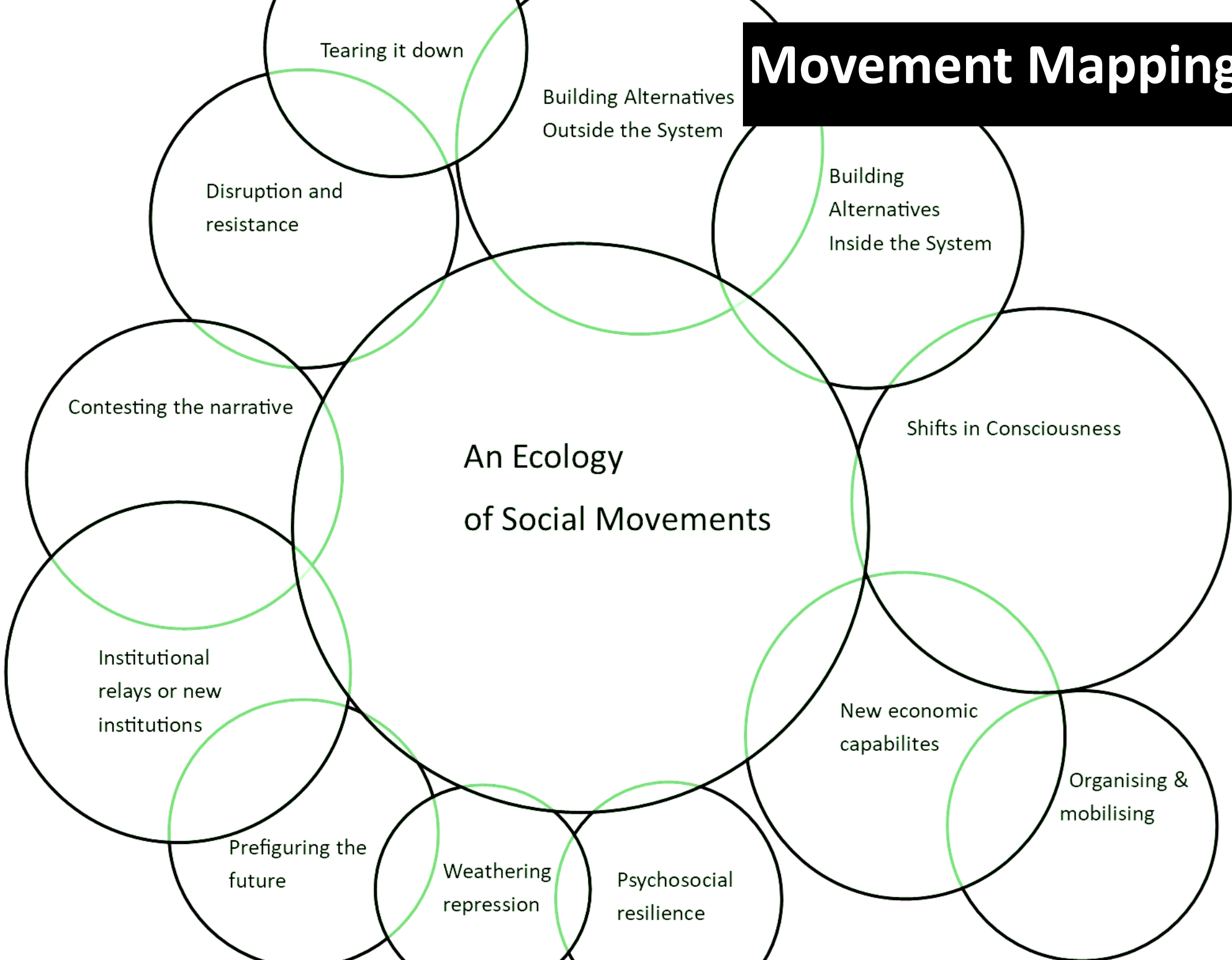


Movement Mapping



Why an Ecology of Social Movements?

Background

Perhaps the most generally accepted definition of a social movement comes from Italian sociologist Mario Diari. Aiming to offer a synthesis of the diverse range of definitions in use, he suggests that social movements are:

"a network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organisations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity."

Thinking in terms of the ecology of social movements, helps to emphasise this networked characteristic that involves a plurality of actors engaged in a wide range of activities. It also draws attention to the ways they are connected in numerous ways, both informally and (despite Diari's view) formally. But it's a bit more than this. Rather than agreeing with Diari's suggestion that "a shared collective identity" is a necessary component of social movements, an ecology of movements approach sheds light on the ways that social movements contain tensions between the commonality of identity, which ties it together as a movement, and the diversity of identities contained within it. Thinking in terms of an ecology of movements can help us to conceive of a movement as able to contain non-aligned, antagonistic, and even contradictory identities – and to acknowledge that this diversity is often crucial to the building of the collective agency needed for radical transformation.

A healthy social movement field requires a multiplicity of contributions, a diversity of identities, as well as actors and roles. Movement resilience and power emerges from the quality of relationships between these parts. Beginning to think at a movement or network level, to recognise the value of different and even antagonistic contributions to the whole, attending to the quality of relationship between them, and becoming better able to acknowledge and hold the diversity in a healthy movement ecology, is of great value to our effectiveness and our resilience.



We emphasise the *ecology* of our social movements because:

- complexity of change requires a multiplicity of contributions, creativity and synergy
- to combat interlocking systems of oppression requires interconnected forms of resistance
- ambition to build large scale social movements for radical transformation engages diverse actors
- increased resilience: with greater diversity within an ecosystem, there is increased adaptability & redundancy in an ever changing environment.

