

Between Prague Spring and French May

Protest, Culture and Society

General editors:

Kathrin Fahlenbrach, Institute for Media and Communication, University of Hamburg.

Martin Klimke, New York University, Abu Dhabi.

Joachim Scharloth, Technical University Dresden, Germany.

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Between Prague Spring and French May

Opposition and Revolt in Europe,
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Edited by

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Introduction

*Martin Klimke, Jacco Pekelder,
and Joachim Scharloth*

From 28 July until 6 August 1968, Sofia, the Bulgarian capital, staged the 9th World Youth Festival. In the middle of the Cold War, 20,000 visitors from more than 130 countries poured into the city to celebrate the unity of Communist and socialist youth across the globe. Events, however, would soon make a mockery of the festival's motto, "For Solidarity, Peace, and Friendship," and turn Sofia into a showcase of ideological divisions among the Left in East and West.¹

Signs of discord emerged as early as the opening ceremony in Sofia's Vasil Levski National Stadium when the West German delegation chanted "Dubček, Dubček" as they passed the dignitaries' loge. This provoked severe consternation among Bulgarian officials, who did not look kindly upon the Czechoslovak Communist leader's reform efforts.

Tensions continued to mount when the Bulgarian secret police tried to prevent a demonstration against the Vietnam War that West German SDS president Karl-Dietrich Wolff had called for. Pushed away from the local U.S. embassy, Wolff gave a speech standing on a wall of the nearby Georgi Dimitrov Mausoleum, in which he denounced Bulgaria's political censorship and the lack of free and open exchange during the festival. Among other things, he derided the prohibition on carrying portraits of Che Guevara, Ho Chi Minh, or Mao Zedong.

The situation escalated a few days later, when a Bulgarian delegate compared Wolff to Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels after the German SDS leader had complained about the manipulation of the list of speakers. As an indignant Wolff stormed to the podium, other Bulgarians caught him and dragged him out of the building, smashing his glasses in the process. Thereafter, turmoil erupted. Delegates from Belgium, Denmark, Great Britain, Italy, Sweden, and the Netherlands left the scene in protest. Disregarding traditional Cold War allegiances, participants from Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia followed suit.²

That delegates from these two Communist countries joined their Western counterparts in protest not only reveals the ideological rifts among the young, organized Left at the end of the 1960s. It also highlights the gap between the party line and political attitudes at the grassroots level. Moreover, the events in Sofia illustrate that conflicts emerging from this gap between political expectations and reality among the younger generation were not confined to the liberal democracies of the West, but were also fought out within and among the Communist countries of Eastern Europe. Opponents of established political dogmas

and power structures on both sides of the Iron Curtain occasionally even overcame the limitations imposed by their national contexts and joined forces with their peers in other countries against perceived oppression and injustice at home and abroad.

This transnational quality of postwar European protest movements sits at the heart of this volume. Despite the overwhelming flow of publications that have paid homage to the rebelliousness of the “sixties” or “1968” in recent years, many historians have argued for a comprehensive perspective on popular political participation in postwar Europe that questions traditional Cold War narratives and their often narrow focus on political history.³ Among other things, they point to the continued prevalence of national viewpoints, despite the blossoming of historical research on this period. In fact, such national perspectives may have even become more dominant over the years, especially since, in some cases, historical research has just begun, as archival material that was previously classified has just recently been released, only now affording scholars an opportunity to freely study this period.⁴ In other countries, the 1960s (or “1968”) have by now become part of national cultures of remembrance, with fitting “lieux de mémoires” like the attack on Rudi Dutschke in Berlin, the occupation of the Sorbonne University in Paris, the teach-ins at Berkeley, and the White Bicycle plans of the Amsterdam Provos. These historical events and their corresponding sites have developed into foundational narratives with both positive and negative connotations.⁵ They range from national myths of rejuvenation, proclaiming the birth of a new society with a more open and democratic political culture and greater equality between the sexes, to the end of a period of liberalization and the advent of domestic orthodoxy and dogma. In other words, the increase of research and remembrance on a national level has frequently come to overshadow the global dimension and transnational roots of the protests.

In response, ever more studies on the 1960s/1970s reinforce the search for connections and comparisons between these different national contexts, viewing the respective protests not only as parallel but interconnected phenomena on the global playing field of the Cold War.⁶ Such studies stress the common inspirations and global backgrounds of the protest movements in different countries and have begun to focus on interactions and the transfers of ideas, protest repertoires, etc., between these movements. Although we acknowledge the crucial need for empirical studies on the local level, as well as the pervasive and often dominant impact of national factors, we nonetheless wish for this volume to contribute to a broader perspective in three ways.

First, the volume connects the historical research of this period to the “transnational turn” in the social sciences.⁷ Stressing the global causes of the social upheavals in the 1960s/70s, it focuses on sub- or non-state actors operating across borders (transnational ones), distinguishing these from international (state-to-state) contacts. To this end, it brings together case studies from Western Europe, the Warsaw Pact countries, and the nonaligned European countries, stretching

from roughly 1960 to 1980. Without negating the fundamental differences between the political and social systems in different parts of the continent, the volume thus tries to examine the mutual influences and interactions among protest movements across Europe's great divide, as well as their communication and cooperation with and perception of other global forces. Its aim is to give voice to a new generation of scholars who seek to establish a more comprehensive, European perspective that explores the impact the Cold War division had on the emergence of social protest within different national contexts and on the continent as a whole.

Second, and partly as a consequence of this transnational perspective, the contributions assembled in this collection are meant to broaden the chronological scope of research on the 1960s and "1968." Although the volume ends with an international chronology of 1968—in recognition of the intriguing density of events in that fateful year and as a way to show the diversity of events across the continent—the narratives of the individual articles shy away from traditional periodizations. Instead of reducing the decade's transformations to the single (though metaphorical) year of "1968" as "the year that rocked the world," many of our authors take a long-term view, perceiving a long transitional period, which began—at least in some countries—in the middle of the 1950s and did not end before the mid- or (sometimes) late 1970s. They either embed their analysis of specific events of 1968 in this larger conceptual framework or describe long-term trends, like leftist attitudes toward the nation in Denmark and Sweden throughout this period. Including genealogies and/or consequences of events and developments, they paint a picture of the *longue durée* of postwar European protest movements.

Third, and building on this "long sixties" perspective, the volume seeks to broaden not only the geographical scope but also the disciplinary base of research on this period. Bringing together scholars from the fields of history, cultural studies, linguistics, as well as media and communication studies, this volume is able to overcome the artificial and narrow focus on political history. For example, combining the insights of political history with analyses of cultural practices, rhetoric, and media representations, our approach is able to take specific local and national conditions of dissent into account and reevaluate traditional dichotomies of success and failure regarding the legacies of this era.

Based on these three principles, the articles in this volume offer a portrait of a "coat of many colors," paying tribute to the transitional character of the societal transformations of the era, while at the same time acknowledging the immense diversity of developments all over Europe. To guide readers through this multi-faceted story, we have arranged the essays into four sections dedicated to politics, protest cultures, the media-staging of protest, and discourses of liberation and violence.

As the first section, "Politics between East and West," demonstrates, international events and power relations had a substantial impact on the formulation of

domestic dissent. The year 1956, for example—Khrushchev’s denunciation of Stalin at the Twentieth Soviet Communist Party Congress, Soviet tanks rolling into Hungary to put down a nationwide uprising, and the British-French war with Egypt over the Suez Canal—profoundly shaped the political attitudes of people all over Europe. Holger Nehring’s contribution shows that precisely this year was the defining moment for the “New Left” in Great Britain. In Nehring’s view, the extremely heterogeneous groups that are traditionally subsumed under this label largely grew out of disillusionment with the Soviet Union. As a result, a reform movement of British communism emerged, which both sought and called itself a New Left. It combined the “emancipatory aspects of the socialist tradition” with an attempt to make the geopolitical reality of the Cold War a personal reality and topic of public debate, envisioning Great Britain to be a role model of nonalignment and “positive neutralism.” Although its members disagreed about protest techniques and the details of its ideological direction, the British New Left clearly illustrates the impact of international events on domestic social change and the convergence of a transnational mission with national roots.

Inside the Eastern European bloc, the long-term impact of 1956 and the thaw initiated by Khrushchev also created limited space for political dissent. Zdenek Nebrensky demonstrates how Czechoslovak students were able to articulate their dissatisfaction at a party conference on higher education in 1963, well before the Prague Spring. Analyzing the congress, he reveals how party officials provided a framework for the expression of dissent among the domestic youth, who seized upon this opening to challenge the restrictive public sphere. The Czechoslovak students were very aware of cultural trends popular among youth in other Eastern and Western European countries, even if they often knew these trends only as mediated by their Polish peers. Their demands for reform with respect to the private sphere, social equality, and validation of their work thus indicated the influence these transnational discourses had on their criticism of the domestic system.

The interplay between international events and domestic ideologies also stretched to other parts of Europe. In Denmark and Sweden, as Thomas Jørgensen points out, the national liberation movements of the Third World and the global student revolt of the 1960s particularly affected the Left. Interestingly, in both countries, these international developments brought about a revival of national sentiments on the Left in the 1970s, together with an increasing focus on the working class. This analysis depicts a remarkable transformation of Left politics within two decades.

The interconnectedness of political change in Western and Eastern Europe also affected party reactions to domestic dissent. Maud Bracke’s contribution on the reaction of the French Communist Party (PCF) to the Paris May events in 1968 reveals that the PCF was caught between its adherence to orthodox revolutionary concepts, its domestic ambitions, and its submission to the Soviet

Union's party line. Bracke suggests that the Soviet Union subordinated the PCF to its larger foreign policy interests by favoring Gaullism and by using pressure on the party to try to sabotage the pro-Atlantic, center-left coalition under François Mitterrand. Combined with the internal flaws of the PCF, this circumstance made the party more distant from student protesters, and prompted it to rapidly realign with the Soviet position after the violent end of the Prague Spring.

Perhaps the most striking illustration in terms of ideological positions between East and West was Yugoslavia, which fully subscribed to neither side. As Boris Kanzleiter elaborates, the Yugoslavian leadership was probably the only governing elite that interpreted the student revolt in its country as a confirmation of its own policies. In Yugoslavia, which, as a nonaligned nation, was open to influences from both Cold War ideological blocs, students could identify with the dissent of their peers in the East *and* the West on the grounds of their own experiences. Their simultaneous opposition against both Stalinism and capitalism was encapsulated in the popular slogan "Down With the Red Bourgeoisie!" Nevertheless, Tito eventually prosecuted them for their actions, which had increasingly gone beyond the party's control.

The geopolitical divisions of the Cold War, however, were not alone in influencing oppositional movements in Europe and domestic responses to them. The contributions in our second section, "Protest Without Borders: Recontextualization of Protest Cultures," focus on the transnational exchange of cultural practices within the protest movements and the historical, linguistic, and spatial factors that shaped them in the receiving country. For the case of the Netherlands, Rimko van der Maar illustrates how the legacies of World War II stamped domestic discussions about U.S. involvement in Vietnam in two ways: on one hand, the American liberation of the Netherlands from Nazi occupation and the close transatlantic partnership between the countries after the war made people hesitant to voice criticism. On the other hand, when U.S. actions in Vietnam were compared to World War II war crimes and bombings, it struck a chord, sparking broad-based anti-war sentiment. Furthermore, the appropriation of American anti-war slogans directed against U.S. President Johnson posed a legal problem that even provoked debates in parliament, since a provision in Dutch law, dating back to 1816, prohibited public defamation of a friendly head of state.

The significance of national dispositions in the transfer of protest techniques is underlined by the language and diction of dissent. Andreas Rothenhöfer's investigation of activist discourse about the global dimension of 1960s/70s protest and how it is informed by national backgrounds makes this very clear. Analyzing the linguistic tools that were used to integrate international models into West German protest discourse and the specific national connotations they included, Rothenhöfer points to the crucial role of linguistic idiosyncrasies in the transmission process by exploring the usage of concepts such as world, society, *Volk*, and German.

The contributions by Timothy Brown and Sebastian Haumann highlight the spatial dimensions of protest. Brown compares the “Kommune I” and the “K1-Ost,” which emerged on opposite sides of the Berlin Wall in the late 1960s. Whereas both communes were dedicated to revolutionizing both private spaces and the public sphere with their provocative actions and living arrangements, Brown emphasizes the vastly different political environment the East German variant operated in. Although heavily influenced by its Western counterpart, the “K1-Ost” ultimately could not reconcile the tension between (counter)cultural activity and political activism. Consequently, its search for political change eventually led the group to cooperate with the regime.

Haumann, on the other hand, describes how activists in Italy and West Germany adopted and used a romanticized image of Native Americans to express their dissatisfaction with existing cultural conventions. For both the “Indiani Metropolitanani” and the “Stadtindianer,” Native Americans embodied a utopian existence liberated from social restrictions and middle-class values, as well as harmony with nature. These groups’ quests for an alternative society and their search for free, autonomous spaces ultimately grew into a youth centered movement that would foreshadow many youth protest issues in Europe in the following decades.

The third section, “The Media-Staging of Protest,” covers a topic that has become a core issue in 1960s protest research: the complex interrelationship between protests and the media. “1968” was the first social movement operating in an increasingly globalized media landscape whose participants were clearly aware of how coverage of their issues and of the movement itself affected public opinion. It is therefore widely considered to be the first movement that protested against the established mass media while closely cooperating with them.⁸ 1968 marked the dawn of a new age in media history: television had gradually turned into a leading mass medium, initiating a broad visualization of the public sphere. As a consequence, the audiovisual performance of political events and their significance increased rapidly. This new development promoted the relationship between protests and the media. Television and other visual mass media very quickly discovered the sensational qualities of student protest. At the same time, the media developed a tendency toward greater emotionalization and personalization. It also expanded the intimate sphere both in and through its coverage, finding willing objects to satisfy these needs in the alternative lifestyles of hippies and communes. The activists, on the other hand, discovered the power of media performances and adapted their staging of protest to the logic of media representation. Even though they often fiercely criticized the coverage of their issues and accused the media of manipulating the masses, protesters often used the media to mobilize potential activists and spread their alternative values and lifestyles.

One example of this dialectic is the Dutch Provo Movement as portrayed in Niek Pas’s essay. Provos were not only rejected as “folk devils” by society, as the famous thesis of sociologist Stanley Cohen would have it, but constantly played

with their own image in the media and public opinion.⁹ From the summer of 1966 onward, the movement went from being a highly original countercultural movement to a more or less commodified phenomenon. Media reporting all over Europe transformed some Provos into celebrities of the 1960s countercultural movement across the globe, which strengthened its own transnational identity by adopting the Provo's action repertoire and image.

By examining the media coverage of national and international events of 1968 in the Norwegian mass media, Rolf Werenskjold reinforces the idea that the forms of media reporting had a great influence on what was perceived as "the 1968 revolt." He observes that the coverage on the Norwegian TV news was almost completely concerned with demonstrations as dramatic events and showed almost no interest in the underlying causes of the unrest. The different actors, issues, and the social movements participating in the revolt, therefore, remained almost invisible. Yet, the coverage of the international events nonetheless contributed to the framing of national protest and shaped Norwegian public opinion concerning the protest movements of the late 1960s.

Corina L. Petrescu sheds a different light on the role of the media and their relationship to the articulation of dissent. In Eastern Europe, Communist parties and leaders used state television and newspapers to control their public images and to officially address the citizens and even the international community of states. Prompted by the invasion of Czechoslovakia, Romania's Secretary General of the Communist Party Nicolae Ceausescu gave a speech on 21 August 1968, criticizing the actions of the Warsaw Pact countries and declaring Romania's independence from the Soviet Union. By analyzing the coverage of Ceausescu's speech in two daily newspapers, Petrescu shows how the media mirrored the internal enthusiasm generated by Ceausescu's action. This underscores the fact that Romanian protest in 1968, unlike that of Western Europe and the U.S., did not denote domestic disapproval of the establishment but rather acceptance of it in order to express dissatisfaction with the Soviet Union's international interventionism.

The fourth section, "Discourses of Liberation and Violence," takes us into the 1970s and examines discourses of armed struggle and solidarity within the different left-wing circles. It is an under-researched chapter of the 1960s and its aftermath, not least because it often generates political controversy. In Germany, for instance, until recently, many researchers regarded the turn toward political violence around 1969/1970 as a case of a small fringe group taking a wrong track during the disintegration of the protest movement. Groups like the Red Army Faction and their supporters and sympathizers were considered to be hardly representative of (tendencies in) 1960s protest. Nowadays, in contrast, most prominent researchers accept and stress the centrality of the *topos* of "armed struggle" in the mental world of the protest movement. Hamburg historian Wolfgang Kraushaar, for example, points to Rudi Dutschke's theoretical contributions to the development of violent action methods.¹⁰ In his eyes, violence was "the secret

magnetic field of the movement of '68'.... It had the most powerful and at the same time most abysmal attraction."¹¹ Bielefeld historian Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey mentions another aspect, the glorification of the aesthetics of violence within the protest movements introduced around 1960 by the avant-garde artists' group, the "Situationists."¹²

In response to these new trends, this final section opens with Karen Steller Bjerregaard describing Danish solidarity with the Cuban Revolution as part of a broader solidarity with the Third World. This solidarity with Cuba, Bjerregaard stresses, was integral to the left-wing protest cultures of the 1960s and 1970s, having both a political *and* cultural side. Castro's Cuba was seen as the realization of a third path in the 1960s, apart from Western capitalism and Soviet communism, a manifest utopia. In the 1970s, forced by economic necessity to give up its own claims to leadership within the socialist world and to rally behind the banner of official dogmatic Soviet style communism, Havana no longer offered an alternative to Moscow. Nonetheless, cultural activities with a focus on Cuba flourished and kept the revolution alive as an object of hope and revolutionary role model.

In his contribution, Sebastian Gehrig then investigates the debates about terrorism within the protest milieus in West Berlin and Frankfurt from which the Red Army Faction and other terrorist groups originated. Gehrig begins by showing the close connection between the terrorist groups and the wider protest milieus in the formative years of terrorism around 1970. Moreover, he explores terrorists' ongoing relationship with the circles they came from. Members of these circles found distancing themselves from their violent comrades difficult. They often criticized terrorism because it hurt their cause: the state's countermeasures targeted the whole protest movement. Nevertheless, most of these critics felt connected to the perpetrators, often secretly admiring their revolutionary zeal. The RAF was able to capitalize on these feelings when its first generation of terrorists was arrested by generating a myth of martyrdom around these imprisoned members. An RAF solidarity movement formed, which hindered critical discussions about terrorism within the radical Left. It took the RAF's murderous campaign of 1977, which culminated in the hijacking of a German tourist plane, to move the original protest milieus to openly reject the strategy of terrorism.

Jacco Pekelder finishes this section with a story of several left-wing activists in the Netherlands that demonstrates the ability of both the RAF and other West German terrorist groups to mobilize support and solidarity outside of Germany. These activists, among them academics and scientists, medical doctors, and lawyers broadened the RAF solidarity movement beyond West Germany to other European countries at a very early stage. German RAF lawyers actively promoted these activities since they generated foreign pressure that would help their clients, but prominent Dutch activists had their own particular reasons for sympathizing with the RAF. For example, one activist group of Dutch scientists and

academics was primarily motivated by anti-psychiatry tendencies; they sought to undermine institutions like psychiatric hospitals and penitentiaries. Already in the early 1970s, this interest had brought an anti-psychiatric patients' collective in Heidelberg to their attention, and this group, in turn, had eventually put them in touch with RAF supporters.

All three authors in this section aim to broaden the contextualization of their topics to open up new perspectives on the protest movement of the 1960s and 1970s. They all discuss how solidarity with terrorism or the national liberation movements of the Third World was closely linked to activists' interpretations of their own society and the world they lived in. Bjerregaard calls this the utopian aspect of Third World solidarity: activists believed that the armed struggle in the Third World would help bring about fundamental changes in Western societies and individuals. Gehrig, for his part, points out that terrorists were tied to their milieus of origin not by a shared belief in terrorism as a practical revolutionary strategy, but by a shared image of the state as an "evil" entity. Pekelder agrees, noting that Dutch activists' support for the RAF had a lot to do with how they perceived their own situation. In the 1970s, most 1960s radicals believed that a conservative backlash had set in throughout the West. Under the guise of modernization and liberalization, they thought, Western governments were transforming state institutions into technologically advanced, Orwellian, citizen-control structures. They no longer viewed the modern Western state as a promoter of progress but as an instrument of oppression. In the eyes of the Dutch, Danish, and German activists, the fate of the Cuban Revolution and the plight of RAF prisoners, for example, seemed to augur future events at home and abroad.

