Actors' traits and relational patterns in collective action fields:
An essay in honor of Peter Groenewegen

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I first met Peter Groenewegen in Trento in the early 2000, through prominent organization theorist Silvia Gherardi. While Silvia is a staunch supporter of qualitative, interpretative approaches to organizational research (Gherardi 2006), my work on collective action relies heavily on formal network analysis and more standard quantitative techniques (Diani 2015). That Peter secures the admiration of people so different in styles as Silvia and myself is proof to his intellectual versatility, and his ability to inspire research which may be highly heterogeneous in focus and method.

In this chapter, I will draw on Peter's long standing interest in fields, and particularly on his recent assessment of fields in organization research (Zietsma et al. 2017), to enrich my own work on what I have called "collective action fields." So far I have used the concept of field in an inclusive way, to indicate sets of individuals and/or organizations, engaged from a voluntary basis in the promotion of collective action and the production of collective goods. In particular, I've treated "collective action fields" as broadly synonymous to "civil society". Engaging with Peter's and his co-authors' work offers the opportunity to refine my own use of the field concept, and also to identify a different way to address what has been a key theme in my work, namely, the need to move from an aggregative to a relational view of collective processes (Diani 1995, 2015). Regardless of the scale of the phenomena we are investigating (a riot, a single-issue campaign, a large scale concerted effort to affect national politics), the properties of the actors or the events attached to them only tell a part of the story. While we are well aware that a collectivity is never the simple sum of its part, theoretical and methodological difficulties often drive us to focus precisely on the properties of such parts. Accordingly, although the problem of turning potentially disconnected events and actors into larger coordinated efforts has been at the core of the analysis of modern social movements (Tilly 1984, 2004; Tarrow 2011), for practical reasons a "movement" is still frequently portrayed by the distribution of the traits of the individuals active within it, the organizations mobilizing on similar goals, or the events promoted by them.

My own approach to social movements as a distinct form of network organizing (Diani 1992, 2013, 2015) can be read precisely as an attempt to move from views of collective processes as aggregations of elements with certain characteristics to systems of relations that connect such elements to each other and to their environment. In doing so, I have taken a very inclusive view of collective action fields, looking for the connections between actors, regardless of whether their profile was close to common sense expectations of how a "social movement organization (SMO)" or a "public interest group" should look like. Many studies move by assuming basic differences between SMOs as organizations expressing a quest for radical change or willingness to engage in protest, and other organizational types. In contrast, I have made no such assumptions, and have instead defined social movements as a distinct form of network multiplexity, connecting a range of groups and associations. More specifically, I have tried to differentiate social movements from other "modes of coordination" of collective action, defined on a relational basis (Diani 2012, 2013, 2015, chap. 2).

At the same time, moving "from aggregations to relations" has not meant ignoring the characteristics of the actors involved in distinct relational patterns. To the contrary, having

identified distinct modes of coordination (each corresponding to distinct structural positions) within fields, I have looked for homophily mechanisms, namely, for actors' traits accounting for their location in a distinctive position. My exploration of civic networks in cities like Bristol and Glasgow (Diani 2015) and later Cape Town (Diani, Ernstson, and Jasny 2018) has shown that (a) different structural positions within the same collective action field in a specific locality are often occupied by actors with different characteristics; (b) at the same time, there is considerable variation in the properties of actors occupying similar structural positions in different cities, in particular between organizations that in different cities are involved in a social movement mode of coordination (not all social movements attract the same kind of organizations).

Peter's work on fields suggests a different approach to combining relational mechanisms and actors' properties. While I start resolutely from relations and bring properties in only at a later stage, the classical view to fields represented by Peter and his co-authors starts from treating fields (and specific structural positions within them) as sets of actors combining properties and relations. Accordingly, searching for social movements within fields means starting from actors with specific traits (e.g., identification with a specific social movement) and exploring the ties between them to ascertain to what extent one can really speak of a field rather than a simple, disconnected (or loosely connected) set of similar actors.

The goal of this chapter is to compare Peter's and my approach to the structure of fields, and their different ways to compare properties and relations. My argument develops in the following steps: first, I summarize the basics of my own approach to "modes of coordination" as different relational models of collective action within fields; then, I review the main tenets of Peter's recent conceptualization of organizational fields; next, I proceed to re-analyze data from my study of civic networks in British localities, focusing in particular on Glasgow, from a "Groenewegian perspective"; finally, I conclude by quickly comparing the portrait of local civil society that emerges from this exercise with some key findings from the original study (Diani 2015), and discussing some pros and cons of either approach.

Modes of coordination

By 'mode of coordination' (MoC) I mean the mechanisms through which resources are allocated within fields, decisions taken, collective representations elaborated, feelings of solidarity and mutual obligation forged. We can identify at least two broad classes of mechanisms, different combinations of which define different modes. They may be associated to *resource allocation* and *boundary definition*. Resource allocation includes the whole set of procedures through which decisions are taken regarding the use of resources – from choice of agendas, strategies and tactics to selection of leadership and resource mobilization. Within specific organizations, such decisions may be taken and implemented through formal as well as informal procedures, although in most cases through a combination of the two. We can extend this logic, however, to organizational fields, by noting that resource allocation may also take place through informal exchanges between groups and organizations (and even individuals, the more so the more they can control specific resources) that maintain their independence and autonomy. In some cases, actors may concentrate most of their resources on their own project and devote a very limited amount of resources to collaborative projects,

which results in fairly sparse exchange networks. In other cases, resources invested in collaboration may be substantial and are more likely to lead to fairly dense networks.

Mechanisms of *boundary definition* may also display both at the level of specific organizations and of broader organizational fields. Boundaries are criteria that classify elements of social life in different groups and categories, while shaping the relations between elements both within and across those groups (Abbott 1995; Tilly 2005). Boundary definition may be generated through ideational elements, social representations, framing processes, as well as through relational mechanisms (e.g, multiple involvements in groups by individuals). For example, "the environmental justice movement [in SA] contains pockets of strong personal relations, collective identities, thick social networks marked by a social cohesiveness ….. for many activists social interactions have a depth that contrast with the thin, atomized identities of citizen and consumer" (Cock 2006, 214). Similar remarks may apply to very diverse instances of collective action (Diani 2015).

