

Transnational Militancy in the Making: A Primer on the Nordic Resistance Movement and Generation Identity

Jacob Aasland Ravndal, C-REX, University of Oslo



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Introduction

Nationalist and patriot groups, in particular those with a militant or revolutionary outlook, usually emerge within nation-states and only rarely operate transnationally. However, over the past decade, there have been two notable exceptions to this rule in Europe: *The Nordic Resistance Movement* (NRM), originating in Sweden; and *Generation Identity* (GI), originating in France. Both groups are regularly described by experts and journalists as some of the most influential of their kind. However, the NRM and GI have received limited academic attention to date and are often portrayed rather crudely by the media. Therefore, this paper is intended to give a thorough introduction of both groups to inform future research, policy-making, and preventive work.

The paper is divided into five parts. Part one outlines the ideological foundation of each group: *National Socialism* in the case of the NRM; and *Identitarianism* in the case of GI. Part two traces these groups' national origins and transnational evolution. Part three compares their ideologies, strategies, organization, and types of action. In part four, the paper discusses how government and local authorities can deal with militant protest groups in a way that discourages extremism and violence, while at the same time safeguarding liberal democratic principles. Finally, part five offers a brief literature review to guide interested readers to further reading about each group.

The chosen method for this paper is the comparative case study, and the investigation relies on triangulation of three types of data: documents and propaganda produced by the groups themselves, including manifestos, books, magazines, pamphlets, manuals, online webpages, and videos; academic research; and media reporting.

Before proceeding, two key concepts used in this paper warrants a clarification because their meanings vary across different national contexts: militancy and extremism. I use the term militant in this study because both the NRM and GI describe themselves as militants. Militancy is therefore an important feature of these groups' self-perception and self-styled public

appearances. However, one should be aware that militancy has somewhat different connotations in their countries of origin. In Sweden and Northern Europe more broadly, militants are usually understood as activists demonstrating a willingness to use violence in pursuit of their political goals. In France, however, the term militant is used more broadly and could refer anyone involved in some form non-conventional political activism with a passionate slant. These differences notwithstanding, the NRM and GI appear to attach quite similar meanings to their self-styled militancy; an understanding that falls somewhere in between these two interpretations. Here, I propose four shared elements of these groups' self-styled militancy.

First, it appears that being a militant in the eyes of the NRM and GI entails a considerable degree of *personal devotion*, part of which is to accept the ideological platform or general worldview of the group. In practise, this means that group members are expected to adhere to a given ideological script developed by the group leadership or other ideological authorities, and that questioning this script is generally not appreciated, at least not publicly. A second element of militancy is *organization*, meaning that the term “militant” usually refers to activists with a formal membership to a militant group. Third, there appears to be an element of *confrontational direct action* in the ways the NRM and GI depict their militancy. In other words, they seek political change directly through provocative public acts rather than appealing to others via more conventional democratic procedures such as lobbying or writing petitions. Finally, militancy entails more for the NRM and GI than personal devotion, organization, and confrontational direct action. It is also seen as a *way of life* that may close some doors, but open others. By choosing the militant way, you may lose access to a comfortable “normie” life and perhaps also to material goods, including your job. In return, you get to know your true self, to experience emotions and pursue instincts that have been suppressed and denounced by modern societies, to fight for a just cause, to be part of a strong and unified collective, to make a difference, to matter. As Arnold Delrieux – a founding member and president of GI from 2012 to 2017 – puts it:

We are aware that we are committing ourselves to a battle of death. Globalism will kill identity, or identity will kill globalism. There is no other possible outcome. So I call upon all young Frenchmen and Europeans to join us. We have the courage of resistance and the carelessness of youth. Militant engagement is one of the last adventures worth the trouble of experiencing it today.¹

¹ Generation Identity, *We Are Generation Identity* (Arktos Media, 2013), 31.

Just like militancy, extremism is a contested term that carry different meanings across different national contexts. Because of its contested nature, I generally avoid using the term in this paper, except for in my final discussion of how government and local authorities can deal with militant protest groups in a way that discourages extremism and violence. When referring to extremism here, I rely on the most established conceptualization used in the literature on extremism and democracy more broadly, seeing extremism as being essentially anti-democratic, as opposed to other forms of radical protest that nevertheless follow democratic rules and procedures.² In addition, I distinguish between the promotion of extremist (anti-democratic) ideas, which in most Western democracies is considered legal as long as they do not breach specific laws such as hate crime legislation, and extremist (anti-democratic) behavior, such as illegal use of violence, which implies disregarding the law or other democratic rules or procedures.

Part one: ideological foundations

Before zooming in on the specific worldviews of the NRM and GI, it is useful to have a look at the broader ideological traditions they draw upon. While the NRM presents itself as a fully-fledged National Socialist organization, GI adheres to a newer ideological current, generally referred to as Identitarianism. The following outline briefly traces the history and features of each of these two ideological traditions.

National Socialism

National Socialism is generally understood as the ideology developed and practiced by the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP) founded in 1920, a development that culminated in NSDAP's rise to power in 1933, and which ended in the closing days of WWII in 1945. Because theory and practice do not always go hand in hand, there is considerable disagreement about what National Socialism essentially is. For the purpose of this paper, which is to understand how National Socialism conditions NRM's worldviews, strategies, and activities, the emphasis is more on theory than practice.

Arguably the most influential account of National Socialism is laid out in the two-volume *Mein Kampf*, which Adolf Hitler began to write while imprisoned for a failed coup attempt in 1923.³

² Cas Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 24–26.

³ The following passages are based on the author's own reading of *Mein Kampf*.

Mein Kampf is partly an autobiographical account, and partly an ideological manifesto. In the beginning, Hitler describes how, as a young adult, he went from having a generally positive attitude towards the Jews to becoming fiercely anti-Semitic. Hitler was of course not alone in developing such ideas at that time; he was highly influenced by both past and contemporary anti-Semitic ideological currents. However, Hitler's conversion to anti-Semitism is important, because as NSDAP's undisputed leader he placed anti-Semitism at the heart of National Socialist thinking.

Hitler's anti-Semitism is premised on a biological form of racism, i.e. the idea that humans can be divided into races with substantively different physical and mental qualities, and then ranked according to their value. For example, Hitler regarded the Jews as an intellectually resourceful but inherently selfish and devilish people, seeking to dominate the world. According to Hitler, Jews therefore constituted the greatest threat to the survival of other races, including his own "Aryan master race".

The supposed superiority of the Aryan master race is another key feature of National Socialism. Hitler saw Aryans first and foremost as morally and culturally superior, and therefore believed other races would benefit from being ruled by them. But Hitler also feared that the clever Jews might deceive credulous and good-hearted Aryans into suppressing their own superiority through political constructs promoting egalitarianism, most notably *Marxism*.

Hitler's fear of Jews and Marxism, and the racially biological thinking these fears are premised upon, constitute the ideological foundation for how "nationalism" and "socialism" are understood in National Socialism. Importantly, National Socialists reject conventional nationalism as being too conservative and backward leaning, as opposed to the progressive race-based nationalism promoted by Hitler and NSDAP. This form of race-based nationalism can also be interpreted through the prism of Hitler's personal history. Hitler was in fact born not as a German but as an Austro-Hungarian. This was no minor detail for Hitler. He did not feel at home in Austria-Hungary – a truly multicultural empire comprising several Slavic peoples (considered subordinate to the Aryans), and in which people of German descent did not constitute a majority. Hitler therefore had strong personal motivation for a race-based form of nationalism – one that draws national boundaries according to racial rather than political or territorial divisions.

National Socialists also reject conventional socialism for being too internationally oriented (or anti-nationalist) and for discrediting racial differences. The socialist element of National Socialism relates mainly to the ambition of serving the (German) people – which at that time comprised many industrial workers – before anyone else. Furthermore, Hitler was highly skeptical about contemporary German elites, such as the Prussian *Junkers* and the bourgeoisie, which he believed did not deserve their privileged positions. Such positions must be earned, not inherited, according to Hitler, and the gold standard for earning a privileged position can only be related to one's contribution to the survival and well-being of the German people. Individual interests must therefore always be set aside for collective interests and the survival of the race.

This juxtaposition of race, people, and nation – blood and soil – ties into a final key feature of National Socialism that has more to do with its philosophical foundations than with politics. National Socialism can also be understood as a form of (political) religion, that is, a holistic worldview offering answers to existential questions about the meaning of life, the human condition, divinity, and nature. As such, National Socialism generally rejects the notion of a transcendent God or a divine world beyond our own. Instead, it argues that divinity is found in the present world, in nature. Humans are seen as a small but integral part of a much larger *organic* whole, a divine nature with its own rules and dynamics. It is only by accepting the laws of nature that humans can fulfill their potential, through a mythical connection between people and nature. These laws of nature are in turn interpreted through a Darwinian lens in which principles such as natural selection, survival of the fittest, and a biological understanding of race and organic evolution rule. As a result, meaning in life is achieved by contributing to the survival of your own race, which is in harsh competition with other enemy races. Eternal life is assured by your race continuing to exist after you die through a mythical blood lineage. This eternal life struggle implies an appreciation of values such as vitalism, personal sacrifice, affection, virtue, aggression, instinct, death, and force, and of violent destruction for the sake of creating something new and better.⁴

⁴ For an extensive exposition of National Socialism and its history of ideas, see e.g. Carl Müller Frøland, *Nazismens idéunivers* (Oslo: Vidarforl, 2018); Stanley G. Payne, *A History of Fascism 1914-1945* (London: UCL Press, 1995).

Identitarianism

Although GI activists call themselves Identitarians, they are skeptical about the term “Identitarianism” because they consider being an Identitarian to be more about following a (militant) way of life than about subscribing to a specific political ideology. When people speak of Identitarians today, they often trace their intellectual heritage back to the French *Nouvelle Droite* or New Right school of thought. A key source for this intellectual current is a think-tank called *Groupement de recherche et d'études pour la civilisation européenne* (GRECE - Research and Study Group for European Civilization) established in 1968. GRECE represents, in the words of an influential Identitarian publisher, “an effort to revive and redefine certain political and cultural ideas which had been discredited since 1945”.⁵ In particular, this New Right initiative can be seen as a reaction to *modernity*, understood as the following five converging processes:

Individualization, through the destruction of old forms of communal life; *massification*, through the adoption of standardised behaviour and lifestyles; *desacralisation*, through the displacement of the great religious narratives by a scientific interpretation of the world; *rationalisation*, through the domination of instrumental reason, the free market, and technical efficiency; and *universalism*, through a planetary extension of a model of society postulated implicitly as the only rational possibility and thus as superior.⁶

According to New Right thinkers, these converging processes are fueled by the dominant ideology of *liberalism* and lead to a dilution of collective identities and to individual feelings of emptiness, anomie, and nihilism. The aim of the New Right community is to reverse these processes, and stake out a radically new course.