Like this final section, this volume, on the whole, advocates broader contextualization of popular political activity and offers a multidimensional perspective on protest movements. Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey's epilogue on the French intellectual Régis Debray and Rolf Werenskjold's chronology of the European "1968" further this end by emphasizing how international events and relationships fundamentally shaped activists' attitudes. Thus, this book constitutes part of the process of integrating the story of the protest movements of 1960–1980 into a larger historical narrative of postwar Europe encompassing the continent's complex internal and external history during the Cold War. To be sure, this story continues to have many blank spaces, and this volume, which deals almost exclusively with leftist movements, will be unable to fill them all. More research is needed to incorporate not only the whole political spectrum but also broader segments of society, including the government, trade unions, faith-based organizations, and the cultural field, as well as other branches of the nonprofit sector, and constitutional and legal developments, into this history. It is our hope that the innovative contributions in this collection will inspire further research in this direction.

Notes

1. Erwin Breßlein, "Das IX. Weltjugendfestival (Sofia 1968)," in: idem, *Drushba! Freundschaft? Von der Kommunistischen Jugendinternationale zu den Weltjugendfestspielen* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1973) 125–158; Karin Taylor, "Socialist Orchestration of Youth: The 1968 Sofia Youth Festival and Encounters on the Fringe," *Ethnologia Balkanica* 7 (2003).
2. For details on these episodes, see "Schöne Schweine," *Der Spiegel*, 5 August 1968, 22; Wolfgang Kraushaar, ed., *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbewegung. Von der Flaschenpost bis zum Molotowcocktail, 1946–1995*, vol. 1 (Hamburg: Rogner & Bernhard, 1998) 350f. For descriptions of similar transnational encounters, see Paulina Bren, "1968 in East and West: Visions of Political Change and Student Protest," in: Gerd-Rainer Horn and Padraic Kenney, eds., *Transnational Moments of Change: Europe 1945, 1968, 1989* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004) 119–35.
3. For a recent overview, see Belinda Davis, "What's Left? Popular Political Participation in Postwar Europe," *American Historical Review* 113 (April 2008) 363–390.
4. Hanco Jürgens, Jacco Pekelder and Falk Bretschneider, "Einleitung: '1968' als transnationale Kulturrevolution," in: idem, and Klaus Bachmann, eds., *Eine Welt zu gewinnen! Formen und Folgen der 68er Bewegung in Ost- und Westeuropa* (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2009) 7–18.
5. See Philipp Gassert and Martin Klimke, *1968: Memories and Legacies of a Global Revolt* (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute, 2009); Ingo Cornils and Sarah Waters, eds., *Memories of 1968: International Perspectives* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010).
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Part I

Politics between East and West

Chapter 1

“Out of Apathy”

Genealogies of the British “New Left” in a Transnational Context, 1956–1962

Holger Nehring

Introduction

This chapter traces the intellectual genealogies and meanings of the British “New Left.” The focus is on the first phase of the New Left, from its origins in 1956 to its decline in the early 1960s. Two approaches in particular dominate the history of the origins of the New Left. The first of these assumes that New Left ideas depended on the complete abandonment of old Left positions, involving a wholly new political language and culture.¹ In contrast, other historians have assumed that activists’ transitions from party membership to New Left participation were seamless.²

Unlike many accounts that link the British New Left directly with processes of political liberalization and the emergence of affluent and permissive societies, this chapter highlights the rather ambiguous character of New Left ideas by locating them in British Communist and socialist traditions. This chapter aims to demonstrate how British New Left activists created a novel form of socialism by working through what they regarded as Socialist (and in particular Marxist) traditions. Hence, rather than interpreting the British New Left as part of a European, if not worldwide transnational movement, this chapter develops a more nuanced reading of its transnational character, by bringing out the multiple layers through which the British New Left was connected beyond borders.³ First, many of its activists could look back on transnational biographies in the British Empire; second, some even continued to advocate transnational campaigns that would endow British national identity with a transnational mission to lead the world toward “socialism”; and third, they were involved in processes of transnational communication and observation. Fundamentally, the emergence of the New Left was intimately connected to the international history of the time: “1956”, marked by the three key events of Nikita Khrushchev’s “Secret Speech” at the Twentieth Party Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in which he

admitted Stalinist atrocities during the 1930s; the crushing of the Hungarian civil rights campaigners with the help of Soviet tanks; and the British-French war with Egypt over the Suez Canal. These events no longer seemed to fit into the bipolar framework of the Cold War, and they set into motion processes of discussion that had an impact on organizations such as the Communist Party, which were modeled upon this bipolar coding of politics.

The so-called New Left began its life as a loose network of activists around the journals *Reasoner/New Reasoner* and the *Universities and Left Review (ULR)*, later the *New Left Review*, and around the New Left clubs and coffee houses, which were established in late 1950s and early 1960s. Although the boundaries were quite fluid, two main groups can be distinguished, one around the historians Edward P. Thompson and John Saville, based primarily in the north of England and consisting mainly of former Communist Party members. After the violent suppression of the Hungarian uprising by Soviet forces, as well as Khrushchev's revelations about Stalin's atrocities in his "Secret Speech" at the Twentieth CPSU Party Congress, they left the party. Most of them then gathered around the journal *New Reasoner*.

The second strand of the New Left first emerged around the Caribbean Rhodes Scholar Stuart Hall, who was to become a famous cultural sociologist, and other students in at the University of Oxford's Labour Club and their journal *Universities and Left Review*. They were interested in revitalizing the British Labour movement and were its most vocal spokesmen. Both movements pooled their efforts by founding a common journal, the *New Left Review*, in 1959/60, thus tapping the tradition of the *Left Review*, a radical journal of the 1930s.⁴ Both sections were united in their desire to move, in the words of one of their first joint publications, "out of apathy" by circumventing the organizational straight-jackets of the Communist and Labour parties and championing more direct political activism. This political activism would, they pointed out, no longer be concerned with Cold War politics, but rather with overcoming the boundaries of Cold War political discourses by moving "beyond the Cold War."⁵

This chapter does not regard the New Left as a homogeneous entity, as it emerged as a product of dynamic political processes. It focuses, therefore, on the conditions and processes under which "the unstable ordering of multiple possibilities" becomes "temporarily fixed in such a way as to enable individuals and groups to behave as a particular kind of agency."⁶ Such social-boundary processes were plausible to contemporaries because they rested upon a set of symbolic resources that were not as novel as the label "New Left" suggests, but harked back to Socialist and Communist traditions. These traditions were not simply out there to be discovered. Rather, the activists actively rediscovered and re-appropriated them.⁷ The historical antecedents to which New Left activists referred ranged from nineteenth-century anarchism and Owenite socialism, through the Popular Front and the Left Book Club of the 1930s, to the social reformer G.D.H. Cole's "Guild Socialism." The New Left, therefore, comprised

both political activism and challenges to the dominant language, the dominant political codes, and the shape of social practices.

This chapter will begin its exploration by examining the role of what the activists regarded as traditional elements in the various groups of the New Left before highlighting the problems this implied for developing a common identification amongst New Left activists as well as for transnational relations with other movements.

Communism and the New Left

Looking back to what became the origins of the New Left, John Saville remarked that “the idea of resigning from the Communist Party was not in our minds when we began the *Reasoner* and it was only in the following months that we recognized, with great reluctance, the fundamental conservatism, not only of the leadership, but also of the rank and file.”⁸ Some of this criticism goes back to the immediate postwar years, when activists, such as the historian of the English Revolution of 1688, Christopher Hill, had expressed his skepticism toward the unthinking application of the Stalinist organizational model to the British context and had emphasized the importance of uniting morality and political activism.⁹

Indeed, for many of those who left it in the aftermath of 1956, the British Communist Party (CPGB) had been a political, personal, and emotional home. Abandoning the party meant giving up friendships and leaving feelings of community behind.¹⁰ In the specific international environment of the mid 1960s, these activists did not, like the writer George Orwell or the intellectual Arthur Koestler before him, become staunch anti-Communists. Instead, they came to play a key role as activists who developed an alternative to virulent anti-communism, defining a space between the polarities of political debate in the Cold War. While they abandoned certain elements of the Communist (in particular Stalinist) heritage, they retained and elaborated some aspects of this experience in a new context.

The development of what came to be called the New Left was not a straightforward process but often involved personally hurtful experiences. It started with the publication of Khrushchev’s “Secret Speech,” which became known in Britain in late spring and early summer 1956. In the speech, Khrushchev had criticized the Stalinist purges and the Stalinist cult of leadership more generally. The process continued with what many regarded as the lukewarm response of the Communist CPGB to these challenges. It culminated in the Soviet intervention in Hungary in autumn 1956, backed by the CPGB leadership, which conjured up memories of the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Pact in 1939 and the Soviet intervention in Finland during World War II. This dissatisfaction resulted in a loss of around 9,000 members or 28 percent of the membership by 1 January 1958:

around 2,000 left in the wake of the Khrushchev speech, another 5,000 quit over Hungary, and around 2,000 resigned after disappointments at the Twenty-fifth CPGB Congress.¹¹

The activists not only moved away from the party out of their own volition, they were also pushed out after being identified as a distinct group that sought to wreck the Communist project by the CPGB leadership. By the summer of 1956, John Saville and Edward Thompson had tried to promote intra-party discussions in the correspondence columns of the party's publications.¹² When this failed, they launched their own journal, the *Reasoner*. After the first issue in July 1957, the CPGB's Yorkshire district committee instructed the editors to close it down, but by then Saville and Thompson knew that it had met needs amongst party activists: it sold out within weeks, and the 300 letters sent to the journal all supported the initiative.¹³

The transition from identifying themselves as "Communist" to turning to "New Left" activism, however, was far more complicated than is usually suggested and did not necessarily involve a complete break from previous orthodoxies. An important part of British communism consisted of a shared sense of purpose and the feeling of mutual sacrifice by party members for the cause. This was only heightened by the social and political isolation which many Communists experienced in Cold War Britain. Coming to terms with the exclusion from their community (which most of them had not planned) and with the sudden collapse of the boundaries which had given their political and social world meaning, was a process which took years rather than months.¹⁴

This feeling of disappointment rarely undermined these core commitments, but was the result of a mixture of political, social, and ideological anxieties: concerning the CPGB leadership's support for Soviet policies, particularly with regard to the intervention in Hungary in late 1956; the validity of Khrushchev's argument that the removal of the "cult of personality" had eradicated the main features of Stalinism; aspects of Soviet history, such as the discovery of widespread anti-Semitism, particularly by Communists in the United States, but also by the CPGB activist Hyman Levy on his journeys through the Soviet Union; and not least, by the reluctance of the party leadership to allow a genuine debate to take place about all these issues in the mainstream party press.¹⁵

Hence, the diffuse opposition which arose against the Stalinist line of the CPGB's leadership in responding to Khrushchev's "Secret Speech" argued in terms of Communist loyalty and traditions. The continued belief that the party would respond and reflect their members' expectations fired their indignation. The activists' initial objective was, therefore, reform.¹⁶ With their submissions to the Commission of Inner-Party Democracy which the CPGB leadership had set up in order to fend off criticism, they intended to strengthen the party, rather than weaken it.¹⁷

The process of breaking away from the CPGB was neither caused nor encouraged by the development of a coherent alternative model of political or-

ganization which aimed to replace the “democratic centralism” of the CPGB. Amongst those who produced a minority report to the CPGB’s Commission on Democracy (the historians Christopher Hill and Peter Cadogan, as well as Malcolm MacEwen who was to become a prominent conservationist) the main concern was the balance between democracy, meaning unfettered internal discussion, and the need for centralism.¹⁸ Yet no substantial alternative model was available to them at the time.¹⁹

The Soviet invasion in Hungary in autumn 1956 was the catalyst that persuaded many to leave and demonstrated how events in the international arena influenced domestic political and social change. The project of reforming and democratizing the party had found its equivalent in similar processes of debate in the Communist parties beyond the Iron Curtain, in particular in Hungary. The Soviet military intervention in Hungary to stop the Socialist experiment there thus appeared to many British activists all the more immoral. Given that the CPGB supported the Soviet Union “unequivocally,” an even wider fundamental rift opened within the party. Calls for reform appeared unrealistic and insignificant against the backdrop of invasion, while for those who supported the leadership, organizational reforms were not feasible when the party was under so much external pressure.²⁰

Yet, arguments began to shift, especially under Thompson’s and Saville’s intellectual leadership, from party reform toward the search for a “lost tradition” of British communism. This led to the reexamination of the theoretical Marxist tradition and to calls for a new history of the party, in particular from members of the CPGB’s Historians’ Group.²¹ But significantly, Thompson and Saville only created the *New Reasoner. A Quarterly Journal for Socialist Humanism* as a discussion forum for the “homeless Left” after the CPGB’s Special Twenty-fifth Congress had not resulted in any major reform of the party’s organization.

The brand of socialist political thought they developed, dubbed “socialist humanism” by Thompson, was one of the main bonds of the emerging New Left. It also proved to be an important point of consensus with the second New Left group around the *Universities and Left Review*. For Thompson, “socialist humanism” involved the reconstitution of the emancipatory aspects of the socialist tradition, but in new moral terms. In other words, Thompson rejected the bureaucratic form that socialism had taken in Eastern Europe after 1945. Instead, he sought to revitalize socialism in moral terms by stressing what one might call the libertarian elements of socialism: to enable everyone to live freely. And he connected this to a message that highlighted the specifically *national* importance of socialism in England. He argued that these aspects had characterized the history of the English labor movement from its very beginnings and was deeply entrenched in English national identity. This evocation of tradition, also visible in Thompson’s 1963 classic *The Making of the English Working Class*, bypassed both the anti-humanism of orthodox communism and Trotskyism as well as the voluntaristic renderings of contemporary liberalism.²²

Yet, Thompson and others still presumed, like historical materialists, that socialism was the guaranteed outcome of the historical process, a vision toward which the younger group around the *ULR* was more skeptical.²³ Thompson's aim was to create ethical moral subjects, which would not act as part of a bureaucratic or governmental machinery, or blindly follow the ideological consensus, but that would make decisions on the basis of their own conscience. Although New Left activists did not regard themselves as religious, much of their rhetoric and world views appear to have been influenced by their nonconformist background, with the emphasis on conscience and individual moral responsibilities: Christopher Hill's and Edward Thompson's families were Methodists; Dorothy Thompson's family were of Huguenot descent. The academic and activist Ralph Milliband, the young historians Raphael Samuel and Hyman Levy came from progressive Jewish backgrounds.²⁴

Thompson's appeal to specifically English versions of national identity had implications for the group's views of foreign affairs, and it shows that he and his allies challenged the framework of the Cold War fundamentally. The foreign political events of 1956 and the history of the New Left are therefore intimately related, as they created the political space in which these ideas could be voiced. Yet moving beyond the Cold War meant at least in part moving back to before the World War II. *New Reasoner* activists in particular continued to regard Britain as a world power which could exert influence by moral example. They championed a genuinely independent British foreign policy which would rid itself from the straitjacket of the Cold War. They championed what they called "positive neutralism." Britain was to remain neutral in the power-political battles of the Cold War, but would remain active by drawing on the strength of the vast anti-colonial movements of the time²⁵; it was to tap the resources in the Empire and Commonwealth and amongst non-aligned nations around the world for a genuinely independent and socialist world order. The thrust of this movement would, they hoped, lead to the dissolution of the two blocs and give them an opportunity to build their kind of socialism at home. "Positive neutralism" thus was the direct counterpart of the domestic project pursued by the movement. It would help to overcome the "apathy" which was at the root of most of the New Left's assessments of the domestic political situation.²⁶

While they maintained the general goal of constructing socialism, their emphasis on non-alignment led some activists away from regarding the Soviet Union as the only model for revolution. They now looked to other countries as well, particularly Cuba and Yugoslavia. The New Left journals were filled with articles or translations from the Communist world.²⁷ This led to the celebration of the Third World as an arena of vital significance in contemporary politics, an area which had been absent from most Marxist writing before.²⁸ Such ideas tapped traditions of socialist foreign policy models of the 1930s and the immediate post-World War II period, and they were centered on networks that reached back to the 1930s and 1940s.²⁹

Indeed, many of those who were to form the New Left in the mid 1950s had joined the CPGB during the enthusiasm of the popular front years and had studied together at Cambridge or at the London School of Economics, which had moved to Cambridge during the war years.³⁰ Their concern was, therefore, to regain the sense of mission and enthusiasm which had characterized the immediate postwar years, in the wake of the Labour victory. Even “the vocabulary of socialism,” they argued, had been corroded: “By the end of the decade [1940s] the intellectual left was in evident rout: ‘progress,’ ‘liberalism,’ ‘humanism,’ and (unless in the ritual armory of the Cold War) ‘democracy’ became suspect terms.”³¹

The New Left at the Universities: Living Political Experiences

It was primarily the *New Reasoner* activists’ focus on developing a version of “democracy” which transcended the boundaries of Cold War discourse that allowed the ex-Communist New Left to join forces with another movement: one that emerged from a Socialist discussion circle among students at the University of Oxford. The catalyst for this meeting of minds and activism was the Anglo-French intervention in the Suez at the time of the Soviet intervention in Hungary. Indeed, demonstrators demanding a ceasefire in Egypt were told of the second Russian intervention in Hungary as they approached Downing Street on their way to Trafalgar Square in early November 1956. It was this revelation which reminded dissident Communists that imperialism had been one of the main reasons they had joined the CPGB in the first place, and it was this event that for the first time welded dissident Communists, Oxford students, and others from the political Left into one movement.³² Although there were, with Raphael Samuel and Peter Sedgwick, Communists among the Oxford student discussion circles, this group of the incipient New Left, grouped around the *Universities and Left Review*, was mainly a response to the growing reformism and increasingly rigid organizational culture within the Labour Party.³³

The 1956 intervention of the Conservative government under Prime Minister Anthony Eden in the Suez and the merely lukewarm protests of the Labour Party had already left many student sections dissatisfied. Conditions in the Oxford University Labour Club were particularly prone to change, as a group of students, among them also disaffected Communists, sought to create a vision of a Socialist future for Britain without nuclear weapons, and a world which went beyond the Cold War and also had close links to G.D.H. Cole’s politics seminar.³⁴ Activists in the group rejected both Labour reformism and what they believed to be the structural constraints of orthodox Marxism. Particularly prominent were the Canadian Rhodes Scholar and Politics, Philosophy, and Economics (PPE) student Charles Taylor, who had already launched the local Hydrogen

Bomb Campaign Committee in 1954, and the Caribbean Rhodes Scholar Stuart Hall, who provided connections between the local section of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and the anti-colonial movement. By launching the journal *Universities and Left Review (ULR)*, the editors (apart from Hall and Taylor: Raphael Samuel and Gabriel Pearson) sought to spread their ideas. The group's basis soon extended beyond Oxford and its focus shifted to London and the metropolitan political culture.³⁵

The *ULR*'s original constituency was a diverse and international group of dissidents on the Oxford left, either at G.D.H. Cole's politics seminars, through the contact to activists dons, such as Christopher Hill, or through the fringes of the University's Labour Club. Members of the *ULR* group first collaborated on the Club's magazine *Clarion*.³⁶ By producing the *New Left Review*, this group of activists self-consciously sought to reactivate the socialist debate in the *Left Review* during the 1930s. This had sought to mobilize literature and the arts to criticize the national government and to support the anti-fascism around the popular front networks.³⁷ Closely connected to the modernist movement, it highlighted the *political* importance of literature and the arts. Like its predecessor, the *ULR* sought to reach a broad constituency and broaden the purchase of socialist analysis beyond those already active in socialist politics and thus, unlike the much more sober *New Reasoner*, included visual images as well. A whole metropolitan culture of coffee houses and bookshops developed, in which students and young activists gathered and discussed the political issues of the day.³⁸

While the *New Reasoner* focused on the direct reactivation of Communist traditions, and the activists involved in circles around it sought to revitalize communism under different auspices, the *ULR* activists were committed to a broader, much more eclectic and more contemporary socialism which adjusted socialist traditions to current demands. *They* felt, as many of them came from colonial backgrounds, far less comfortable to identify themselves with peculiar *English* or *British* versions of political traditions.³⁹

Accordingly, meetings were held to discuss the issues raised in the *ULR*'s pages, and the emerging club, now based in London, soon appealed to young middle-class Londoners, as well as to more experienced political activists. Throughout, much more than the *New Reasoner*, the *ULR* was full of announcements. It advertised social activities which connected New Left politics to cultural practices, for instance skiffle, folk, and jazz clubs at *ULR* clubs. While *New Reasoner* already possessed its cognitive orientations from its CPGB membership and friendship circles, the *ULR* activists still had to create it; and in the course of meeting and talking to more experienced political activists, they came much closer to the *New Reasoner* group. Increasingly, these networks were enacted and revived on the annual marches of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, which took place over the Easter weekend from 1958 onwards.⁴⁰ It was in this response to the fundamentals of the Cold War international system that the merger of lifestyle and politics in New Left thought and action became most visible.⁴¹

ULR activists, much more explicitly than the group around the *New Reasoner*, not only wrote about, but advocated the *living* of their experiences. They developed notions of "democracy" and "social democracy" which maintained that "socialism imposed from above [was] false socialism"⁴² and that socialism could only be realized if it was adopted as a way of life. Many New Left activists sought to translate this feeling into reality by participating in various neighborhood campaigns, most notably in local campaigns against racism in London's Notting Hill quarter, which had been torn apart by race riots in late 1958.⁴³ *ULR* activists celebrated spontaneity and regeneration, but regarded these traits as the regeneration of a Socialist lineage which went back further.

