when we struggle for better care, we depart from ourselves as nurses or caretakers and show that we have common interests. Or when we engage in the neighborhoods, we depart from ourselves as tenants; what do we want with our area, and how do we succeed in involving others? (Activist engaged in *Allt åt Alla*)

As illustrated above, activists who advocated the frame transformation also discussed new ways of approaching other actors working with similar issues, such as left-wing political parties or established NGOs. The previous practice of invisible “micro resistance” was replaced by organization-level collaboration with actors outside of the movement as the preferred course of action. As a result, cross-movement coalitions were seen as more important. At the same time, activists increasingly advocated for transgressive but nonviolent forms of action. Such tactics were put into practice during the mostly nonviolent protests against radical right-wing parties during the national election campaigns of 2010 and 2014. The period’s relative increase in conventional protest tactics, and the decrease in violent protests, can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Protest tactics used during RLLM protest events in Sweden, 1997–2016

Protest tactics (percent)	1997–2001	2002–2009	2010–2016	Entire period	Total (N)	Reported confrontations or property damage (N)
<i>Conventional protests</i>						
Information dissemination event (leaflets, posters, banners, etc.)	7	19	17	15	582	11
Street performance (happening, street theatre, die-in)	2	1	1	1	49	2
Rally (stand-still demonstration)	14	9	19	13	505	11
Demonstration/march	29	23	24	25	953	48
Picketing	3	4	8	5	197	11
Strike (work place)	3	4	2	3	116	3
Other conventional protests	0	0	0	0	3	0
<i>Total conventional protests</i>	58	60	72	63	2,405	86
<i>Transgressive protests</i>						
Disobedience/civil disobedience	0	1	2	1	37	1
Counter-demonstration	5	4	5	4	172	51
Blocking or claiming public space (blockade, square occupation, sit-in)	7	12	10	10	395	55
Occupation or squatting of building	1	3	2	2	70	5
Attack on property	25	10	7	13	507	507
Attack on individual/group	3	11	2	6	248	248
<i>Total transgressive protests</i>	42	40	28	37	1,429	867
Total (percent)	100	100	100	100	–	–
Total (N)	1,039	1,816	979	3,834	3,834	953

The new framing of local conflicts, pragmatism, and alliance building also coincided with changes in how the activists conceived of class and social structure. In particular, the working-class concept was downplayed in favor of more encompassing concepts and efforts to come up with more universalist demands. For instance, during the mobilizations against the Sweden Democrats, a radical right-wing party, during the election campaign of 2014, RLLM groups used concepts such as “the neighborhood,” “the locals,” and “the people” (in a universal sense). The term “organize your neighborhood” became a core slogan used by the movement. If the dominant frame of the second period had emphasized the conflict between workers and capital, the frame of the third period broadened this conceptualization of class by highlighting other types of capitalist subordination.

The development of frames based on a more encompassing political subject and the interrelated prognostic frame transformation towards pragmatism opened a frame dispute between those RLLM actors wanting to maintain their distance to reformist actors of the broader left and those who wanted to take a “pragmatist” path. The former were accused of romanticizing militancy and revolutionary practices and for wanting to return to closed structures, an “activist identity,” and to marginalized forms of activism. The latter were blamed for “selling out” and getting too close to institutionalized politics. These different positions led to increased divisions, with parts of the movement trying to reach out to the surrounding society, whereas others sought to retain the movement’s radical identity and boundaries. One activist engaged in *Allt åt Alla* explains: “The main line of conflict today within the extra-parliamentary left is probably between, on the one hand, those who try and reach outside of the movement and challenge certain norms . . . it can concern anonymity, who should be an ally and so on, and on the other hand, the part of the movement who still believe and gets inspired . . . by other radical groups who think they can bring down society straight away.” An illustrating example of the critique against increased pragmatism and openness comes from the anarchist group *Södra Klubben*: “Our movement must abandon the idea of being an autonomous version of Social Democracy. We are not struggling for a better welfare state or humane capitalism, we don’t vote red, we don’t vote at all! . . . There are also hostile left-wing activists who want to portray the autonomous movement as an innocent, peaceful, and passive subculture. . . . We still believe in the social revolution.”⁵⁷