Boundary definition may be regarded as an essential component of processes of identity building, helping to establish connections across time and space: e.g., between phases in individual or organizational lives, or between different generations, or between events occurring simultaneously in different locations, etc. (Melucci 1996, chap. 4; Pizzorno 2008). These processes are often located at the level of specific organizations, regardless of their level of formalization, as people identify with a distinct corporate actor and interact with its members in ways that are significantly different from relations to outsiders. At the same time, organizations and individuals within a field may develop mechanisms of identification and boundedness that are not restricted to specific organizations – again, more or less formal – but come instead to include a multiplicity of groups and organizations, that still maintain their specificity and distinctiveness. We may see, in other words, the emergence of 'double boundaries', some focusing on specific groups/organizations, others involving broader subsets of a field (it may also happen that identification by individuals with specific groups disappears, to be replaced exclusively by identification with broader entities – such as a 'subcultural community' or, indeed, a 'social movement').

It is possible to think of different MoC as different combinations of mechanisms of resource allocation and boundary definition, both classified in terms of their focus being primarily on specific groups/organizations or on the multiplicity of actors involved in a collective action field (or at least in a subset of them). This generates a four-fold typology that differentiates between social movement, coalitional, subcultural/communitarian and organizational MoC (see table 1 below).

Table 1 about here

Looking at different combination of these two types of mechanisms makes it explicit that having many people interested in a given cause, many protest events occurring on issues that seem more or less related to a set of common problems, and/or a set of organizations mobilizing on similar issues does not warrant per se the existence of a social movement. It is certainly difficult to think of a movement in the absence of such elements, but the reverse does not automatically apply. A movement is in place when we have a particular form of

coordinating those elements, consisting of informal exchanges between multiple actors on the basis of a shared definition of boundaries (what in earlier work I referred to as collective identity (Diani 1992).

In a social movement mode of coordination, the terms of inter-organizational collaboration are informal, and have to be renegotiated each time a new issue/opportunity/ threat emerges. In other words, each collective action event is the product of a specific negotiation between a multiplicity of formally independent, and often highly heterogeneous, actors. This does not mean that practices of repeated collaboration between different organizations may not generate informal routines that reduce transaction costs, however, these routines are not formalized. Negotiations between movement actors refer to several aspects of mobilization campaigns, including the articulation of their specific goals, the choice of the most appropriate tactics and mobilizing messages, the identification of the social sectors from which to search for support, the contributions that each coalition partner is expected to give.

Mechanisms of *boundary definition*[1] are crucial in social movements for a number of reasons, the most obvious being that movements have no formal boundaries and no formally defined criteria for inclusion or exclusion. There are no formal 'social movement members', as the only criterion for 'membership' – better: for being part - is direct involvement with activities and/or organizations that are associated with the movement. By 'associated' we mean that they are socially constructed as linked to a broader collective experience called 'movement'. Therefore, the boundaries of a movement are defined by processes of mutual recognition whereby social actors recognize different elements as part of the same collective experience and identify some criteria that differentiate them from the rest. Those elements may be individuals or organizations, but also events.

Mechanisms of boundary construction secure the continuity of collective action over time and space. Social movements exist, in other words, because both actors mobilized in them and (more or less sympathetic or interested) observers are capable of locating in a broader picture actors and events that operate in different points in space and time (e.g. environmentalism exist to the extent that people are capable of providing a common interpretation for actions on nuclear energy, industrial pollution, animal protection, occurring in different localities and at different time points). Like resource coordination, boundary definition also often takes a multidimensional, complex form. We only rarely have clear cut identities and boundaries, neatly separating movements from their environment. Rather, we have boundaries that are often permeable. It is important to stress the dual nature of boundary definition, at the organizational level and the movement level. The fact that there is a movement-level identity, that is, a boundary encompassing all the actors associated with a movement, does not mean a demise of organizational identity. To the contrary, feelings of belongingness, solidarity, and obligations may be, and often are, addressed to both specific organizations and a movement taken as a whole (Lofland 1996, 11). In general, one may expect some kind of balance between organizational and broader identities.

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[1] Tilly (2005, 137-146) lists a number of specific mechanisms associated to boundary definition.

In my empirical work, I treat the resource exchanges we have called "transactions" as proxies for mechanisms of resource allocation, while the ties treated by shared memberships and personal connections ("social bonds") can be regarded as mechanisms of boundary definition (for a discussion: Diani 2015, ch.1). It is precisely the coupling of informal resource allocation **and** boundary definitions encompassing multiple actors that defines the analytical properties of a 'social movement mode of coordination'. However, social movement scholars are the first to agree that "social movements are only one of numerous forms of collective action" (Snow, Soule, and Kriesi 2004, 6). More broadly, within fields it is usually possible to identify multiple modes of coordination. In terms of resource allocation, **coalitions** are actually very similar to social movements, as both consist of multiple, often heterogeneous, independent actors, sharing resources in pursuit of some shared goals. However, they differ in the nature and scope of the boundary definition mechanisms on which coalitions are founded. In contrast to social movements, the boundary work taking place in coalitions is temporary and locally circumscribed. In its pure form, a coalition is a form of instrumental, goal-oriented activity that exhausts its function either when its goal is either achieved, or when it is clear that the cause has been lost. However, it is certainly true that in practice coalitions, originally set up by organizations focusing each on its own identity, may gradually see the emergence of broader feelings of solidarity among their proponents, and thus contribute to the formation of broader social movements.

