USES OF IDENTITY IN THE ANTI-AUTHORITARIAN MOVEMENT IN QUEBEC

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Abstract

What accounts for the development of a movement's collective identity in periods of low-intensity contention? This paper aims at understanding the transformation of the anti-authoritarian movement in Quebec during the first decade of the 21st century. At the height of a cycle of protest against economic liberalisation, there emerged an anti-authoritarian perspective inspired by contemporary anarchist ideas and practices. Initially advanced by coalitions which formed to respond to the 2001 Summit of the Americas in Quebec City, this anti-authoritarian perspective made a public reappearance a decade later at the 2010 G8 and G20 meetings in Ontario. How has the movement evolved between these major public displays of contention? Facing various challenges, including internal expressions of diversity, the anti-authoritarian movement managed to sustain itself during that period by accommodating its collective identity to the multiple identities of its constituents. Adopting insights from Mary Bernstein's political identity framework, this paper stresses the importance of endogenous processes to understand this dynamic. It argues that we must consider the identity work that allowed the movement to make various uses of identity; where identity has been given the simultaneous functions of empowerment, strategy and goal by anti-authoritarians.

In July 2011, newspapers in Canada reported that the Montreal police had created a special unit mandated to monitor the activities of "fringe movements" and "anarchists"[1]. Officially, the *Guet des activités et des mouvements marginaux et anarchistes* (surveillance of the activities of marginal and anarchist movements), or GAMMA, is intended to deal with acts of violence such as vandalism and assaults on police cars during public gatherings and protests attributed by authorities to anarchist activists. Debates around those allegations and the constitutionality of the squad's mandate notwithstanding[2], this news is useful to draw our attention to the presence of anarchist activism in the province.

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[1] Max Harrold, «Montreal Police Unit to Monitor Anarchists», *Post Media News*, July 15th 2011, http://www.vancouversun.com/story_print.html?id=5109633&sponsor

[2] Following GAMMA's creation, a complaint was filed with Quebec's Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse regarding the constitutioanlity of such a squad, in regard to Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms' dispositions.

Indeed, at the heart of the global justice movement that took root in various local settings, including Quebec, lies a political perspective inspired by contemporary anarchist ideas and practices[3]. Held by social actors who clearly express their allegiance to anarchism as well as by others who share its ideological affinities without openly declaring themselves anarchists, this perspective is more accurately defined by those who embrace it as anti-authoritarian[4]. Following the work of Rosanvallon (1976) and Pucciarelli (1999), "anti-authoritarian" in this paper refers to individuals, groups and networks who refuse all authority deemed to be illegitimate, use direct action tactics and prefigure organizational forms characterized by spontaneity, autonomy, direct democracy and the decentralization of power (Fortier *et al.* 2009). Actors who share these characteristics can be considered to have formed an anti-authoritarian social movement that emerged in Quebec at the beginning of the 2000s and is still active today.

Like all forms of collective action, the existence of the anti-authoritarian movement in the province comes to attention when it engages in overt interaction with authorities and its activities capture the media spotlight, mainly during public events and mobilizations. Nevertheless, scholars studying these phenomena have taught us to look beyond the most visible and often sporadic actions of social movements in order to address their continuity (Ancelovici and Rousseau 2009 ; Armstrong and Bernstein 2008 ; Staggenborg and Taylor 2005; Taylor 1989). Following Snow and colleagues (1986), this approach rests on a conception of social movements as a form of ideologically structured action, producing and disseminating new ideologies, cultural codes and social practices. It is based on the idea that movements are a combination of formal organizations, informal networks and unaffiliated individuals involved in a struggle for social and political change whose effects can be multifaceted. Thus, a social movement may withdraw from public life at a certain point in its trajectory and its components reshape and transform themselves while continuing to work elsewhere and on aspects other than those originally intended.

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[3] The similarities and differences between contemporary anarchism and classical anarchism will not be discussed in this paper. Readers interested in this issue may refer to the work of Richard Day, Francis Dupuis-Déri, Barbara Epstein, David Graeber or Uri Gordon.

[4] Research by the Collectif de recherche sur l'autonomie collective (Research Group on Collective Autonomy, CRAC) documents some of the reasons given by activists to explain their reluctance towards the anarchist label (Breton *et al.* 2011) : for example, the fear of repression and outside jugment, the desire to stay away from strict ideological identitification or dogmatism and the wish to keep a flexible and inclusive stance for mobilization.

Adopting this perpective, this paper aims to explain the processes that have ensured the anti-authoritarian movement's development in Quebec throughout the first decade of the 21st century, particularly in periods of low intensity contention. Between 2000 and 2010, anti-authoritarians managed to sustain themselves as a movement, in spite of the sparsity of public mobilisations, because of the opening out of their collective identity. It is argued that, in order to understand this dynamic, we must look at the inner life of the movement and consider the micro-level interactions that have occurred in their settings. More specifically, we will argue that the identity work undertaken by the movement's participants resulted in the successful accommodation of the internal diversity that expressed itself as one of the main challenges the movement had to face during that period. It is demonstrated that the integration of activists' various identities has been rendered possible because of the multiple roles assigned to "identity politics" by the movement's participants, whereas identity has been simultaneously a form of empowerment, a strategy and a goal of the anti-authoritarian movement (Bernstein 2008).

After reviewing the current literature on collective identity processes, the paper documents the existence of the anti-authoritarian movement in Quebec and finally explores the identity work undertaken. The analysis presented in this paper is exploratory; it is part of a work-in-progress that needs further development. As such, the main goal of this presentation is to discuss the general structure of the argument and the conceptual framework advanced, in order to better identify the steps that lie ahead in the research.