Unlike many activists around the *New Reasoner*, *ULR* activists fundamentally rejected the narrow manner in which politics was defined in Social-Democratic, Socialist, and Communist politics. Most important, they grounded their perspective in what they regarded as the "facts" of contemporary society, in particular the changing patterns of working-class consciousness and experience in an increasingly affluent society. Instead of discussing Capitalist exploitation, they highlighted cultural alienation. Marxism was only one of the tools of analysis they employed. The cognitive orientations of the *New Reasoner* activists harked back to the 1930s and the unfulfilled hopes of the 1945 Labour victory, the *ULR*'s emphasis was primarily postwar and concerned with the debates about Labour's chances to win an election.⁴⁴

Examining the emergence of consumer culture, new towns, and the transformation of older political loyalties, *ULR* activists wondered whether socialism could survive the transition to an age of mass consumption, and thus sought ways to manage the transition. They re-conceptualized capitalism as driven primarily by consumption. Nonetheless, the *ULR* activists continued to draw on Marx's ideas, while, however, stressing their ambiguity and complexity, especially after Charles Taylor had published Marx's early economic and philosophical manuscripts in 1958.⁴⁵

Beyond the Cold War

The eventual abandonment of party conventions was (albeit for different reasons), one of the main unifying forces behind the origins of the New Left. Other factors included the fact that their actions beyond the channels of institutionalized and parliamentary politics turned them, in the eyes of outside observers, into a seemingly homogeneous body. Both groups' emphasis on the novel character of their claims and their particular appeal amongst the "young generation" only highlighted this claim further.⁴⁶ The period from 1959 to 1961 was the high point of this movement, with the new journal, the *New Left Review* selling some 9,000 copies and an energetic club scene across England and Scotland. Yet, at the same time, activists around the *New Reasoner* in particular emphasized

how important it was to maintain the links to the Labour movement, but to try to change its structures and workings by working within it. Activists followed the political trajectory of the Labour Party closely and frequently criticized it in a vein familiar to Communists. This was particularly evident in the debates amongst New Left activists about the welfare state, in which former members of the CPGB's Historians' Group participated.⁴⁷

The identification of the New Left as a political movement and the activists' self-identification with the movement took place before the merger of the *New Reasoner* and the *ULR* into the *New Left Review* in 1960, but had already begun with the first talks about this merger in early 1959. Yet what remained characteristic for the New Left was the heterogeneity of its ideas and the often awkward coexistence of different traditions. The clash of these traditions has often been cast in highly personal terms, yet many important political themes underscored the personal animosities.

The early history of the *New Left Review*, after its formal launch in December 1959, was characterized by differences in approach. While the *New Reasoner* activists had a more general protest movement in mind, many younger *ULR* activists saw the new journal as part of a movement of ideas which would be strong in developing its own brand of Socialist theory. This conflict came to a head when Perry Anderson took over from Stuart Hall as the editor of the *New Left Review*. Anderson emphasized the importance, in particular, of the engagement with developments in contemporary European Marxism.⁴⁸

This debate within the New Left had implications for the transnational connections and links within which the New Left was engaged. Perry Anderson accused Thompson, Saville, and others of their "little England" attitudes. But although Thompson, Saville, and other *New Reasoner* activists focused on indigenous English traditions of radicalism, they nevertheless regarded themselves as "internationalist." Anderson and others regarded these links as being primarily in the adoption of ideas from the continental New Left, especially the post-structuralist thinking, into the British context.⁴⁹ E.P. Thompson, John Saville, and others, by contrast, thought of transnational relations primarily in terms of activism. Ideas here were less important than the actual political emotions generated in events which took place contemporaneously or which involved several different countries. Ultimately, however, political movement had, in Thompson's view, to operate within the very specific national political systems and conditions and had to try to tap national reservoirs of meaning. Thompson attacked the internationalism adopted by the group around Anderson. He argued that it would result in a mere importation of continental Marxism and a fetishistic attitude to Third World politics.

Nevertheless, the *New Reasoner* group entertained manifold contacts with the Socialist Left elsewhere in Europe, particularly with the "nouvelle gauche" around the French intellectual Claude Bourdet and his journal *France Observateur*, but also to Socialists outside of Europe, especially in Africa and India.

The connections to these activists had been established during these New Left activists’ military service during World War II.⁵⁰ The Oxford *ULR* group established contacts to Socialists elsewhere primarily through G.D.H. Cole’s politics seminar and Cole’s International Society for Socialist Studies.⁵¹

The New Left that was formally formed in 1960 was, by 1962, divided between different factions, one headed by the *NLR*’s new editor Perry Anderson, who advocated a more theoretical engagement with Socialist and Marxist traditions and urged the campaign to wrestle itself free from the reformist traditions that he regarded as ingrained in British political culture; and the other headed by E.P. Thompson, for whom theoretical engagement was a diversion from the cause of campaigning for a Socialist society.⁵² This rift has left some bitter personal scars among those involved. And yet we should be cautious about speaking of the “second New Left.”⁵³ While the external unity of a New Left *movement* dissipated, the different activists, in their individual ways, continued to campaign for an overcoming of the binary logics of the Cold War that operated on the basis of the distinction of freedom/communism. They asserted what they believed worked best for individual human beings. They thus helped establish a politics of the self, turned experiences into a political resource and gradually developed a language of authenticity that was to influence a variety of British social movements from the 1960s onwards.⁵⁴ Stuart Hall, one of the New Left activists of the first hour, sums this up neatly:

We raised issues of personal life, the way people live, culture, which weren’t considered the topics of politics on the Left. We wanted to talk about the contradictions of this new kind of capitalist society in which people didn’t have a language to express their private troubles, didn’t realize that these troubles reflected political and social questions that could be generalized.⁵⁵

Where classical Marxist theory had discussed freedom and alienation in an abstract way, the New Left activists—encouraged by their disappointment with real existing socialism to work through this heritage—tried to highlight the very personal meanings of these abstract concepts. While they continued to think of a capitalist world system which they conceived of as a transnational force, they highlighted the politics of the local.⁵⁶

Conclusions: Radical Protests and Cold War Social History

These findings have more general implications for our understanding of processes of societal change during the 1950s and 1960s more generally. Although

the dominant approaches to the history of Western European societies and politics are sensitive to historical continuities, they assume a rather unilinear and rather simplistic process of “liberalization” or “modernization” of social norms, often driven through generational changes and changes in values.⁵⁷ Also, “transnationalism” is often seen as a natural ingredient to such campaigns. Activism thus either becomes entirely dependent on changes in social structures, or on a pervasive change in actors’ motivations and social values. The link between activism and changing social structures remains, however, remarkably vague.⁵⁸ International relations do not figure at all in those approaches.

The perspective adopted here, by contrast, suggests that it is rather unlikely that processes of change in complex and highly differentiated societies affect all social and political groups in the same ways. This chapter has focused on the ways in which one group made sense of these changes and how these framing processes only served to constitute the group. More research is still needed on the effects of these processes on the grassroots, in contrast to the intellectuals explored here. This approach does not mean that we simply take activists’ claims of their activism at face value. Rather, such an approach enables us to investigate the meanings of activism in its political and social contexts and link activism to the ways in which activists—and their opponents in political parties and governments—made sense of the more general patterns of change in society around them. Thus, New Left activism, while not necessarily directly connected to other New Left movements around the world through direct personal links, nevertheless appears as a response to a specific historical conjuncture that brought the end of the kind of governed democracy that had emerged in Western Europe and the United States since 1945—a democracy that was less characterized by people’s involvement in the political process, and more by bureaucratic power.⁵⁹

Developments in international politics were crucial for framing the activism analyzed in this chapter: “1956”—the debate over Stalinism within the British Communist Party as well as the debates over Hungary and the Anglo-French Suez intervention—opened up the political space within which activists from different political backgrounds could meet and discuss ways of transcending the Cold War framework and develop new policies. Through their activities and campaigns, they expanded the space for political activism itself and sought to overcome the logic of communism versus anti-communism/freedom versus socialism as the exclusive ideological framework for Cold War politics. With forms of symbolic politics such as happenings, sit-ins, as well as with verbal and visual representations that were published in the movement and mass media, they thus opened up party organizations’ and governments’ “geopolitical privacy” (Michael Mann) with regard to matters of foreign and defense policies.

These processes occurred through a variety of overlapping boundary processes: direct encounters or more indirect conversation and communication amongst activists, as well as the imposition of boundaries by others: in the case

of the New Left by the general observing public and by the CPGB.⁶⁰ This chapter focused on part of these processes of identification and self-identification by highlighting the importance of communist and labor movement traditions for the cognitive orientations of the New Left activists. In particular, it sought to highlight that we cannot understand the social movement which the New Left was to become if we analyze it separately from the institutionalized political channels of the British Communist and Labour parties.

When analyzing social protests, therefore, we should not try to embed them into a meta-narrative of social and political change. Instead, we should focus on the ways in which these social protests achieved their specific historical characteristics. Rather than looking at the links between societal change and political activism, we should direct our attention toward the ways in which historical activists made sense of the world around them and how they communicated these interpretations amongst themselves and to the general public. This will help to show that generational explanations of political change are as much products of movement rhetoric and their representations at the time, as reflections of the age structure of movement activists.⁶¹ Moreover, it will help to integrate the impact of international relations into the history of domestic politics and society by highlighting how activists framed the importance of change in international relations for domestic political and social change.⁶²

Not least such a perspective will help to bring back the activists' own experiences and expectations into history and overcome the dichotomies between agency and structure that have characterized so many historical approaches. It will also help to highlight the crucial fact that they campaigned for political ideals that are difficult to tail with a history of sociocultural changes away from materialism toward postmaterialism. Thus, the importance of historical traditions which framed the activists' cognitive orientations and which they actively re-appropriated to make their case will emerge much more clearly. The history of this activism and the boundary processes which came to delineate the New Left not only had a temporal dimension. They also had specific geographical locations, depending on often local or regional networks and political traditions. Research on the New Left and protest movements during the 1950s and 1960s more generally has paid insufficient attention to these geographical contexts of political activism.

An approach that focuses on the emergence of political identifications promises to explain far better how social actors have come to form a collectivity and have recognized themselves as being part of it than do the dominant teleological approaches. The focus will shift from homogeneous "identities" to the multiple and complex processes of political identification that lie at the heart not only of movement politics, but also more generally of politics in differentiated societies. In many ways, therefore, it was 1956, not 1968 that marked the main caesura for British radical movements.

Notes

1. Nigel Young, *An Infantile Disorder? The Crisis and Decline of the New Left* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1977), 171; Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, *Die 68er Bewegung. Deutschland, Westeuropa, USA* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2001), 11–17. A sub-group of these historians regards the New Left as a mere representation of a more general change of “values” in society: Nick Thomas, “Challenging Myths of the 1960s. The Case of the Student Movement in Britain,” *Twentieth Century British History*, 13, no. 3 (2002): 277–97.
2. Henry Pelling, *The British Communist Party: A Historical Profile* (London: Macmillan, 1975), 114–85.
3. On the broader links see my “The World under the Shadow of the Bomb: The British and West German Protests against Nuclear Weapons and Anti-colonialism, 1956–64,” *Socialist History*, no. 31 (2007): 8–39.
4. Cf. Michael Kenny, *The First New Left: British Intellectuals after Stalin* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1995); and, from an intellectual-history angle: Lin Chun, *The British New Left* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993) as well as Madeleine Davis, “The Marxism of the British New Left,” *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 11, no. 3 (2006): 335–58. On the history of the journal see Duncan Thompson, *Pessimism of the Intellect? A History of the New Left Review* (London: Merlin Press, 2007).
5. E.P. Thompson, ed., *Out of Apathy* (London: New Left Books, 1960).
6. Geoff Eley, “Is All the World a Text? From Social History to the History of Society Two Decades Later,” in *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences*, ed. Terrence J. McDonald (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 220.
7. It is remarkable in this context that one of the champions of the concept of “invented traditions” was the historian Eric Hobsbawm who, unlike E.P. Thompson and others, did not leave the Communist Party after 1956. Cf. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
8. John Saville, “The Communist Experience: A Personal Appraisal,” *The Socialist Register* (1991): 22.
9. Christopher Hill, *Lenin and the Russian Revolution* (London: Pelican, 1947).
10. Cf. Raphael Samuel, “The Lost World of British Communism,” parts 1–3, *New Left Review*: 154, 156, and 165 (1985 and 1987).
11. Cf. John Callaghan, *Cold War, Crisis and Conflict. The CPGB 1951–68* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 2003), 76–7.
12. Cf. *World News and Views* (19 May 1956): 1; *World News and Views* (30 June 1956): 2.
13. Cf. *World News and Views*, 22 September 1956: 600.
14. John Saville, “The Twentieth Congress and the British Communist Party,” *The Socialist Register* (1976): 7; Henry Abelove et al., eds., *Visions of History: Interviews, with E.P. Thompson et al.* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), 30. More generally, cf. Michael Kenny, “Communism and the New Left,” in *Opening the Books: Essays on the Social and Cultural History of British Communism*, ed. Geoff Andrews, et al. (London: Pluto Press, 1995), 195–209.

15. Cf. Malcolm MacEwen, "The Day the Party Had to Stop," *Socialist Register* (1976): 24–42; idem, *The Greening of a Red* (London: Verso, 1991); Hyman Levy writing in the *Jewish Clarion*, 10 (Sept. 1956) and 11 (Dec. 1956).
16. Raphael Samuel, "The Lost World of British Communism part 2," *New Left Review*, no. 156 (1985): 79; Saville, "Twentieth Congress," 19–20.
17. MacEwen, "The Day," 33.
18. CPGB, *The Report of the Commission on Inner Party Democracy* (as prepared for the 25th (special) Congress), 19–22 April 1957, iv.
19. Cf. Edward P. Thompson, "Socialist Humanism: An Epistle to the Philistines," *New Reasoner*, no. 1 (1957): 105–43; idem, "Socialism and the Intellectuals," *Universities and Left Review*, no. 1 (1957): 31–36.
20. Saville, "Twentieth Congress," 15.
21. Eric Hobsbawm, "The Historians' Group of the Communist Party," in *Rebels and Their Causes: Essays in Honour of A.L. Morton*, ed. Maurice Cornforth (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1978): 21–47.
22. E.P. Thompson, "Agency and Choice," *New Reasoner*, no. 5 (1958): 89–106; idem, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Penguin, 1963); Michael Bess, "E.P. Thompson: The Historian as Activist," *American Historical Review*, 98 (1993): 18–38.
23. Harry Hanson, "An Open Letter to E.P. Thompson," *New Reasoner*, no. 2 (1957): 79–91; Ralph Milliband, "Socialism and the Myth of the Golden Past," *Socialist Register* (1964): 92–103.
24. Michael Newman, *Ralph Miliband and the Politics of the New Left* (London: Merlin, 2002); Victor Kiernan, "Herbert Norman's Cambridge," in *E.H. Norman: His Life and Scholarship*, ed. Roger Bowen (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 26.
25. For a critique, cf. Perry Anderson, *Arguments within English Marxism* (London: Verso, 1980), 25–31.
26. Cf. Thompson, *Out of Apathy* (especially the contributions by Thompson, Samuel, and Hall); idem, "NATO, neutralism and survival," *ULR*, no. 4 (1958): 49–51; Kate Soper, "Socialist Humanism," in *E.P. Thompson. Critical Perspectives*, ed. Harvey Kaye and Keith McClelland (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 204–232.
27. Malcolm MacEwen, "The Two Camps," *New Reasoner*, 4 (1958): 11–19; John Rex, "Africa's National Congress and the British Left," *New Reasoner*, 2 (1957), 56–64; Stuart Hall and Norm Fruchter, "Notes on the Cuban Dilemma," *New Left Review*, no. 9 (1961): 2–11; "The Siege of Cuba," *New Left Review*, no. 7 (1961): 2–3.
28. Peter Worsley, *The Third World* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1964); idem, "Albert Schweitzer and the Liberal Conscience," *New Reasoner*, 3 (1957–58): 39–54.
29. Stephen Woodhams, *History in the Making: Raymond Williams, Edward Thompson, and Radical Intellectuals, 1936–1956* (London: Pluto Press, 2001), ch. 1.
30. Eric Hobsbawm, "Maurice Dobb," in *Socialism, Capitalism and Economic Growth*, ed. Charles Feinstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Rodney Hilton, "Christopher Hill: Some Reminiscences," in *Puritans and Revolutionaries*, ed. Donald Pennington and Keith Thomas (Oxford: Oxford University Press., 1978), 7; "Cambridge Communism in the 1930s and 1940s. Reminiscences and recollections," *Socialist History*, no. 24 (2003).

31. E.P. Thompson, "The Long Revolution, part 1," *New Left Review*, no. 9 (1961): 27.
32. Cf. Callaghan, *Cold War*, 77–78.
33. Perry Anderson, "The Left in the Fifties," *New Left Review*, 29 (1965): 5–9.
34. Raphael Samuel, "The Lost World of British Communism, Part II," 79; Robin Archer et al., eds., *Out of Apathy. Voices of the New Left 30 Years On* (London: Verso, 1989), chs. 1–3. On the general background, cf. Brian Harrison, "Oxford and the Labour Movement," *Twentieth Century British History*, 2 (1991): 226–71.
35. David Marquand, "The Secret People of Oxford," *New Statesman*, 13 July 1957: 43; *Isis*, 19 February 1958: 31; *Isis*, 24 January 1962: 11.
36. Stuart Hall, "The 'First' New Left: Life and Times, in Robin Archer et al., eds., *Out of Apathy*, 18.
37. Cf. Francis Mulhern, *The Moment of "Scrutiny"* (London: Verso, 1979), 85–86; Ben Pimlott, *Labour and the Left in the 1930s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 156 and Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker (eds.), *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines*, vol. 1: *Britain and Ireland, 1880–1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), ch. 26.
38. Robert Hewison, *In Anger: Culture in the Cold War 1945–60* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1981), 163.
39. Cf. Hall, "The 'First' New Left," 18; Ralph Milliband, "The Transition to the Transition," *New Reasoner*, 6 (1958): 35–48.
40. Hall, "The 'First' New Left," 28.
41. Cf. Nick Bentley, "The Young Ones: A Reassessment of the British New Left's Representation of 1950s youth subcultures," *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 8, no. 1 (2005): 65–83.
42. Samuel, "Lost World," 79.
43. Cf. J.O'Malley, *The Politics of Community Action: A Decade of Struggle in Notting Hill* (Nottingham: Bertrand Russel Peace Foundation, 1977).
44. E.P. Thompson, "Commitment in Politics," *ULR*, no. 6 (1959): 50–55. Cf. on the background Mark Abrams and Richard Rose, *Must Labour Lose?* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1960).
45. Stuart Hall, "The Problem of Ideology—Marxism without Guarantees," in *Marx: A Hundred Years On*, ed. B. Matthews (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1983): 57–85.
46. E. P. Thompson, "Outside the Whale," in idem (ed.), *Out of Apathy*, 141–94.
47. Cf. E.P. Thompson, "The New Left," *Peace News*, 18 September 1959: 16.
48. Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick, MSS.302/3/19: E.P. Thompson, "Where are we now?," internal memorandum to the *New Left Review* board, Apr. 1963. On Anderson's biography see: Paul Blackledge, *Perry Anderson, Marxism, and the New Left* (London: Merlin Press, 2004).
49. "Editorial," *New Left Review*, no. 18 (1962): 3–4.
50. Hall, "The 'First' New Left," 14–15; E.P. Thompson and T.J. Thompson, *There is a Spirit in Europe: A Memoir of Frank Thompson* (London: Gollancz, 1947); John Saville, *Memoirs from the Left* (London: Merlin, 2003), ch. 2. Cf. also Mary Lago, *India's Prisoner: A Biography of Edward John Thompson, 1886–1946* (Columbia, MO, and London: University of Missouri Press, 2001).
51. Anthony W. Wright, *G.D.H. Cole and Socialist Democracy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 257.