Coordination of collective action may also occur when inter-organizational linkages are sparse, yet feelings of identification with a broader collectivity are widespread, and are embedded in shared practices and mutual affiliations by individual activists. Several factors might account for the lack of dense inter-organizational networks and the prevalence of what I have called a "subcultural/communitarian" mode of coordination. Repression may increase the costs of public action, discouraging massive work on alliance building, and pushing instead activists to mobilize through the opportunities for interpersonal networking offered by apparently neutral loci of social organization such as cultural associations, churches, neighbourhood public spaces (e.g. Osa 2003). Other times, communication technology may enable people to coordinate their action without the mediation of formal organizations (Bennett and Segerberg 2013). Or, inter-organizational coalitions may be missing because challenges do not take the form of public displays of organized action, but rather take place through the multiple involvement of people in cultural associations and events, in communitarian lifestyles, and in the experimentation of individualized alternative behaviours. Epistemic communities, hackers, countercultural movement scenes provide highly heterogeneous illustrations of this style of action. Still, despite all the variation in content, these forms of action share the fact that the practices enacted by activists provide the main connection as well as the basis for boundary definition processes, in situations in which the role of groups and organizations is limited (Diani and Mische 2015).

Finally, it is also important to remember that a lot of protest activity as well as voluntary action (actually the largest part of it) follows the logic of **organizational** MoC. In this case, resource allocation and boundary definition that do not involve systematic inter-organizational networking and take largely place within specific groups or organizations. This model actually accommodates quite diverse organizational forms, that range from extremely hierarchical and formalized mass parties to extremely decentralized and informal grassroots groups; from the extremely endowed with resources, such as business associations, to the

extremely deprived, such as neighborhood action groups. For all the current rhetoric on the spread of network organizational forms, it is striking to notice how many civil society associations even of the grassroots type work mainly on their own. A systematic exploration of civil society networks in San Paulo for example found the majority of neighborhood associations ('Associações de Bairro'**)** to have no ties to other groups of the same kind (Gurza Lavalle, Castello, and Bichir 2007, 2008).

How to look for modes of coordination within fields? In a nutshell, I conduct an analysis of structural equivalence without any assumption on actors and their characteristics. I do not take, in other words, groups with a specific interest or identity as a starting point. Instead, I identify first structurally equivalent blocks based on generic alliance patterns (resource exchanges in my jargon); then I check how the boundary defining ties (social bonds) distribute across such positions. On that basis, I differentiate between clusters of groups linked to each other through multiple ties (social movement mode of coordination), through resource exchanges only (coalitional MoC), through social bonds only (yielding a subcultural/communitarian MoC) or not involved in any dense cluster of interaction (and adopting then an organizational MoC).[2] The next step is to look for mechanisms of homophily, namely, to check if the incumbents of specific structural positions/blocks stand out for any particular position. In Glasgow, I found a number of traits to differentiate organizations involved in a social movement position from those reflecting organizational or coalitional modes of coordination (Diani 2015, chap.5).

Peter and fields

Peter's and co-authors' approach to fields suggests a different balance of actors' properties and relational patterns. They identify four elements, shared by most approaches to fields, no matter how different: "First, there is the idea that fields are made up of actors who are in relationship with each other and that those relationships are structured around common meanings and common interests. Thus, there is an emphasis on a common culture and shared networks. Second, there is the idea that fields have boundaries that are established both through common meaning systems and the intensity of relationships within a field compared to outside of it. Third ….. fields have hierarchies of status and influence; all actors are not equal. Fourth, the existence of differential power, influence, and status, means that there is contestation, competition, and struggle" (Zietsma et al. 2017, 394).

One point which is somewhat ambiguous in field theory concerns the balance between the existence of shared norms and meanings and the extent of the struggles that develop around the definition of some shared meanings: "…. fields become centers of debates in which competing interests negotiate over issue interpretation. As a result, competing institutions may lie within individual populations (or classes of constituencies) that inhabit a field." (Zietsma et al. 2017, 393). In order to recognize this tension, Peter and his co-authors stress the difference between exchange fields and issue-fields, based on different levels of consolidation and stability: "Exchange fields refer to fields that …… contain a focal population

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[2] Diani (2015, chap.4). The search for "subcultural/communitarian" modes of coordination is particularly problematic as it requires extended data on core activists' multiple involvements. See Diani (2012) for an illustration.

of actors and their interaction or exchange partners (suppliers, customers, etc.).Within exchange fields, populations, rather than the full set of field members, are more likely to share practices and norms, common meaning systems, and references to a common identity ……This homogeneity does not imply lack of conflict in populations, however, as members of populations compete with one another over status and resources in front of the "audiences" of their interaction partners….. who exist within the exchange field. Exchange fields thus contain homogeneous as well as heterogeneous actors. In exchange fields, the shared objective of the field is to stabilize and coordinate exchange, membership in networks, and compatible practices" (Zietsma et al. 2017, 396).

In other words, exchange fields reflect some level of consolidation of a pattern of relations that assigns a central role to a "population" of actors located in a distinctive position within the larger field (I'll illustrate my doubts regarding this use of the term "population" later in this text). In contrast, the concept of issue field stresses the less stable and more contingent nature of fields: "fields form around issues rather than exchange relationships, and …. can be analytically identified by the set of actors that interact and take one another into account on particular issues…… such fields are distinct from exchange fields, and should be considered differently, because they have different effects on institutional processes. The purpose or focus of orchestration of issue fields is to negotiate, govern, and/or compete over meanings and practices that affect multiple fields. Issue fields typically contain the most diverse set of actors, usually including populations with distinct identities and their own commitments to their own institutional infrastructure that may be located in different exchange fields. As the focal interest is an issue that carries different meanings to different populations, multiple and conflicting logics may be more the norm than the exception." (Zietsma et al. 2017, 400).

However, even Peter and his co-authors admit that the boundaries between exchange and issue fields are not always so clear cut. Referring to what they call "interstitial issue fields", they note for example that "Over time and through negotiations, disparate groups form alliances, and shared identity and field infrastructures may emerge….. Importantly, though, once institutional infrastructure becomes stabilized within an issue field, there is little to distinguish it from an exchange field, and we could conceive of the issue field as becoming an exchange field over time." (Zietsma et al. 2017, 401). Conversely, one can expect that, while an exchange field has a dominant internal logic and some sort of established rules, once these logic becomes challenged this may turn the field into an issue field.