Some groups and networks involved in types of activism that have traditionally been more violent, in particular parts of the anti-fascist milieu, have despite the overall developments discussed above retained their secretive, reactive, and militant character. Instead of wanting to intervene in broader social issues and to mobilize a wider constituency, interviewees belonging to such groups often prefer to continue working within specific and more closed “niches” of the movement. Due to the illegal activities of some anti-fascist groups, these activists see no advantages in opening their structures or to mobilizing publicly.⁵⁸

The final years of the third period are characterized by increasing mobilizations in solidarity with refugees and migrants, such as solidarity work with undocumented migrants, Roma migrants from other EU countries, and refugees entering Sweden in 2015, when over 162,000 people fled to the country. Although this refugee migration was described as a great challenge to the Swedish welfare system by both the media and established political actors, different “welcome” initiatives were mobilized to supply refugees with food, medicine, clothes, legal help, and accommodation. These welcome initiatives gathered a diverse set of actors, including the Church of Sweden, political parties, established NGOs, and radical left-wing groups. This facilitated new relations between RLLM activists and other actors within civil society, giving support to the efforts to become the more open and locally based movement that serves to characterize the third period.

Summarizing the Frame Analysis

The development of the movement’s collective identity is summarized in Table 3, which highlights important shifts in collective action frames between the three time periods.

The changes in the movement’s collective identity have corresponded to changes in its diagnosis of social grievances. The diagnostic frame of the first period emphasized the interconnectedness of different forms of social stratification from the perspective of subordinated social categories. This frame allowed the movement to integrate various single-issue struggles under a common ideational framework. The activists often targeted actors symbolizing power and oppression, such as the neo-Nazi movement or

Table 3. Dominant collective action frames and the main frame disputes within the RLLM in Sweden, 1997–2016

	1997–2001	2002–2009	2010–2016
Diagnostic framing			
a) Main focus of frame	a) Interconnected structures of subordination based on class, gender, sexuality, and race/ethnicity (“triple oppression”). Counteract fascism.	a) Expanded capitalist exploitation, e.g. workplaces, education, housing (“the social factory”). Counteract fascism.	a) The universality of capitalist oppression, materialized in a multitude of ways in the local community. Counteract the far right, both in terms of radical right-wing populism and Neo-Nazi groups.
b) Main adversaries	b) Institutions or companies symbolizing power and oppression (e.g. multinational corporations, WTO, EU, the World Bank, etc.). Internalized forms of oppression. Neo-Nazi groups.	b) “Micro struggles,” based on the individual activist’s everyday interaction with, for instance, employers, managers, and local politicians. Neo-Nazi groups.	b) Local politicians and local elites. Neo-Nazi groups and radical right-wing parties.
Prognostic framing			
a) What is to be done?	a) Reactive large-scale, militant protests. Base-group-centered direct action. Prefigurative politics.	a) Direct action and “invisible resistance” in the activists’ everyday lives.	a) Pro-active, long-term organizing at the local level: workplaces, schools, and neighborhoods. Create alliances and networks.
b) Who will do it?	b) The RLLM, consisting of a radical network of direct-action activists.	b) The working class defined in a broad sense, of which the movement sees itself as a part.	b) The “neighborhood,” the “locals,” or “common people” who are affected by economic and social conflicts, and who are supported by RLLM actors.

	1997–2001	2002–2009	2010–2016
Main frame disputes	<div>1. Collective identity based on different social categories (united by triple oppression theory) versus identity based on class position.</div> <div>2. “Inwards” versus “outwards” activism.</div>	<div>1. Building a distinct revolutionary movement versus joining ongoing everyday class struggles as individuals.</div> <div>2. Visible and organized forms of activism versus invisible “micro resistance”.</div>	<div>1. Tactical pragmatism, long-term alliance building, and transparency versus issue-specific specialization, direct action, and secrecy.</div> <div>2. Universal (anti-capitalist) political subject versus the working class.</div>

specific corporations. During the second period, a Marxist-based frame was adopted, focusing on class and capitalist relations of production, although in extended forms. The adversaries were now found in the activists’ everyday interactions, for instance, their employers or managers. During the third period, the diagnostic frame was extended to a more universalist conceptualization of the effects of capitalist relations on local society, turning the movement’s attention towards local politicians or other local elites.