Several key features characterize the New Right school of thought, and therefore also the Identitarian mindset. First, New Right thinkers emphasize the importance of *collective identities* and communitarian bonds for human well-being. Such collective identities are in turn perceived as closely tied to ethnic and territorial belonging, or to being “rooted” as the Identitarians like to say. Because identity is seen as inseparable from ethnicity and territory, people from different

⁵ John B Morgan, “Editor’s Preface,” in *Manifesto for a European Renaissance*, by Alan de Benoist and Charles Champetier (London: Arktos, 2012), 7.

⁶ Alan de Benoist and Charles Champetier, *Manifesto for a European Renaissance* (London: Arktos, 2012), 11.

places are, by definition, different. This diversity, however, is celebrated by New Right thinkers and portrayed as a value that should be *preserved*. The concept of “ethnopluralism” is sometimes used to describe this idea – that people of different ethnic and territorial backgrounds should co-exist separately rather than being mixed, in order to preserve their unique qualities and collective identities.

There are at least three reasons why the New Right community sees liberalism as the main enemy. The first relates to its individualism, which conflicts with the collectivist or communitarian ideas and values celebrated by the New Right. The second relates to its universalism, which conflicts with the ethnopluralist conception of healthy societies that the New Right wants to preserve. The third is economic, and concerns neo-liberal ideas about free markets and a competition-based economy. On this issue, the New Right places itself more to the left than to the right on the economic scale. For example, the New Right is against the capitalist logic of everlasting growth and productivity, and seeks to reduce the importance of capital, money, and work “in order to have some time for oneself and enjoy life”.⁷

Another key feature of the New Right is its so-called *metapolitical* strategy. The central tenet of metapolitics is the idea of influencing cultural, intellectual, and public domains as a way of preparing for a final revolutionary stage. The strategy is heavily inspired by the Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci, in particular his essay series entitled *The Prison Notebooks*, which Gramsci wrote while being imprisoned by the Italian Fascist regime in 1926. In these essays, Gramsci explains how *cultural hegemony*, i.e., cultural dominance through beliefs, norms, and values, was used to sustain the present Fascist system, and therefore how it can also be used to change the system from within through cultural – or metapolitical – struggle.

While it is true that contemporary Identitarians are deeply inspired by New Right ideas, it is also true that Identitarians in many ways represent a break with the original New Right community. The Identitarian movement has no clear beginning, but it appears to have started with “a dissident current to GRECE’s metapolitical project” during the late 1980s.⁸ This new current departed from the New Right in at least two important ways. The first concerns the Identitarians’

⁷ de Benoist and Champetier, 42.

⁸ José Pedro Zúquete, *The Identitarians: The Movement against Globalism and Islam in Europe* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2018), 12.

emphasis on ethnicity over any other issue. Of course, ethnic identity was and still is part of the New Right project. However, it is not as dominant as seems to be the case for Identitarians. Leading New Right thinkers such as Alain de Benoist have attempted to distance themselves from the more ethnocentric perspectives of the Identitarians.⁹

Second, the New Right community was seen as not *doing* much about ethnicity, but only speaking about it. While the New Right is primarily involved in writing books, publishing magazines, and organizing seminars, the Identitarians perceive themselves as a “fighting community”. The philosophical foundations for this new current is laid out in the writings of New Right dissidents, such as Dominique Venner (a war veteran who later became a martyr for the GI movement after he committed “political” suicide in a French cathedral in 2013) and Guillaume Faye, in particular his 2001 book entitled *Why We Fight*.¹⁰

During the early 2000s, Identitarianism was a concept primarily known to people interested in the New Right. Around 2010, however, Identitarian ideas began to spread quickly. One reason was the 2010 launch of the Identitarian publishing house *Arktos*, which publishes English translations of key books by authors such as Guillaume Faye, Alain de Benoist, Dominique Venner, and many others.¹¹ Once these ideas became easily available to an English-speaking audience, new actors in different countries started picking up on them. As a result, Identitarian ideas have been appropriated and adapted by groups and activists that do not necessarily share the same ideological foundation as the original Identitarian thinkers. These include white nationalists from the United States, most notably from the so-called Alt-Right movement.¹²

Because of this rapid development, it is perhaps even more difficult now than before to give a precise description of Identitarianism. However, a handful of features can still be found among most self-identifying Identitarians, often revolving around a set of concepts used to promote their ideas. One such concept is “The Great Replacement”, which refers to the prospect of ethnic European populations (or white Americans) being outnumbered in their “own” countries by

⁹ Zúquete, 10–11; 299.

¹⁰ Guillaume Faye, *Why We Fight: Manifesto of the European Resistance*, English ed. edition (Arktos Media Ltd., 2011).

¹¹ See www.arktos.com

¹² George Hawley, *Making Sense of the Alt-Right* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017); Graham Macklin, “Greg Johnson and Counter-Currents,” in *Key Thinkers of the Radical Right: Behind the New Threat to Liberal Democracy* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2019), 204–23.

people with non-Western immigrant backgrounds. This dynamic, and conspiracy theories surrounding its drivers, appears to be a strong motivator for all Identitarian activists.

To reverse this replacement, Identitarians have introduced another concept that has become a contemporary mantra: “Remigration”. This concept refers to the idea of introducing a series of non-violent incentives to stimulate a “voluntary” departure of non-Western immigrants back to their homelands. Although most Identitarians agree that remigration is necessary, there is less agreement about how exactly this is to be achieved. Proposed incentives range from giving immigrants money to facilitate their return, to making life so miserable for Muslims that they ultimately decide to leave the country.¹³ In 2017, the French GI division published a document containing 30 measures intended to facilitate remigration.¹⁴ However, most of these measures would only serve to reduce further immigration, or are fairly vague. The question of what is to be done about the millions of people of non-Western descent currently living in European countries thus remains largely unanswered.

A related concept is “*Reconquista*”, referring to the confrontational idea of retaking territory from Muslim invaders. This term really gives that answer to what is left unsaid by “remigration” with its emphasis on “voluntary” repatriation. The term has its historical roots in the period between 711 and 1491, when Arab and Berber forces gained control over large parts of the Spanish peninsula. This occupation was countered when Christian kingdoms in today’s northern Spain united forces and started fighting back, ultimately regaining the entire peninsula. For the Identitarians, this territorial metaphor is also associated with the establishment of so-called Identity houses, which are occupied buildings serving as “places of freedom”, “safe spaces”, “rebel zones” or “autonomous zones”, where Identitarian patriots can live out their white ethnic identities. This is done through various intellectual, cultural, or sportive activities, uninterrupted by the “politically correct” and “conformist” culture that surrounds them.¹⁵

These cultural practices tie into a final key feature of Identitarianism, which has to do with the lived experience of being a militant, and, relatedly, the aestheticization of the revolutionary

¹³ Personal interview with former GI activist, Oslo, 14 May 2018.

¹⁴ See <https://www.les-identitaires.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Les-Identitaires-30-mesures-pour-une-politique-didentit%C3%A9-et-de-remigration.pdf>

¹⁵ Zúquete, 61–62.

struggle. Doing *something*, but also doing it elegantly and provocatively, has become a trademark of the Identitarians. Much like militant anarchist groups, they seek a form of personal emancipation or empowerment through militant activism.¹⁶

Part two: national origins and transnational evolution

This section traces the national origins and transnational evolution of the NRM and GI. First, however, it is worth mentioning that transnational evolution is rare in the history of right-wing militancy in post-WWII Western Europe. Most nationalist or patriot protest groups are predominantly oriented nationally. This does not mean that militants do not cooperate or interact at the transnational level. They always have, and they always will, just as any other political or social movement. However, such groups have only rarely expanded to have a physical presence on the ground in other states.¹⁷ The transnational evolution of the NRM and GI is therefore unusual, but each case also quite different, as this section shows.

The Nordic Resistance Movement

The establishment of the NRM (then known as the Swedish Resistance Movement) was announced in the third issue of the newspaper *Folktribunen* (The People's Tribune) in December 1997.¹⁸ *Folktribunen*'s editor-in-chief and one of NRM's founders was Klas Lund, who headed the organization for 18 years between 1997 and 2015, a rare achievement in these circles.

Lund has become something of a mythic figure within the organization. Apart from his lengthy leadership, Lund's status ties into a series of dramatic events that preceded NRM's establishment.¹⁹ Lund began his activist career as a militant skinhead, a form of militancy the NRM normally distances itself from because it wants to emphasize political struggle over subcultural practices. In 1986, when Lund was 18 years old, he and a group of fellow skinheads beat and kicked to death a young man who had allegedly attempted to stop them from harassing young immigrants at a beach in southern Stockholm. Lund and two other skinheads were

¹⁶ See Zúquete, 42–47, for a longer exposé of this element of Identitarian militancy.

¹⁷ Recent examples would include Blood and Honour, Combat 18, and Soldiers of Odin, while further back there is the European Social Movement, the New European Order and the World Union of National Socialists.

¹⁸ Although the organization only changed its name to The Nordic Resistance Movement in 2016, it will be referred to as the NRM throughout this paper for the sake of simplicity.

¹⁹ The following account of Lund's history is based on an in-depth interview with Lund by Magnus Söderman. See "Ett Liv i Kamp För Folket," *Nationellt Motstånd*, 2006, 4–6.

convicted for murder and received eight-year prison sentences. Lund's sentence was later reduced to four years, and he was released after only two.