Social movements and fields

Social movements play multiple roles in Peter and co-authors' approach to fields: "Social movements as exchange fields ….. exist to mobilize and coordinate actors and resources to further a specific agenda or extend an ideology, and members' identity connection to the population is related to their ideological commitment. They include movement organizations, funders, corporate partners, allied movements, and so on. …… Although their overall identities vary, each identifies with the ideology of the Slow Food movement. Boundaries are quite permeable, as the intent is often to mobilize as many actors as possible to further the movement's agenda, and indeed, crossing boundaries into other fields is often a prime objective of movements (discussed below under issue fields). Social movement fields are characterized by emergent organizational collaboration and have as a consequence a quite limited institutional infrastructure ….. In such fields, hierarchy is perceived to be limited,

practices vary significantly ….. and governance is usually informal. Coordination among social movement organizations occurs through informal networks. ……….. In social movement fields, isomorphism is focused mainly on adherence to ideology rather than practices, and members discipline themselves (and each other) with a desire to maintain both their social bonds …. and the values they are emotionally invested in. Because such fields feature limited hierarchy and governance, we would expect diffusion of new practices to be spotty and feature significant variation" (Zietsma et al. 2017, 399-400).

It is certainly plausible to link isomorphism to ideology, but it might develop also as a result of the emergence of a dominant culture not driven primarily by ideology (or at least by explicit ideology. For example, a strong culture supporting professional action and an emphasis on service delivery might have similar effects than a set of ideological arguments in favor of political radicalism. But in either case such pressures should be very strong, and would also most likely result in the move from a social movement to an organizational mode of coordination. Generally speaking, heterogeneity of forms is most likely within social movement sectors and civil society in general.[3]

Peter and co-authors also highlight the role that social movements may play in the undermining of an exchange field and its transformation into an issue field. For example, "the chemical industry ….. was challenged by environmentalists seeking to make industry practices more sustainable. In the terms we have laid out above, the chemical industry was an industry exchange field that included suppliers, customers, insurers, consultants, regulators, and others. When environmentalists (a social movement population) sought to challenge the industry population's environmental performance, an issue field was created…… A common strategy for social movements is to exert influence with powerful members of the exchange field such as customers or regulators, who can then exert influence on focal industry or professional populations ….. This is a means by which social movement organizations can gain access to the boundaries around decision-making in the exchange field" (Zietsma et al. 2017, 400).

There are many affinities between the view of movements portrayed by Peter and co-authors and the one I have developed in my work, starting from the intersection of shared meanings and network connections, and the role that these play in processes of boundary definition. However, I wonder whether the strong connotation of movements as exchange fields does not somehow imply a clear hierarchical structure which is not always there (see e.g. Diani 2003). Nor are power struggles among social movement actors necessarily defined in vertical ways even though that dimension is certainly present. I also wonder whether the characterization of social movements as exchange fields does not assume too homogeneous a view of social movements as something dominated by ideology over practices, while the latter (especially repertoires) may characterize different sectors of a movement. In fairness, however, Peter and his co-authors also often point at the diversification and instability of movement fields.

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[3] One possible way to explore isomorphism would be to identify indicators such as the variance of properties like formalization or the proportion of groups depending on professional staff (or alternatively on their members' participation); and next, to see how these traits distribute across subgroups defined by seniority (older organizations should be more similar if there were an isomorphic effect) or centrality (core organizations should be more central than peripheral ones).

Their shifts in emphasis might simply reflect the inherent complexity of social movements as a distinct dynamic.

I also have some problems with Peter and co-author's use of the concept of "populations". Borrowing from organization ecology they describe populations as "a collection or aggregate of organizations that are 'alike in some respect' …. that manifest the same organizational form or identity, usually within a geographical region" (Zietsma et al. 2017, 396). They also give structural twist to the concept, suggesting that "In network terms, populations are in structurally equivalent positions within fields; they have the same type of relations with similar others." (ibidem). Now, assuming structural equivalence from similarity of traits is a big jump: it is certainly an interesting hypothesis worthy of empirical investigation but as a general principle it is highly disputable. My research certainly suggests a huge variation in the term "populations" to denote an aggregation of actors rather than a distinct network position.

Finally, my view of social movements as a mode of coordination leads me to treat them as a structural position (what Peter would call a population) within a larger field, rather than as a field (no matter if an "exchange" or an "issue" one) in its own right. The larger field within which social movements are located may be civil society if the focus is on the production of collective goods, specific policy fields, or a larger polity if other actors/foci are included. Commenting on my work, Peter and co-authors suggest that "[Diani and Bison] differentiate between movement members who do not engage in networking, those who network intensely but do not define field identity and boundaries ("coalitional"), and those who engage in multiplex relations and activities such as defining targets for the movement ("social movement organizations")." (Zietsma et al. 2017, 399). At one level, this is a misinterpretation of my work, as only organizations involved in multiplex networks are considered part of a social movement in my framework. At the same time, it also points at a critical issue in my approach, namely, whether one can be part of a movement through shared culture and ideational commitment without being extensively linked to other actors. This was a criticism raised by Christopher Rootes quite some time ago, in reference to environmentalism (Rootes 2004, 610). Perhaps involuntarily, Peter's interpretation of my typology suggests an alternative way to approach movement fields. In the next section I re-analyze some of my data from a "Groenewegian" perspective.

A "Groenewegian" analysis of collective action fields

While I look for structurally equivalent sets of actors, that I define as "social movement actors" on the basis of their relational patterns, within larger fields, a "Groenewegian perspective" suggests to (a) start from actors that share specific cultural elements and who identify with a movement; (b) treat them as a field; and (c) look for specific positions within that field. This approach represents another way of going from aggregates to relations. It would have the advantage of addressing the objection that actors may also identify with movements without being embedded in specific networks, but basically on the basis of cognitive and emotional mechanisms. Of course, this would happen at the cost of treating as "movement members" organizations with very tenuous links to activist social milieus.