Social movements and the individual/collective identity nexus

Distinguishing identities

It is widely recognized that the concept of identity is now central to the study of social movements (Reger *et al.* 2008 ; Bernstein 2005; Poletta and Jasper 2001 ; Snow and McAdam 2000). Since the shift, in the 1980's, to cultural and socio-psychological approaches in social sciences in general, and the emergence of new social movement theories in the study of social movements in particular, identity has been conceived as a useful notion to understand a variety of movement dynamics; from the subjective dimensions of participation to the evaluation of a movement's outcomes and successes. Identity has also been the focus of research interested in the

factors that ensure the creation of solidarity ties between movement constituents; that is, the creation of collective identity (Friedman and McAdam 1992). Following this line of enquiry, many scholars have contributed to defining activists' sense of themselves as a collectivity (Hunt and Benford 2004 ; Poletta and Jasper 2001 ; Stryker *et al.* 2000 ; Taylor and Whittier 1995). In the study of social movements, collective identity generally refers to "a shared sense of we-ness among those individuals who compose the collectivity" (Taylor and Whittier 1992: 105), or "a perception of a shared status or relation, which may be imagined rather than experienced directly" (Poletta and Jasper 2001: 285).

Approaches to collective identity in the study of social movements have emphasized the interactive dynamic involved in a movement's identity construction (Hunt and Benford 2004 ; Poletta and Jasper 2001; Gamson 1996 ; Melucci 1996, 1989; Whittier 1995). In this view, rather than being fixed, collective identity rests on a fluid and relational process, emerging out of interaction with a variety of audiences such as bystanders, allies, news media and state authorities (Poletta and Jasper 2001 ; Einwhoner 1999). It can be affected by the larger political, cultural and historical context, driven by pressures from events and opportunities exterior to the movement (Tarrow 1998 ; Johnston and Klandermans 1995; Whittier 1995; McAdam 1982). In such perspectives on the creation of collective identities, interactions between movement constituents and movement outsiders are studied. The process of group differentiation involved in "boundary formation" (Taylor and Whittier 1995) is constructed by "framing both SMOs and opponents in relation to one another" (Smithey 2009: 660).

To understand the dynamics underlying a movement's collective identity, a particular trend of research has looked at the interplay between individual and collective identities. If collective identities are thought of as being "structural in nature in that they are shared beliefs about a group institutionalized in symbols, communities and politics", individual identities exist at the micro-level as "the internalized set of meanings oriented to the validation of the self" (Stryker, Owens and White 2000: 6). In other words, the latter are formed by "the bundle of traits that we believe make us unique", while collective identities are "what makes people occupying a category similar" (Poletta and Jasper 2001: 298). Although these two dimensions are in constant interplay with each other, it has been emphasized that collective identities are not the only aggregate of

individual identities (Reger 2002). When groups of people join together to form a social movement, they must articulate commonalities defining how they present themselves to others and even to each other. As pivotal as collective identities can be to social movements, they are not easily elaborated (Reger *et al.* 2008).

Looking at identity work processes

Wanting to better understand the relationship of collective identities to issues of role and self, scholars studying identity work processes initially looked at "the range of activities individuals engage in to create, present and sustain personal identities that are congruent with and supportive of the self-concept" (Snow and Anderson 1987:1348). Indeed, if personal identities build upon individual traits, they also include a social dimension referring to the person's sense of self as part of a group (Johnston *et al.* 1994). Researchers concluded that correspondence between individual and collective identities was one of the main challenges faced by social movements. This observation led to studies of the processes by which individuals align their personal identities with the collective identity of a movement, to make them consistent (Snow and McAdam 2000). Others highlighted the inherent complexity of identity work, beyond this generic process of harmonisation between individual and collective identities. The socio-psychological processeses involved in identity work are more complexly characterized by the simultaneous amplification and suppression of differences (Reger *et al.* 2008 ; Bernstein 1997) and operate differently in different contexts (Einwohner 2006).

These conceptualizations are useful to shed light on the various processes in which individuals engage as part of their identity work. Less documented, however, is the reciprocal transformation of the collective identity of a movement as individual experiences evolve (Bernstein 2008). Collective identity formation is a process in which multiple, overlapping identities inevitably conflict (Calhoun 1994; Taylor and Whittier 1992). Moreover, social movements must contend with "ever changing" activist identities (Reger 2002: 710, Einwohner 1999; Gamson 1996; Whittier 1995). Identity work then becomes as much a group accomplishment as it is an individual one (Schwalbe and Mason-Shrock 1996). Engaging in dialogues and debates on different problems, individuals develop common understandings of issues and engage in collective action on the basis of these understandings, altering the collective identity of the

movement. The expression of interests, preferences and grievances embodied in individual identities may cause tensions that can either be resolved by the extension of the collective identity of the movement or that may generate scissions and serve as the basis for spin-off movements (Valocchi 2001).

How are internal instabilities and diversities accommodated in a social movement? How does a movement contend with the reality of the multiple identities participants bring with them to their activism? The external environment is seen as a factor that will affect debates over the degree of inclusiveness of the collectivity, mainly through the movement's relation to antagonists (Munkres 2008; Reger 2008). A movement's capacity to accommodate individual identities has also been shown to be related to the flexibility of the organizational structure in which its collective identity is institutionalized (Valocchi 2001). In this view, organizational dynamics mediate collective identities and affect a social movement's ability to negotiate internal issues of diversity (Roth 2008; Ward 2008 ; Reger 2002 ; Gamson 1996) Movements may also rely on factors such as experience, ideology, commitment and emotion to overcome challenges arising from participants' differences (Bernstein 2008; Myers 2008).

Clarifying the roles of identity

This paper rests upon the intuition that there is still something to be said about what allows a movement's collective identity to adjust to the expression of diversity by individual members. The studies mentioned in the previous paragraph all highlight *conditions* deemed to have contributed successfully - or not - to the extension of a movement's sense of "we". In the following pages, it is proposed that, to better understand the dynamics that allow collective identity to accommodate individual identities, we must also consider the *properties* given to the notion of identity by a movement's constituents. This can be carried out by examining the identity work of participants aimed at aligning a movement's collective identity with personal needs and grievances.