52. Cf. Anderson, *Arguments within English Marxism*.
53. Cf. the arguments in Chun, *British New Left*.
54. Cf. McEwen, *Greening of a Red*.
55. Quoted in Ronald Fraser et al., *1968: A Student Generation in Revolt* (New York: Pantheon, 1988), 30.
56. For a brilliant summary of these trends and their impact on history-writing and activism see Geoff Eley, *A Crooked Line. From Cultural History to the History of Society* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005), 16–25. For background see Dennis Dworkin, *Cultural Marxism in Postwar Britain: History, the New Left and the Origins of Cultural Studies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997).
57. Cf. Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy and the United States, c.1958–c.1974* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Thomas, “Challenging Myths of the 1960s.”
58. Dominic Sandbrook, *Never Had It So Good: A History of Britain from Suez to the Beatles* (London: Little Brown, 2005). Slightly more precise: Mark Donnelly, *Sixties Britain: Culture, Society and Politics* (London: Pearson, 2005).
59. On this see Martin Conway, “Democracy in Postwar Western Europe: The Triumph of a Political Model,” *European History Quarterly*, 32, no. 1 (2002): 59–84 and Jan-Werner Müller, “The Triumph of What (If Anything)? Rethinking Political Ideologies and Political Institutions in Twentieth-Century Europe,” *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 14, no. 2 (2009): 211–26. On other responses to this particular historical conjuncture see Guy Ortolano, *The Two Cultures Controversy: Science, Literature, and Cultural Politics in Postwar Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009); Aribert Reimann, *Dieter Kunzelmann. Avantgardist, Protestler, Radikaler* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009) on West Germany; and Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America* (New York: Columbia University Press 1998).
60. On this general point see Alberto Melucci, “The Process of Collective Identity,” in *Social Movements and Culture*, ed. Hank Johnston and Bert Klandermans (London: UCL Press, 1995), 41–63.
61. Cf. also Holger Nehring, “‘Generation’ as Political Argument in West European Protest Movements, 1965–1969,” in *Generations in Western Europe*, ed. Stephen Lovell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 57–78.
62. For the broader context and further readings see my chapter “Great Britain” in *1968 in Europe: A History of Protest and Activism, 1956–1977*, ed. Martin Klimke and Joachim Scharloth (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 125–36 as well as my *The Politics of Security: The British and West German Protests against Nuclear Weapons, 1957–1964* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

Chapter 2

Early Voices of Dissent

Czechoslovak Student Opposition at the Beginning of the 1960s

Zdeněk Nebřenský

Introduction

This chapter focuses on student opposition in Czechoslovakia in the 1960s. Instead of emphasizing the spectacular protests of 1968, it traces the frictions and conflicts between students and the central authorities back into the early 1960s. By examining the student demands voiced at the founding conference of the Youth Higher Education Committee in Prague on 30 November 1963, this chapter will expose the language and context in which students articulated their dissent.

Historical narratives of 1960s' student opposition in Czechoslovakia are often subject to retrospective interpretation through the events of 1968.¹ Student activists, charismatic leaders of the reforming Czechoslovak Communist Party, and many other social actors, such as writers and intellectuals, occupy the attention with respect to this year.² The danger of such an approach is that it reduces social conflict solely to practices that were already visible in the public.³ Thus, only conflicts that had already received mass media attention are portrayed as historically relevant. However, voices of dissent among students could be heard much earlier than 1968.⁴ In the early 1960s, the first generation born into the “new” postwar society was already growing up;⁵ the youth of the 1960s represented the “new” socialist citizen, brought up with “new” non-bourgeois values.⁶ Students, as the future socialist intelligentsia, were to be the main actors in the new socialist order.⁷ They were no longer to be identified with a national community, but were to be actors of a universal working class which transcended national boundaries. They were “socialized” into the Czechoslovak Youth Union (CYU), the only official youth organization in Czechoslovakia seeking to represent the political and social interests of young people between the ages of 14 and 26 within the socialist order.⁸

The youth question in Czechoslovakia played an important role in political relations in the 1960s. After student protests in 1956 against the frozen poli-

tics of Czechoslovak communist leaders caused by the student appropriation of the Twentieth Party Congress in the Soviet Union, the Central Committee of Czechoslovak Communist Party (CC CPCS) had begun to exercise direct control over the CYU. Officials from the Department for Youth Matters within the CC CPCS observed youth activities on a regional and local level. As a reaction to continuing negative attitudes of students toward the socialist order, the CC CPCS decided to establish youth higher education committees in order to increase the supervision of university students.⁹ The three established higher education committees were supposed to represent about 80,000 students from universities and business, technical, and agricultural colleges in Prague, Brno, and Bratislava. The founding conference of the committee in Prague on 30 November 1963 sought to bring about dialogue between central authorities and student representatives. However, the party catchwords coined at the Twenty-second Congress of the CPSU, proclaiming more “liberty in socialist life,” provoked students to dissent and speak out about their own interests and needs in Czechoslovak society.

Based on Axel Honneth’s normative typology, the students’ grievances fell into three distinct areas of demands: the private sphere¹⁰, social equality, and the value of intellectual achievement for society.¹¹ Although this certainly does not exclude other demands sought in the evolving official discourse, each of the above three types can be distinguished by patterns that established various social relations. Furthermore, through their public articulation, students learned to refer to themselves according to three distinct attitudes.

The Struggle for the Private Sphere

In the early 1960s, the communist leaders frequently discussed the negative attitudes toward the socialist order generally, and of students in particular. The Czechoslovak communists viewed the integration of youth and students into socialist society as insufficient and sought new ways to increase it. In 1962, they formulated new youth and student policies and decided to support youth activities on a local level. This support included the establishment of three new higher education committees. However, they also emphasized the socialist character of higher education and pushed for the students’ active participation in social and political life.¹² A conference establishing the Youth Higher Education Committee in Prague on 30 November 1963 was intended to be a step in this direction.

The institutions of higher education in 1960s Prague consisted of the Charles University, the Czech Technical University, the Agricultural University, the University of Economics, the University of Chemical Technology, and the Academies of Plastic, Performing and Industrial Arts. Their student representatives in the Czechoslovak Youth Union belonged to political authorities in Prague. By November 1963, the student representatives in the CYU were un-

der the direction of an Urban Youth Committee, which observed youth activities and controlled youth organizations in Prague. With the convening of the Youth Higher Education Committee on 30 November 1963, the Urban Committee designated to the new committee certain powers over higher education in Prague. At the same time, the new committee was able to intervene in the administration of the Prague universities. This made the conference discussions especially interesting for the deputy of the minister of education, as well as the rectors, deans, and other academic functionaries.

The beginning of the conference ran relatively smoothly and the conference chairmanship, procedures, and schedule were quickly ratified by the various delegates. Representatives of the Bratislava and Brno Youth Higher Education Committees, which had only been established a few weeks earlier, also participated. At the end of the opening speech, the chairman of the meeting welcomed the student delegates to the conference. However, an electrical engineering student later interrupted discussions to voice his dissent and demand that premises for a student club be built in his faculty similar to that of his Polish peers:

At our electrical engineering faculty, we were building a student club called *Kyberna*. The first discussions and suggestions to build a club began two years ago, when two students of our faculty visited Poland and saw how student clubs operated ... We want to establish a program that will include meetings with young artists, journalists, educators, foreign students, producing performances of our small theatre group, concerts, music of all kinds ... art and photography exhibitions, an exchange program abroad and hitchhiking ...¹³

The reference to the Polish students may appear surprising, since it was highly unusual for ordinary Czechoslovak students to travel abroad in the 1950s, as they did not have necessary social connections or financial means.¹⁴ However, during debates about proletarian internationalism and a socialist way of life in the early 1960s, the central authorities discussed the possibility of trips abroad for Czechoslovak citizens and gradually allowed favored groups to go, including members of the Czechoslovak Youth Union. As a result, some CYU members traveled to East Germany and the Soviet Union to meet their counterparts there. Moreover, interactions between Czechoslovak and Hungarian or Polish students were much less frequent.¹⁵ The rapid de-Stalinization of Poland after 1956 was viewed with great skepticism and fear by the Czechoslovak communist leaders, who had been in power since 1945. Consequently, they sought to restrict relationships between Czechoslovak and Polish citizens, but allowed student exchanges in supposedly non-ideological subjects, such as electrical engineering, making it much easier for these students to travel to Poland than for humanities and social sciences students.

In 1963, while students in Prague were hoping that the establishment of the Youth Higher Education Committee would promote their interests and help build a student club, student clubs in Warsaw were already flourishing. Student functionaries from Poland had traveled throughout Western Europe and had experienced youth culture in Britain, France, or Denmark. Student theater groups began to perform political satires and dramas by Western European playwrights,¹⁶ and dance evenings, jazz concerts, and film projections drew increasingly larger audiences.¹⁷ Apart from their personal experiences in the West, Polish functionaries brought back popular youth magazines, posters and records, thereby strongly influencing Polish youth culture. Polish student authorities operated their own clubs, theaters, cinemas, and galleries, and arranged cultural events, such as exhibitions by young artists or concerts by student orchestras, which they advertised in student newspapers and on student radio.¹⁸

All of this was in strong contrast to the situation in Czechoslovakia, which the above-mentioned electrical engineering student described as follows at the conference in November 1963:

First of all, we had to overcome bureaucracy and the distrust in youth members during the approving of building designs. It took the whole term to get a building license. We did not have enough money to hire a building firm and we carried out most of the construction ourselves. It prolonged the work. We demanded the support of the dean's office and the faculty trade unions for our endeavor, but both the faculty and the trade unions acted harshly and we did not receive anything. We had to resort to our own financial resources which we earned in working brigades.¹⁹

The bureaucratic obstacles facing the engineering students in their quest for a student club were symptomatic not only of the central authorities confronting them, composed of university, party, and youth functionaries, but also of their larger distrust in youth activities. The academics in charge of Czechoslovak higher education in the 1960s had participated in the communist seizure of power in 1948 and had been the leading agents in the transformation of the Czechoslovak universities in the 1950s, where they established Communist doctrine and forcefully introduced Marxism-Leninism.²⁰ However, Khrushchev's criticism of the Stalinist personality cult in 1956, as well as his policy of a "thaw" in cultural areas in 1959–62, radically broke with Stalinism in higher education. After the Twentieth CPSU Congress in 1956, many Czech and Slovak students expected a shift in the "frozen" politics of the communist leaders. Youth committees were providing discussion platforms for the articulation of student expectations, which were transformed into rallies of public dissent during the student carnival of May 1956.²¹ Due to the role of the youth committees in

the student riots, party functionaries decided to place all youth organizations under the direct control of the Communist Party in 1958,²² a move which soon resulted in student disinterest in youth activities, as they changed into political rituals of particularly orthodox groups. Most Czech and Slovak students turned instead to family relationships, individual friendships, and private interests. Unofficial and unexpected youth activity arising from the grassroots level, such as the construction of a student club, was thus viewed with great distrust by party and university functionaries.

At the faculty of electrical engineering, however, the student club was only one illustration of student demands for private sphere in Czechoslovakia in the early 1960s; another was hitchhiking. At the beginning of the decade, hitchhiking was a popular way of traveling freely during the summer holidays. In comparison to other social groups, students had more leisure time and non-conventional holiday experiences became a matter of social prestige, influencing recognition within the peer group. Hitchhiking brought about potential conflicts among communist leaders and young people in the early 1960s, since it was associated with the past and the West, and its cultural meaning ascribed to a practice of dissent. This included some hitchhikers dressing in non-conformist clothing, for example a domestic imitation of moleskins, plaid shirt, neckerchief, and sometimes a cowboy hat, and thus displaying individualistic and non-collective behavior. Hitchhikers were defined as “soft males” and combined features of hikers, who represented the tourism of young Prague middle-class males in interwar Czechoslovakia, as well as American beatniks and vagabonds.²³ Party authorities thus agreed in 1963 that hitchhiking had to be officially organized through the Czechoslovak Youth Union.²⁴ Students at the conference of the Higher Education Committee in Prague, however, demanded it be kept unregulated, with no hitchhiker identity cards, travel insurance or timetables distributed by youth functionaries.

All student demands concerning the private sphere, including student criticism of the new rules in student residences, were registered in the shorthand protocol of the conference. In the course of 1962, representatives of central party, youth, and ministry officials had prepared, negotiated, and confirmed new dormitory rules. Communist and academic functionaries formally recognized the autonomy of student councils in student residences, but representatives were not invited to negotiations and were only later informed of their outcome. Students complained that these new rules were contradictory and impracticable. Restraints placed on private visits in student residences especially provoked student opposition. Dormitory administrations could prohibit the visits of students who were not performing satisfactorily in their studies and who showed “bad morals.” Although the definition of these categories was disputable, visitors were only officially allowed at the weekend. For those who broke the rules, the consequence was social isolation. Furthermore, the new rules ignored local conditions, that in fact, each of the residences in Prague, Brno, and Bratislava was different. It thus additionally fueled student criticism.²⁵

Struggle for Equality

The socialist way of life was imagined as transnational. Marxism-Leninism pitted the concept of society against the concept of nation, and the Stalinist practice in the Cominform aspired to replace national distinctions with transnational Russian language centrality.²⁶ National identity was effectively put into the socialist melting pot during the expected introduction of socialism in Central and Eastern Europe in the postwar period because it stemmed from the bourgeois past. According to the Marxist-Leninist rules of history, the communist functionaries in Czechoslovakia equally sought the change from the old bourgeois order to a new socialist order. In their view, the laws of historical materialism predetermined the new socialist order that inherited its legitimacy from revolution.²⁷ Furthermore, the socialist way of life was to be practiced through proletarian internationalism and founded on equal rights and transnational class solidarity; in other words, in favor of a universal working class and at the expense of an identification with particular national communities.²⁸ With the beginning of decolonization and the emergence of liberation movements in Asia, Latin America, and Africa in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the acceptance of foreign students from “less developed countries” at universities in Czechoslovakia also became a frequent topic in official discourse. In a similar way to their Czechoslovak peers, foreign students also began to publicly voice their dissent and demands for equality and thereby further contributed to the students’ experience of disrespect by communist leaders and youth functionaries. As an Iraqi student said at the founding conference of the Prague Higher Education Committee in November 1963:

The cooperation between the Czechoslovak Youth Union and foreign students is at a higher level than it was a few years ago. There is already a department of urban committees for foreign students, and a club for foreign students, called the Club of Friendship but it does not mean that we have exhausted all possibilities of cooperation in this area ...²⁹

Foreign students in 1960s’ Czechoslovakia were involved in a network of cooperation with government, party, and university functionaries in cities with higher education establishments, as well as with the Czechoslovak Youth Union (CYU). Only Brno, which, after Prague and Bratislava possessed the third largest higher education infrastructure, had the Club of Foreign Students (CFS) or Club of Friendship, as it was sometimes called. According to a report of youth functionaries, from 1963, there were 2,500 students from 80 countries in Czechoslovakia, with about 250 foreign students from 28 countries studying at Brno universities (including 120 medical students from East Germany 40 from Greece,³⁰ and 25 from Africa). The leader of the CFS saw the club not as a student political organization, but as a student association supporting the cultural and sporting interests of foreign students. Club members convened for an annual plenary

meeting in the fall to elect the executive committee, which then cooperated with an advisory authority, consisting of youth delegates at the university and the technical and agricultural colleges, as well as at the Youth Urban Committee in Brno.³¹ The club organized student forums, sessions, patronages, and excursions and held weekly meetings in the clubroom of the faculty of medicine, in which between 70 and 100 foreign students participated. Discussions and parties as well as study and disciplinary proceedings took place in the club.

The attitudes of many foreign students, however, did not conform to the club, and most formed separate informal groups outside of it. Very few Czech and Slovak students regularly participated in the social life of the CFS. Most ordinary students at Brno universities considered the CFS to be exclusively for foreign students. Local party departments for youth matters and youth faculty committees, as well as the administration of student residences also did not cooperate with the club, leading to complaints on the part of foreign students, which were subsequently voiced at the founding conference in 1963:

Many of the Czech and Slovak students do not see why foreign students are here, why it is important for Czechoslovakia and the other nations sending their students to study [here] ... If people know why we study here, why it is important, it would make the mutual understanding between ourselves and Czechoslovak students easier in the future. In terms of financial cooperation, it can be embarrassing. There is sometimes not enough money for the organization of youth activities. Therefore, I suggest that the CYU cooperate with the authorities that are concerned with foreign students.³²

One of the reasons most ordinary Czech and Slovak students had trouble welcoming foreign students was that they saw them as part of the surveillance of central government, party, and youth functionaries. In 1958, the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (CPCS) had instructed the minister of education, the head of the state planning commission, and the minister of finance to draft a party resolution for the greater acceptance of foreign students from “less developed countries” which was ratified two years later.³³ The CPCS’s international and ideological departments saw the resolution in the context of the cultural diplomacy efforts of the U.S., Britain, and West Germany in former colonial countries. For them, the West was seeking to retain its economical and political interests in former colonial societies by trying to move into the space formerly occupied by European colonizers and offering a large number of scholarships at Western universities to educate national intelligentsia from these countries as pro-western. From the Communist perspective, these Western politics of “development aid” belonged to new forms of imperial dominancy,³⁴ while cooperation with foreign students in Czechoslovakia was a socialist contribution to the postcolonial struggle for independence from capitalist states.

The communist functionaries thus saw the increasing number of students from postcolonial countries at universities in Czechoslovakia as a form of comradesly assistance, but also pointed out the political, economical, and cultural impact of this assistance. Foreign students who had studied in Czechoslovakia for between five and seven years had learned the Czech language; they had been introduced to Marxist-Leninist consciousness and politically educated to believe in the primacy of the socialist over capitalist order. After their return to their native countries, they would form strong future partnerships with Czechoslovakia, and in high positions in administration and business, they would take up and spread the socialist way of life.

One obstacle to this, which was frequently commented upon by party functionaries, was the class background of foreign students. From the parties' perspective, students from Ethiopia, Guinea, and Yemen, for example, often rejected the manual labor in socialist working brigades because they belonged to the ruling groups in their countries. Along similar lines, the nationalism of most Algerian students was explained by their origins as petty national bourgeoisie. Related to this was the problem of foreign currencies, as well as luxurious goods, which in 1960s' Czechoslovakia could only be acquired in special shops, known as "Tuzex." Consumers had to obtain a special currency, called "bonds" to make purchases in these shops. Scarce commodities were especially sought after by young people, but trade in this currency was illegal. The currency was issued in limited series and was only exchangeable for U.S. dollars, West German deutschmarks, and other foreign, preferably Western, currencies, which foreign students coming into Czechoslovakia often possessed. Thus, it was young assistants at higher education colleges and youth functionaries interacting with foreign students who, more often than ordinary students, participated in a thriving black market with foreign currencies. This was also complained about by foreign students.³⁵

Other problems arose from the relationship between Czechoslovak and foreign students. A student from Syria openly complained about the disrespect that foreign students experienced in Czechoslovakia in the early 1960s. A group of foreign students in Prague sought to strengthen cooperation with the local Youth Urban Committee to improve these contacts, although no Club of Foreign Students (CFS), such as in Brno, was established in Prague.³⁶ Prague students often saw relations between Czechoslovak and foreign students as problematic, calling foreign students "lounge-lizards" who received scholarships, but spent their time in coffee bars or in creating conflicts. In the 1960s, the Prague police registered numerous incidents involving physical conflicts among foreign students, not only in Prague city center at night, but also during the afternoon in student residences.³⁷

A discourse of equality also played an important role in other student demands at the higher education conference: A female medical student demanded equality for people living on both sides of the "Iron Curtain." In October 1963,

students and postgraduates from socialist universities in Czechoslovakia and Poland visited a European academic week (EURAC) in Amsterdam. The student delegation from Czechoslovakia was surprised by the intensity of academic exchanges, transfers, and meetings among its Western counterparts. According to the student launching the complaint, Czechoslovak students were isolated from other European countries and stereotypes about ways of life under the socialist and the bourgeois society were abundant. Western European students were surprised that cultural practices of socialist students were similar to those of the youth in the West; for example, that Prague students wore informal clothing instead of uniforms, and that they listened to rock music and danced the twist.³⁸

The state agencies organizing these transnational interactions were particularly criticized for unequal recruitment conditions which excluded ordinary students. Party, academic, and youth authorities, however, defended their authority over the international domain and the favored recruitments from the Youth Central Committee.³⁹ Transnational interactions in the form of correspondence, excursions, conference papers, or discussions were perceived as a symbol of social prestige at universities in 1960s' Czechoslovakia. Students who traveled abroad often received more recognition from their peers than academics that had not had this experience. Therefore, party, academic, and youth functionaries tried to inhibit the participation of Prague students at the EURAC's congress in Edinburgh the following year. They also prohibited the student "West-East" initiative to hold the 1965 EURAC congress in Prague.