Upon his release from prison, Lund was eager to leave behind his skinhead misdemeanors and get involved in true revolutionary struggle. Together with a handful of other activists, he established the network *Vitt Ariskt Motstånd* (VAM, White Aryan Resistance), deeply inspired by revolutionary and terrorism-inciting publications and groups from the United States, such as *The Turner Diaries*, *Hunter*, and *The Order*. To prepare for this armed revolution, and in line with *The Turner Diaries* script, Lund and his associates carried out several bank robberies to finance their activities. However, one of these robberies landed them in prison, and thereby ended the revolution before it had even begun.²⁰

While in prison, Lund had plenty of time (six years, only interrupted by a short prison escape to Norway) to contemplate the means that would be most effective in generating a revolutionary outcome. He arrived at the conclusion that terrorism carried out by loosely organized leaderless networks might not be so effective after all. Rather, a strong hierarchical organization with the long-term ambition of radicalizing people through steadfast propaganda and street activism was a better alternative. These thoughts were further developed in the newspaper *Folktribunen*, which Lund created after his second release from prison. *Folktribunen* thus became the NRM's first official media outlet, following the announcement of NRM's establishment in December 1997.

The NRM can be characterized as a militant and action-oriented National Socialist organization, aiming to generate revolution, mainly through extra-parliamentary struggle. According to its founding members, its National Socialist worldview has been an essential part of the organization ever since its inception. During its early years, the NRM did not use the National Socialist label – allegedly for strategic reasons – but referred to its activists as “patriots”. In 2006, however, the NRM leadership decided to “come out of the closet” and be open about their National Socialist foundations.²¹

Another characteristic of the NRM is its skillful organization (compared to similar groups in this landscape) and its relatively strict membership criteria. To become a full member, you have to

²⁰ For more details about VAM's early history, see Helene Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige 1980-1999* (Ordfront, 2009).

²¹ The Nordic Resistance Movement, *Motståndsrörelsen: 20 År Av Revolutionär Kamp* (Grängesberg: Nordfront Förlag, 2018), 68–73.

dedicate yourself fully to the organization and its day-to-day struggle. Accordingly, the NRM never had the ambition to grow fast but rather has been careful about recruiting what it sees as the “right” kind of people, meaning those who are fully dedicated and action-oriented, and never question the organization’s radical stance, in particular concerning questions of race and the Jews.

Such ideological questions (about race and Jews) and questions concerning strategy and activist methods led to an organizational split of the NRM in 2001, when several activists left the organization in favor of the newly established political party *Nationaldemokraterna* (National Democrats).²² One strategic question of concern had to do with the role of more intellectual forms of activism, or metapolitics, versus the more action-oriented forms of activism, which have always been NRM’s trademark. Interestingly, several of the activists who left the NRM in 2001 later became protagonists of the Swedish Identitarian movement (which to date remains unaffiliated to GI).

The NRM aims to create a Nordic nation for the Nordic people. A logical step forward was therefore to expand into the other Nordic countries. A first attempt took place in Norway in 2003, when former members of the Norwegian skinhead group Boot Boys became sworn members of NRM’s first Norwegian branch. A photo from this symbolic event is on the cover of the second issue of *Nationell Motsånd*, the second official publication of the NRM, which replaced *Folktribunen* in 2003.

Shortly thereafter, a Norwegian version of the NRM-website – *Patriot.nu* – was launched, and the first issue of the Norwegian version of NRM’s publication *Nasjonal Motstand* was published. However, recruiting dedicated activists in Norway proved harder than in Sweden. The timing may also have been unfortunate. The Norwegian militant movement had receded considerably following the murder of Benjamin Hermansen in 2001 by two Boot Boys members. Another complicating factor was that leading figurers within the Norwegian branch had to serve prison sentences for various criminal activities, including a bank robbery. Thus, after a couple of years

²² The Nordic Resistance Movement, 115–18.

of activities concentrated around the cities of Oslo and Kristiansand, the first Norwegian branch of NRM largely ceased to be active.²³

It was to take several years before a second attempt was made to re-establish the NRM's Norwegian branch. In 2010, Haakon Forwald joined the Swedish branch as their only Norwegian member, after several attempts to reach out to the defunct Norwegian branch. He was soon promoted to leader of a resurrected Norwegian branch and given the task of rebuilding a Norwegian activist network. Later that year, a Norwegian version of NRM's website – *Nordfront* – went online, mainly containing articles from the Swedish site translated into Norwegian. However, slowly but surely, activism reports began appearing on the Norwegian website as well, usually about night-time sticker raids.

During its first years, the resurrected Norwegian branch was involved in few public activities. However, from 2016 onwards, this pattern changed, and Norwegian activists started carrying out a number of public activities, including a relatively large demonstration in Kristiansand in July 2017.²⁴ This sharp increase in activity level appears to reflect a similar increase in Sweden, following the leadership change in 2015.

The NRM had been active in Finland since 2008, when Esa Henrik Holappa founded the NRM's Finnish branch: *Suomen vastarintaliike* (The Finnish Resistance Movement). Holappa has today left the organization and is considered by the NRM as a traitor and oath breaker. In any event, Holappa's decision to establish a Finnish branch of the NRM was, according to him, highly influenced by the American veteran activist Richard Scutari, one of the most influential members of the white power movement worldwide. Scutari is currently serving a 60-year prison sentence for his involvement in the American terrorist organization The Order, headed by Robert J. Matthews in the 1980s. Since his imprisonment in 1989, Scutari has kept an active profile and corresponded with fellow activists in the United States and abroad. One of his pen pals was Holappa, who started writing letters to Scutari when he was 17 years old. Holappa and Magnus Söderman – another pen pal from Sweden who at the time was a leading NRM member – have

²³ The activity level can easily be traced by looking at NRM's old webpages through the Internet Archive Wayback Machine at: https://web.archive.org/web/*/patriot.nu.

²⁴ Aftenposten, "Høyreekstrem demonstrasjon i Kristiansand – politiet ville ikke gripe inn," *Aftenposten*, July 29, 2017, <https://www.aftenposten.no/article/ap-mq9gv.html>.

published this correspondence as a tribute book.²⁵ The book shows how Scutari put Holappa and Söderman in contact with each other, and how Scutari advised Holappa to establish a Finnish version of the NRM under the auspices of Söderman and the Swedish mother organization.

The Finnish branch is still quite small, with fewer than a hundred active members, but appears to be growing and is currently active in at least five different locations.²⁶ Some Finnish members have also been associated with the (now defunct) online neo-Fascist collective *Musta Sydan* (Black Heart), founded in 2010.²⁷ *Musta Sydan* drew inspiration from militant groups emerging across Europe, such as *CasaPound Italia*, as well as GI. They also had links to the Russian far-right martial arts organization *White Rex* and numerous other neo-Fascist groups and initiatives. In 2018, NRM's Finnish branch was banned as an organization by the Finnish court.²⁸

The most recent addition to the NRM's transnational network (not counting a handful of activists in Iceland) is the Danish branch, (re)established in 2017.²⁹ Just as in Norway in 2003, an earlier attempt at establishing a Danish branch was made in 2013, headed by a former member of *Danmarks Nationalsocialistiske Bevægelse* (Denmark's Nationalist Socialist Movement, DNSB).³⁰ However, apart from a few sticker raids suspiciously close to the Swedish border, few activities followed, and the Danish NRM-branch soon became inactive.

The re-establishment of the Danish branch in 2017 appears to be more promising for the NRM. One reason why the 2013-attempt failed might have been the presence of a somewhat similar organization in Denmark at that time: *Danmarks Nationale Front* (Denmark's National Front, DNF). Since then, however, the activities of DNF have receded considerably, reaching a historical low in 2018.³¹ In addition, *Danskernes parti* (The Party of the Danes), initially founded

²⁵ Magnus Söderman and Henrik Holappa, *Unbroken Warrior: The Richard Scutari Letters* (Stockholm: Nationellt Motstånd Förlag, 2011).

²⁶ Interviews conducted by the author with a local anti-racist activist in Helsinki, June 2014, and with Holappa in Oslo, May 2016.

²⁷ An archived version of this blog can be found here: https://web.archive.org/web/*/http://www.mustasydan.com/.

²⁸ Yle, "Banned Neo-Nazi Group Assembles, Nine Detained," *Yle Uutiset*, accessed February 22, 2019, https://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/banned_neo-nazi_group_assembles_nine_detained/10467826.

²⁹ Nordfront, "Nu er det på høje tid at få startet Den Nordiske Modstandsbevægelse i Danmark!," *Nordfront.dk*, October 28, 2017, <https://www.nordfront.dk/paa-hoeje-tid-faa-startet-nordisk-modstandsbevaegelses-danmark/>.

³⁰ Simon Lindberg, "Intervju Med En Representant För Motståndsrörelsen i Danmark," *Nordfront.se*, June 8, 2013, <https://www.nordfront.se/intervju-med-en-representant-for-motstandsrörelsen-i-danmark.smr>.

³¹ Redox, "Naziorganisation i knæ - se billederne fra fiaskofesten," *Researchkollektivet Redox*, September 13, 2018, <https://redox.dk/nyheder/naziorganisation-i-knae-se-billederne-fra-fiaskofesten/>.

by former DNSB members and regularly accused for harboring National Socialist sympathies, dissolved in 2017, leaving some of its members in search for a new activist platform. Whether they will return to DNSB, which still exists but has been struggling since its former leader left the party in 2011, or turn to the more radical alternative offered by the NRM, remains an open question.

Finally, the historically strong Danish anti-fascist movement, which has kept organizations like DNF and DNSB from establishing strongholds in larger Danish cities, is today smaller and less active than before. In addition, compared to the DNF and DNSB, the NRM has in Sweden, Finland and Norway been more willing to fight anti-fascists in the streets. All in all, the opportunities may be more favorable today for launching a new militant alternative in Denmark.

A final critical development occurred in 2019, when a group of activists headed by Klas Lund, including the leader of the Norwegian division Haakon Forwald, left the Swedish and Norwegian divisions to establish a new group known as *Nordisk Styrke* (Nordic Strength). The split was according to members of the new group based on internal disagreements about strategy, mainly concerning whether the group should continue pursuing mainstream types of activities such as large public demonstrations and maintaining a political party, or rather focus on operating in a semi-clandestine fashion, as the NRM used to do.³² It is too early to tell what to make of this new group at the time of writing. However, the fact that it is being headed by Klas Lund and that several key activists followed him suggests that it could become a potent contender to the NRM.