In this exploration I'll look in particular at my data on civic networks in Glasgow, focusing on organizations identifying broadly with new social movements, namely environmentalists,

women's, and global justice movements.[4] About one quarter of organizations fall in this category (table 2 below also reports data on Bristol and on organizations identifying with movements fighting inequality such as poor people's or class movements). .

Table 2 about here

Figure 1 below shows the network consisting of all alliance ties, regardless of their strength. One should notice that only one organization identifying with NSMs (up triangles) is isolated, consistently with views of movements as comparatively dense networks. The graph limited to organizations identifying with NSMs suggest a certain level of connectivity among those groups (figure 2). Is there, however, a salience associated to the NSM identity? In other words, does this identity provide the basis for the drawing of boundaries between those who, do, and those who do not identify with NSMs? A crosstabulation (table 3 below) suggests that it actually does in a significant way, even though the relation is not particularly strong (odds ratio 1.9).

Figures 1-2 and Table 3 about here

A similar profile emerges if we concentrate on the stronger ties, "social bonds", combining resource exchange and deeper ties created by shared personnel (see figure 3 and table 4 below). At that level
too, identification with NSMs has some significant – if not very strong - impact of over the structure of civic networks in the city. At the same time, the distribution of the – rare – stronger ties in the networks suggests some degree of fragmentation by focus. One can notice in particular four components, consisting of political ecology groups (among them, the Greens and FoE), women's groups, peace groups (Trident and Faslane) and groups fighting for asylum seekers/refugees – basically, representatives of the main movements/campaigns within the NSM sector.

Figure 3 and table 4 about here

So far, evidence suggests a combination of cultural traits and salient networking, even with strong ties only, which authorizes to speak of a NSM field, according to Peter and co-authors' first criterion (Zietsma et al. 2001, 394). Let's now explore the internal structure of the field. A structural equivalence analysis conducted with Concor on all ties identifies four meaningful positions (blocks, in SNA language): one consisting largely of isolated groups, the second of organizations broadly focusing on environmental justice (both globally and locally), the third addressing minorities and refugee issues, and the fourth focusing on women's rights. Table 5 below shows the distribution of alliance ties across the different blocks.

Table 5 and figure 4 about there

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[4] A total of 124 voluntary organizations, active on three broad sets of issues (environment, minorities & migrants, inequality & social exclusion) were interviewed between 2000 and 2002. See Diani (2015, chap. 2) for full details.

If we check for the distribution of the few multiple ties (13 only: table 6) across the different blocks we find that the profile does not change from that of the network based on all ties. In both networks, connections tend to concentrate disproportionately within blocks 2 and 4, i.e., between organizations in the environmental justice and the women's block, while migrant organizations, internally disconnected from each other, have some connection to environmental justice but these are not reciprocated.[5] In my conceptualization, blocks 2 and 4 are closest to what I call a "social movement mode of coordination". On the other hand, the minority and migrant organizations seem acting primarily following an organizational logic among themselves (no resource exchanges nor boundary defining ties among incumbents of the position). This is entirely consistent with an earlier comparison of environmental and minority and migrant sectors, that did not focus on groups carrying a NSM identity (Diani and Pilati 2011). On that level too, the cohesion of the environmental sector was higher than that of minorities and migrant groups. At the same time, however, minority and migrant groups are linked by multiple ties to organizations in the global justice position. This suggests a hierarchical structure (Breiger 1979), based on strong ties, within the social movement field.

Table 6 about there

At the same time, the network does not display the hierarchical tendency that according to the literature characterize most fields, even though they do acknowledge that this applies to a smaller measure to social movements (Zietsma et al. 2017). Centralization is low (0.115) and fragmentation is high (0.808). A core-periphery analysis yields a small core consisting of three organizations (the three big nodes in figure 4 above) that however do not seem to play a key role in the field, neither in terms of network structure, nor in terms of substantive political prominence in the Glasgow urban scene.

Issue networks

The approach to issue networks is identical to the one followed above, yet with a focus on organizations with an interest in specific issues, rather than with a specific identity. Here I look at groups with a non-occasional interest[6] in some of the issues that may be linked to NSMs. However, in principle the same issues might also be of interest to groups with a very different perspective, including one of political conservatism. In particular I look at environmental, women's, and global justice issues (table 7 below).

Table 7 about here

The analysis of the distribution of alliances across the local civic network suggests that in contrast to the NSM identity, an interest in environmental issues has no salience, i.e., no structuring capacity over alliance networks (table 8 below). The same applies to the set of organizations interested in women's issues as they are no more likely to engage in

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[5] I.e., important members of theirs are also involved in EJ groups, but not viceversa.
[6] "Non occasional interest" means having identified as a priority at least two of the issues that correlated strongly with a factor interpretable as a "macro issue" (see Diani 2015, 41-42).

cooperation among themselves than with organizations holding different issue priorities (table 9). In both cases, focusing on social bonds only does not alter the pattern (findings not reported here). Given the broad scope of both sets of issues, the range of perspectives from which they can be approached, the relevance that new versions of these issues have had in public debates as well as public policy over several decades (since the 1970s at least), and the relative persistence of a class discourse in Glasgow, it is no surprise that mere interest in such issues be insufficient to shape the structure of the networks, and thus the field, in significant ways. In the two cases it makes little sense to speak of "environmental issue" or "women's issues" fields at all, at least from a relational perspective.

Tables 8-9 about here

Global justice issues are different: they are more recent, less established, and more clearly linked to a specific orientation, critical of the Washington consensus and of neo-liberal policies. In this case, interest in such issues has some structuring effect on the civic sector, on both generic alliance ties and stronger social bonds (tables 10-11). Having said that, it is not easy to identify further lines of structure within the network, as structural equivalence analysis identifies positions that are not easy to interpret in terms of their incumbents' traits (figure 5 below).