Changes in diagnostic frames correspond to changes in the movement’s prognostic frames. During the first period the movement engaged in a wide variety of different struggles connected through triple oppression theory. The RLLM often used disruptive forms of protest, took part in many large-scale mobilizations, and even used clandestine repertoires of action. The second period saw the RLLM developing a tactic based on “invisible resistance.” The movement emphasized “everyday life” struggles as a way of acknowledging and elevating “micro conflicts” in society, especially at the workplace. In the third period, the RLLM embraced more formal organizing and tactical pragmatism as a way to connect to, and assist in, local struggles and to build long-term relations with other organizations and individuals.

Internal disputes were present in all periods and on a wide range of matters. The most salient frame dispute during the first period was between “lifestylists” and “workerists,” a dispute involving both diagnostic and prognostic frames and encompassing movement-internal relations as well as protest tactics.

Whereas the “lifestylists” were accused of emphasizing difference rather than commonality and as being inward-oriented in their activism, the “workerists” were accused of not taking personal responsibility and of creating a new form of identity based on working-class stereotypes. In the second period, most actors had embraced class as the central political category, and frame disputes mainly concerned whether to emphasize “invisible” microstruggles or the perceived need to create lasting, open, and inclusive organizational structures. The overall dispute in the third period concerned how the movement should relate to and engage with other actors within the broader left. Whereas some groups embraced tactical pragmatism in terms of alliances, others saw this as a turn towards reformism and class collaboration. This involved disputes about both diagnostic and prognostic frames regarding the universality of class struggle, who to identify as adversary or ally, and the potential of tactical pragmatism.

Conclusions

In this article we have analyzed the development of the Swedish RLLM’s collective identity from 1997 to 2016. Regarding collective identities as sites of on-going negotiation and tension, we have focused how intra-movement frame disputes affects the development of the movement’s collective identity, political priorities, and strategies.

Although previous research on RLLM actors has tended to describe their “we-ness” as a mainly oppositional or fluid collective identity, or as based on shared forms of action or organizing rather than common worldviews, our analysis shows that the collective identity of the RLLM in Sweden has been based in shared collective action frames, but that these have developed over time due to various ideological influences, strategic considerations, and needs to adapt to external challenges. Between the three analyzed periods, one can notice a change in the relative weight that activists gave to shared repertoires of action vis-à-vis shared worldviews, the former being gradually downplayed and the latter becoming more central. The collective identity of the movement can still be regarded as flexible and fluid, but it is not only based on refusals or negations of others. Instead, many of the internal disputes of the movement have been motivated by a perceived need to create actual alternatives to the existing order, through prefigurative politics as well as

more pragmatic efforts to influence institutionalized politics, rather than just refusing or reacting “against” different adversaries. In relation to previous studies that primarily regard RLLM actors as “subcultural” or “sectarian,” our results show an overall—although not unanimous—change of the collective identity of the RLLM in Sweden, in which countercultural elements seem to be playing a less central role and the movement instead self-identify as a radical political actor seeking broad, inclusive, and locally grounded alliances. This said, it is still important to emphasize that some of the central disputes within the movement have not been settled, and continues to animate tensions over political priorities and preferred strategies between different groups.

The results also illustrate how the RLLM’s dual ideological heritage, stemming from the early labor movement and the “new social movements” of the 1960s, has been both a resource for frame transformations and a cause for internal tensions. During the last two decades, RLLM activists have had disputes about whether the movement’s collective identity should primarily be based in the working class or if it should place class on equal footing with other subordinated social categories—such as gender, sexuality, and race/ethnicity—that have been the basis for many new social movements’ collective identity since the 1960s.