Generation Identity

On July 14, 2002, 25-year-old Maxime Brunerie attempted to assassinate the French President Jacques Chirac, firing two shots with a .22 rifle towards Chirac, who was approaching in a motorcade parade during the French national day (Bastille Day). Brunerie was at the time a member of the revolutionary nationalist group *Unité Radicale*, subsequently banned by the French authorities for promoting discrimination, violent threats against foreigners, and anti-Semitism.³³

³² Nordisk Styrke, NS Radio #1, <https://nordiskstyrke.org/ns-radio-1-nordisk-styrke/>.

³³ “Décret Du 6 Août 2002 Portant Dissolution d’un Groupement de Fait” (2002), <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT00000408605>.

In the wake of *Unité Radicale*'s dissolution, several new groups were established by former members. One of these was *Bloc Identitaire – Mouvement social européen* (Identity Bloc – European Social Movement). This new group self-identifying as Identitarian drew much of its ideological inspiration from the writings of New Right dissidents such as Guillaume Faye and Dominique Venner. Before the establishment of *Bloc Identitaire*, the revolutionary nationalist scene in France was characterized by an ever-changing conglomerate of small grouplets, or *groupuscules*, continually changing names, alliances, and outlooks, and never really managing to unite forces or develop a strong unifying organization.³⁴ In several ways, *Bloc Identitaire* changed this pattern, as the organization and its network have continued to expand and develop over the years. According to a founding member, “the goal was to break away from a sectarian logic and outmoded models and create both a new language of activism and a renovated strategy of propaganda.”³⁵ Today, the movement is simply known as *Les Identitaires* (The Identitarians) and claims at least two thousand members in France.³⁶ However, its youth organization *Generation Identitaire* (Generation Identity) is currently making the most notable impact on the international scene.

Initially called *Jeunesses Identitaire* (Identitarian Youths) and then *Une Autre Jeunesse* (Another Youth), this youth organization was founded in 2002 and then fused with *Bloc Identitaire*. However, it was only when they relaunched the organization in 2012 under the new label *Generation Identitaire* and published a video-manifesto on YouTube entitled “A Declaration of War” that the group gained international attention. Shortly thereafter, GI activists “occupied” the rooftop of a mosque construction site in Poitiers (where Charles Martel had defeated an invading Muslim Moorish force in 732) and published several dramatized videos of this publicity stunt. Together with the initial video manifesto, these videos quickly went viral on the internet and thereby introduced the Identitarian label and its stylish form of militancy to audiences far beyond France.

³⁴ Jeffery M. Bale, “‘National Revolutionary’ Groupuscules and the Resurgence of ‘Left-Wing’ Fascism: The Case of France’s Nouvelle Résistance,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 36, no. 3 (2002): 24–49; Roger Griffin, “Net Gains and GUD Reactions: Patterns of Prejudice in a Neo-Fascist Groupuscule,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 33, no. 2 (1999): 31–50; Roger Griffin, “From Slime Mould to Rhizome: An Introduction to the Groupuscular Right,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 37, no. 1 (2003): 27–50.

³⁵ Quoted in Zúquete, 29.

³⁶ Les Identitaires, “Bloc Identitaire becomes Les identitaires,” *Les identitaires* (blog), August 9, 2016, <https://www.les-identitaires.com/2016/08/bloc-identitaire-becomes-identitaires/>.

As a result of these successful media stunts, new GI-divisions began to pop up across Europe, the first ones being formed in Austria and Germany in 2012 under the label *Identitäre Bewegung* (Identitarian Movement). Unlike NRM's transnational evolution, which seems to have been under the auspices of the Swedish leadership, GI's transnational evolution follows a *franchise* logic, where basically anyone can set up their own local GI division by drawing on GI's original label, style, and ideology.

At the same time, the French GI leadership was involved in the establishment of several new GI divisions. For example, French GI leaders met with the prospective leader of the Austrian division a month before it was launched.³⁷ Similarly, shortly after a Czech division was established in 2013, two high-ranking French GI leaders travelled to advise the Czechs on GI's ideological and strategic foundations.³⁸ At the first press conference by the Hungarian division in 2016, representatives from both the French and German-speaking GI were present to show their support.³⁹ New GI divisions have also been established in Slovenia, Italy, Belgium, Poland, and Serbia.⁴⁰ Although GI divisions now exist in many countries, it is primarily the Austrian and perhaps also the German division that match the French movement in terms of initiatives, campaigns, and public impact.⁴¹

In 2017, two of the latest additions to the GI family were established in Denmark and in the UK. A number of publicity stunts have been carried out by these new groups. Both groups were tied to the French mother organization, although the UK division was recently expelled from the wider movement for harboring too extreme views.⁴² Before that, however, GI representatives from the UK and Denmark, as well as many other countries, participated in the French GI's "Summer University" in 2018.⁴³ This is an annual youth summer camp where young GI activists

³⁷ Zúquete, 74.

³⁸ Zúquete, 87.

³⁹ Zúquete, 87–88.

⁴⁰ HOPE not hate, "Generation Identity Network," accessed February 8, 2019, <https://www.hopenothate.org.uk/research/islamophobia-hub/profiles/anti-muslim-street-protest-movements/generation-identity-network/>.

⁴¹ Zúquete, 86.

⁴² The Guardian, "Infiltrator exposes Generation Identity UK's march towards extreme far right," August 24, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/24/generation-identity-uk-far-right-extremists>.

⁴³ Redox, "Internationalt drama i Generation Identitær," *Researchkollektivet Redox*, August 13, 2018, <https://redox.dk/nyheder/internationalt-drama-i-generation-identitaer/>.

receive ideological training, participate in workshops to learn about forms of activism and propaganda-making, and undergo physical training, most notably in martial arts.

Part three: comparative analysis

Although both the NRM and GI are involved in a transnational form of militancy currently unfolding across parts of Europe, there are considerable differences between the two groups.

Ideology

Ideologically, the NRM belongs to what one might call the Old Right and GI to the New Right. The Old Right is here understood as the ideological currents that underpinned the Fascist and National Socialist regimes during the interwar period, most notably in Italy and Germany. Following the Allies' victory in WWII and growing public awareness about the Holocaust, ideas and values associated with these Old Right regimes, such as ultra-nationalism, anti-Semitism, and racism, became sacrilege and entirely impossible to promote politically in Europe.

However, behind toxic concepts such as Fascism, National Socialism, and anti-Semitism, lay deeper, more general, but also less controversial ideas and values such as anti-modernism, anti-liberalism, collectivism, communitarianism, and the idea that people's identities and life-meanings are closely tied to the territories, peoples, and cultures to which they naturally "belong". The self-given mandate of the New Right is to reinvigorate such ideas and values, while at the same time maintaining a safe distance from the toxic elements of the Old Right. Accordingly, a number of fundamental ideas and values are shared by the NRM and GI, and they also share many of the same political enemies. One should therefore not be surprised that three of the most high-profile GI leaders – Fabrice Robert and Phillippe Vardon from France, and Martin Sellner from Austria – all share a past in groups and milieu associated with Old Right ideas.

That said, there are of course a number of important ideological differences between the NRM and GI. First and foremost, there is "the Jewish question" and that of race. While the NRM insists on maintaining these two controversial elements at their ideological core, GI is desperate to rid itself of such labels. However, this is easier said than done. For example, while GI considers racism and ethnocentric patriotism as fundamentally different, others see the two as

different expressions of the same idea: that some people should have precedence over others in certain territories, simply because of their racial or ethnic descent.

Turning to “the Jewish question”, the ideological differences between the NRM and GI are clearer. GI’s rejection of anti-Semitism comes across as credible, and is also backed up by publications from ideological authorities, such as Guillaume Faye’s book *La nouvelle question juive* (The new Jewish question), in which Faye argues that, rather than obsessing about the Jews, the defenders of Europe must now turn their attention towards Islam.⁴⁴

This brings us to another ideological difference between the NRM and GI, which is how they relate to Islam and Muslims. For GI, the so-called Islamization of Europe represents a primary challenge to be dealt with, and while they may not be obsessed with Jews, they do seem to be obsessed with Islam and Muslims. In contrast, although the NRM is concerned with challenges posed by growing Muslim populations in Europe, they always make sure to remind themselves and others that the real cause of this “Muslim invasion” is the Jews, who have deliberately masterminded it in order to weaken European peoples and nations for their own benefit.⁴⁵

Besides obsessions with Jews and Muslims, religion does not occupy much space in the ideological production of the NRM and GI. The NRM do claim to support religious freedom in their political manifesto. They also draw on pagan myths and symbols in some of their propaganda, in particular Norse mythology. For example, their main symbol is constituted by an overlay of the Tiwaz/Tyr rune, named after the warrior god Tyr, and the Yngvi/Ing rune, named after the Yngling lineage, the oldest known Scandinavian dynasty. GI do in some cases draw on Christian symbols and history, but are generally skeptical to modern expression of Christianity and seem equally or more interested in Paganism. Their main symbol is the Greek letter Lambda, which figured on the shields of the warrior Spartans, and symbolizes a determination never to give up when defending one’s people.

One ideological difference worth highlighting is how the NRM and GI relate to democracy. While the NRM explicitly rejects democratic rule and envisions a more authoritarian system,

⁴⁴ Guillaume Faye, *La nouvelle question juive* (Chevaigné: Éditions du Lore, 2007).

⁴⁵ Klas Lund, “Några Funderingar Kring Islam, Västerlandet Och Den Nationella Kampen,” *Nationellt Motstånd* 2, no. 4 (2004): 2.

headed by strong and competent National Socialist “senators”,⁴⁶ GI tends to portray themselves as even *more* democratic than current Western democracies. However, GI’s conception of democracy is quite shallow and differs considerably from dominant conceptions among democracy theorists. As stated in one of the most widely distributed leaflets on GI’s ideological platform:

Superficially it would appear that both our generations stand for at least one common cause. At least on one point we agree: in our passionate commitment to the principle of the rule of the people, democracy.

In the end, however, we agree on nothing more than a word. It becomes clear soon enough that we understand something entirely different by the word democracy.

When we think of democracy, the image of Athens and the right to participate in the community’s decisions come to mind. We strongly believe that the people have a right not only to participate in these decisions, but to make them entirely on their own accord.