"There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives. Our struggles are particular, but we are not alone. We are not perfect, but we are stronger and wiser than the sum of our errors." —Audre Lorde, Learning from the '60's, 1982

Movement mapping

It is fairly common in campaign work to use tools such as *power mapping* or the *spectrum of allies*. These are valuable tools. Movement mapping can be complimentary to these approaches, but starts with different intentions and distinct approach. Where these strategy tools are looking for points of intervention and analyzing the context for specific kinds of action, movement mapping encourages us to turn our attention to longer term capacity building and setting up conditions to increase our movement power.

A lot of the time we can find ourselves firefighting and being forced to respond to an agenda set by our adversaries, the media, or other circumstances. Movement mapping and analysis helps us to step back from short term immediate responses and begin to take a longer term and radical view aimed at developing our capacity to deep structural transformation and better understanding our own role within our movements.

Movement mapping helps us to:

- Improve our appreciation of the diversity of contributions needed for a healthy and effective social movement
- Become better placed to consider strategic interventions that can improve movement resilience
- Deepen our understanding of the Ecology of Social Movements
- Learn to think about the relationships within our movements as indicators of strength or weakness
- Develop longer term strategic approaches to build deep movement power on scale.

Key steps

1. Defining the movement to be mapped
2. Listing key actors
3. Reflecting on and analysing power within the movement
4. Analysing types of actors and characteristics
5. Creating a key and applying it to the actors
6. Using different typologies to analyse movement ecology characteristics
7. Mapping connections
8. Reflecting and enriching the map
9. Network analysis
10. Strengths and weaknesses analysis

Duration

This kind of mapping requires a minimum of 3 hours. It can be extended over many days, depending on the depth of analysis, value and purpose.

Materials

Other people! Mapping is best done as a group, sharing research and pooling knowledge. Movement mapping can be done using large sheets of flipchart paper, sheets of A4 paper to cut up, scissors, and pens. Alternatively, digital tools can be used, such as <https://www.diagrams.net/> (which we understand to be relatively secure) or for something more advanced www.kumi.io (which requires careful workarounds and/or licenses to ensure reasonable levels of security). But even with digital tools, it can be best to start with pen and paper and then transfer work across later.

1. Defining the movement to be mapped

Take your time defining the movement you will map. The boundaries are unlikely to be entirely clear, but you should minimally be able to offer a coherent name for the movement and to define its geographic context.

Don't worry if it already seems difficult to be sure about who is in the movement and who is outside the movement. As you map important movement relationships and connections this will probably become less easy to define anyway.

What is important at this stage is that you can name something that can help you to direct your attention towards the key relevant actors (organisations, networks, individuals) who are involved and contribute towards the movement.

For example: 'European Climate Justice Movement', 'Movement for a Just Transition in Germany', 'UK Degrowth Movement', Spanish Anti-Fascist Movement'... etc.

This is how some other people have defined social movements:

"We have a social movement dynamic going on when single episodes of collective action are perceived as components of a longer-lasting action, rather than discrete events; and when those who are engaged in them feel linked by ties of solidarity and of ideal communion with protagonists of other analogous mobilizations." Donatella Della Porta, 1999

"Purposive collective actions whose outcome, in victory as in defeat, transforms the values and institutions of society." Manuel Castells, The Power of Identity, 2003

"A network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity." Mario Diari, 1992

2. Listing key actors

Now make a list of the key **Actors** involved in the Movement you are mapping. Name organisations, groups, individuals, and other elements. This is where having a small group of you working together can really help. Brainstorm to begin with. Don't spend time debating whether they are key actors or not, or whether they really belong to the movement or not. Just build up your list.

Use a big sheet of paper (A1) to make the list. You might find it useful to do it as a mindmap, as the association of groups can sometimes help us to remember and bring people to mind.

If you find that you are struggling to identify actors, think about where you could get more information. Who could you talk to? Where could you research?

3. Reflecting on, analysing, and depicting power *within* the movement

Eventually we aim to end up with the name of each **Actor** from your list depicted by a **Circle** (paper or digital), cut to a size representing the level of power you think/feel they have *within* the Movement. If you see them as having a lot of power, they will have a big circle, if you see them as having less power, they will have a smaller circle.

To get to this it can be useful to go through a few steps:

- a. We are looking at power **WITHIN** the movement. This relates to the actors ability to influence people or things within the movement. Take some time to discuss what this means in your opinion. It is not an easy thing to find a final answer to. Power is related to many things, such as economic capacity, numbers of people involved, ability to shape narrative, leveraging connections, perceived legitimacy, and a wide range of other factors. Although we are looking at power *within* the movement, it could be that the actors power to influence things *outside* the movement is relevant, but this isn't the same thing. Reflecting on this question alone is valuable!
- b. You might want to use some kind of scale (1-10) to mark off your estimates alongside the names. These might change as you look at more actors and find they need adjusting relative to each other.
- c. Finally, cut out or make circles for each actor with the size representing relative power. (*see the diagram on the next page if this doesn't seem very clear to you*).

4. Analysing types of actors and characteristics

Next, generate a list of key **categories** and **characteristics** which you think are most relevant to the Movement you are mapping.

We've found it useful to use several (slightly overlapping) typologies. There is an overview of the typologies we suggest in **Annex 1** on the final pages of this activity sheet.

It is really up to you to come up with whatever seems most relevant. You can add more categories/characteristics later, if you find you have missed anything important.