This argument takes up Mary Bernstein's contribution to the study of identity politics (2008, 2005, 2002, 1997). In her work, she integrates insights from political process and identity theory to create what she calls a *political identity approach* to social movements. She argues that the

concept of identity as it relates to social movements has at least three distinct analytical levels linked to different functions of identity. First, identity can be a source of empowerment; serving as the basis of a sense of belonging that leads to the creation of community and solidarity. Identity can also be used as a strategy, with participants of a social movement putting forth certain images of themselves in order to achieve their goals (Einwohner 2006). Last but not least, identity can be a goal of social movements, when activists "challenge stigmatized identities, seek recognition for new identities or deconstruct restrictive social categories" (Bernstein and De la Cruz 2009: 727). More recently, Bernstein has further proposed that these different analytical levels of identity (*identity for empowerment, identity as strategy* and *identity as goal*) are inter-related, connected by feedback loops so that an intervention in one dimension of identity influences the others (Bernstein and Olsen 2009 ; Bernstein 2008).

Using the categories proposed in Bernstein's model and their suggested interdependence as an analytical lens, this paper elaborates more fully the ways in which identity work figures into social movements and collective action. It intends to do so not by investigating the conditions that intervene in the unfolding of one of the analytical levels of identity, but by showing how simultaneous work on these three dimensions interacts to provide for a collective identity capable of adjusting to a movement's internal diversity. With that objective, this study offers an empirical elaboration derived from the anti-authoritarian movement in Quebec. After defining the movement and presenting an overview of its collective identity developed over the last decade, it will be shown how identity plays multiple roles in the anti-authoritarian movement.

Data and method

The argument presented in this paper is part of a PhD dissertation in progress at the Political Science Department at Université de Montréal. It draws on data collected by the Research Group on Collective Autonomy (Collectif de recherche sur l'autonomie collective - CRAC), based at the School for Community and Public Affairs (SCPA) at Concordia University (Quebec, Canada). CRAC has been documenting and analyzing contemporary initiatives linked to the anti-autoritarian movement in Quebec since 2005. Being an anti-authoritarian feminist research collective, it uses a prefigurative participatory action research methodology that integrates

participants in all aspects of the study, from validation of the data to contributions to the analysis (Breton *et al.* 2011). This way of functioning aims to produce movement-relevant knowledge with those who are directly involved in the research process. Relying on mutual trust, this methodology also provides information that is otherwise not easily accessible to academic researchers. Being themselves participants in the movement, CRAC members not only have privileged contacts with the groups and networks involved in the research but also concretely experience the anti-authoritarian perspective that serves as their basis of affinity. As a CRAC member since 2007, I have had access to this data, contributed to its analysis and participated in this collective experience.

CRAC's research is based on a study of secondary sources as well as primary material derived from 127 interviews conducted between 2006 and 2009 with activists involved in about ten different groups and networks linked to the anti-authoritarian movement. The actors interviewed represent a variety of the movement's constituents and individuals were interviewed on the basis of their involvement in these groups and networks. Adopting an anti-authoritarian perspective, these groups and networks work on a wide range of issues linked to feminism (Ainsi squattent-elles, réseau des féministes radicales), the environment (Liberterre, Jardins autogérés), queer politics (Les Panthères roses, QTeam, Ste-Emilie's Skillshare), anti-racist and anti-colonial organizing (réseau antiraciste/anticolonial) and anti-capitalist coalition-building (Convergence des luttes anti-capitalistes). The interviews touched upon many aspects of activism, including personal experiences, group formation, objectives and tactics, as well as internal challenges and relation to the broader social and political context. This data was then used to produce monographs on each of these groups (CRAC, forthcoming (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), 2010a, 2010b, 2008a, 2008b) and also serves as the basis for transversal analysis on specific themes (CRAC 2011a, 2011b, 2011c). The preliminary findings of these transversal analyses were the subject of a focus group held in February 2011 with about 60 activists involved in the movement.

Identifying the anti-authoritarian movement in Quebec

Traces of anarchism in social struggles in Quebec can be located as far back as the end of the 18th century (Houle-Courcelles 2008). Ideas and practices associated with this ideology

resurfaced at the turn of the 21st century amidst a cycle of protest against neoliberal globalization (Lamoureux 2008; Hammond-Callaghan and Hayday 2008). A decade later, they still animate a social movement composed of various individuals, groups and networks brought together around an anti-authoritarian perspective. For the purpose of this paper, it is argued that the contours of the anti-authoritarian social movement in Quebec, as well as its trajectory between 2000 and 2010, can be identified by examining two important protest events that also serve as temporal landmarks for this study. The mobilisation that occurred around the Quebec Summit of the Americas in 2001 helps document the emergence of the movement and the consolidation of the anti-authoritarian perspective, whereas the campaign against the 2010 G8/G20 meetings in Ontario shows the movement's persistence and testifies to the development of its collective identity throughout this period. This mode of identification adopts Tilly's (2004) suggestion that the existence of a social movement is recognizable by the consequential synthesis of the following elements: a campaign, performances issuing from social movement repertoire and participants' "worthiness, unity, numbers and commitment" (WUNC) display.

First vignette: the 2001 Summit of the Americas
In 2001, 34 heads of state from across the American continent met in Quebec City for the Summit of the Americas. Their objectives were clear: to elaborate a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) integrated into a larger political agenda for the region. In turn, the months that preceded the Summit were subject to an unprecedented display of political and social effervescence in the province (Gaudet and Sarrasin 2008). Following a lengthy mobilization campaign lead by diverse coalitions of social activists, approximately 50 000 people opposed to the Summit's occurrence were drawn to Quebec City for the protest.