Direct democracy and referenda are our ideals. When we say democracy, we *really* mean democracy.⁴⁷

A core theme in normative democratic theory is how to avoid majoritarian mob rule, considering that the aim of democracy is balancing liberty and equality for *all* members of society.⁴⁸ In contrast to this perspective, GI’s conception of democracy contains one principle only – majoritarian rule, operationalized as a system of direct democracy.

A final ideological difference concerns the extent to which activists are expected to adhere to a given ideological script. As a member of the NRM, you are expected to embrace everything the organization stands for, including conspiracy theories about Jewish elites trying to control the world and homosexuality being an unnatural and confused state of mind. This form of militancy borders on fanaticism, i.e., on an uncritical ideological devotion. In fact, NRM activists regularly and proudly present themselves as fanatics, much in line with prominent National Socialists from the Third Reich, such as the SS-troops. GI does not promote such conspiracy theories, and their ideological script comes across as less rigid and more open for discussion and individual interpretation.

⁴⁶ Klas Lund, “Framtidens Styre: Motståndsrörelsens Vision,” *Nationellt Motstånd*, no. 18 (2010): 4–8.

⁴⁷ Markus Willinger, *Generation Identity* (Arktos Media Ltd, 2013), 41.

⁴⁸ See <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/democracy/>.

Strategy

In one way, the goals of the NRM and GI are quite similar: the establishment and preservation of ethno-societies. In the case of the NRM, the main ambition is to create a Nordic nation for the Nordic people. GI's dream society is somewhat less pronounced and more complex, because they operate with triple identities at the local, national, and regional or pan-European levels, and wish to cater for all of these simultaneously. To simplify, GI seeks more local autonomy, in accordance with local customs, culture, and needs. At the same time, they seek to preserve national identities by repatriating all or most people of foreign descent. Finally, they seek to replace the European Union, which they see as a liberal-capitalist-globalist-technocratic threat to the authentic European identity, with an autonomous European geopolitical alliance. Notably, this alliance should be detached from the current economic, cultural, and military grip of the United States, and perhaps rather seek alliances with Russia.⁴⁹

If we look at the strategies used by the NRM and GI to reach these stated goals, they are in fact surprisingly similar, although with slightly different configurations. Both groups operate mainly in the extra-parliamentary space, and they aim to influence how people *think*. Furthermore, this influence is to be achieved mainly through two types of activism: *metapolitics* and *direct action*. Which one of these two strategies has primacy over the other is not entirely clear for either group.

As explained above, the establishment of the NRM can be seen as a reaction to a poorly organized “leaderless” movement with little direction, whose actions and terrorist ambitions did not really cater to its states political goals. At present, the NRM's core task is to use propaganda and (mostly legal) direct action to “awaken” the people and prepare them for the upcoming “race war”. As such, one could see the present NRM as quite metapolitical in its orientation. At the same time, however, we have seen how an internal conflict about the primacy of metapolitics vs. direct action led to an organizational split in 2001, in which those oriented toward intellectual or metapolitical struggle left the organization, while those oriented towards direct action remained. Much in line with the general National Socialist emphasis on action rather than on

⁴⁹ Zúquete, 253–57.

intellectualism, therefore, the NRM sees itself as an action-oriented vanguard in which ideology is meant to serve the struggle, and not the other way around.⁵⁰

GI's point of departure is in a way the opposite: GI and the Identitarian movement more broadly can be seen as a reaction to an intellectual form of metapolitics which involves a lot of thinking and talking, but not much doing. For many prominent GI activists, it appears that action and life as a militant are equally or more important than the ideology itself, which is why they see themselves first and foremost as a "fighting community". As one of GI's founders Philippe Vardon stated: "We are more loyal to attitudes than to ideas".⁵¹ At the same time, metapolitics remains GI's main strategy, and their "fight" is primarily a cultural, not a physical, one. All of their activities are streamlined towards the development of an alternative counterculture, that is, the establishment of a new cultural hegemony.

A related strategic difference concerns how the NRM and GI envision the revolutionary or fundamental societal change to unfold. In the case of the NRM, the current "metapolitical" or propaganda-oriented phase is expected to continue only until sufficient people support their cause. At this moment, a radical shift will occur, as the organization moves into the revolutionary phase, in which a forced take-over of the government is one of several possible outcomes. That could include taking the offensive and using violence, should the circumstances become favorable of it. At this point, the present parliamentary system will be quickly demolished and a new and radically different system will replace it. By contrast, in the case of GI, the revolutionary change is envisioned as a long-term process through which the current system will begin to crack open, as the result of the persistent metapolitical struggle, and slowly but surely transform into a new system catering to the interests of those who share the same local, national, and pan-European roots.

Organization

These two different visions of how revolutionary change will materialize affects how the NRM and GI are organized. Because the NRM envisions an actual take-over of the government, it needs a hierarchical organization on stand-by when this critical moment arrives. In the case of GI, a less rigid, less hierarchical, and more network-centric organizational structure makes sense,

⁵⁰ The Nordic Resistance Movement, 41.

⁵¹ Quoted in Zúquete, 38.

considering that their metapolitical struggle is meant to take place at many different places, over long stretches of time, through many different channels, and involving many different types of actors. Therefore, GI is designed as an open and inclusive network of locally based groups with horizontal structures. To be sure, GI divisions also have their leaders, both locally and nationally. However, they are nowhere close to the hierarchical logic that permeates the NRM, in which advances in the hierarchy are important rewards for personal sacrifice and dedication to the struggle.

In Sweden, the NRM currently consists of seven sub-divisions – or nests (*nästen* – a term borrowed from the Romanian Iron Guard) – covering different regions of Sweden. In addition, they have a national council (*Riksrådet*) as well as a Nordic council (*Nordenrådet*) comprising members from the various national branches. Membership criteria have three levels: *Full membership* is restricted to activists willing to be publicly associated with the organization; *affiliates* are formal members whose involvement is on a more voluntary basis; *supporting members* provide financial support only and may remain anonymous. The entire structure is organized hierarchically. For example, each nest has a nest leader and deputy. Some nests consist of so-called “combat groups” (*kampgrupp*), with their own respective leaders. At the top of the hierarchy is the leader of the entire organization, currently Simon Lindberg. Besides these top positions, there are several other prestigious positions within the organization, such as operational leader, parliamentary leader, media spokesperson, editor-in-chief, news editor, head of radio broadcasting, etc.

By contrast, GI draws inspiration from leftist anarchist and autonomous movements, characterized by fundamentally different organizational principles, in which hierarchical, and thereby authoritarian, structures are seen as anathema. Here, an essential idea is to “live now the world you want to create”, for example by squatting in empty houses and establishing autonomous free zones, or “Identity houses”. It is up to each individual to enter this revolutionary do-it-yourself mode, and to form local groups and societies using horizontal structures. The result is a network-centric organization, comprising local autonomous groups with their own particular styles, outlooks, and modes of operation, all within, of course, a broad Identitarian frame. Accordingly, membership rules and criteria are less rigid, and vary across national and local divisions. However, some form of vetting procedure seems to exist in most

places. For example, Bouron describes an interview at the French GI's annual summer camp, where he initially had to signal certain political beliefs, before the interview took on a less interrogative style.⁵² Similarly, an activist from the UK division stated: "All prospective activists go through a similar [vetting] process, to ensure they are both who they say they are and, equally important, sufficiently committed."⁵³

Another organizational difference between the NRM and GI can be found in the types of people they recruit. While the NRM typically recruits adults with a vocational background, GI typically recruits young university students. One reason may be that the style of each group is quite different. The NRM displays a grounded, rural, family-oriented, caring, and authoritarian style. In contrast, GI's style is rebellious, urban, youth-oriented, carefree, and anti-authoritarian.

Finally, the number of dedicated activists involved is considerably smaller for the NRM than for GI. While the Swedish NRM branch currently claims a few hundred members, there are fewer than a hundred in Finland, and fewer than 50 in Norway. That said, the NRM's website appears to have a considerable readership – between 300,000 and 400,000 unique visitors per month, according to their own estimates.⁵⁴

GI operates with a rough estimate of more than two thousand members in France alone,⁵⁵ and all together the entire transnational network probably amounts to a few thousand dedicated activists. These numbers notwithstanding, compared to most other political movements, the NRM and GI remain marginal. To compensate for their lack of numbers, one important tactic is therefore to carry out spectacular stunts to draw the public eye, often aiming at national media coverage, and then spreading footage and videos from these stunts through the internet and social media to reach an even larger audience, as the next section shows.

⁵² Samuel Bouron, "Studying the Social Conditions That Make Possible the Militant Commitment to the Extreme Right," in *European Consortium for Political Research* (General Conference, Montreal, 2015), 12–13, <https://ecpr.eu/Filestore/PaperProposal/5926282d-aa97-4b5e-832f-971c2b634755.pdf>.

⁵³ Quoted in Zúquete, 91.

⁵⁴ The Nordic Resistance Movement, 133.

⁵⁵ Les Identitaires, "Bloc Identitaire becomes Les identitaires," *Les identitaires* (blog), August 9, 2016, <https://www.les-identitaires.com/2016/08/bloc-identitaire-becomes-identitaires/>.

Action repertoires

The term “action repertoire” comes from the social movement literature and refers to the idea that all social movements have at their disposal a range of alternative types of actions, and continually consider which actions are most effective for reaching their desired political goals. In other words, the types of action militant protest groups such as the NRM and GI engage in should be seen as dynamic rather than static, and may change over time and across places, depending on the circumstances.

At the same time, the ideological, strategic, and organizational configurations outlined above shape the action repertoires available to each group, and certain patterns can be recognized by tracing their actions over time. Internal activities are meant for members only, sometimes including potential recruits, and are mainly used to build group cohesion, to educate, and to train for future external activities. External activities constitute these groups’ interaction with the public, and their primary function is to convey the group’s political message to larger audiences, sometimes but not always through spectacular and creative stunts, or through shocking behavior.

By tracing these actions, one can see that the NRM creates a pattern in which the same types of activity are repeated over and over again, whereas GI’s pattern is more unpredictable and irregular, often introducing new types of activities, artistic expressions, and publicity stunts. Another difference is that the NRM regularly seeks out violent confrontation with their perceived enemies, which is not the case for GI whose external action repertoire is restricted to non-violent activities.