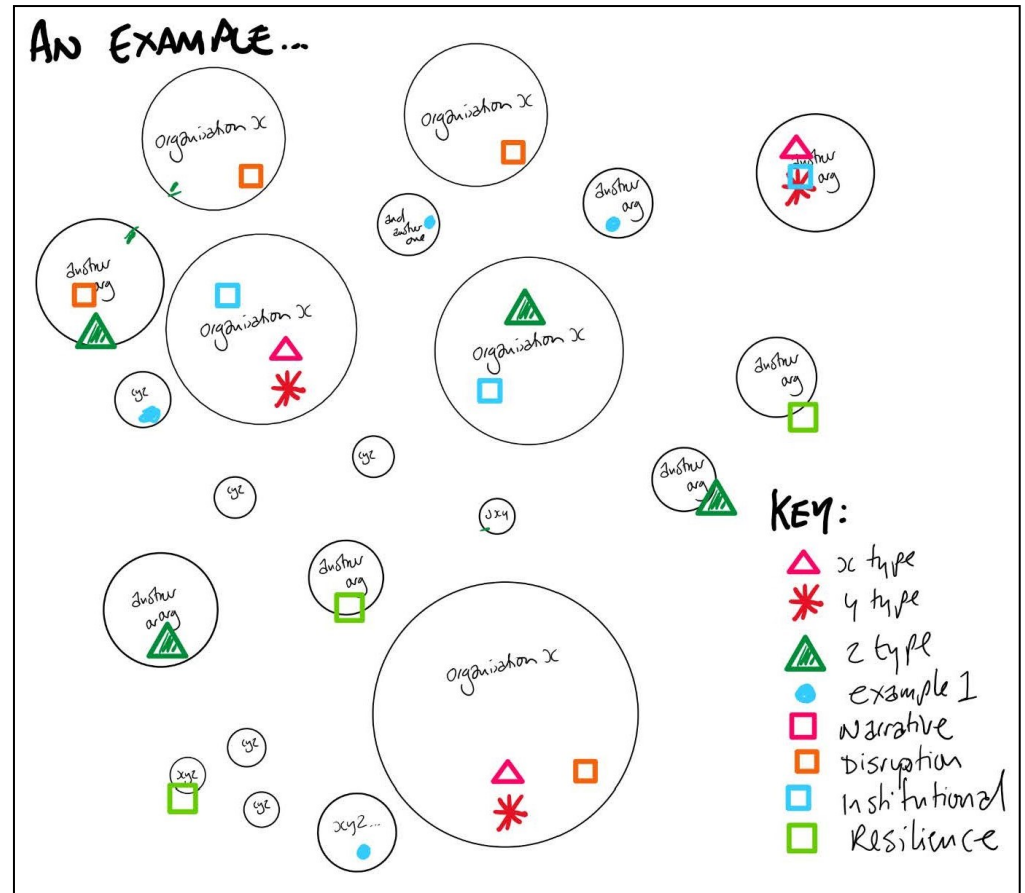
These are some of the categories that we've found can work well:

<p>Types of Organisations e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGO • Grassroots • Alliance • Trade Union • Local Group • National Network • Alternative Media • Funder • etc... 	<p>Movement Capabilities they contribute:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative • Disruptive • Institutional • Prefigurative • Resilience • Training and Learning • Others?
<p>Movement Roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen mobilisation • Agitation and disruption • Organising and/or Movement infrastructure • Reformers 	<p>Transformative Strategic alignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building alternatives inside the system • Building alternatives outside the system • Ruptural • Others?

5. Create a key and apply it to the actors

You should give each of these characteristics a **symbol**. Use these to make a **key** to the map. Mark the different actors using the key.

Use these **symbols**, mark each of the **actor circles** with the characteristics they embody/relate to. Many will have more than one symbol. For example: on a Circle representing Greenpeace, you might draw the Symbols for NGO, Institutional, Citizen Mobilisation, and so on. (See Diagram 1 for examples).

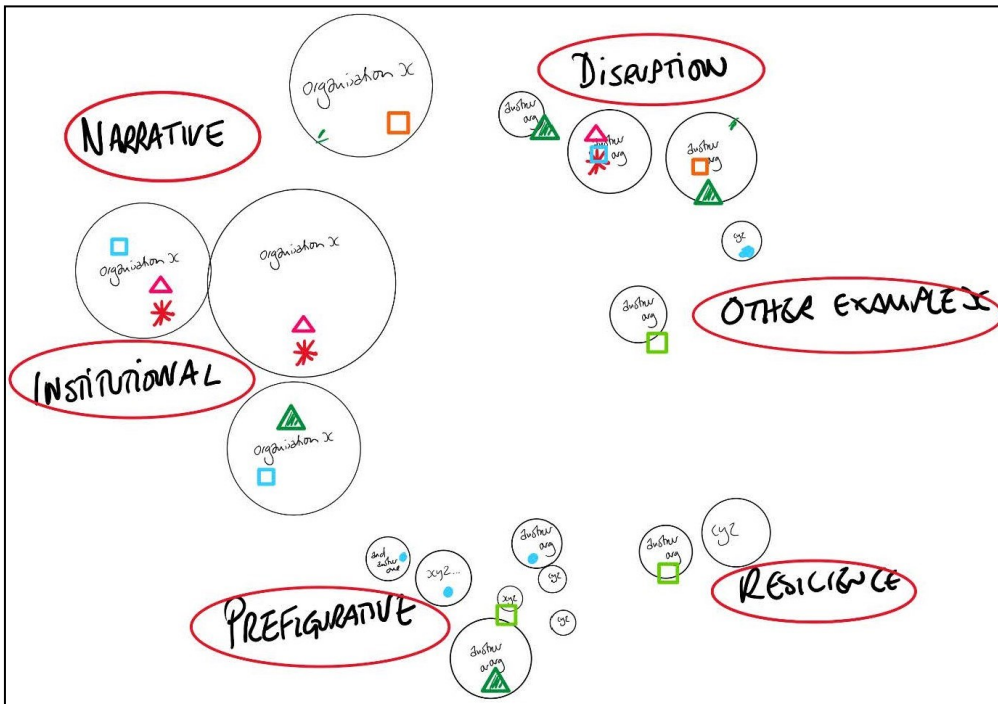


6. Use typologies to analyse movement ecology characteristics

Now, with the help of the Symbols, analyse and explore the balance and spread of the various **characteristics** across their **circles**. For each of the areas or **categories** (capabilities, roles, strategies, etc) you can ask:

- What is present?
- What is missing?
- Where are Movement strengths?
- Where are Movement weaknesses?