Consistent with the heterogeneous composition of the global justice movement, social activists of various political orientations and ideological tendencies converged around the anti-FTAA mobilization. United under the general principle of opposing economic liberalism, activists further articulated specific demands along a spectrum encompassing a variety of positions, from a demand to make the agreement under negotiation public to the goal of shutting down the meeting entirely. Focusing on the latter objective, one of the features characterizing the mobilization against the Summit was the formulation, by certain social activists, of a position inspired by

anarchist principles. Among the initiatives that emerged during this period, the *Convergence des luttes anticapitalistes* (Anti-Capitalist Convergence - CLAC) and its Quebec-based sister group, the *Comité d'accueil du Sommet des Amériques* (Welcoming Committee of the Summit of the Americas - CASA)*,* described themselves *ab initio* as "radicals". Neither CLAC nor CASA expressly formulated affinities to the anarchist ideology as an official position in the context of the Quebec Summit. However, their basis of unity - the common ground for activists united under their banner - was clearly inspired by anarchist values and principles.

The anti-capitalist position of these coalitions was, from the outset, accompanied by a consistent action strategy, developed around the idea of respecting a diversity of tactics, and by organizational schema inspired by participative democracy and decentralized models (Epstein 2001). During the anti-Summit mobilization campaign, the political positions of CLAC and CASA were translated into an action strategy which aimed to make the FTAA negotiations a "non-event"[5]. Groups who responded to the coalitions' call opted for a variety of tactics ranging from mass education gatherings (such as "teach-ins") to the elaboration of a Carnival Against Capitalism, which included participation in a large-scale march and a day of coordinated direct actions. As reported in local and provincial newspapers at the time:

> *Around 700 youths chanting slogans – particularly against the Free Trade Area of the Americas and generally against the institution of capitalism – kicked off a protest dance in honor of the Quebec Summit of the Americas under the watchful eyes of police officers. (...) The procession extended from the Laval University campus to the "basse ville", despite the chilly weather. Protesters had been instructed by organizers to gather as many candles and flashlights as possible in order to "bring a little light" into the "great darkness" that covered the city because of the Summit. (...) The crowd counted many young people dressed in black clothes and hoods, also exhibiting black anarchist flags. Less radically attired, but just as politically significant – if not more so – were locals, running daily errands or taking walks, who decided to join the ranks of the protesters. (...) "The streets are ours", "Capitalism is hypocritical", "The FTAA won't pass", screamed protesters. (...) The CLAC or Anti-Capitalist Convergence, a far-left coalition of diverse, sometimes anarchist groups, and the CASA, their Quebec sibling, had organized the rallies.[6]*

The protests against the Summit of the Americas were violently repressed by the police.

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[5] Formulated as such in CLAC's basis of principles.

[6] Excerpts from Marie-Claude Lortie, « Une manif pour mettre un peu de lumière», *La Presse*, vendredi 20 avril 2001, p. A1.

Nevertheless, in the summer of 2002, the CLAC led another mobilization campaign in Ottawa entitled "Take the Capital", which opposed the G8 meeting occurring at the same time in Alberta. During that campaign, the Convergence again experienced heavy répression and protesters started expressing demoralization about such mobilizations, whose occurences are dictated by the political agendas of states. Coalitions like CLAC and CASA, which were the first to promote anti-authoritarian perspectives, seamed no longer to exist and indeed had disbanded. However, nearly a decade later, CLAC and the social movement from which it issued resurfaced.

Second vignette: the 2010 G8/G20 meetings

In the context of the global economic crisis occurring at the same period, the 2010 G8/G20 Leaders' Summit in Ontario became the theatre for new mass mobilization efforts called for by an alliance of social activists promoting the anti-authoritarian perspective. The Convergence des luttes anticapitalistes 2010 (Anti-Capitalist Convergence 2010 -CLAC 2010), openly claiming its affiliation with the 2001 CLAC and even re-using its original iconography, formed in the beginning of 2010 in order to organize participation in the campaign. Various groups responded to the call-out by the Toronto Community Mobilisation Network who situated the initiative as an individual event of the larger "Resistance 2010" campaign. The latter was officially inspired by the anti-capitalist and anti-colonial resistance of the country's west coast Indigenous People following the government's decision to host the Vancouver Winter Olympics on what are considered to be stolen native land. The CLAC 2010 was composed of groups such as the Bloc AMP-Montreal, the Regroupement Anti-G20 Étudiant, the Radical Feminist Coalition Against the G20 and diverse other anti-capitalist groups and collectives from the Montreal region. The CLAC 2010's common values were based on "an anti-capitalist and anti-colonial analysis; a confrontational attitude towards oppressive systems; an opposition to any form of oppression; a respect for autonomous and horizontal organization; and support for the principles of Aboriginal sovereignty and auto-determination – in a perspective of unity, solidarity and mutual aid."[7]

Wanting to extend the mobilization beyond the singular effort for the G8/G20 Summit, CLAC 2010 insisted on developing a popular education campaign to consolidate anti-capitalist struggles

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[7] Action Mondiale des Peuples-Montréal (People's Global Action-Montreal), http://www.amp-montreal.net/?q=fr/node/9

at a grassroots level. Members of the Convergence stress that protests against leaders' meetings are not ends in themselves, but should rather be seen as opportunities for the rallying of forces, day-to-day practices and know-how of different social activists. This analysis rests on a denunciation of the capitalist system promulgated by nations of the G20 and considered to be fundamentally wrong. Other oppressive systems such as "patriarchy, classism, racism, colonialism, imperialism and heterosexism" (CLAC 2010 : 4) are also openly denounced, as they proceed from a common logic complementing capitalist exploitation. In this sense, the CLAC 2010 wishes to be the converging hub of those who are "exploited, oppressed and forgotten by the capitalist system" (CLAC 2010 : 4).