The NRM

In line with National Socialist thinking that humans are a small part of a larger organic whole – a divine nature – many of NRM’s internal activities consist of outdoors activities such as forest and mountain trips. Besides these trips, the NRM also organize annual summer camps and competitions (*Nordendagarna*), internal seminars, radio broadcasts, and ceremonial events related to festivities, weddings, and births. Such events give activists a feeling of being part of a community. For some activists, this community might even function as an extended or alternative family, considering that several had to break ties with their original families because of their political activism.

The NRM's most regular external activity is sticker and flyer raids, which often occur at night. In addition, NRM activists carry out flyer distributions in public squares during the daytime. From time to time, the NRM also carries out protest events addressing specific topics. Previously, NRM activists would regularly sell their magazines to the public (today's media production is mainly online). Another regular activity consists of hanging up large NRM banners at various public locations, typically road bridges, and sometimes at spectacular heights. Within the organization, these types of stunt are called "Skorzeny operations", referring to the German Nazi hero Otto Skorzeny, who famously liberated Mussolini from a mountain prison during a spectacular special operations rescue.

More irregular types of activity include "sealing off" enemy buildings, using specially produced NRM-cordons, vigilante street patrols, and broadcasting confrontational phone pranks against people considered as political enemies, including the police and the security service. In its early days, NRM youth activists also carried out a handful of sabotage operations against art exhibitions because they thought these exhibitions were promoting pedophilia.

The NRM sometimes combines legal action with threatening behavior. For example, after its controversial participation at the 2017 annual political gathering in Almedalen in Sweden, several Swedish officials wanted to ban the group from participating at next year's convention. As a result, the NRM threatened to systematically harass the festival, should they not be allowed to participate.⁵⁶

More recently, the NRM has carried out a number of larger demonstrations, which to date have been organized legally in cooperation with the police. However, during several of these demonstrations, there have been violent clashes between NRM-activists and the police. The Swedish NRM branch has therefore threatened no longer to seek legal approval for its demonstrations, because it is not satisfied with the way the police have handled them.⁵⁷

From time to time, NRM members have also been involved in illegal activities, including violent attacks using weapons such as knives and explosives (some with deadly outcomes). Such activities are, of course, dismissed by the NRM leadership as something these activists have

⁵⁶ The Nordic Resistance Movement, 257–58.

⁵⁷ The Nordic Resistance Movement, 258–64.

carried out on their own initiative. Interestingly, after some of these illegal actions, the NRM receives “exclusive” interviews from members of the self-titled “action groups” that claim to be behind them.⁵⁸ One could speculate that the existence of such clandestine “action groups” may serve as a tool for the NRM to carry out illegal activities without compromising the organization.

GI

Compared to the NRM, GI’s action repertoire is more irregular and multifaceted. This stems partly from GI’s network-centric organizational structure, and partly from GI’s emphasis on creative countercultural (metapolitical) activism, leaving much of the initiative to each local group. Among the best-known internal activities are the annual Summer University training camp arranged by the French GI division, and activities organized at the various “Identity houses” that appear to be most common in France.

Although GI’s external activities vary a lot, they are usually premised on the same basic idea: to carry out creative, spectacular, or provocative publicity stunts to generate media attention – a form of action referred to as *guerrilla media tactics*.⁵⁹ These stunts can range from small-scale street-based artistic displays or performances, via regular street patrols meant to protect the native population from violent foreigners, to symbolic “occupations” of buildings associated with political enemies or even large-scale operations such as the Defend Europa campaign in 2017. For this campaign, GI joined forces with other like-minded groups and used crowdfunding to charter a ship, which was subsequently used to intervene against rescue operations sent out to help refugees lost in the Mediterranean Sea. On a more regular basis, GI activists also organize flyer distributions, protest events, and larger street demonstrations.

Publicly, GI presents itself as a non-violent group, and violent confrontation with political enemies is not part of its daily action repertoire. At the same time, GI adheres to a war-like rhetoric alluding to violent images. Several publicity stunts orchestrated by the French GI contain elements of symbolic violence, for instance when they “occupy” mosques,⁶⁰ carry out

⁵⁸ See e.g. The Nordic Resistance Movement, 120.

⁵⁹ Zúquete, 48.

⁶⁰ Le Monde, “Génération identitaire poursuivie pour l’occupation de la mosquée de Poitiers,” October 21, 2017, https://www.lemonde.fr/police-justice/article/2017/10/21/generation-identitaire-poursuivie-pour-l-occupation-de-la-mosquee-de-poitiers_5204150_1653578.html.

vigilante “patrols” to protect natives from immigrant “rabble” (*racaille*),⁶¹ seek to interfere with search-and-rescue vessels to “defend” Europe from migrants lost at sea,⁶² or “block” popular migrant routes through the Alps.⁶³

However, GI activists are not restricted to imagined violence. For example, at their annual summer camps, newcomers are expected to participate in an initiation ritual inspired by the movie *Fight Club*, in which they have to fight one of their own for one minute, while the crowd stands around cheering.⁶⁴ GI also organizes martial arts training for their members,⁶⁵ and from time to time, they experience violent confrontations with opposing anti-fascist groups – fights that are hailed and commemorated among GI members.⁶⁶ Furthermore, French GI activists have proven to be quite violent when acting on their own, and even bragging about it to fellow GI activists.⁶⁷ In the end, physical violence is not rejected altogether. As the GI-leader Delrieux stated in an interview with a Greek magazine: “We reject violence, but we will use force if necessary.”⁶⁸

In sum, most of the activities carried out by the NRM and GI are legal, but for many members of the public deeply provocative. Considering that these are militant protest groups promoting the interests of certain races (the NRM), or ethnic groups (GI), that is to be expected. However, in the case of the NRM, legal activities such as protests and demonstrations often lead to violent confrontations with counter-protestors or the police. Although GI refrains from such violent confrontation, apart from some violent encounters with opposing anti-fascists, they do carry out

⁶¹ Le Point, “Paris : la ‘patrouille anti-racaille’ de Génération identitaire dans le métro,” *Le Point*, May 10, 2014, https://www.lepoint.fr/societe/paris-la-patrouille-anti-racaille-de-generation-identitaire-dans-le-metro-10-05-2014-1821135_23.php.

⁶² Le Monde, “Le siège de SOS Méditerranée occupé par des militants identitaires,” October 5, 2018, https://www.lemonde.fr/immigration-et-diversite/article/2018/10/05/le-siege-de-sos-mediterranee-occupe-par-des-militants-identitaires_5365367_1654200.html.

⁶³ Le Monde, “Migrants dans les Alpes : opération « Défend Europe » par des militants d’extrême droite,” April 22, 2018, https://www.lemonde.fr/immigration-et-diversite/article/2018/04/22/migrants-dans-les-alpes-francaises-renforts-importants-pour-controler-les-frontieres_5289094_1654200.html.

⁶⁴ Bouron, “Studying the Social Conditions That Make Possible the Militant Commitment to the Extreme Right,” 15–16.

⁶⁵ Zúquete, 59, 62.

⁶⁶ Zúquete, 336–37.

⁶⁷ Al Jazeera, *Generation Hate Part 1*, accessed February 8, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/12/generation-hate-part-1-181226094751438.html>.

⁶⁸ *Generation Identity*, 39.

various forms of civil disobedience, such as road blockages, compelling the police to deal with them forcefully.

As such, both groups represent particular challenges to contemporary Western governments. The NRM represents two challenges in particular. The first concerns how liberal democratic societies should deal with groups openly promoting a worldview deeply at odds with almost all members of society, openly aiming to dismantle the current democratic system, and generating public fear and mistrust, in particular among minority groups and other enemies that are systematically targeted. The second challenge concerns how to deal with groups demonstrating violent capabilities and intent, in a way that discourages violent encounters with the police or political opponents.

The case of GI represents a slightly different challenge, because more members of the public sympathize with some of their views, and they do not represent any immediate violent threat. This raises the question of whether responses to militant protest groups such as GI should come from civil society first and foremost, and to a lesser extent from government agencies – that is, as long they obey the law. These questions and dilemmas are treated in more detail in the next section.

Part four: preventing extremism and violence

This section offers some policy advice on how policy-makers and practitioners tasked to prevent extremism and violence might go about dealing with militant protest groups such as the NRM and GI without compromising liberal democratic principles.

Note that the working assumption here is that these groups will continue to exist and evolve, and that the primary aim is not to ban, defeat, or dismantle them, but to prevent them from engaging in extremist or violent *behavior*. Extremist behavior may include hostile activities targeting specific individuals, groups, communities, or institutions by way of systematic harassment, physical confrontation, violent attacks, and/or direct threats. Bans are of course always a potential option (the NRM was recently banned in Finland) but they are controversial, have unpredictable consequences, and would require a discussion of their own, which falls outside the scope of this paper.

It should also be noted that having extremist (or anti-democratic) ideas is not illegal *per se* in most liberal democracies, as long as the views are not translated into extremist behavior. This does not mean that extremist ideas are to be welcomed in a liberal democracy, or that governments cannot work systematically to prevent or minimize the prevalence of such ideas. However, trying to prevent or minimize extremism (ideas and behavior) is a delicate and complex task that can easily backfire and lead to unintended consequences. One must therefore always be careful about giving explicit advice about how specific measures could reduce extremist views or behavior, in particular because measures that have proven effective in one case do not necessarily apply to different cases, or to similar cases in different contexts.⁶⁹

Although there is a vast academic literature on preventing violent extremism,⁷⁰ this field of research suffers from the inherent challenge of isolating and documenting the effects of measures intended to reduce extremism, because meaningful control groups are hard to establish. Thus, considering the delicate, volatile, and poorly documented effects from counterextremism measures, the following policy advice is kept at a general level, and tailored to groups such as the NRM and GI, i.e., militant protest groups mainly operating in the extra-parliamentary space and seeking to influence people through mostly legal yet sometimes disturbing and confrontational actions. In what follows I will focus on these six advices:

1. Deny the role of heroic victim
2. Encourage responsible media coverage
3. Build knowledge about militant protest groups
4. Build knowledge about liberal democracy
5. Recognize genuine concerns while dismissing extreme solutions
6. React decisively to extremist and violent behavior

⁶⁹ Tore Bjørge, *Preventing Crime: A Holistic Approach*, Crime Prevention and Security Management (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

⁷⁰ William Stephens, Stijn Sieckelinck, and Hans Boutellier, “Preventing Violent Extremism: A Review of the Literature,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 0, no. 0 (January 2, 2019): 1–16.