It can be helpful to arrange the circles visually to get a sense of this more easily. This can be done as a *spectrogram*. For example, analysing the ecology in terms of movement capabilities, you might use a large sheet with the capabilities marked around the edges of the sheet and then move the actor circles towards the capabilities they offer. The visual arrangement can make it easy to see the spread and distribution of characteristics. You can try making different *spectrograms* using different typologies.



7. Mapping connection

In this stage we arrange the **circles** on a large sheet and then to draw **connection lines** to express the relationships between them. It is up to you to decide types of relationships to depict, but generally it is useful to include:

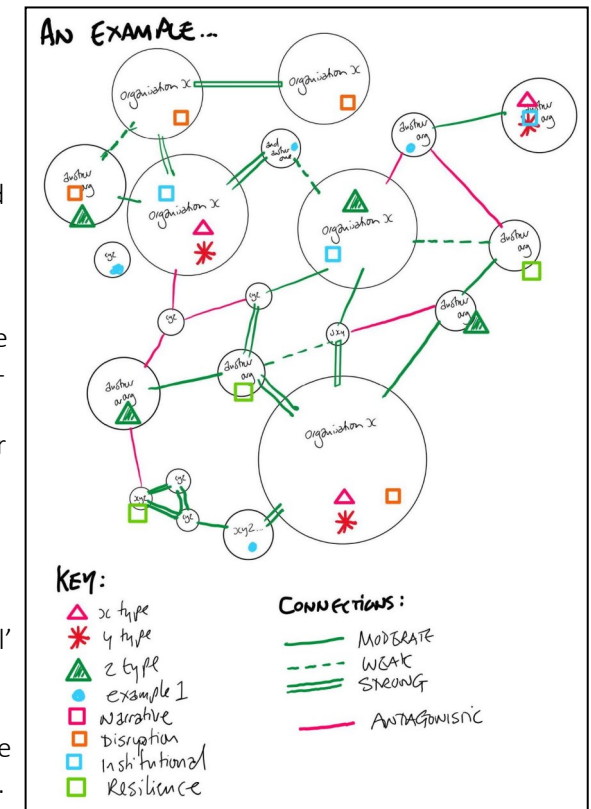
- Strong relationship
- Weak relationship
- Direction of relationship: which direction / is there reciprocity (using arrows)
- Conflictual or antagonistic relationship

They can use coloured lines to depict these differences, and these should also be added to the **key** of the maps. The process can become complicated using paper and pens, as new connections are found. Digital versions are often a bit more versatile. But if you begin by arranging circles according to rough affinity, it usually works well enough.

Here's a simple example using a few actors. The single green lines indicate a moderate connection and so on.

It is often the case that we can find our own organisation depicted at the centre. Often this is just a reflection of our limited perspective. Similarly, we can often depict more connections from ourselves to other actors than between other actors. This is often simply due to our access to information about our own connections. So, do take time to really think through the diverse connections you are aware of.

Do include 'personal' and 'informal' connections, as well as 'formal' ones such as coalition agreements or coordinated campaign work. The informal/social aspects can matter.



8a. Reflecting and analysing the map

Now the maps are assembled, you can look at them and ask some useful analytical questions **Take your time with these reflections and questions:**

- What do you see at a first glance?
- How distant are you from key influencers or powerful actors?
- What actors are there, is there diversity? Who is missing?
- What are your strengths and the well developed capabilities of your network?
- What are your weaknesses, what capabilities are missing?
- What kinds of actors and/or relationships could help reduce your weaknesses and enhance your strengths?
- What are the key learnings in terms of flow of information / organising / influence across the network?

8b. Network analysis

We have found that additional and useful insights can arise by applying some basic concepts from Network theory to our analysis.

a) Density

Density refers to the "connections" between participants. Density is defined as the number of connections a participant has, divided by the total possible connections a participant could have. For example, if there are 20 actors, each actor could potentially connect to 19 other people. If most actors only have 2 or 3 connections, we'd say that there is low density.

Possible reflections:

- Is there high or low density overall?
- Are there areas of greater density?

b) Centrality

Centrality focuses on the behaviour of individual participant/elements within a network. It measures the extent to which an individual interacts with other individuals

in the network. The more an individual connects to others in a network, the greater their centrality in the network. Depending on the direction or mutuality of the connections, centrality can have in-degree and out-degree variables. In-degree centrality concentrates on a specific individual as the point of focus; centrality of all other individuals is based on their relation to the focal point of the "in-degree" individual. Out-degree is a measure of centrality that still focuses on a single individual, but the analytic is concerned with the out-going interactions of the individual; the measure of out-degree centrality is how many times the focus point individual interacts with others. If we focus in on individual elements we can see their 'sociogram' and the relative centrality or not they play in the whole or certain areas of the network.

Possible reflections:

Are there obviously more central actors?

To what extent is this due to the bias or partiality of your data or inputs available?

Is centrality (where it exists) directional or mutual?

Do areas of density cluster around points of centrality?

c) Connections

Homophily: The extent to which actors form ties with similar versus dissimilar others. Similarity is defined in relation to the types and characteristics you have included in your mapping. *Possible reflection:* Are there places where homophily is strong? Are there actors who have greater connections with diverse and different types of actors?

Multiplexity: The number of content-forms or types of interaction contained in a connection. For example, two people who are friends and also work together would have a multiplexity of 2. Multiplexity has been associated with relationship strength and can be a good basis for stronger trust based action. *Possible reflection:* Where do you see some of these stronger multiplex connections?

Mutuality/Reciprocity and directionality of influence: The extent to which two actors reciprocate each other's friendship or other interaction. *Possible reflection:* What can we see about the nature of influence and power across our network in these terms?