All instances of the Convergence such as working groups and the general assembly, as well as all groups and collectives working alongside the coalition, operate according to the principles of direct democracy. Moreover, activists involved in CLAC 2010 insist on the fact that in order to resist and fight capitalism, the legitimacy of the G8 and G20 leaders must be undermined using a variety of tactics. In that spirit, action days focusing on issues identified as primordial by activists taking part in the movement have been planned. Amongst the most pressing topics were: the auto-determination of Aboriginal peoples, environmental justice and migrant justice. The CLAC 2010 also called for the presence of an anti-capitalist contingent in a large-scale union and community march, followed by an anti-capitalist carnival organized in a festive and inclusive spirit. The last day was reserved for the expression of various direct autonomous actions by groups affiliated to the Convergence.

This resistance program was never fully manifested because activists mobilized in Toronto were subject to mass repression even before the projected start of the demonstrations and actions. In response to those events,

> *More than 1000 people have gathered on Saint-Louis Square [in Montreal] yesterday around noon, following the 2010 Anti-Capitalist Convergence's initiative, to denounce the 900 arrests made by Toronto's police force last weekend for the G20 Summit's demonstrations. (…) Yesterday, protesters marched peacefully for nearly two hours and a half along Saint-Denis and Sherbrooke streets, as well as on Saint-Laurent and Mont-Royal, shouting slogans like "Free our comrades!" or "It is white collar thieves in neck-*

ties we need to fight!" Dozens of parents accompanied by their children followed the processions.[8]

Activits involved in CLAC 2010 continue to organize today in order to collectively face the judicial consequences of the repression collectively and to reflect on the future of the coalition.

The anti-authoritarian movement's trajectory between 2001 and 2010
The 2001 and 2010 campaigns are landmarks that underline the existence of an unprecedented social movement in Quebec. The different chapters of the CLAC and CASA show how the movement played a key role in the mobilization against the Summit of the Americas and the demonstrations against the 2010 meetings of the G8/G20. With their radical political analysis and the implementation of this vision through the respect for a diversity of tactics, activists reconciled the different modes of expression peculiar to social movements as part of an innovative approach. Among the variety of actions put forth during the campaigns, some were held in a festive, family spirit, others aimed at popular education, all attesting an expression of dignity on the part of the actors. Each of the interventions organized under the banner of CLAC and CASA expressed the unity of the participants through slogans and dress codes reflecting their political affinities. The movement also managed to maintain the commitment of a large number of demonstrators during these campaigns, despite the delibitating repression by the police.

External observation of the movement, that is to say from its appearances in public events, might lead us to conclude there was a general weakening of the movement between these two campaigns, as the temporary disappearance of the coalitions might suggest. In addition to the police repression the movement had to face in the aftermath of the 2001 Summit, changes in international and national political climates gave activists food for thought regarding the nature and the possibility of their involvement. In Quebec just as elsewhere, the September 11, 2001 events and the war that followed caused a shock wave in the social and political landscape. Of similar importance were the election of governments on the right end of the ideological spectrum, both in Quebec and at the federal level[9].

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[8] Excerpts from Arianne Lacoursière, «Libérez nos camarade», *La Presse*, 2 juillet 2010.
[9] The Liberl Party of Quebec was elected in 2003 and the Conservative Party of Canada took office for the first time in 2006.

Within CLAC a period of major questioning followed the 2001 mobilization regarding with the relevance of the coalition, during which several activists expressed differences with the movement. Identity emerged as the basis for the expression of grievances as many activists expressed their feeling of being left out of the movement. As one activist mentionned:

> (…) CLAC was not exactly eco-friendly. There were many people who described themselves as eco-anarchists but they wouldn't go to CLAC meetings because it didn't correspond to their positions. Some were tired with CLAC, because environment was never a priority. Me too, what frustrated me was that, ok, I do pamphletering, I do diffusion work against imperialism and all that, but what personaly brought me to activism, it's never discussed, it's never a collective priority, it's never questioned or debated. To me, it's the ecological perspective that brought me here. But there always seem to be something more urgent.[10]

Various other statements were expressed in the same vein, a gay male activist reported:

> (…) when I was in CLAC's general assemblies, I would feel put aside. Whenever I would have a discussion with people, it was very much heterocentered, there was a lot of heterosexism. People would never ask me if I had a boyfriend. It was always : "so, do you have a girlfriend?" I couldn't believe it : these were anarchist activists talking like that?! (CRAC 2010a : 24)

These challenges, including the expression of this unease by activists, lead to a period of important circumspection within the movement immediately following the 2001 and 2002 campaigns. The decision to put and end to the coalitions that had coordonated the mobilizations did not lead to the fragmention of the movement, however. On the contrary, not only did the anti-authoritarian movement persist until today but its collective identity actually developed between 2001 and 2010. The anti-authoritarian perspective continues to be at the heart of the political analysis, the organizational structure and the action strategies of the movement's constituents. Nevertheless, the content of this perpective adjusted regarding each of those aspects during this period, due to the internal life of the movement.

First, on the organizational level, a diversification and decentralization of struggles occurred in the movement between 2001 and 2010 (Delisle-L'Heureux and Sarrasin forthcoming; Delisle-L'Heureux and Kruzynski 2007). Activists saw advocacy on issues close to their interests and everyday concerns as achieving both a diffusion of the anti-authoritarian perspective to a variety of social struggles in order to radicalize their perspective, as well as broadening the scope of the

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[10] Excerpts from an activist's interview from the group Liberterre.

issues discussed in the anti-authoritarian movement. The slogan "to radicalize ecologists and ecologize anarchists"[11] summarizes this position. In this sense, the anti-authoritarian perspective is now significant in a myriad of groups and collectives created in the last decade by anti-authoritarians whose work is oriented towards various social and political causes (Delisle-L'Heureux and Sarrasin forthcoming; Gaudet and Sarrasin 2007). This anti-authoritarian perspective is linked to issues ranging from environmental and feminist struggles to those relating to social housing, migration of people, urban development, police brutality or Native struggles, to name only a few. This shift is reflected in the fact that CLAC 2010 received the endorsement of groups and collectives, rather than being mainly composed of individuals as in 2001.