1. Deny the role of heroic victim

An essential element of NRM's and GI's militant identities is that they – as true representatives of their peoples – have become victims of a malicious system trying to convert or defeat them. As such, they have chosen to sacrifice a comfortable “normie” life to become part of a heroic battle against the system. This romantic self-perception appears to be a strong motivator for many militant activists. Denying this role of heroic victim might therefore reduce some of the appeal these groups are dependent on. The implication is that any initiative or reaction from the “the system” – i.e. the government – that might solidify the perception of being heroic victims, such as derogatory public labeling, unwarranted public arrests, or unannounced house searches at night, should be considered against alternative measures that might be perceived as less intrusive or repressive.

This does not mean that governments should not initiate measures against militant protest groups, or react promptly when their behavior crosses certain boundaries. Trying to deny their role as heroic victim should, for example, never be used as an excuse for not responding to illegal extremist behavior. However, there is likely to be benefit in always thinking hard about how certain initiatives or responses might affect these groups' self-perception, and whether alternative measures could do the same job but with less of a victimizing effect.

2. Encourage responsible media coverage

As militant protest groups that try to convey messages to larger audiences, both the NRM and GI thrive on media attention, including the negative kind. Both groups have become experts in making the most of any form of media attention, often with follow-up initiatives such as video-filmed personal confrontations or public responses. At the same time, the media's interest in these groups is undeservedly high due to their controversial political messages. Minimizing media attention towards these groups would most likely impact negatively on their recruitment and mobilization.

However, in a liberal democracy, it is of course not acceptable to dictate what the media should or should not do. Therefore, perhaps the most viable option from a governmental perspective is to establish a dialogue with the media about the potential negative effects of disproportionate coverage of militant protest groups. All things considered, these groups have minimal public support and limited impact, unless they are granted to them by the media or by the government.

3. *Build knowledge about militant protest groups*

In order to carry out informed assessments of how certain measures might impact on the self-perception and behavior of militant protest groups, or to educate the media or other non-governmental or governmental stakeholders about their nature and dynamics, valid, in-depth, and updated knowledge is needed. Building, sustaining, and disseminating such knowledge may therefore contribute to more effective responses and initiatives, both outside and within governments. Poor understanding will lead to misinformed responses and initiatives that can easily backfire and lead to unintended consequences. For example, considering the fanaticism, experience, and position of well-established NRM leaders, home visits by the security police intended to warn them about their activism are not likely to have the desired effect.⁷¹

This type of knowledge has limited shelf-life and therefore requires some form of permanent structure designed to produce, update, and disseminate it. Furthermore, considering the radical nature of militant protest groups, those responsible for producing it should not represent interest groups with political agendas, but rather more “neutral” civil or government agencies. At the same time, because we are dealing mostly with legal actors here, these agencies should not operate clandestinely like intelligence agencies, but openly and in line with international privacy laws and regulations.

4. *Build knowledge about liberal democracy*

A shared denominator for the NRM and GI is their fierce opposition to liberal democracy. By implication, building knowledge about liberal democratic ideas and values in broader society, and in particular among young people, could serve as a firewall against anti-liberal propaganda. Many Western countries are currently experiencing an erosion of support for democratic systems, including among young people.⁷² Some of this erosion may result from the fact that today’s young people have been born into fairly well-functioning democratic societies and have no experience of illiberal or authoritarian regimes. Liberal democracy can easily be taken for granted and even blamed for broader societal trends related to modernization and globalization.

⁷¹ Frihetskamp, “PST truet med trakassering og utvisning fra landet!,” *Frihetskamp.net*, October 14, 2016, <https://www.frihetskamp.net/pst-truet-med-trakassering-og-utvisning-fra-landet/>.

⁷² Roberto Stefan Foa and Yascha Mounk, “The Signs of Deconsolidation,” *Journal of Democracy* 28, no. 1 (January 10, 2017): 5–15; Roberto Stefan Foa and Yascha Mounk, “The Danger of Deconsolidation: The Democratic Disconnect,” *Journal of Democracy* 27, no. 3 (July 6, 2016): 5–17.

Some might also regard liberal democracy as a rather neutral and boring political construct, unaware of the historical significance of its core values such as civil and human rights, freedom of speech, freedom of organization, freedom of religion, and the rule of law.

For these reasons, contemporary liberal democratic governments have a responsibility to build knowledge about what liberal democracy essentially is, how and why it came about, and what its alternatives might entail. Ideally, liberal democracy should not be perceived as neutral and boring, but as an ideology worth defending. Making liberal democracy fashionable among young people may sound like a difficult task, but is perhaps one that should be striven towards.

5. Recognize genuine concerns while dismissing extreme solutions

Some of the concerns voiced by groups such as the NRM and GI are genuine in the sense that they are heartfelt by the activists and may also relate to actual societal challenges. For example, assuming that current patterns of demographic change continue, people of white ethnic descent will most likely be outnumbered by people of mixed ethnic background by the end of the century in several European countries.⁷³ Increasing ethnic/cultural heterogeneity may also impact negatively on social cohesion and social trust.⁷⁴ These developments cause concern among considerable parts of the population in European countries.⁷⁵ Such concerns must be recognized and discussed openly, without prejudice and moralization. At the same time, the extreme solutions proposed by groups such as NRM and GI, such as remigration, must also be brought into the light and criticized, not only as entirely unrealistic, but also as deeply problematic from a democratic point of view.

6. React decisively to extremist and violent behavior

Finally, although liberal democracies may have to tolerate the existence of illiberal or anti-democratic ideas, they must never extend this liberal attitude to tolerating extremist or violent behavior, especially when specific communities, groups, or citizens are being targeted systematically. In such instances, decisive reactions with real consequences are needed to clearly

⁷³ Eric P Kaufmann, *Whiteshift: Populism, Immigration and the Future of White Majorities* (London: Allen Lane, 2018).

⁷⁴ Paul Collier, *Exodus: How Migration Is Changing Our World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁷⁵ Matthew J. Goodwin, "What Do Europeans Think About Muslim Immigration?," *Chatham House* (blog), February 7, 2017, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/expert/comment/what-do-europeans-think-about-muslim-immigration>.

signal the types of extremist (or anti-democratic) behavior that is intolerable. However, knowing precisely where to draw the line between tolerable extremist attitudes and intolerable extremist behavior is not a straight-forward exercise.

One resource typically used to draw this line is the law, which to some extent dictates the types of views and behaviors that are intolerable such as direct threats, violent attacks, or causing public disorder. However, all laws are subject to interpretation, and some laws are vaguer and harder to enforce effectively than others. This is especially the case with hate crime laws, such as the racism paragraphs in Norway and Denmark and their Swedish and Finnish equivalents known as “harassment against communities” (*hets mot folkgrupp*).

At least two general problems arise when trying to enforce these types of law. The first is that the extent and complexity of this type of harassment implies that the police will only be able to respond to a very small proportion of it. As a result, those few who get convicted may perceive their punishment as unfair and arbitrary. A second problem is that previous experience indicates that these types of laws have been used in ways that most likely lead to unintended consequences, such as stronger internal group cohesion, further radicalization, and a sense of victimization. For example, NRM activists are regularly sentenced to prison, using hate crime laws. However, the justifications for imprisonment are often quite vague and the sentences rather short. Serving short prison sentences appears to give *status* to activists within these groups, in particular if they perceive the conviction as unfair. Activists have (according to their own accounts) been imprisoned for a few months for posting a picture of the Star of David being thrown into a garbage can, and publishing statements such as “long live National Socialism!” Although explicit promotion of such views may be interpreted as illegal according to hate crime laws, one can easily bypass such laws by making the statement more implicit. The result is a cat-and-mouse interpretation game, which does not seem to have the intended preventive or protective effect, rather the contrary. One alternative would be to ban the organization entirely – that is, if such views are to be seen as illegal *per se* – a practice that would not fit easily with the tolerant paradigm of liberal democracies.

There have also been attempts to use similar laws to punish GI activists for expressing incitement to hatred. However, most of these accusations have been dismissed in court because a

racist intent could not be proven, thereby boosting the confidence of the accused GI activists.⁷⁶ Similarly, GI activists in Germany and Austria have been subjected to quite repressive measures by the state, including being put on surveillance, being prosecuted as a criminal organization, and having their homes raided and their funds confiscated, without such harsh measures leading to legal convictions.⁷⁷ These types of measures might then only strengthen the notion of activists being heroic victims, unfairly targeted by a malicious system.

Rather than policing political views, one should perhaps be more oriented towards policing extremist and threatening behavior targeting specific individuals, groups, or communities. A recent documentary showed how French GI activists in their spare time seek out violent confrontations with random Muslims, including young girls, in the streets at night.⁷⁸ This type of behavior should be reacted to decisively. On a similar note, the NRM has been harassing and threatening political opponents into silence at different locations in Sweden, apparently without any firm reactions from the police.⁷⁹

Precisely where the boundary for legal reaction should be situated remains an open question that needs to be further discussed. At the moment, we see legal reaction to controversial political views, which may lead to unintended consequences, and we see a lack of legal response to extremist actions that are clearly overstepping the boundary of what our societies should tolerate. A more precise analysis of where this boundary should be situated and how to implement it in practice will rely on more knowledge about contemporary militant protest groups, as well as an increased public awareness about our own liberal democratic societies.

Part five: further reading

This final section outlines existing academic and some non-academic sources covering the NRM and GI. Note, however, that academic research on the NRM and GI is limited, especially in English or the Scandinavian languages. Those interested in learning more about these groups

⁷⁶ Die Tagesstimme, “The Identitarian Movement on trial: The reasons they were acquitted,” *Die Tagesstimme*, July 26, 2018, <https://www.tagesstimme.com/2018/07/27/the-identitarian-movement-on-trial-the-reasons-they-were-acquitted/>.

⁷⁷ Zúquete, 85–86.

⁷⁸ Al Jazeera, *Generation Hate Part 1*.