The dual heritage has created both opportunities and challenges for the RLLM in Sweden. At times, the dual ideological heritage has made it possible for the movement to encompass a broad range of radical political issues, enhancing its prospects for frame alignment and alliances with other movements, and thus the possibilities for continual mobilization. The dual heritage has also allowed the movement to be flexible when facing a continually shifting political context. With an ideological heritage giving precedence to both class and other subordinated social categories, and to both redistribution- and rights-oriented struggles, the movement has at times been well-equipped for frame alignment processes during coalition work and when seeking new allies. The possible internal tensions between the class-oriented, anti-capitalist framings of the early labor movement and the more plural framings of the new social movements has sometimes been sought to be overcome through diagnostic framings that give different sorts of subordination equal weight in the overall analysis. At other times this dual heritage has been a source of ambiguity, lack of frame consistency, and internal disputes, leading to fragmentation within the movement. This has been most obvious when it sometimes has been claimed that class and anti-capitalism has precedence over other social categories and forms of subordination.

In the case of Sweden, the role of this dual ideological heritage could also be related to the actual composition of the RLLM in the country. On the one hand, one of the most active groups during the studied period has been the anarcho-syndicalist trade union SAC. For SAC, the diagnostic and prognostic framing has largely remained focused on answering to labor market issues through a mainly conventional repertoire of strikes and public demonstrations. On the other hand, other RLLM groups have been oriented towards issues such as anti-racism, feminism, and animal rights, expressed through broad prognostic framings and repertoires of action which also included more transgressive and violent protest tactics. In between, new and existing groups have moved between the two poles, continuously experimenting with both diagnostic and prognostic frames and strategies. This has probably both made internal disputes more likely and activists more motivated to bridge and transform seemingly conflicting elements within the collective action frames.

In conclusion, we have shown that the RLLM's collective identity is complex and has been constantly evolving, both regarding its ideational content and the repertoires of action it prescribes. Despite these changes, one can also see continuities in the "we-ness" of the RLLM in Sweden. This is particularly evident when we contrast our frame analysis, primarily based on retrospective interviews and movement texts, with RLLM protest event data. In the latter, one can see that certain protest issues—in particular anti-fascism—tend to be salient across all studied periods, and the use of transgressive forms of protest might be decreasing, although still making up a large share of all activities. This indicates that although frame analysis shows some central aspects of a movement's collective identity, in particular the strategic and ideational matters that animate internal disputes, it does not always capture the types of frames and activities that most activists take for granted and seldom discuss, which are also an important aspect of a movement's collective identity. Furthermore, our analysis has been centered on the internal tensions within the RLLM, and we have not sought to describe in detail the role of external factors—such as the actions of the state, allies, and adversaries—in the changes in collective identity that our analysis has identified. As a consequence, we have not made any claims to interpret the specific causal dynamics surrounding changes in collective action frames vis-à-vis public protest activities. These aspects of the RLLM's collective identity are something to investigate in further research.