In terms of political positions, the calling into question of the foundations of the capitalist system and the state, which initially formed the main rallying point for those involved in the movement, expanded to be connected with the denunciation of a larger number of corrolary systems of domination. Although the CLAC in 2001 declared itself to be against all forms of oppression, the analysis of power dynamics related to patriarchy, racism, colonialism, heteronormativity, anthropocentrism and ableism, among others, is much more assertive and further developed in the 2010 formation of the group. In parallel to these critical positions, the movement now expresses more clearly the values it seeks to promote and that guide the actions of activists, among which are "social justice, equality, mutual aid, solidarity, spontaneity, autonmy, democracy, diversity, creativity" (CRAC 2011a; Lambert-Pilotte *et al.* 2007). Finally, in terms of strategies, there are calls to concrete and daily actions that go beyond the use of street protests as a mode of action. This is articulated in a double approach aimed at delegitimizing the established order while simultaneoulsy promoting the construction of political, social, economic and cultural alternatives.

The roles of identity in the anti-authoritarian movement in Quebec

The last section of the paper will demonstrate how identity work of and in the movement has contributed to the adjustment of its collective identity along the lines previously described. The multiple roles identity has played in the anti-authoritarian movement in Quebec is suggested as an explanation of its capacity to formulate a collective identity that progressively encompassed

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[11] «Radicaliser les écolos et écologiser les anars», Liberterre, CRAC 2008b.

individual differences within the movement. This is revealed by documenting the identity work processes undertaken by the movements' constituents under each of the analytical dimensions of identity, in face of the challenges it confronted during the years of less public visibility and mobilization.

Identity for empowerment

As argued by many social movement scholars, a shared sense of collectivity, what Bernstein has labeled identity for empowerment, is necessary for the mobilization of any social movement (Reger *et al.* 2008; Bernstein 2008, 1997; Morris 1992). As discussed previously, the core of the anti-authoritarian identity today lies in its political stance against varied forms of oppression, which activists and the movement recognized as encompassing more dimensions. Oppression is thus defined as all types of illegitimate power institutionalized into systems and norms that confer on certain social groups a position of domination over other social groups, such as men over woman, heterosexuals over homo/bi/trans-sexuals, human beings ovre other types of living beings, and so on. (CRAC 2011c). Resting on that analysis, anti-authoritarian activists gradually came to understand their respective grievances and issues of struggle as being interconnected to one another in a common fight against oppression. This "oppositional consciousness" (Mansbridge and Morris 2001) linking activists together into a social movement came to be articulated through the construction of a community[12] where solidarity is enacted in a shared political culture, supported by networks, institutions and events rooted in this anti-authoritarian perspective.

Within the broad anti-authoritarian community, the first level of organization is composed of groups and collectives of between 5 to 20 people organizing on specific issues on the basis of a shared affinity, whether it be anchored in affective bonds, geographical proximity, common interest or social status (CRAC 2011a). Some activists involved in those groups and collectives

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[12] Social movement communities serve as "the context for groups to articulate and act out these collective identities" (Reger 2002: 711). They support the work of activists in key periods of mobilization as well as outside the public expressions of a social movement (Staggenborg 1998). A social movement community can be recognized by the existence of mutual relations between individuals connected to each other by a shared political culture and more formally linked through networks and joint participation in activities. Such a community is therefore supported by a variety of organizational forms ranging from social movement organizations, movement community centers and varying degrees of institutionalization, defined as established links with institutions outside the social movements sector (universities, government agencies, businesses, etc.) (Buechler 1990; Staggenborg 1998).

feel devoted to one particular issue, whereas others can be seen as "free electrons" (Pleyers 2004), individuals simultaneously involved in various struggles and composing a "shared personnel" (Meyer et Whittier 1994) among different groups and collectives. On a second level, these groups, collectives and individuals organizing on related issues form various networks interconnected more or less directly to one another. On the basis of this conception, CRAC has identified networks working on issues of antiracism/anti-colonialism/anti-imperialism; state violence; international solidarity; unionism, labor, poverty and inequality; urban planning; ecology; radical feminism; and radical queer politics (CRAC 2011a).

These groups and networks come together on specific occasions to work on larger ad-hoc campaigns, such as the ones described in the 2001 and 2010 vignettes. They also meet in other gatherings such as the Montreal Anarchist Bookfair, the March 15th protest against police brutality and the May 1st anti-capitalist rally, to name only a few. Coalitions like the Bloc-AMP Montreal and the CLAC 2010 also facilitate networking on ongoing basis. The community also provides ressources that ensure the diffusion and the embodiment of the anti-authoritarian perspective, on alternative terms to the market logic. For example, documentation centres and libraries, autonomous living spaces, research groups, bycicle repair shops, childcare collective, independant media centers, self-managed work places, screen printing workshops, independant publishers, breweries and artistic collectives all form an infrastructure progresively created by and for the community. These common ressources, be they temporary (TAZ, Temporary Autonomous Zones) or permanent (PAZ, permanent autonomous zones), support the work of the diferent groups and networks in many ways. Perhaps more importantly, they provide for moments and spaces where activists working on different issues meet and share their experiences, knowledge, analysis and practices (CRAC 2011a).

Through this social movement community, anti-authoritarians use identity as a form of empowerment. It is a place, a structure, where people come to develop formal and informal relationships on the basis of a shared perspective, albeit applied to different issues. Therefore, recognizing commonality between themselves anchored in political principles, forms of organizing and strategies for action, they come to broader their conception of what it means to be anti-authoritarian today.