Strength: In network theory, strength is often defined by the linear combination of time, emotional intensity, intimacy and reciprocity (i.e. mutuality). Strong ties are also associated with homophily, propinquity (geographical proximity) and mutuality, while weak ties are associated with bridges. *Possible reflection:* How have you determined strength of connection? Is it useful to add a further category of 'very strong'?

d) Distributions

Bridge: An individual whose weak ties fill a structural hole, providing the only link between two individuals or clusters. It also includes the shortest route when a longer one is unfeasible due to a high risk of message distortion or delivery failure. *Possible reflection:* Where are there bridging actors in the network? What relationship do you have to them?

Structural holes and islands: Holes are the absence of ties between two parts of a network. Islands are clusters of the network that are unconnected or minimally connected to the rest. *Possible reflection:* Where are there holes and islands? What does this imply about the relationships and affinities in the network?

e) Types of roles in the network

Influencer or Hub: the node / actor that has the most direct connections in the network, making it the most active node in the network.

Broker: Has few direct connections -- fewer than the average in the network, but in many ways, has one of the best locations in the network -- she is between two important hubs. She plays a 'broker' role in the network.

Catalysers: The pattern of their direct and indirect ties allow them to access all the nodes in the network more quickly than anyone else. They have the shortest paths to all others. They are in an excellent position in terms of information flow and they have the best visibility into what is happening in the network.

Periphery: Usually has very low centrality, but peripheral actors are connected to networks that are not currently mapped.

Possible reflection: Which of these roles can you identify? Which roles do you see yourself and organisation playing?

9. Conclusion

The work you will have done on your map provides you with a range of useful insights. But the question now is what can you do with these?

Primarily we see the movement mapping work as a valuable way of carrying out the *strengths* and *weaknesses* stages of a movement level **SWOT Analysis** (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats). Strengths and weaknesses focus on the *internal* factors relevant to a strategic analysis, whereas the *opportunities* and *threats* aspect focuses on the *external* factors.

So, in terms of the movement as a whole, the mapping helps us to recognize the movement strengths we can work with and leverage, as well as the weaknesses that we will need to address. This will suggest a range of strategic interventions and developments that we can build into our movement building plans and broader strategies.

We will be better placed to understand our position, role and relationships within the movement. This helps us to consider where we should invest time in building connections, which connections between others we can help to build, strengthen or transform, and so on. We will be better placed to see what kinds of qualities, capabilities, and constituencies are present or missing, which is also suggestive of types of strategic action in terms of movement capacity building.

However, the movement mapping work is only one half of a movement SWOT Analysis. The second part involves looking at *opportunities* and *threats*. This includes a broad context analysis using tools such as PESTLE (informed by social reproduction theories) and *Hegemony Mapping*, both of which we introduce as a next step.

Annex 1: Typologies for Social Movement Ecologies

CAPABILITIES FRAMEWORK

To be strategic about capacity building we need to have a sense of the capabilities movements need to be more or less effective and have transformative impact. Building on a list in Zeynep Tufekci's book, *Twitter and Teargas* (2017), we've devised a framework that (in addition to learning) emphasises six key capacities: *Narrative, Disruptive, Institutional, Cooperative, Prefigurative, and Resilience*. We use this framework to make decisions about programme design and the collaborations we foster.

Narrative capability

Movements need to be able to tell stories, especially stories about how we got here and where we want to be heading. This is about analysis of the conditions that give rise to the injustices and problems we want to address. It's also about our vision, our goals, and what we can do to achieve them. Social movements are built on a sense of empowering connection, so narrative capability includes telling the story of who we are and being able to articulate the sense of purpose and shared commitment that underpin collective agency.

Disruptive capability

This is often the most visible manifestations of movement capability, and what is most easily recognisable to an onlooking public. It includes a wide range of actions that disrupt the functioning of the systems we challenge: strike action, boycotts, occupations, mass demonstrations that transgress the rules of the game, the wide-ranging tactics of nonviolent direct action, and of course riots or rebellion. At one level these actions are simply ways of saying 'no' to ongoing injustice, seeking to prevent further damage directly, often temporarily, but sometimes with lasting impact. They also put the system under pressure, raising the cost of its everyday activities, escalating tensions, signalling power, and seeking to generate leverage for demands.

Institutional capability

As Tufekci discusses in her analysis of the Arab Spring (2017), where social movements achieve disruptive capability but lack an institutional capability, they usually fail to constitute a systemic threat. Or as Chantal Mouffe (2019) writes concerning the Indignats and Occupy movements, although "protest movements have certainly played a role in the transformation of political consciousness, it is only when they have been followed by structured political movements, ready to engage with political institutions, that significant results have

been achieved."

This kind of analysis can run the risk of short sightedness and failing to take account of the non-linear and complex nature of social change. Sometimes the legacy of these moments is to articulate new struggles and lead to shifts in culture and discourse that constitute foundations for later rounds of action. Even so, movements that lack what Mouffe calls a *political relay* or intentionally eschew institutional engagement tend to find their demands hit a wall or become co-opted. At the same time, we don't believe it is necessary to frame *institutional capacity* solely within the reformist pathways Mouffe prefers. The key issue is the ability to shape mechanisms that translate narrative and disruptive power into sustained structural transformation.

Cooperative

Rarely do organisations or groups achieve deep and lasting social change alone. It requires broad based alliances, collaborative efforts, and coordination between diverse actors. Working with other actors, groups and organisations involve a range of specific skills and attitudes. Without people and organisations in our movements who bridge between other groups or communities, bring people together, and help to find alignment and cooperation we cannot build the collective power we need to generate.