Tables 10-11 and figure 5 about here

Conclusions: Comparing strategies to combine relations and attributes

As I already noted, my approach to collective action fields is different from the one synthesized by Peter and his co-authors in that I start with a structural equivalence analysis, without any assumption on actors and their characteristics. I do not take, in other words, groups with a specific interest or identity as a starting point. Instead, I identify first structurally equivalent blocks based on generic alliance patterns (resource exchanges in my jargon); then I check how the boundary defining ties (social bonds) distribute across such positions and on that basis I differentiate between clusters of groups linked to each other through multiple ties (social movement mode of coordination), through resource exchanges only (coalitional MoC), or not involved in any dense cluster of interaction (and adopting them an organizational MoC). Only at this point come actors' traits into the fore, as I check if the incumbents of specific structural positions/blocks stand out for any particular position.

In Glasgow, I found a number of traits to differentiate the social movement position from those reflecting organizational or coalitional modes of coordination (Diani 2015, ch.5). Such differences were largely consistent with expectations generated by social movement theory. In this paper I have not been able to conduct a systematic analysis of homophily mechanisms for organizations claiming and identification with NSMs, or occupying different structural positions within that subset of civic actors. Still, some indications emerge, which are highly consistent with my earlier analysis:

- Identity with NSMs is also salient for social bonds; in my earlier study, identification with environmental and global justice movements was significantly more present among incumbents of the social movement block (Diani 2015, 94)

- On the other hand, interest in the environmental issues per se does not shape ties in the civic sector; this is again consistent with my previous analysis, that showed interest in environmental issues to cut across groups involved in different modes of coordination (Diani 2015, 101)

- Similarly consistent with previous analyses is the fact that interest in a less structured set of issues, linked to global justice, exerts a significant impact on the structure of civil society, thus defining the boundaries of a distinct issue field. Again, this also emerged from my previous work, as interest in global justice was found to characterize in particular the incumbents of the social movement position (Diani 2015, 102).

Peter and co-authors' approach to fields enables us to include actors that identify subjectively with a movement, yet do not have to opportunity, for whatever reason, to actively engage in sustained, multiplex networking. This might generate more nuanced accounts of the multiplexity of relational levels that might connect actors identified with a certain cause. The risk, however, might be to fall again under the negative influence of aggregative approaches, including in collectivities with a capacity of joint action what might simply be largely isolated sympathizers.

It would certainly be interesting to continue the conversation by looking at issues which have been left unresolved by the purely relational approach I used in the UK study. For example, my earlier analysis found that the incumbents of different structural positions, associated with different modes of coordination, showed similar patterns of relations to political representatives and public agencies (Diani 2015, chap.8). It would be interesting to replicate that analysis by looking first for differences between organizations inside and outside the NSM field, and then between different positions within the latter. Another theme that it would be interesting to explore is the connections and the overlaps between different movement fields. One finding from the Glasgow and Bristol study was that it actually made little sense to speak of distinct movements, associated with specific issues or identities (women, environment, urban inequality, etc.) as the organizations close to them were actually inextricably linked in a larger "social movement position" within local civil society. This suggested the opportunity to focus on the social movement sector rather than specific movements (Diani 2015, chap.9).

While further explorations might also enable us to better identify strengths and weaknesses of either approach, as of now I think it is somehow comforting to note the consistency of some of the most basic findings that the two approaches generate. Regardless of their different points of departure, both strategies also illustrate the value of network analysis for the exploration of collective action fields, *pace* some illustrious yet superficial critics.

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Table 1. Modes of coordination of collective action				
			Focus of boundary definition	
		Field		**Specific group or association**
	Field	**Social movement**		**Coalition**
Focus of resource allocation				
	Specific group or association	**Subculture/ Community**		**Organizational**

Source: Diani (2013, 2015)

Table 2. Identification with social movements in UK civic networks

Movement identity		Glasgow			Bristol	
New Social Movements		33	27%		44	33%
Poor people's Movements		21	17%		35	26%
N		124			134	

Table 3. Salience of NSM identity in Glasgow civic network (all alliance ties)		No identity		NSM identity
No identity		**174**		**58**
NSM Identity		**69**		**51**
Observed/expected				
No identity		**0.92**		**0.84**
NSM Identity		**1.00**		**2.09**
Odds ratio = 1.864				
Sig.= 0.05				

Table 4. Salience of NSM identity in Glasgow civic network (social bonds only)		No identity		NSM identity
No identity		32		9
NSM Identity		15		13
Observed/expected				
No identity		0.86		0.66
NSM Identity		1.10		2.72
Odds ratio = 1.849				
Sig.= 0.02				

Table 5. Densities of all alliance ties across structurally equivalent positions

	Block1	Block2	Block3	Block4
Block1	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Block2	0.00	0.16	0.02	0.00
Block3	0.00	0.13	0.02	0.03
Block4	0.00	0.04	0.00	0.40

Overall density = 0.05
Key to the different blocks
Block1: miscellaneous, isolated (ACTSAfr, AnimConc, BrkYouth, Concern, GvnhlYth, SthsideHous)
Block2: environmental justice (Afghan, Amnesty, FOE, Faslane, Greens, GvhhlEnv, Iona, JAM74, JstceNoWar, PositActHous, SAPTrnsprt, TRANSformSco, TalentedFutures, Trident)
Block3: minorities & migration rights (AfroCarib, AslmRghts, GlaWomAid, Oracle, PhaceWest, SHRC, SanJai, WelcRef)
Block4: women's issues (LesbResCntr, Meridian, RapeCrisis, WiseWom, WomSupprt)

Table 6. Density of social bonds across structurally equivalent positions in the NSM field

	Block1	Block2	Block3	Block4
Block1	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Block2	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.00
Block3	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.00
Block4	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10