⁷⁹ Jacob A. Ravndal and Tore Bjørgo, “What Is the Problem with the Nordic Resistance Movement?,” *Right Now* (blog), June 7, 2018, <https://www.sv.uio.no/c-rex/english/news-and-events/right-now/the-nordic-resistance-movement.html>.

would therefore benefit from also looking at primary sources published by these groups themselves, such as magazines, books, radio broadcasts, blog posts, videos, and news articles, most of which is available through their webpages, webshops, or related websites. In doing so, one should be mindful that these products have been created for propaganda purposes, and that when buying these products you also provide financial support to the groups.

Published research on the NRM

Notwithstanding NRM's prominent position in the Nordic militant landscape, few academic publications on this particular group exist. A number of relevant master and bachelor theses have been written (mostly in Swedish and Norwegian). Although they are not included in this list of published research, they can be easily accessed through Google Scholar.

- Helene Lööw has written the definitive historical account of Nazism in Sweden, in Swedish, covering the period from 1924 to 2014 in three volumes. The last book, which covers the years 2000–2014, dedicates 11 pages to characterizing the NRM and placing it into the larger historical picture.⁸⁰
- Tore Bjørgo and Ingvild Magnæs Gjelsvik have written an extensive report chapter in Norwegian about right-wing extremism in Norway, including 22 pages covering NRM's Norwegian branch.⁸¹
- Benjamin Teitelbaum has written a book in English about the radical nationalist movement in the Nordic countries, focusing on its cultural and musical evolution. The book is based on extensive ethnographic fieldwork among prominent activists, some of which belonged or belong to the NRM.⁸²
- Abby Peterson has written a chapter in English on the relationship between the NRM and the Sweden Democrats in a recent book on so-called “movement-parties” in Europe, portraying these two as mutually benefiting from each other.⁸³

⁸⁰ Heléne Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige 2000-2014* (Stockholm: Ordfront, 2015).

⁸¹ Tore Bjørgo and Ingvild Magnæs Gjelsvik, “Utvikling og utbredelse av høyreekstremisme i Norge” (Oslo: Politi-høgskolen, 2018), <https://www.phs.no/biblioteket/anmeldinger/arkiv/2018/oktober/hoyreekstremisme-i-norge-utviklingstrekk-konspirasjonsteorier-og-forebyggingsstrategier/>.

⁸² Benjamin R. Teitelbaum, *Lions of the North: Sounds of the New Nordic Radical Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

⁸³ Abby Peterson, “The Relationship between a Movement Party and Its Radical Flank: The Sweden Democrats and the Militant Factions within the Swedish Neo-Nazi Ultra Nationalist Movement,” in *Radical Right Movement Parties in Europe*, ed. Manuela Caiani and Ondřej Císař (Oxon: Routledge, 2018), 131–48.

- Christer Mattson has published a short report in Swedish summarizing NRM's ideology, propaganda, and world view.⁸⁴ Mattson has also published an article (with Thomas Johansson) in English on exit processes among young activists in Sweden, some of whom belonged to the NRM.⁸⁵
- Jacob Aasland Ravndal has written an article in English about right-wing terrorism and militancy in the Nordic countries. This article includes a short case study of the NRM and its development in each of the Nordic countries.⁸⁶

Non-academic sources on the NRM

- Magnus Söderman, a former leading member of the NRM who later left the movement (but remains a political activist), has written a book in Swedish covering his ten-year-long experience with the organization.⁸⁷
- Esa Henrik Holappa, founder of NRM's Finnish branch, who left the movement entirely, has written an account of his experience, in Finnish.⁸⁸
- Hollapa and Södermann have also published their letter exchange in English with the prominent American activist Richard Scutari, which sheds some light on the establishment of the Finnish NRM branch in particular.⁸⁹
- The Swedish anti-racist organization EXPO regularly publishes news stories and more in-depth feature articles about the NRM.⁹⁰

⁸⁴ Christer Mattson, "Nordiska Motståndsrörelsens Ideologi, Propaganda Och Livsåskådning" (Segerstedtinstitutet, University of Götterburg, 2018), https://segerstedtinstitutet.gu.se/digitalAssets/1693/1693644_rapport7-si.pdf.

⁸⁵ Christer Mattson and Thomas Johansson, "Becoming, Belonging and Leaving – Exit Processes among Young Neo-Nazis in Sweden," *Journal for Deradicalization* 0, no. 16 (September 22, 2018): 33–69.

⁸⁶ Jacob Aasland Ravndal, "Right-Wing Terrorism and Militancy in the Nordic Countries: A Comparative Case Study," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 30, no. 5 (September 3, 2018): 772–92.

⁸⁷ Magnus Söderman, *Hell Seger!: Ett decennium i Svenska motståndsrörelsen* (Place of publication not identified: JoMaDa Media UG, 2017).

⁸⁸ Esa Henrik Holappa, *Minä perustin uusnatsijärjestön – Suomen Vastarintaliikkeen ex-johtajan muistelmat / Into Kustannus* (Into Kustannus, 2016), <https://intokustannus.fi/kirja/mina-perustin-uusnatsijarjeston-suomen-vastarintaliikkeen-ex-johtajan-muistelmat/>.

⁸⁹ Söderman and Holappa, *Unbroken Warrior: The Richard Scutari Letters*.

⁹⁰ See www.expo.se

- The Norwegian anti-racist organization *Antirasistisk senter* recently published an extensive report about right-wing extremism in Norway, with main emphasis on the NRM.⁹¹
- The Danish anti-racist organization Redox has also begun to publish articles about the newly established Danish NRM branch.⁹²
- The journalist network Hate Speech International has published several in-depth feature articles about the NRM in English,⁹³ including an extensive report by Øyvind Strømme.⁹⁴

Published research on GI

Most existing research on GI is written in French, with some notable exceptions in English that make up the bulk of the publications listed here.

- José Pedro Zúquete recently published in English that will become the definitive account of the Identitarian movement for many years to come. This 484-page book traces the movement's history from the establishment of GRECE in the late 1960s to the most recent developments, such as Identitarian ideas being picked up by contemporary white nationalists in the United States, and the establishment of GI's Danish and British divisions in 2017. However, the book's main emphasis is on the development of GI in France, Austria and Germany, as well as on CasaPound in Italy. The book offers an unfiltered account of these groups' ideological universe and organizational evolution.⁹⁵
- Samuel Bouron has published extensively on the French Identitarian movement, mostly in French,⁹⁶ including an ethnographic study based on his own participation in one of GI's summer camps. This last study is also available as a draft paper in English.⁹⁷

⁹¹ Shoab Sultan and Rune Berglund Steen, "Høyreekstremisme i Norge: Trender Og Utvikling" (Antirasistisk Senter, 2018), <http://antirasistisk.no/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/H%C3%B8yreekstremisme-i-Norge-trender-og-utvikling-Web.pdf>.

⁹² See www.redox.dk

⁹³ See <https://www.hate-speech.org/behind-the-nazi-facade/>

⁹⁴ Øyvind Strømme, "Neo-Nazis in the North: The Nordic Resistance Movement in Finland, Sweden and Norway" (Hate Speech International, n.d.), <https://www.hate-speech.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/neo-nazis-in-the-north.pdf>.

⁹⁵ Zúquete.

⁹⁶ See <http://dauphine.academia.edu/SamuelBouron>

⁹⁷ Bouron.

- Fabian Virchow, an expert on the extreme right in Germany, has published a book chapter in English on GI's German division, discussing its characteristics as a social movement.⁹⁸
- Pietro Castelli Gattinara has written an article about recent mobilization against refugees in Italy and France based on face-to-face interviews with a number of activists, some of whom are associated with Generation Identity in France.⁹⁹
- Alice Blum has written an article about masculinity within the Identitarian movement.¹⁰⁰
- Imogen Richards has recently published an article on the philosophical and historical foundations of Generation Identity.¹⁰¹
- Louie Dean Valencia-García has published an online piece about Generation Identity for the Council for European Studies' online journal *EuropeNow*, based on his wider research into the New Right.¹⁰²

Non-academic sources on GI

- The British anti-racist organization Hope not Hate has published a series of in-depth articles in English about GI in the UK and elsewhere, available on its website.¹⁰³

"In-house" sources on GI

- Markus Willinger, an Austrian GI activist and student in history and political science, has written two booklets presenting GI's general worldview.¹⁰⁴ English versions of these are available through the website of the identitarian publishing house Arktos.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁸ Fabian Virchow, "The 'Identitarian Movement': What Kind of Identity? Is It Really a Movement?," in *Digital Media Strategies of the Far-Right in Europe and the United States* (Lanham; Boulder; New York; London: Lexington Books, 2015).

⁹⁹ Pietro Castelli Gattinara, "Europeans, Shut the Borders! Anti-Refugee Mobilisation in Italy and France," in *Solidarity Mobilizations in the 'Refugee Crisis': Contentious Moves*, ed. Donatella della Porta, Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology (Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 271–97.

¹⁰⁰ Alice Blum, "Men in the Battle for the Brains: Constructions of Masculinity Within the 'Identitary Generation,'" in *Gender and Far Right Politics in Europe*, ed. Michaela Köttig, Renate Bitzan, and Andrea Petö, (Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2017), 321–34.

¹⁰¹ Imogen Richards, "A Philosophical and Historical Analysis of 'Generation Identity': Fascism, Online Media, and the European New Right," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 0, no. 0 (September 30, 2019): 1–20.

¹⁰² Louie Dean Valencia-García, "Generation Identity: A Millennial Fascism for the Future?," *EuropeNow*, Council for European Studies (February 22, 2018), <https://www.europenowjournal.org/2018/02/22/generation-identity-a-millennial-fascism-for-the-future/>.

¹⁰³ See <https://www.hopenothate.org.uk/research/investigations/undercover-inside-britains-far-right/generation-identity/>

¹⁰⁴ Willinger, *Generation Identity*; Markus Willinger, *A Europe of Nations* (Arktos Media Ltd, 2014).

¹⁰⁵ See www.arktos.com

- Arktos also sells an English translation of a booklet containing a number of original texts written by GI activists and interviews with GI leaders introducing GI and their metapolitical project.¹⁰⁶

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University of Oslo
P.O.Box 1097 Blindern
0317 Oslo
Norway
Email: post@c-rex.uio.no