Prefigurative capability

Unlike some of its proponents, we don't see prefiguration as a stand-alone strategy or alternative to directly contesting power. We see it as a complementary capability. On the long journey of social transformation, it is important that we don't lose sight of the value and power of ensuring that the ways we organise embody, as best we can, the kind of new social relations we strive for. Prefigurative capacity is about walking the talk. It's about creating organisations that embody a culture of care, anti-oppression and active solidarity practices, and that enable us to honour each other's potential as human beings. It includes the way power functions in our groups, the ways we make decisions, the way we balance autonomy and cooperation, and the paying of attention to economic justice and influence within activist organising.

More than this, prefigurative capability involves the creation of the social contexts needed for nurturing shifts in consciousness and our maturation as transformative subjects. We need opportunities to develop skills in transformative collaboration, and to learn how to align our practices with our values. Where we can see our values embodied, even in the microcosm of our groups, it strengthens confidence in our potential and belief that change is

possible, helping to rekindle the radical imagination. Prefiguration generates crucial opportunities for the experimentation and action-learning needed to guide our aspirations.

Resilience

Our first longer residential trainings were designed to promote shifts in activist culture to avoid repetitive cycles of burnout, the consequent haemorrhaging of talent and knowledge, and the disruptions it causes to long-term movement building. Building capacity for resilience involves paying attention to a wide range of factors, ranging from the cultivation of emotional literacy and self-awareness to the security skills needed to respond to repression and attack from state and non-state actors. Developing this strand of work enabled us to develop a definition of activist resilience as:

the ability of activists, organisations, and movements, to endure and maintain stability under duress, build flexibility, learning and adaptation into their approach, and to build the power and collective agency to achieve structural changes in society, that derives from a diverse range of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and political practices.

We came to recognise that psychosocial resilience is a foundational capability underpinning all movement development and needs to be integrated at the heart of all strategies concerned with deep and long-term transformation.

Diverse Strategies, Roles, Actors and Identities

In addition to looking at movement capabilities, we’ve found it helpful to analyze the diversity of movement ecology in terms of several other characteristics, including: 1) different transformative strategies, 2) a range of movement roles 3) distinct movement capabilities, 4) the way forms of activism are shaped by their interface with everyday life and organisational structures, and 5) diverse identity formations related to specific issues and struggles.

1. Transformative Strategies

Clear axes of antagonism and complementarity can be found running between the different strategies pursued in our movements. Drawing on the work of Erik Olin Wright (2010), we adopt a simplified typology analysing strategies in terms of those that:

- i. aim to **create alternatives within the system** (*symbiotic metamorphosis* in Wright’s terms) by building on and reforming existing institutions. Reformist strategies extend and deepen the institutional forms of popular social empowerment, while also offering solutions to practical problems faced by dominant classes and elites.

These strategies often exhibit contradictory characteristics, simultaneously expanding social power and strengthening aspects of the existing system.

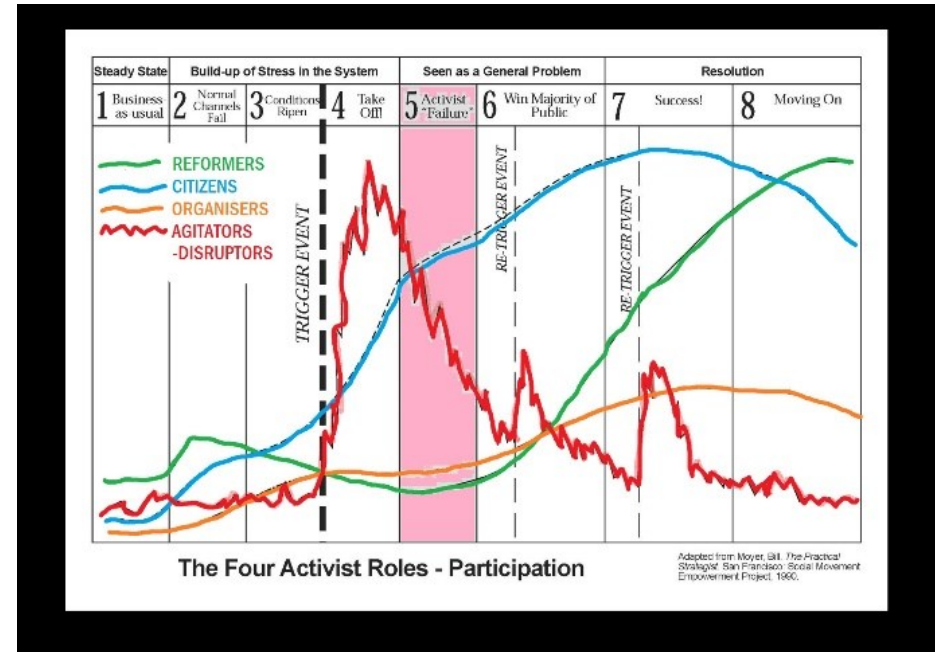
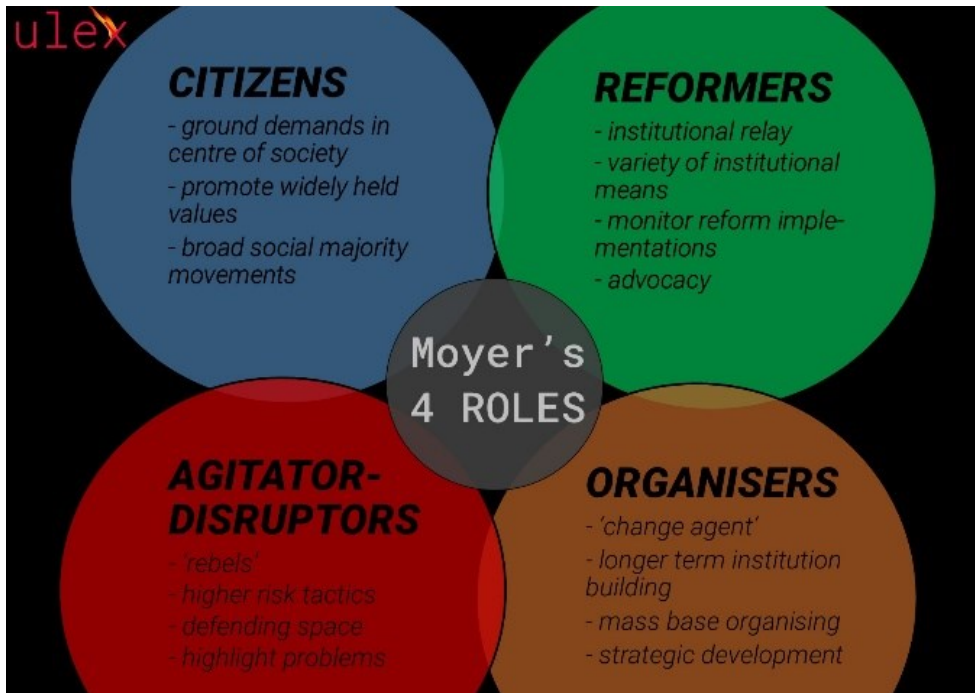
- ii. aim to **build alternatives outside the system** or the cracks and gaps within (*interstitial metamorphosis*) to gradually evolve beyond the limits of the existing structures. Historically connected with the Anarchist tradition, this encompasses some prefigurative initiatives and new forms of social empowerment growing in the cracks and margins of capitalist society, including such disparate projects as autonomous squatted social centres, ecovillages, and alternative economic initiatives.
- iii. seek to **rupture the system** (*ruptural*) with the hope of rebuilding out of the ruins. Associated with the revolutionary socialist or communist traditions and the organisation of classes through parties in direct confrontation with the state, the approach envisions creating new institutions of social empowerment through a sharp break with existing institutions and social structures. It implies a radical disjuncture. Less evident today as fully fledged revolutionary organising, ruptural approaches are still very present in the ways they influences the identities of some radical actors and offer a tactical legacy.