Identity as a strategy

As noted in the social movement litterature, activists and social movements may incorporate aspects of their identity into their strategy, by making tactical choices regarding how to best portray themselves (Poletta and Jasper 2001). Identity deployment therefore means "expressing identity such that the terrain of conflict becomes the individual person so that the values, categories and practices of individuals become subject to debate" (Bernstein and Olsen 2009; Bernstein 2008, 1997). This expression of identity can be deployed both at the individual and the collective level. It refers to the way activists put forth certain images of themselves in order to best achieve their goals, whether they be to transform mainstream culture and institutions, to change participants or simply to educate legislators and the public (Einwohner 2006: 38). It can be used along a continuum from education to critique, the former challenging the dominant culture's perception of the minority or used strategically to gain legitimacy by playing on uncontroversial themes, the later challenging dominant cultural assumptions about the "naturalness" of certain roles (Bernstein and Olsen 2009). This identity work is enacted when activists make decisions about whether to express their similarities or differences from targets, opponents and even each other (Reger *et al.* 2008).

The sense of belonging to a community whose constituents are all perceived to be engaged in a fight against oppression translates for anti-authoritarian activists into the endorsement of a variety of identities. As an example, when asked how one activist self-identifies, a person anserwered that she simultaneously conceived of herself "as queer, as a person of color, as diaspora, as a woman, as a cisgender privileged person[13], as a radical feminist, as anti-racist, anti-imperialist and anti-colonial, as anti-authoritarian."[14] The cohabitation of these identities within one social movement is rendered possible because of the conception of forms of oppression as being interrelated rather than competing with one another. For anti-authoritarian activists, organizing around identity is conceived as a strategic maneuver rather than an essentialist posture (Sandoval 2000; Bernstein 2005). It allows for the presence of a diversity of personal and social identities under the umbrella of one larger anti-authoritarian collective identity, without one of the

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[13] A cisgendered person is someone who is socially privileged by the fact of being non-transgender.
[14] Excerpts from a CRAC interview with an activist involved in the anti-racist/anti-colonial network.

dimensions enclosed being more salient than the others. More precisely, it allows for different identities to be salient at different times within the movement (Reger 2002).

Anti-authoritarians will therefore choose to advocate for one particular identity or another depending on the needs expressed by the movement's constituents and according to the analysis of the political, social and economic conjoncture at the time. Being aware of the interconnection of all fights against forms of oppression, activists engage periodicly in what are deemed to be "front-line struggle" (CRAC 2011c). This allows for the prioritizing of certain struggles at certain times, depending on the urgency of a situation. For example, activists from various networks within the movement will respond to calls for action from groups organizing on specific issues such as migrant justice when individuals -from or outside the movement- face imminent deportation. This sense of implication or being affected translates into solidarity work with particular communities : support committees for families of a young racialized individual brutalized by the police are formed, while others engage in community-based work with Native people.

One approach to understanding the relationship between movement identities and the formation of coalitions across issues is to examine how activists use their identity to legitimate participation in a social movement in which they are not directly implicated (Bernstein 2005: 63). "Ally activism" is thought of as a way to justify involvement in a struggle on the basis of the relationship that bonds people together (Myers 2008). In the case of the anti-authoritarian movement, activists engage in struggles on various issues at different times because they come to understand the bonds that make all fights against oppression a common struggle. The ability of anti-authoritarians to play with various identities rests on the simultaneous celebration of sameness to one another on the basis of their common engagement in a fight against oppression, along with the expression of differences on the basis of their social location regarding systems of oppression.

In that sense, if not directly concerned by a given situation, activists come to conceive of themselves as allies to the individuals in a situation of oppression. This is done by acknowledging for the particular privileges they might themselves benefit from, as members of dominant social

groups (CRAC 2011c). Indeed, one individual may be oppressed economically, but receive social advantages as a heterosexual man. Another may experience oppression for the fact of being a lesbian woman, but enjoy privileges for being white-skinned and well-educated. Activists will accordingly "take responsibility" of their situation in that struggle by recognizing those structural privileges as a mode of fighting against oppression on that behalf. The analysis of oppression developed within the movement therefore involves a relation of reciprocity between its members on the basis of their respective social locations that allows for the strategic use of identity.

Identity as a goal

Identity can be a goal of social movement activism, by either gaining acceptance for a hitherto stigmatized identity or deconstructing categories of identities (Bernstein 2008). In the last vein, "movements that have identities as a goal are motivated by activists' understanding of how categories are constituted and how these categories, codes and ways of thinking serve as axes of regulation and domination" (Bernstein et De la Cruz 2009 :1). Considering that in such catgories lie the cultural basis of inequalities, it is suggested that in order to understand identity as a goal of social movements, the way identity is related to power must be made explicit. This implies broadening the conception of power, traditionally linked to the state, towards a multi-institutional politics model that views power as rooted in a variety of overlapping institutions (Armstrong and Bernstein 2008).

As argued throughout this paper, the anti-authoritarian fight against all forms of oppressions is based on the use of various identities according to individuals' social location. These uses of identity as a source of empowerment and as a strategy is accompanied by the will of activists to work on the transformation of power dynamics as they unfold in everyday life. An important challenge activists face in their struggles against oppression is the awareness that they weild power themselves, in spite of their political engagement (Delisle-L'Heureux and Sarrasin forthcoming). Unequal relations may arise unintentionally between certain individuals or groups of individuals, be it because of a particular social status (nationality, for example) or an individual's personal competencies (the person's high computer skills or capacity to speak in public, among others). Such a situation then confers implicit powers and privileges to certain people at the expense of others.