Overall density = 0.01
Sig. = 0.02
Key to the different blocks
Block1: miscellaneous, isolated (ACTSAfr, AnimConc, BrkYouth, Concern, GvnhlYth, SthsideHous)
Block2: environmental justice (Afghan, Amnesty, FOE, Faslane, Greens, GvhhlEnv, Iona, JAM74, JstceNoWar, PositActHous, SAPTrnsprt, TRANSformSco, TalentedFutures, Trident)
Block3: minorities & migration rights (AfroCarib, AslmRghts, GlaWomAid, Oracle, PhaceWest, SHRC, SanJai, WelcRef)
Block4: women's issues (LesbResCntr, Meridian, RapeCrisis, WiseWom, WomSupprt)

Table 7. Interest in macro issues among UK civic organizations

Issues		Glasgow			Bristol	
Environment		68	55%		72	54%
Global justice		37	30%		35	26%
Women's		87	70%		71	53%
N		124			134	

Table 8. Salience of environmental issues in Glasgow civic network (all alliance ties)		No interest		Interested
No interest		66		91
Interested		61		134
Observed/expected				
No interest		0.93		1.04
Interested		0.69		1.27
Odds ratio = 2.377				
Sig.= 0.19				

Table 9. Salience of women's issues in Glasgow civic network (all alliance ties)		No interest		Interested
No interest		**28**		**64**
Interested		**70**		**190**
Observed/expected				
No interest		**0.91**		**1.00**
Interested		**0.81**		**1.10**
Odds ratio = 1.478				
Sig.= 0.62				

Table 10. Salience of global justice issues in Glasgow civic network (all alliance ties)		No interest		Interested
No interest		**133**		**83**
Interested		**62**		**74**
Observed/expected				
No interest		**0.77**		**1.12**
Interested		**0.83**		**2.41**
Odds ratio = 2.56				
Sig.= 0.002				

Table 11. Salience of global justice issues in Glasgow civic network (social bonds only)	No interest		Interested
No interest	30		10
Interested	12		17
Observed/expected			
No interest	0.89		0.69
Interested	0.82		2.82
Odds ratio = 3.54			
Sig.= 0.005			
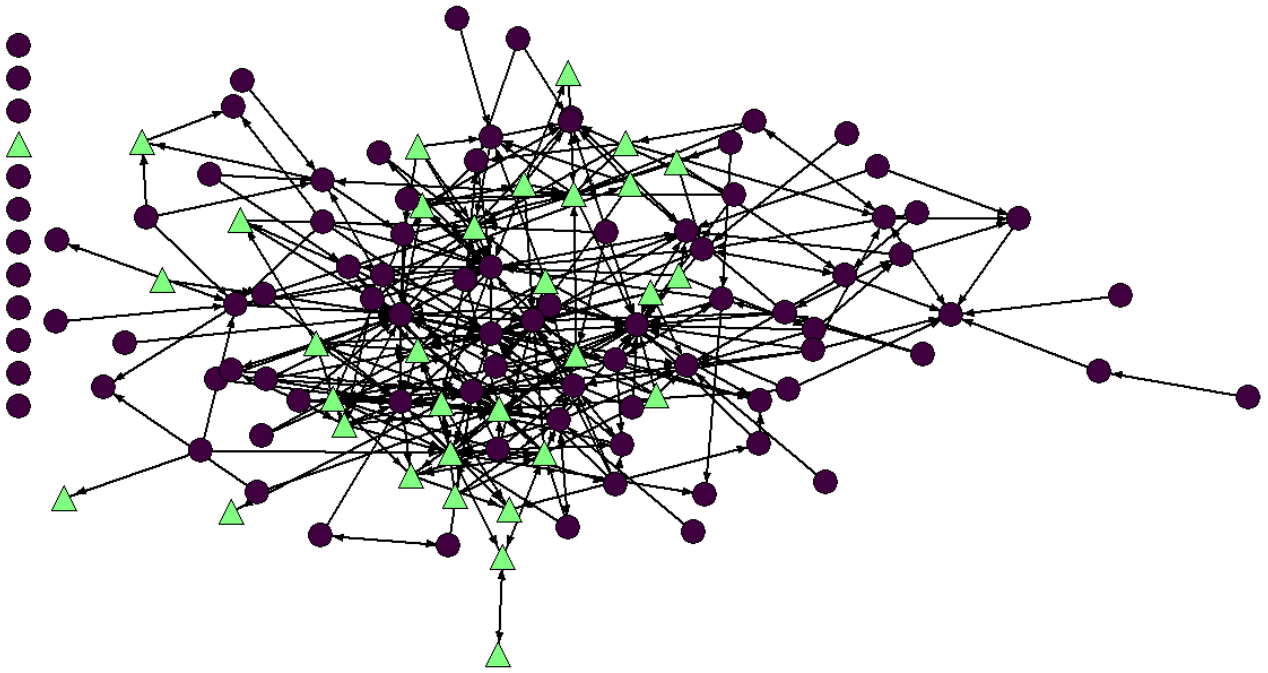
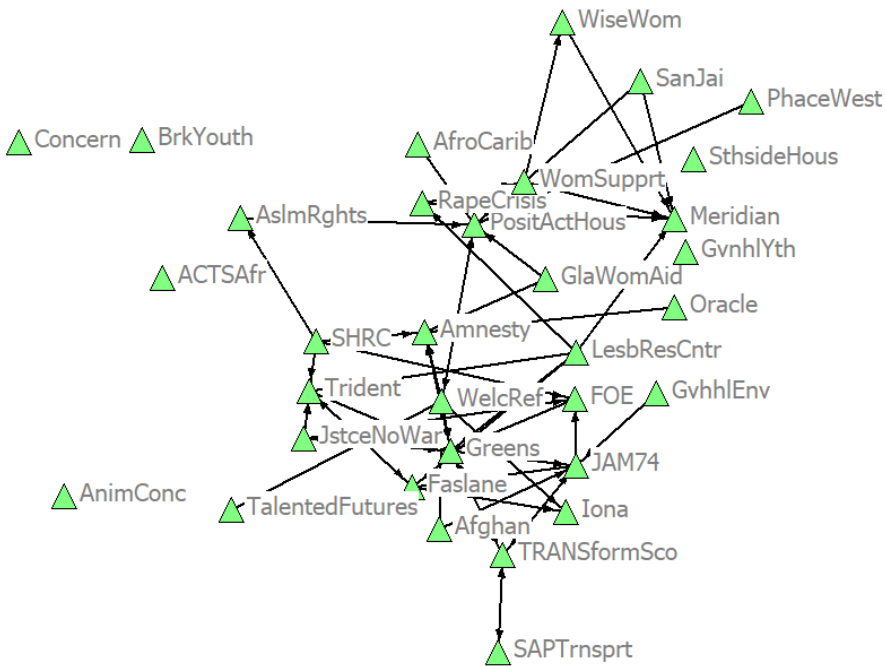Figure 1. Alliances between civic organizations in Glasgow (green triangles identify with NSMs)