	Associated political tradition	Pivotal collective actors	Strategic logic in respect to the state	Strategic logic in respect to capitalist class	Metaphors of success
Ruptural	Revolutionary socialism / communism	Classes organised on political parties	Attack the state	Confront the bourgeoisie	War (victories and defeats)
Interstitial metamorphosis	Anarchist	Social movements	Build alternatives outside of the state	Ignore the bourgeoisie	Ecological competition
Symbiotic metamorphosis	Social democratic	Coalitions of social forces and labour	Use the state: struggle on the terrain of the state	Collaborate with the bourgeoisie	Evolutionary adaptations

Not only do these different strategies imply diverse political practices and identification with different political traditions, but they also correlate with different sub-cultures and organisational structures. Historically, they have often involved overlapping practice and they shouldn’t be seen as completely firewalled from each other. This overlapping practice continues today with people often moving between and straddling the range of practice connected with each approach, even while feeling strongly identified with one or other.

2. Range of Roles

Another useful way of thinking about diversity within our movements relates to the wide range of roles involved in building impactful movements. We have found Bill Moyer’s typology useful, even though it remains mostly cast within a reformist framework. He identifies four key roles: *rebel*, *reformer*, *citizen*, and *change agent* (1990). Moyer maps these roles onto a timeline that suggests a specific sequence of phases in the life of a movement from ‘kick-off’ to success. During different phases each role takes on greater or lesser prominence, but through the entire process all have a key part to play. Again, it is useful to note the different organising cultures that characterise these diverse roles – and different types of organisations they can give rise to.



Of course, we can expand on Moyer’s typology to include an enriched sense of the diverse roles that are key to the success of social movements. A member of our training team, Natasha Adams, generated an expanded typology based on research into the history of environmental and LGBTQI+ movements in the UK (2019). Her extended typology adds the roles of news media, thought leaders, artistic and cultural production, and the roles involved in the diverse approaches across grassroots and professional NGO mobilising and organising. Her typology suggests a broadening out of the field of a social movement to include some actors who might not always be identified with it, but whose role, based on her research, has a decisive influence.

3. Contributions to Movement Capabilities

While there is some overlap with an analysis of movement roles, looking through the lens of movement capabilities, as discussed earlier, draws attention to functions that might not otherwise be made visible. Using the framework of five key capacities (*Narrative*, *Disruptive*, *Institutional*, *Prefigurative*, and *Resilience*), we can get a sense of the diverse contributions, skills, and knowledge required for movements to build and sustain power. Some take place on the ‘front line’, some are hidden away, and others happen in spaces we might not customarily associate with our movements, but all constitute vital contributions to a healthy movement ecology.

4. The Interface with Everyday Life

Another set of factors that shape the diversity of movement ecology relates to the specific social and economic contexts different forms of activism are embedded within. Another member of our team, Laurence Cox, points out in a paper on Sustainable Activism (2019) that:

Different movements interface with everyday life and social routines in different ways. Put another way, someone's movement participation can be primarily a job, an identity, a part of their everyday culture or a dimension of their working life; and these different situations affect individual activists but also shape movements insofar as most movements have a centre of gravity in one or other of these (perhaps a characteristic of a truly powerful movement is its presence across multiple dimensions).

He goes on to list these different situations in terms of:

Workplace-based movements: Peasant and labour struggles are naturally workplace-based, while other types of activism (e.g., sabotage during the European resistance to fascism) can also be centred here.

Community-based movements: Some movements naturally tend to organise within people's residential or social communities – working-class community organising, LGBTQI activism, certain radical sub-cultures, and many ethnic or religious movements, for example.

Professional or full-time activism: In some kinds of movement situation (parties, unions, media, NGOs and so on) many or most activists are employed *by* movement organisations.

“Leisure” activism: Some kinds of movements take place outside where most of their participants work and live, in the social space otherwise occupied by leisure activities.