Therefore, considering that social relationships in society are based on differentiation and stratification, anti-authoritarian activists aim at challenging this by developing non-hierarchical relationships with each others -and beyond- (Breton *et al.* forthcoming). This is not to devalue difference, but rather to acknowledge and account for differences, collectively negotiating potentially unequal power relations in an attempt to undermine and ultimately dismantle them (Breton *et al.* 2011). It aims at transforming patterns of internalized oppression and domination. The means used for the advancement of social change must therefore, be free of such power dynamics.

In their use of identity as a goal, anti-authoritarian activists aim at creating "safe spaces" where power dynamics can be uncovered and addressed. Within these safe spaces, activists experience prefigurative practices in order to deconstruct power dynamics between individuals. Following this idea, the groups and collectives composing the anti-authoritarian movement have developed mechanisms to deal with issues of power. Some organizational dynamics including non-mixed caucuses around certain identities (women or people of color, for example) or alternating turns to speak between men and women, as well as first and second interventions, help to bring about an understanding of the distribution of power between social groups (Roth 2008). Workshops, trainings and do-it yourself practices are also important mechanisms that ensure skill-sharing and task-rotation between activists, so that the most valorised responsabilities in organizing (for example, speaking with the media or facilitating an assembly) will not always be assumed by the individuals who come to activism with the most resources.

Other mechanisms such as "check in" and "check out", periods in which activists freely express their feelings at the beginning and at the end of a meeting, as well as the "vibe keeper" function, which entitles an activist to provide feed back on non-explicit interactions that might have occurred between people during a meeting, rest on the recognition of emotions as potentially oppressive dynamics. Collective deliberation, resting in part on consensus decision making, is also an important aspect of the reconstruction of social relations aimed at by anti-authoritarian activists. The use of discursive practices also help to socially situate activists to one another. A "cisgendered person" then refers to an individual who is socially privileged by the fact of having a sexual identity that corresponds to the expected behavior related to that person's birth-identified

gender, where as an "abled person" refers to someone who is socially privileged by having mental and physical faculties that correspond to the defined normality.

This use of identity as a goal in "prefigurative spaces" (Futrell and Simi) of the anti-authoritarian community in Quebec is based on a conception of social change as an ongoing process (CRAC 2011b). It rests on the disruption of the binaries on which power structures are constructed and maintained, such as public/outwardly visible tasks vs private/housekeeping tasks or racialized vs non-racialized person. In that view, the embodiement of alternative experiences in the *here and now* becomes part of a larger engagement towards significant political transformation, aiming at the deconstruction of social categories.

Discussion and conclusion

The anti-authoritarian movement that emerged on the public scene during the 2001 Summit of the Americas and resurfaced nearly ten years later in the context of the G8/G20 protests in Ontariodid not disappear between these two large public moments. It has been able to persist in-between these major dispays of contention because of its capacity to adapt its collective identity to the internal challenges it had to face. The integration of individual identity claims into a broader collective identity has been rendred possible by the identity work conducted by activists in relation to the different functions identity plays in a social movement. This capacity to use identity as a source for empowerment, as a strategy and as a goal has further deepened the links between the movement's participants and rests on a political understanding of identity claims. The multiple identities expressed by individuals in the movement are therefore contained in the collective identity of the movement and not perceived as being in competition with one another. Rather, they are seen as corollary in a fight against all forms of oppression. This encompassing identity serves as a source of empowerment in the social movement community anti-authoritarians have created. It also allows activists to engage in various struggles on the basis of the reciprocity that bonds them with other individuals in different social locations. That fight against oppression translates as well into a goal of the anti-authoritarian social movement as activists engage in prefigurative practices that aim at deconstructing power relations.

Uses of identity in the anti-authoritarian movement in Quebec are interconnected and mutually reinforce each other. As such, identity is a source for empowerment as it links various struggles conducted in an anti-authoritarian perspective through the belonging to a social movement community. As the collective identity of the movement correspondingly enlarges to encompass grievances formulated by activits, so do the strategic options individuals can play upon when engaging in their work against oppression. This strategic use of identity is then constructed on a variety of social locations, whether it be in the situation of an oppressed person or the position of a privileged individual in that given situation. Finally, the more types of oppression are unveiled and played upon on the basis of individual identities, the more individuals come to broader their understanding of power dynamics. As a consequence, identity as a goal is used in the experience of prefigurative practices to deconstruct social categories and engage, here and now, in the process of social change.

Drawing on examples from the anti-authoritarian movement in Quebec, this argument hopes to contribute to the literature on social movements by adding an empirical elaboration of the way identity is used in collective action. As intended with Bernstein's model, it wishes to question the dichotomy between political and cultural objectives by calling into question the static conception of identity often displayed in the literature. The multiple uses of identity by the anti-authoritarian movement shows a more fluid embodiement of identity, allowing for the cohabitation of various identity postures in one social movement. This allows us to question upfront notions deemed to be fundamental not only in the study of social movements but also in political science more generally, such as the traditional understandings of the political nature of collective actions and the way they relate to power. The argument developed in this paper shows how political work can be undertaken on the basis of identity claims, transgressing differences towards a common engagement for social change. Futher more, it demonstrates that power dynamics not only unveil in the relation to state authorities, but are linked to various institutional and cultural institutions.

As stated at the beginning of this paper, these ideas are a work-in-progress that need further development and articulation. For one thing, we plan to deepen our demonstration by adding more empirical examples of the multiples uses of identity in the anti-authoritarian movement in Quebec. To reinforce the main argument based on the importance of endogenous dynamics in the

extension of the collective identity of the movement, we also realize that the exploration of other factors that might have influenced the movement's trajectory should be explored. Finally, we are aware that more analysis needs to be conducted in order to unveil the causal mechanisms that link all identity dimensions together. In this perspective, it is our hope that the discussion that will follow on the basis of this presentation will lead to a fruitful conversation that will benefit all scholars interested in such movement dynamics.

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