Communist leaders not only disapproved of interactions between Prague students and their Western European counterparts, but also of those with Soviet students. In 1963, a group of prominent ship engineering students from St. Petersburg made a forty-day visit to Czechoslovakia. When students of the Prague Technical University discussed the possibility of a mutual student exchange with them, their Soviet colleagues stated that only the central party, academic and youth functionaries could allow such an exchange.⁴⁰ Those functionaries, however, did not even welcome interactions between Prague students and their socialist counterparts from Central and Eastern Europe. Similarly, although the Technical University in Prague cooperated with the Technical University in Wrocław, and academic staff, along with a small group of Polish students, were able to travel to Czechoslovakia in 1962, Prague students were not allowed to accept a reciprocal invitation.⁴¹ The most paradoxical situation arose at Czech and Slovak universities as well as at higher education colleges in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia when party, youth, and government officials defined in advance how many students of which regional origin would be accepted to study a variety of specific subjects and disciplines at university and other institutes of higher education.⁴² Ordinary people in Czechoslovakia in the 1960s did not go to coffee bars and student residences or encounter foreign students from outside of Europe in their everyday lives. Yet these topics became public knowledge because the police not only sent interrogating protocols about controversies among for-

eign students to party, university, and youth functionaries but also because distortions, negative stereotypes, and derogative inscriptions about foreign students were widely circulated in public.⁴³

Struggle for Difference

The language of student demands for difference referred to the one-sided interpretation of achievements within the industrially organized division of labor in the socialist order. “Work achievement” with specific and valuable use for a socialist society was related to function, age, and class origin. Marxism-Leninism in Czechoslovakia essentially appropriated the highest group status recognition for members of the working class, which especially recognized long-term communist male functionaries. Therefore, students, as future members of socialist intelligentsia, were competing for recognition of their status. In this competitive environment, the issue of working brigades was a crucial one.

Working brigades in Czechoslovakia were supposed to introduce students to the working class and familiarize them with “practical life.”⁴⁴ The social transformation after the communist takeover in the 1950s had not resulted in a socialist society of workers, peasants, and intelligentsia according to the Stalinist postulates, but had established new power relations and status inequalities in the social order. The transformation to a planned economy, as well as mass industrialization and the collectivization of agriculture, had caused unexpected consequences. Additionally, the switch to heavy and military industry and the forming of agricultural cooperatives changed employment structures and caused a permanent labor shortage and the urbanization of society. Working brigades and socialist work teams for young people had already been introduced after the communist seizure of power in 1948. However, after Stalin’s death in 1953, youth enthusiasm for these working brigades had cooled, and they became a ritual most people tried to avoid. In this context, it was especially the central planning of target figures from communist leaders that produced conflicts with the students.

At the higher education conference in November 1963, a medical student from Charles University complained about the lack of recognition for the labor that he and his peers had carried out in the working brigades assigned for the building of student residences in Prague’s urban district of Petřiny. He particularly criticized the unrealistically high centrally determined target figures, and that these figures did not correspond to the number of available male students at his university.⁴⁵ The Central Planning Commission had assigned students from some faculties twice, leaving other faculties with a shortage of labor. For example, for a brigade in April 1963, 160 male students were requested although only 100 were registered at the faculty of medicine. In addition, poor organization and timing in the brigades were a constant source of protest among students.⁴⁶

The Central Planning Commission often responded to student initiatives with delays, sometimes of several years, and the organization of student brigades often ended in even greater chaos.⁴⁷ Furthermore, the timing of the student working brigades often coincided with final exams, which further contributed to student dissent with central decisions, and led to demands for greater recognition that their future professional achievement was more valuable for society than the brigade.

The gap between the theoretical idea and the practice of the working brigades was particularly clear in the agricultural brigades during the summer. Students had to work primarily in southern and western Bohemia, where there had been a labor shortage since the expulsion of the German-speaking inhabitants in the late 1940s. In 1962, the organization of summer agricultural brigades had failed disastrously due to the logistical deficiencies of urban youth functionaries, who subsequently had to undergo special training. The year after, many medical students refused to participate in the agricultural brigades by pointing to their different training and social status in the face of substandard living and hygienic conditions, food shortages, and a lack of sanitary facilities. At the same time, authorities in charge of agricultural cooperatives did not respect the student labor and did not pay their salaries or pay for their transportation, whereas youth functionaries were rewarded simply for their leadership, without joining in with the actual work effort.⁴⁸

Demands for social recognition and the conflict between students and central authorities in a socialist society were, however, often communicated with a certain ambivalence. At the conference, for example, some fine art students also demanded the recognition of their achievements as artists who should have sufficient creative freedom without any central supervision. However, the same students also called for a central regulation of the socialist labor market and of established art professions. They argued that young painters, sculptors, and designers should be privileged when looking for artistic jobs. Obtaining an artistic position in Czechoslovakia involved taking part in special interest groups and relations between older members of central art associations and their clients from publishing houses, magazines, and galleries that the young artists were not cognizant of. Some students, graduates, and academics attempted to improve the status of young artists by establishing special awards and scholarships for them. At the same time, they argued that the socialist society should not prevent the realization of the declared aims and professions of its citizens.⁴⁹

Conclusion

The student demands articulated at the conference to establish the Youth Higher Education Committee in Prague on 30 November 1963 were closely connected to transnational topics circulating in the official discourse in Czechoslovakia in

the early 1960s. A new anthropological perspective on socialism and an emphasis on the writing of the young Marx reached Czechoslovakia after the Twenty-first/Twenty-second Soviet party congresses in 1959–61 and subsequently spread among the ordinary citizens through the mass media. A whole generation of socialist students perceived, shared, and appreciated this discourse, which proclaimed the recognition of the individual subject and his needs, expectations, and desires. Socialist society now seemed to have created suitable conditions for a self-realization of all this without any pressures, wants, and struggles.

The disrespect that students experienced through their distrust by government, party, and university functionaries, as well as an oppressive bureaucracy, produced local student opposition. This dissent was found in informal student networks, separate from the visible collectivity and the class solidarity of the socialist community presented in mass media. These student networks were characterized by mutual trust, friendships, individual concerns, and common interests. They allowed students to publicly voice their demands at the establishing conference of the Prague Youth Higher Education Committee, where central authorities were forced to recognize and resolve them, such as, in the construction of a student club, free hitchhiking, and autonomy in student residences.

The topics of equal rights and transnational class solidarity, which had been part of the communist politics of proletarian internationalism since decolonization, and the emergence of liberation movements, as well as socialist peace campaigns in Europe in the early 1960s, did not, however, dilute national, racial, ethnic, gender, class, or religious differences in Czechoslovakia; rather, they reproduced them. Both ordinary Czechoslovak and foreign students experienced inequality and disrespect from party as well as youth functionaries on a local level. Most foreign students who were accepted to study at Czechoslovak universities were not integrated into the socialist community in Czechoslovakia and ordinary Czechoslovak students could not freely visit meetings of their counterparts in the Soviet Union, Poland, and Western Europe, since communist leaders reserved transnational interactions for themselves and their favorites. Therefore, students at the higher education conference in Prague demanded greater cooperation and mutual understanding from the functionaries, as well as equal access to transnational events.

Students who interacted with communist, higher education, and youth functionaries in Czechoslovakia in the early 1960s took on and incorporated party language into the demands they voiced on a local level. By pointing to the inconsistencies between mass media and their daily experiences at the higher education conference in November 1963, students attempted to connect their demands to a greater recognition of their status. They put forward their criticism in areas related to the private sphere, social equality, and value of intellectual achievement for society, representing a new self-confidence, self-respect, and self-esteem in a society whose limitations they had already outgrown and whose norms and values they were trying to improve for the common good.

From a long term perspective, between the late 1950s and late 1980s, three generations of student opposition, those of 1956, 1968, and 1989 can be distinguished in Czechoslovakia. The Cold War culture determined their cognitive orientations, and the transformations of power in Central Europe formed each generation into a social group with a specific historical experience. Some resolutions of the Twentieth Party Congress in Soviet Union which were transferred into Czechoslovak official discourse mobilized the actors of the 1956 generation. The Suez crisis in the Middle East, political struggles in Poland, and especially the revolutionary events in Hungary brought about the strengthened control by the central authorities over university students and strongly influenced their everyday lives. Nevertheless, surprisingly, student demands, which were articulated during the public meetings in May 1956, reemerged in the founding conference of the Youth Higher Education Committee in Prague in November 1963. This time, demands regarding the private sphere when traveling; and in friendships and relationships in student clubs and dormitories; regarding equality in transnational space and relations with students from former colonies; as well as demands concerning the value of intellectual achievement for society, were much more pronounced than seven years previously.

The establishment of the Higher Education Committee in 1963 did not increase student interest in socialist education and their participation in political life, as communist leaders had predicted, but instead provided a social framework for student dissent. Within two years, student activists had taken over the committee, after having been radicalized by police violence toward students who demonstrated against poor living conditions in dormitories in autumn 1967. Thus, in the course of Prague Spring, successors of the 1963 founding committee became an integrated generation opposed to authorities. At the beginning of the 1970s, when communist orthodoxy reinforced its power, the generational cohesion was broken up, and actors of the 1968 generation dispersed throughout Czech and Slovak society, as well as throughout Europe. Some of them, the pragmatics, joined in with communist politics, judged their protest activities self-critically, and approved the August military operation of the Warsaw Treaty Organization. Others, the silent majority, started to make daily compromises with the communist powers, meeting their individual needs and following private interests. The last group consisted of the former student leaders, who were forced to leave universities, join the army, or enter into second rate professions. Continuing in their dissent, they contributed to the establishment of social projects, a cultural avant-garde and political opposition, as represented by the *Charta 77*.

Their symbolic voice of dissent was raised in the Velvet Revolution of 1989. It started similarly to Prague Spring, when police broke up a student rally just as they had thirty-two years earlier. The hard-handedness of the police led to the mobilization of the student opposition at most Czechoslovak universities. Leaders of the student opposition first articulated political demands, but the

generation of 1968 rapidly undertook political actions to try to restore the political order of Prague Spring. But it was no longer successful. History did not repeat itself.

Notes

1. Jaroslav Pažout, "Reakce československých studentů v době Pražského jara na protestní hnutí na Západě," in Zdeněk Kárník, Michal Kopeček, eds., *Bolševismus, komunismus a radikální socialismus v českých zemích*, (Praha: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, Dokořán, 2004), 213–27. Jaroslav Pažout, "Sbírka Ivana Dejmalá—významný pramen k dějinám československého studentského hnutí v 60. letech 20.století," in *Sborník archivních prací* LIII/2 (2003): 129–194. Cf. Jürgen Danyel, *Deutsche in Prag, Dubček in Rom. Die Erinnerung an 1968 in transnationaler Perspektive*, Conference "1968 als Erinnerungsort" at ZZf Potsdam, 19–20 May, 2006.
2. Galia Golan, *Reform Rule in Czechoslovakia, 1968–1969* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1973). Jaromír Navrátil, *The Prague Spring 1968: A National Securitive Archive Documents Reader* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1998). Jan Pauer, *Prag 1968. Der Einmarsch des Warschauer Paktes. Hintergründe—Planung—Durchführung*, (Bremen: Ed. Temmen 1995).
3. Frank L. Kaplan, *Winter into Spring: The Czechoslovak press and reform movement, 1963–1968* (Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1977). Miklós Kun, *Prague Spring—Prague Fall. Black Spots of 1968* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1999). Gordon H. Skilling, *Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution* (Princeton: N.J. University Press, 1976). Kieran Williams, *Prague Spring and its Aftermath: Czechoslovak Politics 1968–1970*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
4. Galia Golan, *The Czechoslovak Reform Movement: Communism in Crisis; 1962–1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971). Elizabeth Gray, *The Fiction of Freedom: The Development of the Czechoslovak Literary Reform Movement 1956–1968* (Clayton: Monash University, 1999). Vladimír V. Kusin, *The Intellectual Origins of The Prague Spring: The Development of Reformist Ideas in Czechoslovakia 1956–1967* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971).
5. Global Context cf. Jeremi Suri, "The Language of Dissent," in *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Detente* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: Harvard University Press, 2003), 88–130.
6. "ČSM na vysokých školách a společnost," in National Archive (NA), collection (f) ÚV ČSM, Vysokoškolská rada, box (k.) 1327: 2pp.
7. Conclusions of the twenty-first congress of the CPSU concerning the education of the younger generation were discussed by members of the CPCS Central Committee 22–23 April 1959. The Congress of Socialist Culture in Czechoslovakia thematized relations between the party and creative intelligentsia, and discussed the practice of a socialist cultural revolution, the popular assumption of the Marxist world view, and the formation of socialist citizens, 9–11 June 1959. The Czechoslovak parliament approved a law defining the new education reform, connecting school and life, study of workers (higher education study for employed people), 15 December 1960. The twenty-second congress of the CPSU had the immediate aim of building a communist society, 17–31 October 1961. The Central Committee of the CPC accepted

- a report about the conclusions of the twenty-second congress of the CPSU about questions regarding the communist youth, 15–17 November 1961.
8. The plenum of the Central Committee of the CPCS discussed the question of communist youth, 10–11 July 1962. The twelfth congress of the CPCS emphasized actual questions of communist education and the struggle against the bourgeois and petty bourgeois ideology, as well as anticommunism, 4–8 December 1962. The fourth congress of the Union of Czechoslovak Youth discussed the conclusions of the twelfth congress of the CPC concerning communist education, 18–21 April 1963.
 9. Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPC, 9 February, 1963, NA, f. KSČ-ÚV 02/1– 8—9/4, 2. Cf. Karel Kaplan. *Kořeny československé reformy 1968. IV: Struktura moci*, Brno, 2002, 343 p.; Stenografický záznam ustavující obvodní konference ČSM vysokých škol, konané dne 30. listopadu 1963 v Praze v Kulturním době pracujících ve strojírenství, Archive of the Charles University Prague (Archiv UK), the collection (f.) Studentské hnutí 60.let 20.století, 72-39-1, 34 pp. Cf. Archiv UK, f. 72-39-1, 9/2.
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 13. Archiv UK, f. 72-39-1, 14/3.
 14. Hodnocení letní brigádnické činnosti studentů o prázdninách 1961, Usnesení ÚV ČSM o letní činnosti organizací ČSM na školách v roce 1961–62, Celostátní soutěž ve výrobní a veřejné prospěšné práci vysokoškolských organizací ČSM, NA, f. ÚV ČSM, k. 1325, a.j. 6, 7.
 15. Usnesení 31. schůze sekretariátu ÚV KSČ ze dne 20. listopadu 1963 k bodu: zahraniční cestování mládeže, NA, f. Sek. ÚV KSČ 02/4, sv. 18, a.j. 31/9, 3.
 16. *ITD 43/II*, 17 grudnia 1961. Cf. Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury Rady Uczelnianej ZSP UW za okres roku akademickiego 1961/62, in: Archive of the University of Warsaw (AUW), collection (sign.) 757/015.
 17. *ITD 10/III*, 11 marca 1962. Cf. Komisja Kultury Rady Uczelnianej ZSP Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego ogłasza okres od 1 marca do 31 marca 1963 r.—Miesiąca Filmu, in: AUW, sign. 757/015.
 18. *ITD 37/III*, 5 listopada 1961. Cf. Biuletyn Informacyjny Rady Uczelnianej, Warszawa, dnia 28. III. 1963 r. Nr. 8, Komisja Kultury, in: AUW, 1960.03.27—1963.12.10, sign. 757/015.
 19. Archiv UK, f. 72-39-1, 14/3.
 20. John Connelly, *Captive University: the Sovietization of East German, Czech, and Polish higher education 1945–1956* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).
 21. John P.C. Matthews, *Majales: the abortive student revolt in Czechoslovakia in 1956* (Washington: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 1998).
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- Zásady výstavby a vnitřního života ČSM,” Praha: Agitační a propagační oddělení ÚV ČSM 1959.
23. “Na slovíčko s Gézou Včeličkou—Tábornictví kdysi a dnes,” *Mladý svět* 47 (1963): 11.
 24. “Dvě hodiny u předsedy ÚV ČSM Miroslava Zavadila—devatenáct odpovědí na otázky mladého světa,” *Mladý svět* 45 (1963): 6 p. They demanded it to be regulated according to the pattern of Poland. See Archiv UK, f.72-39-1, 18/4-19/1.
 25. Archiv UK, f. 72-39-1, 4/2-4/4.
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 27. Jindřich Zelený, *Historický materialismus: k některým otázkám marxistického materialistického pojetí dějin*, (Praha: SPN 1958).
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 29. Archiv UK, 72-39-1, 12/3 pp.
 30. Brno, as well as a conurbation in Moravian Silesia, was a popular destination for Greek refugees from the beginning of the civil war in Greece. The total number of refugees in Czechoslovakia was approximately 11,941 in 1950, with 3,500 children. Cf. Rikí van Boeschoten, “Unity and Brotherhood”? Macedonian Political Refugees in Eastern Europe,” *History and Culture of South Eastern Europe* 5 (2003): 192.
 31. “Několik připomínek a poznatků k práci se zahraničními studenty v Brně,” NA, f. ČSM-ÚV, Vysokoškolská rada, k.č.1325, 2 pp.
 32. Archiv UK, 72-39-1, 12/3 pp.
 33. See “Návrh perspektivního plánu přijímání zahraničních studentů ...,” NA, f. Úřad předsednictva vlády (ÚPV) 1959, k. 2466, 17 pp.; “Usnesení schůze politického byra ÚV KSČ ze dne 18.7. 1960 k bodu: Zvýšení počtu zahraničních studentů přijímaných do ČSR ke studiu...,” NA, f. 02/2 Politické byro ÚV KSČ 1954–1962, sv. 271, a.j. 352/b-21, 2 pp.
 34. “Usnesení schůze politického byra ÚV KSČ ze dne 2.5. 1961 k bodu: Zvýšení počtu zahraničních studentů v ČSSR a opatření s tím spojená,” NA, f.02/2 Politické byro ÚV KSČ 1954–1962, sv.306, a.j.389/b-11, 10 pp. Cf. “Informace o mezinárodním studentském hnutí.” Oddělení studující mládeže a mezinárodní oddělení ÚV ČSM, Praha, 1961.
 35. Archiv UK, f. 72-39-1, 13/3.
 36. Archiv UK, f.72-39-1, 16/3 pp.
 37. Archiv HMP, k.č. 32 VV KSČ, i.č. 465—Korespondence přijatá 1965 (VB). 25/6.
 38. Archiv UK, f. 72-39-1, 17/1 pp.
 39. Archiv UK, f.72-39-1, 9/1.
 40. Archiv UK, f.72-39-1, 18/4.
 41. Ibid.
 42. “Problémy výběru studentů na vysoké školy,” NA, fond ČSM-ÚV, Vysokoškolská rada, k.č.1327, 7208/B pp.

43. Miloslav Rechcigl (ed.), *Czechoslovak between Past and Present* (The Hague: Mouton, 1968).
44. Návrh zásad pro rozvoj iniciativy a aktivity organizací ČSM na školách, in: NA, f. ÚV ČSM—Praha, kr. 157/8, 11.
45. Archiv UK, f.72-39-1, 3/4 pp.
46. Archiv UK, f.72-39-1, 3/4 pp.
47. Archiv UK, f.72-39-1, 13/5 pp.
48. Archiv UK, f. 72-39-1, 3/2 pp.
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National Ways to Socialism?

The Left and the Nation in Denmark
and Sweden, 1960–1980

Thomas Ekman Jørgensen

The relationship between the Left and the nation has always been precarious. The international call for all workers to unite went hand in hand with the Left's necessity to work within their respective national political context. To see the tension between the Left and the nation in the twentieth century, one has only to think of the fragmentation of the Second International under nationalist pressure at the onslaught of World War I or the communist parties' dilemma of balancing internationalist ideology with national credibility in the second half of the century.

There is a large amount of literature dealing with the history of the concept of the nation. However, it is generally agreed that there is no simple or even stable definition of nation. While periods like the nineteenth century present recurring discussions about what the nation is—cultural, ethnic, or “a daily plebiscite,” for example; later periods judge the concept differently. In the postwar period, the two countries in question, Denmark and Sweden, saw themselves very differently from other European countries. They were neither among the imperial nations, like Great Britain or France, which had to come to terms with decolonization, nor had they experienced national traumas like the German states, whose relationship with its national identity was devastated by National Socialism. Denmark and Sweden were two old, consolidated nation states that had been spared displacement or irredentist conflicts. For these reasons, the idea of nation was often taken for granted, and there were few specifically “national” discussions. This did not, however, mean that the nation was not important. Indeed, elements of the concept of the nation were almost always present in political considerations, three of which will be considered specifically: (1) The question of what is external and internal to the nation; (2) the relation between people and rulers; and (3) the question of historical time and agency.¹

First, the question of inside and outside the nation refers to the nation as “we” as opposed to the “other.” This implies ideas about “friends” and “enemies” and puts the nation into a larger context by defining its virtues, vices, or *missions*

civilisatrices and its place in the world. Through its internationalist heritage, this element was always an immediate concern for the Left. The national political struggle had to be justified and connected to a vision that included—if not all mankind—an international community such as the proletariat evoked by Marx in the *Communist Manifesto*.