Notes

1. See, e.g., James K. Hertog and Douglas M. McLeod, "Anarchists Wreak Havoc in Downtown Minneapolis: A Multi-level Study of Media Coverage of Radical Protest," *Journalism & Mass Communication Monographs* 151 (1995): 1–48; Simon Teune, *Corridors of Action: Protest Rationalities and the Channeling of Anti-Summit Repertoires* (Berlin: Free University of Berlin, 2012).
2. Jeffrey S. Juris, "Violence Performed and Imagined: Militant Action, the Black Bloc and the Mass Media in Genoa," *Critique of Anthropology* 25, no. 4 (2005): 413–32; Kevin McDonald, "From Solidarity to Fluidarity: Social Movements Beyond 'Collective Identity'—The Case of Globalization Conflicts," *Social Movement Studies* 1, no. 2 (2002): 109–28; George N. Katsiaficas, *The Subversion of Politics: European Autonomous Social Movements and the Decolonization of Everyday Life* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1997).
3. Abby Peterson, *Neo-Sectarianism and Rainbow Coalitions: Youth and the Drama of Immigration in Contemporary Sweden*. (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1997); Jan Schwarzmeier, *Die Autonomen zwischen Subkultur und sozialer Bewegung* (Norderstedt, Germany: Books on Demand, 1999).
4. Grzegorz Piotrowski and Magnus Wennerhag, "Always Against the State? An Analysis of Polish and Swedish Radical Left-libertarian Activists' Interaction with Institutionalized Politics," *Partecipazione e conflitto* 8, no. 3 (2015): 845–75; Jan Jämte and Adrienne Sörbom, "Why Did It Not Happen Here? The Gradual Radicalization of the Anarchist Movement in Sweden 1980–90," in *A European Youth Revolt: European Perspectives on Youth Protest and Social Movements in the 1980s*, ed. Bart van der Steen and Knud Andresen (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 97–111.
5. See, e.g., Katsiaficas, *The Subversion of Politics*; Cristina Flesher Fominaya, "Autonomous Movements and the Institutional Left: Two Approaches in Tension in Madrid's Anti-globalization Network," *South European Society and Politics* 12, no. 3 (2007): 335–58; Eduardo Romanos, "Anarchism," in *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements*, vol. 1, ed. David A. Snow, Donatella della Porta, Bert Klandermans, and Doug McAdam (Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 53–56.
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18. See, e.g., Williams, *Black Flags and Social Movements*.
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 33. Abby Peterson, *Contemporary Political Protest*; Jämte, *Antirasismens många ansikten*; Jämte and Sörbom, "Why Did It Not Happen Here?"
 34. Klaus Viehmann, *Three into One: The Triple Oppression of Racism, Sexism, and Class* (Dijon, France: Editions Turbulentes, 2001); Jämte, *Antirasismens många ansikten*.
 35. Most of these interviews were conducted within the research project "From Apathy to Activism: Citizen Identities and Responses to the Political," by Adrienne Sörbom and Magnus Wennerhag. A few interviews were made in 2013–14 within the research project "Anarchists in Eastern and Western Europe: A Comparative Study," by Måns Lundstedt, Mattias Wahlström, and Magnus Wennerhag.
 36. These interviews were made by Jan Jämte, within his PhD project "Antirasismens många ansikten" (between 2009 and 2012) and within the research project "Radicalization and Deradicalization" (in 2017).

37. Our protest event database clearly indicates which organizations, networks, and informal groups were most active between 1997 and 2016. Among the groups that organized the most protest events, one finds (within brackets, the percent of all protests the organization has staged): SAC (25 percent), SUF (25 percent), AFA (13 percent), Revolutionary Front (6 percent), Everything to Everyone (6 percent), No One is Illegal (5 percent), and Planka.nu (3 percent).
38. After *Motkraft.net* (N = 2,080), the main sources providing information about protest events were web material produced by SUF (N = 348), AFA (N = 253), Revolutionära Fronten (N = 219), Allt åt alla (N = 178), SAC (N = 163), and Planka.nu (N = 102), together with printed material from *Syndikalisten* (N = 398), *Arbetaren* (N = 214), and *Direkt Aktion* (N = 209). The variables used in this article are protest issue (the protest's dominant issue was coded according to a list of twenty-two issues), protest tactic (coded according to the list shown in Table 2), and a variable for whether violent confrontations or property damage occurred during the protest.
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41. Jacobsson and Sörbom, "After a Cycle of Contention."
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44. Cathrin Wasshede, *Passionerad politik: Om motstånd mot heteronormativ könsmakt* (Malmö, Sweden: Bokbox Förlag, 2010).
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47. Peterson et al., "Sweden 1950–2015," 384.
48. Jacobsson and Sörbom, "After a Cycle of Contention."
49. Kim Müller, "Från kampanj till konflikt," in *I stundens hetta: Svarta block, vita overaller och osynliga partier*, ed. Mathias Wäg (Stockholm: Roh-nin förlag, 2011), 517–27.
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51. Various articles in *Direkt Aktion* 48–49 (2006).
52. Kämpa Tillsammans!, *Vi vill ha allting! En historisk bakgrund till den autonoma marxismen* (Malmö, Sweden: Subversiv media, 2003).
53. For an example of a workplace diary, see "Arbetsorganisering och arbetarautonomi i terminal," *Riff-Raff* nos. 3–4 (2003), <https://www.riff-raff.se/3-4/arbaut.pdf>.

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58. Jämte, "Radical Anti-Fascism in Scandinavia."