Each of these represent different forms of institutionalisation (or lack of it) and organising culture. The different economic relations and dependencies (or lack of them) also have a significant bearing on movement dynamics related to power, resourcing, and types of influence.

5. Issues, struggles, and identity

In a recent interview Judith Butler, renowned for their work on gender and identity, stated: “My own political view is that identity ought not to be the foundation for politics.” And yet, like most of us, Butler knows all too well the central role identity plays in our struggles to redefine “what justice, equality and freedom can and should mean.” As Manuel Castells (2003) points out, a “crisis of political legitimacy has created a vacuum in the mechanisms of political representation and social mobilization that is being filled with identity-based movements,” which have become increasingly prominent during the last couple of decades. The tensions that arise between diverse social and political identities represent one of the most challenging dimensions of *ecology of movements* work. Addressing these challenges requires a nuanced understanding of both the political and psychosocial formation and function of identity within our movements.

Identity formation is integral to movement building, creating the sense of the ‘we’ who constitute it or are represented by it. Activist identity defines what ‘we’ stand for, the kind of world ‘we’ aim to create, and the kind of people ‘we’ want to do that with. It enables us to build collective power and to find belonging and meaning in our struggles. And yet, mixed in with these empowering functions, there are psychosocial dynamics related to activist identity that are central to burning us out, breaking up our groups, fragmenting our movements, and consequently undermining our resilience and effectiveness.

One of the frameworks we use to shed light on the different ways identity formation functions within the constant struggle over power in society comes from Castells’ trilogy on *The Information Age* (2003), which names three ‘forms and origins of identity building’:

1. Legitimizing identity: shaped and maintained by the dominant institutions to underpin and reinforce their dominance (e.g. forms of nationalism, dominant group ethnicity, fixed gender roles, etc)

2. Resistance identity: shaped by marginalised group or actors disfavoured ‘by the logic of domination, thus building trenches of resistance and survival on the basis of principles different from, or opposed to, those permeating the institutions of society’ (e.g. religious fundamentalism, identity-based rights movements, far right reconstruction of traditional values, etc)

3. Project identity: shaped by social actors seeking to ‘build a new identity that redefines their position in society and, by so doing, seek the transformation of overall social structure’ (e.g. where feminism moves beyond women’s rights to challenge patriarchy, some environmentalism, anti-capitalism, etc).

While the movements we support mostly coalesce around project identities, it is important to recognise how all three forms can overlap and even change position. Project identities can grow out of resistance identities, and if either gain dominance can themselves become new forms of legitimizing identity. As patterns of social dominance shift, previously legitimizing identities can become the basis of resistance identities (recent far right leveraging of ethno-religious or nationalist interests in the face of the dominant forces of liberal globalisation, for example).

Actors within movements often use the struggles they are involved in as a primary identifier, such as the environmental movement or feminist movement, and qualifying variants to specify particular analysis or approaches, such as the climate justice movement or radical feminists. Where the boundaries lie around these identities, the degree of porosity, and the areas of overlap between them are all challenging aspects of movement ecology reflection and analysis.

We add to Castells' model our own distinction between three modalities of identity formation we call *empowering*, *limiting*, and *liberating*:

1. Empowering identities are those that constitute political communities based on a recognition of shared grievances and a vision of how to resolve those grievances, as well as strengthening the sense of personal and collective agency needed to achieve it.

2. Limiting identities are where certain psychosocial dynamics cause empowering identities to become stuck, undermining our ability to build connections with those outside our group or forge the alliances and coalitions needed for deeper social transformation, or to renew identity as circumstances change.

3. Liberating identities arise where we are able to weaken the tendencies leading to limiting identities and become better equipped to work across differences, embrace diversity and transversality, and allow our sense of self and community to evolve and adapt responsively – enhancing our potential to realise radical transformation.

This model seeks to integrate an understanding of identity formation that takes account of both the socio-political and the psychosocial dynamics involved. The construction of political or social identities always involves drawing boundaries of inclusion and exclusion – the creation of an 'us' and a 'them'. The inclusion aspect enables us to find belonging, security and a sense of community. When the identity reinforces a positive self-view, as part of something meaningful, and enhances collective agency, it serves to empower us. The exclusion aspect involves the construction of 'them', our adversaries, what we are not and are against. It re-

veals latent conflict and clarifies antagonism as steps in the process of social change.

This inclusion-exclusion dynamic is inherent in all identity formation. The psychological process of individuation itself necessitates the formation of boundaries in the development of a healthy sense of self. Likewise, the formation of politically empowering identities often involves rejecting identities imposed by an oppressive system and claiming the right to re-define ourselves. Through this process we assert what we are and want to become, as well as specifying what we are not.

Although part of a healthy identity formation process, the complex of socio-political and psychosocial strategies, involving an interplay of both conscious and unconscious dimensions, all too easily deteriorates from empowering 'differentiation' into less productive forms of polarisation and 'othering'. The very inclusion-exclusion dynamics that enable us to constitute *empowering identities* can also lead us to become stuck, isolated and disempowered. This is what we mean by *limiting identities*.

Developing healthy movement ecologies intersects with the development of practices that enable us to avoid the traps of *limiting identities* and the cultivation of *liberating identities*. These are simply *empowering identities* held with greater awareness of their constructed and non-essential nature, and increased clarity about their psychosocial and political function. And yet, cultivating this kind of awareness requires a holistic approach that can attend to the socio-political dimension without losing sight of the psychological, emotional and even existential drivers of identity formation and attachment. Constructing liberating identities involves socio-political analysis, as well as practices and communities where healing, self-awareness, and psychological integration are nurtured.

These kinds of insights highlight the interplay between the intra-personal, inter-personal, and socio-political dimensions of activist practice. They help to underscore our sense that movement capacity building needs to simultaneously attend to our organisational cultures, the development of ourselves as individuals, and to movement level strategy. It is this understanding that we aim to articulate through the idea of Integral Activist Training.