The second element refers to the nation in the sense of “people.” This term, in its classic form, has two meanings, specified by the Latin *plebs* and the Greek *demos*. *Plebs* refers to the people as the common man, the subject who is ruled over, while the Greek term implies the people as the source of legitimacy and power. For the Left, again, this had the specific meaning that the people, the working class or the proletariat were both the common men, ruled over by the bourgeoisie, but they were at the same time the only real source of both material wealth and political legitimacy. For this reason, the definition of true *demos* among the *plebs* was always an important intellectual task for the Left.

The last major element concerns historical time and agency. Because the Left defined itself as the carrier of progress, it had to imply a philosophy of history that designated a goal. The nation was considered in a historical context of past and present, pointing to a specific future. The historical context or narrative could entail examples of the nation as being repressive, democratic, or independent, but first and foremost, gave meaning to contemporary events as part of the nation’s destiny, and—importantly—pointed to the question of *who* should bring about progress.

How then, do we define the Left? Left and Right have been used in order to define the political spectrum since the French Revolution. Various attempts have been made to apply the more or less essential values to the two political poles, for example, the Right being conservative, and the Left defending progress. While some have defined the Left in almost ethical terms as fighting against social and political injustice;² others saw it as being essentially concerned with equality.³ Generally, these definitions are marked by a mixture of essentialist political labels with vaguely defined concepts such as “progress,” “injustice,” and “equality.” These do not easily translate into workable tools for an empirical study. Instead, it is much more productive to see the Left as a social category, a political community of like-minded people. After all, the Left is a political concept, and practical politics is more than the mere translation of ideology into action. The Left, therefore, has common ideas, but is also defined as a group within the same milieu, sometimes with different points of view, but nevertheless recognized both from within and outside the community to be the “Left.” It takes more than a commitment to progress and equality to be part of the Left; it also needs acknowledgment that those ideas do indeed fit what are generally accepted as Leftist values. In sum, the Left is as much a social community as an ideological one and is thus defined as those considering themselves and being recognized by others as belonging to the Left.

Accordingly, the Left is a community of those active in the same parties or organizations, those who communicate through the same media, and participate in internal politics on the Left. This network of people and ideas is easily distinguishable in articles, debates, or inquires. When the Left is defined as a political and social field, it becomes similar to any other political milieu.⁴ It has no particular ethic or historical mission as in the ideological definitions, but becomes normalized and “demystified.” The Left did not have a different concept of ideology compared to other political groups. It was a field of competing positions, competing interpretations, and competing concepts.

I will give three examples of how the nation was defined within this field at different time.⁵ These examples show the ideological and thematic shifts in the Left during the 1960s and 1970s, how ideological crises gave new answers to old questions, how outside events could shape new concepts, and how old traditions could reemerge in a reconstituted form.

The Crisis of Communism and the Emergence of the New Left

At the end of the 1950s, the World Communist Movement was in a profound crisis. Ten years earlier, communism and the Soviet Union had represented a strong alternative to capitalism; communists had gained prestige through resistance activities, and the Soviet Union itself had made large sacrifices to decisively crush Nazi Germany. The events of the 1950s had, however, ruined this prestige. After the riots in the GDR in 1953, the exposure of Stalin’s crimes in 1956 and the invasion of Hungary in the same year, communism could no longer pose a credible alternative to capitalism, which at this time seemed to be able to produce wealth for all. Within the movement, Khrushchev’s de-Stalinization had led to ideological bewilderment. The loss of Stalin, the infallible father figure and the introduction of “national ways to socialism”—followed by a clampdown on “revisionism”—only added to the confusion, further enhanced by the growing ideological defiance of Mao’s China. What was the future role of the communist parties? What were the limits to independence and how were they to be reconciled with the loyalty and values at the root of communist identity?

Denmark and Sweden demonstrated two different reactions to the crisis. In Denmark, the Communist Party split over the issue of political renewal. Those who wanted to renew Danish communism and emphasize independence from the Soviet Union were expelled from the party and formed the new Socialist People’s Party (SF—*Socialistisk Folkeparti*). In Sweden, the party embarked on radical reforms to present a communist party independent of Stalinist traditions and the Soviet Union. At the same time, and connected to this renewal, a New Left of non-communist Leftists who wanted to create a political alternative to

both petrified communism and over-conciliatory Social Democrats appeared in both countries.

These new positions required a re-definition of key elements of particularly communist ideology. This was often intimately connected with the concept of the nation, such as internationalism and class, as well as with the historic mission of the Left.

The internationalist vision had always been one of the driving forces of communism. The perspectives of an international community, with history on its side and fighting for all mankind, lent the movement an air of grandeur absent in the bread-and-butter pragmatism of Scandinavian parliamentarianism. At the same time, it served to encourage political difficulties at the domestic level: Both the Danish and Swedish parties were very small, but being part of a global movement made it possible to celebrate the victories of the sister parties and thus divert the frustrations of a domestic working class unreceptive to communism. This was especially strong in Denmark, where the communists had strong personal links to the Soviet Union. For this reason, the expelled Danish communists in the SF had the obvious problems involved with being confined to national politics. Even though the party fared considerably better in the elections than the communists, the party's weekly, *SF*, was filled with international commentaries, which were generally rather positive towards the Soviet Union, and especially toward Khrushchev, almost as if the ex-communists had missed the days of proletarian internationalism. At the same time, though, the geopolitical context was changing rapidly with the accelerating decolonization of the 1960s.

In both Sweden and Denmark, the North-South divide began to overshadow the East-West axis as the main global division. This came about however, in different forms. In the SF, the newly independent countries, and notably the non-aligned movement, was described as an opportunity to create an alternative to the internationalism of the World Communist Movement. Third World countries, who wanted to avoid being caught in the sphere of either superpower, provided a global mirror image of the national, political position of SF. The party wanted to avoid the rigidity of communism, but was at the same time fiercely opposed to the Atlanticist position of the Social Democrats and the right wing. Developments in the Third World were thus seen as closely connected to the party's own politics. This was the beginning of a new era, which discarded the logic of the Cold War, and instead, offered a humane, progressive, and even socialist vision of the future:

These [newly independent] countries have made ever closer ties as a non-aligned or neutral bloc, a third force, which refuses to submit to neither of the blocs of the two giants, but are kept together by a single goal: to strengthen peace and fight imperialism.⁶

The “third force” of the non-aligned movement referred to the position of the SF as a third force in Danish politics.

In Sweden, where proletarian internationalism had been weaker in the post-war period, there was less rationale to make this kind of connection. Also, the “third” position was already part of the Social Democratic rhetoric of Swedish neutrality. Instead, the Swedes chose to portray the Third World as a helpless victim of capitalist oppression. This included an element of white guilt quite typical for Sweden. Swedish Left referred to European culture as the source of this injustice and emphasized their own, albeit indirect, guilt—much different from the Danish SF, which saw itself as akin to and a natural ally of the newly independent countries. In this vein, the influential Swedish intellectual Jan Myrdal wrote in *Confessions of a European Intellectual*:

I have kept this history a personal one. This could be a way to escape my guilt to say that we all share it equally. I presuppose, though, that my readers do keep in their minds what has happened in Europe during the last decades ... I will emphasize that it was we European intellectuals who lead and carried out these acts on every level. ... This has been the century of the European intellectual.⁷

There was a strong tendency to internalize the collective European guilt and see it as a personal, individual responsibility. In this light, it is unsurprising that the confrontational vision of liberation promulgated by Frantz Fanon was translated into Swedish before any other foreign language, becoming a bible for the Swedish Left.

The new internationalism focusing upon Third World liberation differed in one crucial aspect from the internationalism of the World Communist Movement: It had no institutional framework and was a virtual internationalism in that it took place without any real contact or common acts of solidarity. Whereas the World Communist Movement was a very tangible community bound together by common meetings, congresses, and publications, Third World internationalism mainly consisted of unilateral proclamations of solidarity. One could not be excommunicated from this international movement, as opposed to the World Communist Movement, since it existed almost entirely on a symbolic level. Leaders of communist parties were known within the communist movement; they would meet personally and their ideas or articles (if deemed suitable) were translated and distributed all over the world. In contrast, it is hardly imaginable that African independence leaders like Patrice Lumumba would have known in detail about their Scandinavian allies, much less would have had a direct influence on the forms and expressions of solidarity.

Internally, the break with communism coincided with the beginning of a larger social transformation in society. Capitalism began to live up to the prom-

ises of providing wealth for everybody. The growth of the 1960s resulted in higher wages and more material opportunities and security for a large part of the population. Not only did the individual worker have more money to spend, but the state also had the means to provide welfare benefits. How did this influence the image of the “people” in Denmark and Sweden?

The Communist image of the true people was the deprived, industrial working class: The honest worker who produced the wealth but who, according to Marx, was only allowed enough for himself to survive and to work. This hardly corresponded to the early 1960s: Wages rose far beyond the minimum envisaged by Marx, and the industrial working class slowly shrank as the service sector grew.

In Denmark, this subject was discussed extensively in relation to the party’s name. In line with communist ideas, the name Socialist Workers’ Party was proposed, but was soon abandoned in favor of the broader and more inclusive “Socialist People’s Party,” with the following arguments:

Why “People’s Party”? Why does the party not call itself a “workers’ party”? Because socialist policies in our society, and in the light of a new society... must build on a broader foundation than the working class ... The working class goes in front in the battle for progress, but it is and will remain a minority in the population. However, a majority in the population lives under conditions that bind its interest firmly to that of the workers: public servants, white collar workers, intellectual workers, in other words the majority including the workers, which receive wages but has no property ... It is not possible to declare that socialism has to be reached with the consent of the people’s majority, and then appeal only to the working class.⁸

This was understandable in Denmark, which had never been an industrial nation, and where most of the working class in the 1960s had their roots in agriculture and thus had a very weak blue-collar identity.

In Sweden, things were different. The country had more and older heavy industry such as shipyards and automobile manufacturers in Southern and Central Sweden, and sawmills and mining in the North. Yet the image of the deprived proletariat hardly resembled the everyday experience of the Swedish worker. For the reformers of the Swedish Communist Party, there was little need to find alternatives to the concept of the working class, as was the Danish case. They clearly saw, however, that the communist promise of a better life through the dictatorship of the proletariat was no longer attractive in a society that seemed to be able to provide both material well being as well as democratic freedom:

Swedes today have both bread and peace and often a little more than just that. The Swedish worker right now believes he can afford to wait

and see when he suspects that certain human rights and freedoms would be neglected in a socialist Sweden.⁹

It was not viable to treat the worker as a deprived victim to be saved by the global revolution of the World Communist Movement; he was a voter who had to be attracted by credible left-wing politics of an independent socialist party, based on Swedish reality instead of Soviet dogma.

The coming of what John K. Galbraith termed the “affluent” society also affected the way the Left thought about its goals and the future of the nation. Considering the new material possibilities, the seemingly functioning capitalism with little labor unrest, continuous growth, and full employment, leftist intellectuals felt a certain disenchantment and alienation. Indeed, alienation was a key term of the intellectual Marxist scene of the early 1960s. The works of the young Marx had recently been published, and the idea of the division of labor as a source of alienation suited the experience of an increasingly complex society. It also paralleled the intellectuals as a cultural elite being overtaken by the commercialization of culture. The intellectual traditions of the inter-war period in Denmark and Sweden focused on the conservatism of bourgeois culture and advocated an uncompromising commitment to modernity. By now, the intellectuals found themselves surrounded by the cultural products of capitalist modernity, rational and simple in their unabashed commercialism, but very far from the visions of the Cultural Revolution imagined by the radicals of the 1930s.

This led to the analysis in both countries that industry and commercial culture, or “pop” as it was generally called, had entered into an unholy alliance to persuade the people to over-consume in the interests of capital. Pop culture had dulled their minds from pursuing their real interests. Instead, the intellectuals, the so-called Cultural Radicals, saw it as their task to free the common people from their own “bad taste” and give them real, critical art. Despite reaching large audiences with critical theater plays and revues, the Cultural Radicals still felt alienated by a modernity that did not correspond to their own visions. The nestor of the Cultural Radical movement, Poul Henningsen, even went so far as to describe the society of the 1960s as “falsely contemporary.” To him, real modernity meant rationality and functionality, not what he saw as mindless consumption and empty pop music. The present was therefore not truly contemporary as it did not live up to the rationalist model of modernity. This large degree of alienation is worth noticing, especially with regard to the events of 1968.

1968

The student revolts of 1968 were as much a surprise to the Left as to the rest of society. Before then, students had not played a major, independent part of the leftist scene. On the contrary, they were seen as conservative and complacent.

The revolts that occurred in Germany and Italy were therefore not only spectacular in their own right but they touched upon the deep frustration and alienation of the New Left in previous years by finally providing a revolutionary subject at a non-revolutionary time.

One of the attractions of the virtual internationalism of previous years had been the capitalist consensus at home. It was hard to articulate a revolutionary concept of the nation, especially in Denmark and Sweden where the Social Democrats monopolized the workers' movement and integrated it into a class compromise. The welfare state secured both accumulation of capital as well as the material needs of the workers. The transition to socialism seemed unimaginable in these societies of small and highly institutionalized conflicts. The liberation movements of the Third World provided vague hopes of a global revolution, which the Left over-emphasized to compensate for the complete lack of such a hope for the European nations.

Some events, like the Greek coup d'état of 1967, showed that the emerging détente between the superpowers did not necessarily mean political stability in the West. However, it also did not point to a possible European revolutionary movement. Instead, an article in *Politisk Revy* emphasized how the coup had happened without a real revolutionary threat, but against a government "no more red than Social Democrats."¹⁰

Against this background, the European student revolts stood out as a loud and radical opposition to an otherwise extremely consensual society: "Only a few years ago, it seemed that potent political youth movements were a phenomenon of the developing continents only," wrote *Politisk Revy*, the leading leftist magazine in Denmark.¹¹ Now, however, the student movement had transformed the European continent into a stage in the world revolution. The events in France raised hopes even further: students had taken to the streets and the working class had followed the revolutionary call. Whereas Europe a few years earlier had been depicted as a fortress defending itself against the rising peoples of the global south, the students had now brought about the revolution from within. The European Left was no longer a sympathetic spectator to far-away events, but was itself an agent of the world revolution. The Swedish Maoist weekly *Gnistan* wrote "Today's struggle in France is a part of the struggle that is led by the students from Sweden and the USA to Turkey, Thailand and Mexico."¹²

The events in Denmark and Sweden, however, manifested themselves differently. In Sweden, the student revolt can at best be described as a failure. Some students in Stockholm tried to follow the continental example by occupying the university building allocated to student activities. But when the minister of education, Olof Palme, personally appeared to talk with the students, it only served to prove the consensual political culture and tolerance that confronted the Scandinavian student revolts. The Left did not gain a foothold among the students. Rather, the activism of the student movement prompted the majority of students to elect representatives at the opposite end of the opposite political

spectrum, resulting in a 70 percent the right wing vote for the student organization at the University of Stockholm.¹³ Instead, the Swedish Left gathered around Vietnam and the Maoist movement.

In Denmark, events were more impressive. In spring 1968, the University of Copenhagen experienced occupations and demonstrations against the hierarchy of the university and managed to mobilize a considerable part of the student body to demand formal influence in the university administration. These demands were largely accommodated due to the similar ideas of the rector of the university and the minister of education, who were drafting a thorough university reform. During the years of this reform, the activist student movement gained a large following and managed to stage big demonstrations and even occupations of the university in support of their demands. In this way, the Danish student movement became a strong independent part of the Left. It was from the student milieu that capable organizers and intellectuals emerged who would eventually influence the Danish Left considerably throughout the 1970s.

The European student movements, as well as domestic events, shifted attention away from international issues. High hopes of a revolution from the Third World had already faded when it became clear that decolonization did not mean complete liberation from the old colonial powers. This had been demonstrated, among other places, in the Congo. Vietnam had been the main topic since the large-scale American involvement in 1965, but as events moved closer to home, the Vietnam War played a significantly smaller, although still important, role.

This domestic movement also required a new concept of the nation, and particularly of its revolutionary potential. For the New Left of the early 1960s, particularly in Denmark, the Nordic countries represented an exceptional entity in the world. They stood out from the rest of Europe because of long democratic traditions, uninterrupted by authoritarian dictatorships, versus that of Southern and Eastern Europe, and their lack of colonial past like the Western European countries. The Nordic countries also had unique welfare states and strong working class movements, which restrained unbridled capitalism. With the entrance of Denmark and Sweden on the stage of the world revolution, this exceptionalist view of the nation faded. Instead, the Left now saw the nation through the light of a more radical analysis of capitalism and imperialism. Denmark and Sweden were, in the eyes of the Left, capitalist countries, and as such, part of the global imperialist system prone to fascism. Capitalism was at the root of imperialism and dictatorship and for that reason Sweden was indirectly imperialist. Denmark's involvement in NATO was similar to France's in Africa, and the Scandinavian democratic traditions were a mere historical coincidence. As soon as the capitalists saw an interest in abolishing democracy, Scandinavian fascism would be a reality.

This posed to the Left the question of how to attain the socialist system, which it saw as the only guarantee for peace, democracy, and justice. Here, the responses were different in the two countries. In Denmark, with its larger intel-

lectual and student element, the theories of, among others, Herbert Marcuse about the integration of the working class had some appeal—although they did in no way attain any consensus on the Left. According to the most outspoken representatives of this line, the workers were caught in the web of consumer society. They were authoritarian and worshipped material status symbols to the degree that they were to be seen as the most conservative group in society, completely untrustworthy as an agent of the revolution:

Can you make these persons responsible for anything at all? Infantile and politically color-blind as they are, they would march under the brown banner of Nazism believing it was red! [It's] something that they will do sooner or later.¹⁴

Although this was an extreme opinion, it was in many ways a continuation of the intellectual critique of consumer society from before 1968. In the plays and poems of the Cultural Radicals, the worker might still have a theoretical revolutionary potential, but he had been brainwashed by the alliance between capital and the entertainment industry. Only the poet or the intellectual could possibly open his eyes to his or her real interests. For the student movement as well as the growing countercultural movement, this was of course an appealing theory that put intellectuals and artists in the front line of the revolution as Denmark's revolutionary avant-garde.

In Sweden, however, such ideas had very little impact. The communist party, now reformed under the new and cryptic name, "Party of the Left—Communists" (*Vänsterpartiet Kommunisterna*), still had its electoral base among the workers and was committed to the struggle of the working class. The student movement was weak, and there was no ideological countercultural movement to speak of. Rather, the opposition to the communists came from the Maoist Left, which distinguished itself from the communist party by its stern dogmatism. The Swedish Marxists imagined themselves in the footsteps of the Chinese Communist Party before the revolution, preparing for the right revolutionary moment when the proletariat would rise and gather under the banners of true Marxism-Leninism:

In the founding congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921 only twelve delegates took part, and behind them stood only between fifty and sixty members ... But who would deny that this congress began a new epoch in the history of the Chinese workers' movement and of the Chinese people? ... [The Swedish Maoists] shall create an invincible revolutionary party, which within the foreseeable future will be the strongest in the country and under the red banners of Marxism-Leninism lead Sweden's working class to victory in the battle for socialism.¹⁵

While this approached delusions of grandeur, there were reasons not to abandon workerism in Sweden. If one had hopes of a revolution following the lines of classical Marxism, one could still find an industrial working class as described in the *Das Kapital*. Above all, the situation in the Arctic mining and forest districts did not lend itself easily to images of a complacent working class. In 1968, the celebrated author and Vietnam activist Sara Lidman published the book *Gruva, The Mine*, about northern iron mines in Sweden. Images of grimy workers and depressing tales of a life of hard work and little happiness would feed the renewed workerism in the following decade.

The 1970s and the Popular and National Revival in the 1970s

On the brink of the new decade, the very workers in the northern mines portrayed by Sara Lidman went on strike. The aesthetic and ideological appeal of silent, hard Northerners fighting for their rights in the dark, Arctic night profoundly touched the Left. As did the fact that the mines were state owned, which meant that they were run by the Social Democratic government who should be protecting the workers' interests. This only proved the failure of the Social Democratic class compromise and showed the real socialist potential of a radicalized working class.

The repercussions of the strike also reached the Danish Left. Here the counterculture had broken down under the weight of its own utopianism—especially the belief in drugs as the key to a better world, as an increasing number of members of the milieu became psychotic under the use of drugs. At the same time, the student movement lost momentum as it began to meet government resistance to its radical demands. The strike in northern Sweden thus came at a time when the Left in Denmark needed new ideas and a new direction. A renewed faith in the working class combined with a return to the revolutionary classics of Marx and Lenin provided the framework for new concepts on Denmark's position in time and space.

Generally, the beginning of the 1970s coincided with a European-wide protest cycle, of which the Swedish miner's strike was only one—albeit spectacular—part. All over Europe, workers re-discovered the strike as a useful weapon in the political game, and the tendency for unrest was reinforced by the aftermath of 1968 in the form of student activism, left-wing protests, and grassroots movements. Whereas the 1960s had been politically peaceful and complacent in terms of labor activism, the 1970s turned out to be a decade of strife.