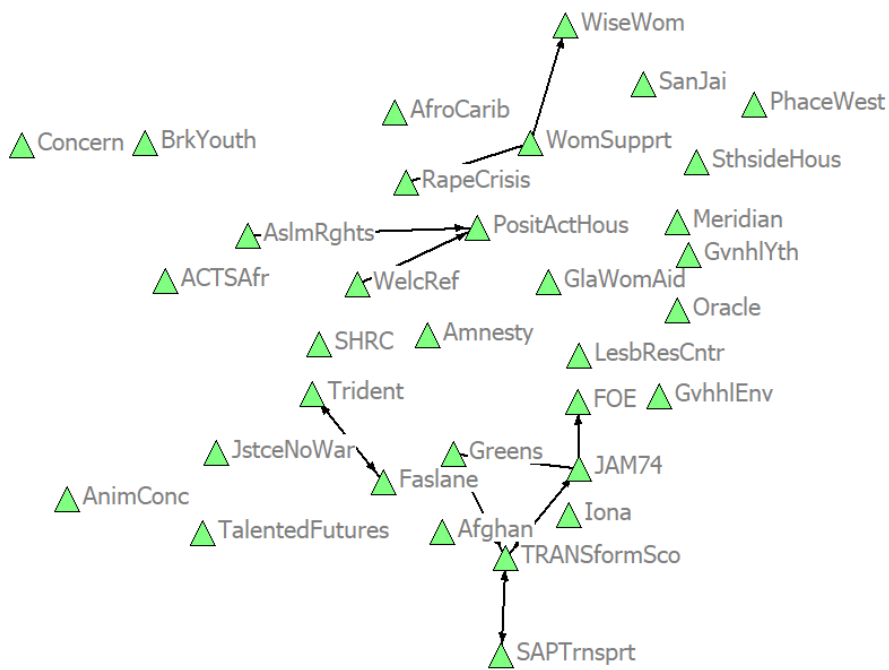Figure 2. Alliances between organizations identifying with NSMs in Glasgow

Figure 3. Alliances between organizations identifying with NSMs in Glasgow (social bonds only)
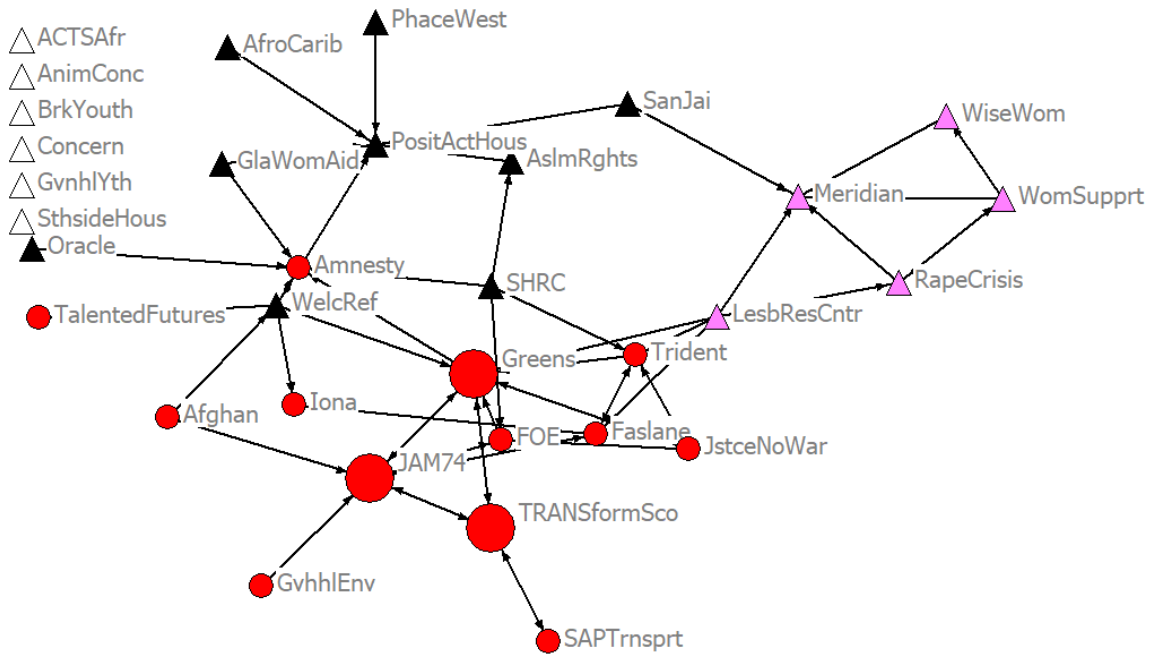
Figure 4. NSM field with structurally equivalent blocks (all alliance ties)
Key to the different blocks
White triangles: Block1 (miscellaneous, isolated)
Red circles: Block2 (environmental justice)
Black triangles: Block3 (minorities & migration rights)
Violet triangles: Block 4 (women's issues)

Figure 5. Alliances between organizations interested in global justice issues (all ties, four blocks plus isolates)