The consequence of this, both in Denmark and Sweden, was a return to tradition. The problems of the 1960s of articulating socialist ideas in a functioning capitalist society were over. The protest cycle and later economic crisis seemed to prove that the classic communist texts were right: Capitalism was an

unstable system that created unrest and was prone to crisis. Economic Marxism and Leninism now returned as ways of explaining the crisis of capitalism and the revolutionary strategy to topple it. This was coupled with a renewed fascination with the past and in particular with the traditions of the Scandinavian popular movements. This tradition dates back to the nineteenth century where the popular movements, religious and political, appeared as a rural-based opposition to the established society. It had connotations of the people,” in the sense of broad opposition from below, and of the working class, through the traditions of the trade unions. The terms *folk* and *folkelig/folklig* (literally “like the people”) were revived in left-wing texts, connoting anti-elitism as well as authenticity, in that the true spirit of the nation was to be found among the common people.

In Sweden, this popular revival was particularly strong. In 1972, a group of Left-wing activists with a large, but not exclusive, Maoist element founded the organization *Folket i Bild/Kulturfront* (Images of the People/Culture Front) with a magazine of the same name. Its program was to provide an authentic, popular alternative to capitalist culture, and to protect and revive the proud traditions of the Swedish popular movement:

Capitalism offers a culture of such a bad quality that it can at best be compared with a plastic pot in contrast to the beautiful handmade things of noble materials produced by the peasant culture.¹⁶

The magazine created an image of an “authentic” Sweden, where workers and peasants led simple, fulfilled lives, despite threats of the capitalist craving for modern consumers. It was largely an image of a Sweden of yesteryear, with blond peasants dancing on long summer evenings, and mill workers playing traditionally popular instruments like the accordion. The construction of this image was intentional; it was what can be called “imagined authenticity.”¹⁷ The journalists of *Folket i Bild/Kulturfront*, from the outset, purposely went out to seek it, document it, and present it to their city readers.

Parallel to this were other nineteenth century traditions, notably the return of explicit nationalism among Maoist circles. This was largely connected to the heightened tension between China and the Soviet Union, which had escalated to the point where China declared the Soviet Union to be a bigger threat than the U.S. Suddenly, the geographical position of Sweden was no longer in the periphery, but facing the enemy right across the Baltic. The anti-Russian sentiments of a hundred years earlier were phrased in the almost anachronistic language of territorial pride like “Not an inch of Swedish water to the Soviets!” (in connection to the renegotiation of fishing rights in the Baltic).¹⁸

This anachronistic element of the Swedish popular revival, attractive as it might have been, was also the Achilles’ heel of the movement. The industrial worker, who was supposed to incarnate the innermost values of the nation, would soon become as old-fashioned as the nationalist calls of the Maoists. The eco-

conomic crisis of the 1970s hit old industries such as steel and shipbuilding especially hard, while other industrial branches restructured and introduced new, often highly mechanized ways of production. This did not leave much space for the grimy worker distinguished by his boiler suit and political radicalism. So, the over-idealized workerism of the Swedish Left lost its credibility, as noted in a leftist music magazine:

Through some kind of demand on being simple and of the people, the songs have been more vulgar and lame. One suspects an implicit view ... that the Swedish worker wears a chequered shirt and a cap ... and that he gets a mild expression on his face every time he hears an accordion.¹⁹

In Denmark, the same kind of fatigue appeared in a slightly different context. Here, the Left had been considerably more intellectual and elitist mainly due to the influence of the student movement. The attempts to connect to the popular traditions of the nineteenth century had thus also been of a more theoretical kind, for example rediscovering the thinkers of the national movement a hundred years before, particularly N.F.S. Grundtvig, who had played a major role in articulating what it meant to be Danish in the Age of Nationalism. At the same time, the economic crisis and the continuing labor unrest of the 1970s led to a large number of analyses that tried to predict the future of a capitalism that no longer necessarily provided growth and security.

The theoretical approach led, however, to the same kind of disillusionment, where images of the Danish people seemed to correspond badly to the actual experience. It was not possible to see the revolution on the horizon every time the workers demonstrated or went on strike for more pay. Capitalism did not collapse under the crisis, but restructured old industries fairly peacefully and in cooperation with the trade unions. It was as if the revolutionary vanguard quietly took a severance package and went into early retirement. The feeling of being out of touch with reality is found in a number of books from the period where the Left and its activists are portrayed as isolated and impotent. Their theories no longer offered plausible explanations of the world around them and their personal ideals were increasingly felt to belong to another time. The concept of the nation as an image of classical capitalism was incompatible with the daily experiences of a rapidly transforming society.

Thus, in both Denmark and Sweden, the end of the 1970s was a period of increasing disillusionment. Although the Left was still numerically strong, the cultural and intellectual strength of the preceding decades had faded. The days, in which the student movement or Vietnam demonstrations had dominated the headlines, were over, as was the energy and enthusiasm, which had endowed the Left with a remarkable dynamism and the ability to adapt its concepts to new contexts. At the beginning of the 1980s, the leftist subculture that remained

from the 1970s survived largely as an isolated reservation of petrified radicalism, bordered on the left by a new, but very different generation of activists, and on the right by the emerging “yuppie” culture and the rebirth of liberal politics.

Conclusion

As mentioned at the beginning, there are a number of essential definitions of the Left as inherently progressive, egalitarian, or formed around one coherent ideological core. It seems that the Left is often seen as a particular political community from which one can expect both higher idealism and intellectual sophistication compared to that of other political groups. This is not least an inheritance from the self-perception of the Left, the idea of a political community dedicated to the progress of mankind.

However, seeing the political development of the Left through the lens of the concept of the nation, this image disappears. Political ideas, programs, and visions are changed, re-articulated or abandoned according to social and political developments. They may be contradictory, unconvincing, or attractive, just as any other political program may be. The attempt to reduce these ideas according to an imagined coherent core of leftist values runs the risk of painting a simplified and often much too positive image of the Left. The Left was certainly a distinctive political community, but not in a different way from any other political milieu. In the 1960s and 1970s it could even be argued that the defining feature of the Left was discontinuity and incoherence. There was little ideological connection between the critique of consumer society in the 1960s and the Maoist nationalism of the 1970s. The countercultural milieu disappeared quickly and made room for a wave of Leninism. The strongest source of continuity in these developments was the people on the Left, who repeatedly managed to change opinions and political vocabulary over a short period of time.

In this way, the Left was no different from liberal groups or conservative groups, whose world views were constantly being challenged by the new events and changing contexts of those years. There is nothing inherently wrong with changing political concepts over time, quite the contrary. It is in the nature of concepts to be contested. They do not correspond to a fixed reality, but to abstractions and—not least—expectations for the future. Thus, they change continuously as circumstances change and events lead to different results than those expected.

For this reason, I would argue against picturing the Left as something exotic, above or beyond normal politics. This does mean not evaluating ideology, political strategy and the practices of the Left by different standards as compared to other groups, but taking a step back and looking at the Left as an integral part of the political history of the twentieth century.

Notes

1. The two first elements are taken from Koselleck's considerations about the history of the nation as a concept, Reinhart Koselleck, "Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse" in Otto Brunner et al. ed., *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* 7, (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1992).
2. See for example Steven Lukes, "Qu'est-ce que la gauche?" in Lazar, Marc ed., *La Gauche en Europe depuis 1945* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France 1996), 369–88.
3. Norberto Bobbio, *Left and Right the Significance of a Political Distinction* (Cambridge: Polity Press 1996), 72–86.
4. Pierre Bourdieu, *Raison pratiques Sur la theorie de l'action pratique* (Paris : Seuil 1994), 20.
5. For more detail about the developments, see Thomas Ekman Jørgensen, *Transformations and Crises: The Left and the Nation in Denmark and Sweden 1956–1980* (Oxford/New York: Berghahn Books, 2008)
6. *SF* 6/1 1961: 8–9.
7. Jan Myrdal, *Samtida bekännelser av en europeisk intellektuell* (Stockholm: Norstedt 1964), 134.
8. Quoted in Jens Kragh, ed., *Folkesocialisme. Udvalgte taler og artikler 1958–60 af Aksel Larsen, Mogens Fog, Kai Moltke, Gert Petersen, m fl* (Copenhagen: SF Forlag 1977), 84–85.
9. *Ny Dag* 15/10 1963: 2, 5.
10. *Politisk Revy*, no. 84, 1967: 2.
11. *Politisk Revy*, no. 102, 1968: 2.
12. *Gnistan*, no. 7 1968: 2.
13. Sven-Olof Josefsson, *Året var 1968* (Gothenburg: Historiska institutionen i Göteborg 1996), 108.
14. Quoted in Per A. Madsen and Jens O. Madsen, *Fra sandkasse til kadreparti*, (Copenhagen: VS Forlaget 1980), 106.
15. *Gnistan*, no. 3, 1967: 6.
16. *Folket i Bild/Kulturfront*, no. 1, 1972: 2.
17. See Hagen Schulz-Forberg, *London—Berlin. Authenticity, Modernity, and the Metropolis in Urban Travel Writin*, (Brussels: Lang 2006), 55–56.
18. *Gnistan*, no. 30 1979: 12–13.
19. Quoted in Lahger, *Proppen : musikrörelsens uppgång och fall* (Stockholm: Atlas 1999), 142.

The *Parti communiste français* in May 1968

The Impossible Revolution?

Maud Anne Bracke

Introduction

In recent years, and particularly in the context of the fortieth anniversary in 2008, a wealth of material has been published in France on the events of May 1968. It includes autobiographical material, political commentary, and most usefully, the first systematic attempts at historicization on the basis of wide-ranging primary source material. As gaps are being filled in, on an empirical as well as an interpretative level, what emerges is a growing understanding of the French May as the culmination point of a political and social crisis that found its origins in the advent of the Fifth Republic in 1958, and which had specific national characteristics but was clearly framed internationally.¹ Since the 1980s, the paradigm of 1968 as a “cultural revolution” rooted in accelerated cultural change rather than social or political conflict, and based on generational identity rather than other forms of collective identity, has risen to prominence in the English-speaking literature, influencing also the debate on France.² In this context, two key aspects surrounding the French May have remained relatively understudied. One of these is the generalized industrial conflict, where the lack of detailed empirical studies has recently been addressed by Xavier Vigna and others;³ the other is the political crisis and its scope and contours, and much research remains to be done regarding the strategies developed by various political parties and actors. The thesis of 1968 as a cultural revolution reflecting the apogee and triumph of capitalist modernization may to some degree be accurate for the cases of the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), but it fails to grasp the complexity and encompassing nature of the social and political crisis of late 1960s in countries such as France and Italy, where an acute revival of industrial militancy fits uneasily into this interpretation. Grand narratives on the disappearance of “class” since the 1960s have obstructed the basic fact that central to the mass mobilization of the late

1960s in France and elsewhere, were issues to do with workplace organization and control over one's labor in the passage from Fordism to post-Fordism. I argue that these issues should play a central part in broad understandings of the French and European "1968", along with opposition against new forms of social inequality and injustice.⁴

The present article looks at the interpretation of the May–June events by the leadership of the *Parti communiste français* (PCF), and the strategies it developed in response to the student movement, the workers' strike, and political instability. In doing so, it aims to contribute to bringing social conflict and political crisis, rather than "cultural revolution", back to the center of our understanding of the French 1968. Further, a focus on the PCF also allows for a unique insight into the international dimensions of the French crisis, and this in two ways. First, to the PCF the events in France were international in their origins, their nature, and their repercussions, as they were understood in close conjunction with the unraveling of the Czechoslovak crisis and as an aspect of East-West conflict more generally. The first preoccupation of the PCF leaders during these months was not the nature of events in France but the growing tension between the Soviet leadership and the reform-oriented leadership of the Czechoslovak Communist Party during the Prague Spring, and whether the outcome of the crisis would be a military one. The PCF's strategy vis-à-vis the student and strike movement in France was to be shaped by these preoccupations, as well as by its understanding of how political change in Western Europe related to political change in Eastern Europe. Second, the question of PCF strategies immediately refers to the issue of Soviet responses to the French events and Soviet interests in Western Europe. It is posited here that, although the PCF leadership was to a large degree dependent on and dominated by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), relations between the two parties were, in 1965–68, very complex and fraught with tension. The PCF's policies in 1968 were not as much conditioned by the CPSU as by *its conflict with* the CPSU, in the context of the crisis of the Soviet-dominated "world communist movement." Thus, the present article aims to offer an insight into the complex intricacies of French, European and global tensions in 1968.

A number of analyses of PCF strategy and debate in this phase have been published, based either on PCF documents or on archives that have become available in Moscow.⁵ In addition, several recently published biographies and memoirs of key PCF leaders have allowed existing interpretations to be verified or disproved.⁶ I aim here to offer a new interpretation of PCF strategy during the May crisis by seeking its origins in the mid-term implications of the domestic and international challenges posed to French communism by the multiple crises of 1956–58. It is argued here that the PCF's relative immobility during the May events should be understood as the culmination point to, and indicative of, the profound crisis of strategy and legitimation in which the party found itself. This crisis had loomed since the de-Stalinization of 1956 and more strongly since

the advent of the Fifth Republic in 1958, which revealed the party's inability to develop an effective and radical riposte to Gaullism. Despite the specificities of the French context, a focus on the PCF may illustrate the impasse in which the Soviet-aligned communism in the West found itself. This impasse resulted from a combination of international factors, specifically the Cold War division of Europe, which severely hindered revolutionary change in the West, and domestic factors, including these parties' inability to fundamentally re-think their strategies in a context of rapidly changing societies.

The Crisis of Legitimacy in the “Long 1960s” Between Gaullism and leftism

The PCF's immobility during the May events of 1968 was, on a theoretical level, linked to the party's unwillingness to fundamentally rethink its traditional concept of revolution. To understand why it was unable to do so, we must consider the party's identity structure, domestic strategies, and international alignment during the 1960s. On the face of it, the party seemed to fare relatively well in this decade. It succeeded in escaping the worst forms of political isolation it had known in the 1950s through its alliance, from 1965, with the new socialist formation *Fédération de la gauche démocratique et socialiste* (FGDS) and the major party within it, the *Section française de l'Internationale ouvrière* (SFIO). This apparently rather successful alliance strategy, however, disguised a severe crisis of political legitimation, caused by a complex combination of circumstances and challenges: the French war in Algeria (1954–62), de Gaulle's return to power as president in 1958, Gaullist foreign policy and early European détente, and finally, the rise of the New Left, the proliferation of new interpretations of Marxism, and the growing popularity of radical leftist strands.

The party experienced growing difficulties in maintaining its traditional sources of political legitimation vis-à-vis the French public, as well as in establishing new ones in a rapidly changing society.⁷ The two sources of domestic legitimation that had been fundamental to the PCF since World War II were revolution and anti-fascism. While the PCF's credibility in both these areas came to be questioned in the 1960s, the party, in addition, failed to profile itself in relation to a source of legitimation that was of central importance to the French and European Left in the 1960s, namely anti-imperialism. When Charles de Gaulle became president of the French Republic in 1958, he presented the PCF with a new challenge by claiming to be the incarnation of the French nation. French communism and Gaullism were political competitors on the most fundamental level, in the sense that they both projected themselves as the political embodiment of the nation's destiny and *grandeur*.⁸ More specifically, they competed with each other for the political appropriation of collective memories of the Resistance and related issues, such as the sovereignty of the French people

and their liberation from foreign oppression. The PCF's initial response was an attempt to claim anti-fascism as its own, exclusive source of legitimation, and to present de Gaulle's anti-fascism as illegitimate. However, the image of Gaullism as quasi-fascist, or "paving the way to fascism," was too far from reality to bear any credibility, and ineffective in the face of de Gaulle's success in exploiting his role in the wartime Resistance.⁹

Revolution as a source of legitimation for the PCF became equally difficult to maintain. Undeniably, the party maintained revolutionary discourses and images throughout the 1960s. Its concept of revolution was a traditional one, based on what was understood to be the modern revolutionary cycle, linking the French Revolution of 1789 to the Russian Revolution of 1917. In this historical narrative, it was the PCF's task to complete this cycle by bringing revolution to France. Yet revolutionary discourse could hardly disguise the reformist, gradualist, and moderate nature of the party's domestic strategy. In the 1960s, the party pursued a fairly classical "Popular Front" strategy, based on an analysis of French capitalism as state monopoly capitalism (*Capitalisme monopoliste d'Etat*), in which the "main enemies" were identified as monopoly capital, the Gaullist state, and the convergence of interests between the two. The short-term agenda was the pursuit of a program for "progressive democracy" by a broadly based left coalition, including, for example, the nationalization of key industries. To this end, the PCF embarked in 1965 upon a left alliance, the *Union de la gauche*, with the FGDS led by François Mitterrand, in what was very much a personal agenda developed by its general secretary, Waldeck Rochet.¹⁰ The only elements of its discursive and ideological arsenal that distinguished the PCF in this context from socialist party reformism were on the one hand, its traditional Marxist identity based on a discourse of class, and on the other, Soviet-aligned "internationalism."

The need for the party to mark its difference from the social democratic tradition while engaging in a strategy that was reformist rather than revolutionary was a matter of deeply rooted identity. The split in the European Left in the 1910s and 1920s between a communist Soviet-oriented tradition and a social democratic tradition was constitutive to the identity of both these traditions. Thus, it was essential for communist parties to be seen as "revolutionary," which in their understanding of it meant being part of the Soviet communist world and developing a class-based strategy. The need for the PCF to differentiate itself from the reformist tradition only grew when it engaged in a domestic alliance with the Socialist Party. It was this basic need which made the party unwilling, after the crises of 1968, to fundamentally rethink either its traditional concept of revolution and its understanding of class politics, or its dependency on the Soviet Union and its positioning in the Cold War. At the same time, the events of '68 suggested that it was precisely these elements of its strategy and outlook that needed reconsidering.

Its moderate, reformist domestic strategy was but one reason behind the fact that young people, students, intellectuals, and radical anti-capitalists drifted

away from the Communist Party in the 1960s. Another had to do with the party's attitudes during the French war in Algeria. In the context of the dissolution of the European empires and the rise in the Third World of radical anti-imperialist thought and strategy, Third World revolutionary movements and regimes such as Maoist China, revolutionary Cuba, and the North Vietnamese communists gained widespread appeal among radicals in Western Europe after 1958, and anti-imperialism became a crucial source of domestic legitimation for all left-wing political forces. In France, it was the Algerian War that was formative to a generation of young radicals, politicizing many who were later among the activists in '68. The PCF's Algerian policy was opportunistic. In 1956, it supported the socialist-dominated government by voting in favor of war credits. Only in the late 1950s, when intellectuals and radical anti-fascist organizations became outspoken in their opposition to the war and support for the FLN (*Front de libération nationale*), did the PCF, reluctantly, support the cause of Algerian independence. Its doing so was a matter of both jumping on the bandwagon of French opinion on the Left, and aligning itself with Soviet strategy, rather than a more genuine concern for the sovereignty of the Algerian people.¹¹

The PCF was never able to make up for its loss of credibility on the issue of revolutionary anti-imperialism, despite many attempts to do so during the 1960s, particularly in the context of the Vietnam War. The loss of its revolutionary credentials damaged the party particularly in terms of support among young people, students, and intellectuals. This was materialized in the crisis of the party's student organization UEC (*Union des étudiants communistes*) in 1963–67. Because of the purging of hundreds of (alleged) Maoist, Trotskyist, Gramscian, and other “unorthodox” students by the leadership, by 1968 the UEC was reduced to a fraction of its former dimensions and influence.¹² Furthermore, many PCF members defected to the new left formation *Parti socialiste unifié* (PSU), which was to become an important political player in the May '68 events—despite always being much smaller than the PCF in terms of membership and parliamentary representation.¹³

The Impasse of Détente

Next to outbidding the PCF as the incarnation of the French popular sovereignty, Gaullism posed a threat to the PCF in the realm of France's foreign policy and international alliances. The Gaullist concept and strategy of détente provoked a crisis in relations between the PCF and its prime international ally, the Soviet Union. Gaullist détente, and Soviet responses to it, did nothing less than reveal the limitations of Moscow's support for the PCF's domestic strategy for coming to power. The Soviet-PCF rift around 1965 was not based on doctrine, as nothing in the latter's strategy was “unorthodox,” in Moscow's own terms. Instead, it was strategic, and should be seen in light of the situation in the Soviet-

dominated communist world at the time and within it the lack of consensus on basic matters of Cold War and European strategy.

Gaullist détente policy united two strategies. One was to seek friendly relations and intensified diplomatic, commercial and cultural contact with the communist regimes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The other was to weaken the Atlantic alliance, and especially the hegemony of the United States in it. Both were aimed at re-asserting French national sovereignty and, ultimately, at enabling French leadership over a strong Europe, situated “between the blocs” and reaching “from the Atlantic to the Urals.”¹⁴ The Soviet view on détente, or peaceful coexistence with the capitalist world as the strategy that was announced in Moscow in 1956, was only to a limited extent compatible with Gaullist détente. Moscow’s view on détente in the 1960s involved the stabilization of superpower relations, the initiation of arms-control negotiations, and the consolidation of the spheres of influence on the European continent. Moscow also favored the weakening of the Atlantic alliance to the extent that it would enhance its bargaining position vis-à-vis Washington in their bilateral dealings. This, however, was obviously not understood as a symmetrical development: a similar process of bloc disintegration in the Soviet-dominated communist world was to be avoided.¹⁵

Yet it was this weakening of bloc cohesiveness and questioning of superpower hegemony, on both sides of the Iron Curtain, that characterized early détente between 1963 and 1968. Dissent within the Soviet sphere of influence resulted from a mix of long-standing resentment regarding Soviet dominance, raised expectations of liberalization following Khrushchev’s new course and concerns over Moscow’s willingness to settle for a superpower status quo agreement in Europe. Soviet dominance over the European communist world was troubled in the late 1950s and 1960s by Albania’s turning to Maoism, Yugoslavia’s high-profile role in the Non-Aligned Movement, and Romania’s refusal to adopt Comecon’s economic policies. Most of all, it was challenged, *de facto* rather than explicitly so, by Czechoslovakia during the Prague Spring of 1968, and by the interest shown by reformist communist leaders such as Alexander Dubček in improved relations with Western Europe, in particular with the Federal Republic of Germany.¹⁶

Meanwhile, the PCF’s foreign policy was put under severe pressure by its alliance with the FGDS, within which, despite disagreements, Mitterrand’s strongly pro-NATO stance dominated. The extent to which Soviet foreign policy interests converged with Gaullist strategy and clashed with the *Union de la gauche* became crystal clear at the French presidential elections of 1965. In the second round of the elections, the PCF refrained from presenting its own candidate, supporting instead Mitterrand’s candidacy. Mitterrand lost to de Gaulle, but only by a relatively small margin, obtaining 45 percent of the vote. He thereby surpassed the expectations of both friends and foes of the left alliance. At the

height of the election campaign, the Soviet Communist Party daily, *Pravda*, published a series of articles not only openly supportive of de Gaulle and his foreign policy, but also omitting any reference to the PCF and the *Union de la gauche*. The message could not have been clearer: Moscow preferred the continuation of the conservative general's tenure, whose foreign policy line it appreciated, to the perspective of a pro-Atlantic center-left president, even when supported by a party that for decades had been Moscow's right hand and loyal supporter. The episode caused a break in PCF-CPSU relations which was, although largely hidden, more profound and genuine than has often been assumed. Evidence of it included a commentary in the party daily *Humanité*, which objected to "the interpretation of domestic problems in France by a foreign agency,"¹⁷ and the fact that the PCF was to pursue its alliance strategy with the socialists up to the mid 1970s, disregarding Soviet disapproval.

The PCF in May 1968

Hostility

The PCF's reformist strategy, its focus on relations with the Soviet Union, and its crisis of legitimation forced it into a position where it was incapable of responding with flexibility to what it saw as the sudden outbreak of an anarchist-inspired and dangerous disruption of its own gradualist strategy. The very hostile initial reactions of some PCF leaders in response to the first signs of massive student unrest are well known. The tone was set by George Marchais's article in *Humanité* on 3 May, in which he notoriously, and dismissively, referred to popular student leader Daniel Cohn-Bendit as "that German anarchist."¹⁸ His negative judgment of the student leader and movement as a whole was based on three arguments. First, the students had isolated themselves from the working class and from the French people; second, they threatened to disrupt PCF strategy and "obscure its achievements," and finally, they provoked state repression without a clear purpose. The *Bureau politique* [BP], in a somewhat more positive statement issued on May 7, acknowledged the "legitimacy of student dissatisfaction," but echoed Marchais's denunciation of "adventurist action."¹⁹ Marchais's statements in *Humanité* were, as Hofnung has argued, not isolated initiatives but rather part of a concerted PCF attack on the student mobilization, aimed at nipping it in the bud.²⁰

The party's slightly more positive attitude with regard to the student protests in the second week of May did not result from a changed analysis of the phenomenon or from a revision of its own strategy. Rather, its attitude was more pragmatic—a matter of tuning in to the now more positive responses to the student protests in public opinion. The escalation of police repression against students and other protesters, especially after the first mass occupations of the

Nanterre and Sorbonne campuses on 6–10 May provoked a basic sense of solidarity across French society. However, the PCF remained, up to the pivotal events of 13 May, isolated from any radical momentum. Its careful overtures remained at best unnoticed, and at worst were ridiculed by the student groups.²¹ The PCF's initial, almost instinctive hostility toward the students stemmed from the profound cultural gap that separated them from the student movements and the radical leftist ideologies such as Maoism, Trotskyism, and anti-imperialism, which were influential among them. PCF leaders continuously voiced their suspicions regarding the bourgeois and middle-class background of most students. This attitude was mirrored by the students' equally aggressive and overt hostility toward the communists, whom they usually referred to as "Stalinists" or "bureaucrats." Popular slogans such as "à bas la charogne stalinienne" (down with the wretched Stalinists) and "veuillez laisser le Parti communiste aussi net en sortant que vous voudriez le trouver en y entrant" (please leave the Communist Party behind as clean as you would like to find it), suggest that the protests were almost as anti-PCF as they were anti-Gaullist. Indicative of the feelings among students toward the PCF was the fact that Central Committee member Pierre Juquin, sent to the Nanterre campus by the *Bureau politique* in late April to initiate a dialogue with the students, was refused access to their meetings.²² The book *Gauchisme: remède à la maladie sénile du communisme*, by Daniel Cohn-Bendit offered a radical-leftist critique of the PCF, denouncing its 'parliamentarism', its authoritarian methods, and its dependence on Moscow.²³

PCF strategy toward "intellectual workers" (intellectuals and students) was rigidly class-based, old-fashioned, and patronizing.²⁴ However, at the outbreak of the student protests, a number of intellectuals who were members of, or close to, the PCF expressed their discontent with the party's intellectual policies by showing support for the students. In particular, philosopher Roger Garaudy, known for his humanistic and Gramscian interpretations of Marxism, and writer and journalist Pierre Daix attempted to pressurize the party leadership into more constructive approaches to the student movements.²⁵ At a secret Central Committee meeting held on 15 May renowned communist intellectual and poet Louis Aragon sharply criticized Marchais for his positions; as did Roland Leroy, the only member of the *Bureau politique* to do so. Later, on 26 May, a number of party intellectuals and *compagnons de route* wrote a letter to the BP in which they strongly asserted their solidarity with the revolting youth.²⁶ However, in the short term, their impact on the decisions made by the small circle of the *Bureau politique* was limited.

Institutionalization

The situation crystallized around 13 May. While thousands of students occupied universities and set up Action Committees, the first large-scale strikes occurred

at Sud-Aviation in Nantes and at the Renault plants of Billancourt and Flins. By 16 May, over 200,000 workers were on strike at more than fifty factories across the country. Only at this point did the PCF leadership realize that de Gaulle's days in power might well be numbered, and that the moment had come to develop a short-term strategy for conquering government power. At the heart of this strategy was the attempt to secure the passage from Gaullism to a center-left government, based on the alliance with the FGDS. The PCF now tried to catch up with the movement, control it, and channel its political energy into support for its own reformist strategy. The student mobilization needed to be transformed into a more "broadly based" movement, led by trade unions and the PCF. Controlled and organized (rather than spontaneous) industrial action and street demonstrations would serve to maintain social tension as well as testify to the PCF's influence over the movement. This would enable the communists to negotiate with the Gaullist regime from a position of strength. The downfall of Gaullism would thus be negotiated politically, rather than enforced through an insurrection or a revolutionary strike. The party's daily press releases announced the "clear perspective" uniting the communists and socialists, namely, the replacement of the Gaullist government by a center-left government. Rochet and other PCF leaders met privately on a daily basis with Guy Mollet, leader of the SFIO, and Mitterrand.²⁷ Together with the FGDS representatives, the PCF deputies in the National Assembly proposed motions on 14 and 21 May condemning police repression and calling for the government to step down and the Assembly to be dissolved.²⁸

The actions taken by the communist trade union *Confédération générale du travail* (CGT) in the second half of May were part and parcel of the PCF's strategy. Since 1966 the CGT was engaged in "unity of action" alliances with the *Confédération française démocratique du travail* (CFDT), a union confederation which found its origins in political Catholicism. In the mid 1960s the latter had radicalized through the adoption of notions of class struggle, notably the proposition of self-management of the production process by workers, or *autogestion*. In the first weeks of May, the strike movement spiraled out of CGT and CFDT control, and the actual role played by the CGT in terms of grassroots mobilization at plants seems to have been limited at all times.²⁹ Only on 13 May did the CGT take a major initiative, when it co-launched a call for a general strike with the CFDT and *Force ouvrière* (FO). FO had split off from the CGT in opposition to Stalinist influences at the start of the Cold War and had since become popular among anti-Stalinist communists and socialists, and among younger generations of workers. The CGT was keen on reaching an agreement with FO as it would mean expanding its influence in these sections of the workforce as well as among the revolting students. However, relations between the CGT and FO were tense at all times, and trade union unity turned out to be short-lived. FO was throughout the May crisis the less radical of the

three major unions, rejecting notions of *autogestion* and maintaining close links with the SFIO.³⁰

In the third week of May, the general strike grew into the largest strike ever witnessed in Western Europe, involving between eight and nine million workers. Yet despite its dimensions, the strike was vulnerable in its dependency on party politics, and its development was increasingly conditioned by relations between the PCF, FGDS, and the student unions. Between 16 and 18 May the PCF's *Bureau politique*, in agreement with the FGDS leadership, issued two calls for a "popular government of democratic unity." Aware that greater enthusiasm at the grassroots was needed to support this proposal, the party set up a network of Action Committees for a Popular Government of Democratic Unity. They were based locally rather than in factories, but all trade unions were invited to join. Much remains unclear regarding the importance and impact of the committees, but they do not seem to have visibly or immediately expanded the PCF's rank and file.³¹

In the final week of May, the communists' industrial-political strategy fell to pieces. The motion against the government was voted down in the Assembly. Mitterrand started to show a renewed interest in the reconstitution of a "third," centrist force in the party-political landscape, excluding the PCF. It became evident on 24 May that the FGDS had become an unreliable ally to the communists, when it accepted an unofficial invitation to engage in talks with the government. Then, on 28 May, Mitterrand announced at a press conference his readiness to take up the presidency. The PCF leadership was left with no other option than to announce its own "availability to take government responsibility," which it did in a Central Committee statement of 30 May.³² When de Gaulle recaptured the political initiative by announcing the dissolution of the National Assembly in the final days of May, the PCF, although still verbally attacking the Gaullist regime, had come to accept playing by its rules.

If PCF leverage over the street and workplace mobilizations in the second half of May had grown compared to the beginning of the month, it was still insufficient to allow the party to instrumentalize the movement. The student organizations forcefully reasserted their autonomy vis-à-vis the Communist Party on 22 May, when the *Union nationale des étudiants français* (UNEF) organized a mass demonstration of over 30,000 activists in protest against Cohn-Bendit's expulsion from France. The call for this mass rally and the acute discursive radicalism surrounding it created an atmosphere of insurrection. Both the PCF and CGT rejected the initiative, referring to the "incredible pretensions" with which UNEF sought "to organize the workers' struggle."³³ This reflected the communists' categorical refusal to consider any kind of program that prioritized spontaneous grassroots mobilization over parliamentary or union-led action. This was not only an anti-insurrectional strategy, but it was also one aimed at saving the French state and its institutions.

The PCF's sudden isolation immediately provoked the breakup of short-lived trade union collaboration. Unity of action between the CGT and FO proved to be impossible after the break between the socialist and communist parties, and the CFDT's radicalism was increasingly feared by both FO and CGT. Following the mass rally of 22 May, the CGT enforced a break with both UNEF and the union of higher education teachers, SNE-Sup, referring to them as "provocateurs."³⁴ Its political alliances having collapsed, the PCF now relied even more heavily on the outcome of the strike to achieve its political aims. This was the background to the national industrial negotiations held at Grenelle between 20 May and 27 May. The CGT entered into negotiations with employers' organizations and government representatives on the basis of its unmodified 1966 program. The demands it put forward included traditional, quantitative demands such as wage increases. None of the issues and demands typical of the May movement featured in this program. Qualitative issues related to power relations in the workplace, self-management and workers' control (*autogestion*), which had been central to the programs and discourses of the FO and the student unions, as well as much of the CGT's own rank and file, were off the agenda. Yet more radical views prevailed regarding the nature of the general strike at the CGT grassroots level than was the case among the leadership. This became clear from the rejection of the Grenelle agreement by the majority of workers—many of them CGT members—at the Renault factory at Billancourt, one of the country's major industrial plants. Following the agreement, CGT leaders Benoît Frachon and Georges Seguy were denounced as traitors by the student movements.³⁵ There are indeed indications that the CGT (and the PCF) wished to strike a deal and secure the end of the strike before the mass protest meeting, planned by the CFDT and the *Parti socialiste unifié* in agreement with UNEF, for 27 May at the Charléty stadium.³⁶ Their fears concerned the PSU being able to present itself as the party-political voice of the movement with far greater success than the PCF or FGDS. The Charléty rally was expected to confirm its leader, Pierre Mendès France, as the legitimate political representative of the radical protesters.

The Soviet Factor

The issue of Soviet influence over the PCF's decisions during the May–June events has long been a matter of speculation. There were at least two important meetings between the PCF and the CPSU leaderships during the events. Gaston Plissonnier, member of the PCF's *Bureau politique* and regular interlocutor of the Soviets, met with V.A. Zoryn, the Soviet ambassador to France on 20 May; Waldeck Rochet and BP member Duclos did the same the following day.³⁷ These meetings took place in the last crucial days before the UNEF mass rally. The discussions have been interpreted as evidence of Soviet support for the PCF's reformist and institutional strategy.³⁸ However, seen in the context of the problematic relations between the Soviet and French communist parties since 1965 and

Moscow's quasi-overt disapproval of PCF domestic strategy during the *Union de la gauche*, the conversations between the PCF leaders and the Soviet ambassador in May 1968 take on a different meaning. The result of these meetings was the Soviet imposition of a very cautious and institutional strategy on the PCF leadership. The shift undertaken by the PCF around 22 May—the renewed attacks on “leftism,” the condemnation of UNEF’s mass rally, and the CGT’s break with the student unions—should be understood as partly resulting from pressures exercised by the Soviets. However, if Moscow did not welcome an insurrectionary strategy, neither did it wholeheartedly favor the center-left alliance coming to power, although it could not make this fully explicit. Both scenarios went counter to Soviet foreign policy interests in Europe. The first did so because, although the PCF might be able to expand its influence over the movement, it was evident it would never fully control it politically, and the coming of an “uncontrollable” leftist regime should be avoided in the light of loss of Soviet hegemony over the communist world. The second possibility was not favored by Moscow because a pro-Atlantic left-of-center government coalition was less advantageous than an anti-Atlantic Gaullist one.

Indicative of Moscow’s lack of enthusiasm for the PCF’s moderate line was the tone of the Soviet press coverage. At the height of the May crisis, a long article was published in CPSU periodical *Novosti*, headed “We support France.”³⁹ As the Soviet press had done also in 1965, this article meaningfully omitted reference to the PCF-FGDS alliance, and overall had very little to say about the communists’ political and industrial strategy. De Gaulle was described here as a leader with “a progressive perspective in international affairs” although “suffering from short-sightedness regarding domestic problems.” This was a curiously mild assessment of an arch-conservative regime that seemed on the verge of collapse. Further, it was stated explicitly that “the France we support” was a country with a foreign policy fully independent from the United States. All this should be read as a warning to the PCF to check its alliances, and as an expression of the limits and conditionality of Soviet support.

Impacts and Conclusions

The short-term impact of the May events on the PCF in terms of membership figures was negative but by no means nefast. While according to estimates around 6,000 members left the PCF in the aftermath of the crisis, the party reported around 23,000 new members by the end of the year.⁴⁰ Far worse, however, was the party’s performance in the June 1968 legislative elections, which saw de Gaulle’s party obtain an absolute majority and a defeat for all parties of the Left.⁴¹

In July 1968 it was not wholly unrealistic to believe that the PCF would allow itself to be somewhat influenced by the events, and that it would belatedly

engage in some of the issues that had been at stake in May. There was a tradition in the party of responding to outside shocks with a delay, and in a gradual and highly controlled manner which would minimize the dangers of secessions and avert sudden identity shifts.⁴² The May events were discussed at a Central Committee meeting held in Nanterre in early July. Noticeable here were the first, cautious signs of a limited change in the interpretation of the events. The student movement was now defined as “important,” and the party’s own influence over it was recognized as limited. This did not, however, lead the party to reconsider its reformist strategy for which the students had criticized it. The bulk of CC members emphasized the need to continue the *Union de la gauche* as a party-based alliance, as well as give priority to “defend democracy,” and the need for the workers’ movement to focus on quantitative rather than qualitative demands. Nonetheless, a shift in the party’s approach to students, intellectuals, and theoretical matters—announced as the “importance of the battle of ideas”—was acknowledged.⁴³

The analysis of the May events at the Central Committee meeting of December 1968 in Champigny continued along this line, while according a greater historical importance to the events. In his closing speech, Waldeck Rochet explicitly abandoned the thesis of a leftist plot, which had previously been circulating in PCF circles. He now proposed that the spontaneous, student-led uprising had been aimed at replacing Gaullist power and establishing a new political system, and that the general strike had not only been about quantitative demands in the workplace but also about qualitative change. This differed from the July interpretation. More broadly, Rochet attempted to construct a narrative of the events to give them meaning within the PCF’s theoretical arsenal, for example, by understanding the events in terms of class relations. The May crisis was interpreted as the most extreme symptom of a structural, generalized, and international crisis of State Monopoly Capitalism. Rochet argued that the May events had failed because of the lack of agreements between political parties, social movements, and trade unions. Rochet proposed working toward an “anti-imperialist alliance” between these three groups of actors. This notion was new to PCF strategy and should be understood as Rochet’s belated attempt to catch up with new forms of radicalism.⁴⁴

Champigny was, however, one of Rochet’s last important interventions as party leader, and none of these changes were pursued. A tremendous disruption was the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Union and its allies in August 1968, and the impact the subsequent realignment process of the Soviet-dominated communist world had on the PCF. From 21 August, the night of the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the armies of the Soviet Union and four Warsaw Treaty countries, to June 1969, when a conference of global communist parties was held in Moscow, the communist world went through a process of rampant realignment. This involved direct and indirect Soviet interference in the internal affairs of the East and West European communist parties, with the aim of re-

imposing (Soviet-defined) “orthodoxy” in terms of ideology, strategy, and organization. To a significant extent, the leaderships of these parties carried out this process of internal realignment themselves. In Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, realignment meant the imposition of strict discipline within the political system and in society more generally. It mirrored the so-called “normalization” in Czechoslovakia, which involved a clampdown on dissidents and reformers.⁴⁵

Among the West European communist parties, the PCF was one in which “normalization” was carried out in the most systematic way and had the most devastating impacts. While in Prague, Alexander Dubček, leader of the Prague Spring, was replaced by the “pragmatic” and highly Soviet-loyal Gustav Husák, in Paris, Waldeck Rochet fell ill and in the course of 1969 was unofficially and gradually replaced by Georges Marchais, although the latter was only officially elected as General Secretary in 1972. Marchais was one of the younger members of the *Bureau politique* but was ideologically conservative and in favor of a return to a tight leadership structure; he was, moreover, strongly supported by Brezhnev.⁴⁶ Rochet needed to be removed from power because between 1964 and 1968 he had voiced a (softly spoken) determination to take the PCF to government.⁴⁷ His dissidence was unconscious: by taking Soviet “orthodoxy” literally he unwillingly exposed its inner contradictions. If his *Union de la gauche* strategy proved successful, it would go against Soviet strategy, which had a vested interest in the political status quo on the European continent. Moreover, immediately following the invasion of Czechoslovakia, Rochet seemed to have been ready for an open confrontation with the Soviet leadership, a move opposed by the older members of the leadership such as Duclos. Rochet drafted an article, probably meant for publication in *Humanité* but never published, in which he criticized the Soviet Union for initiating a conflict with the PCF. The thesis that the Prague Spring had been a counter-revolution was here explicitly rejected—something the PCF had never done officially—and the invasion was said to go against the PCF’s principle of “diverse roads to socialism.”⁴⁸

Alongside Rochet’s ousting, a number of PCF intellectuals were excluded from the party between September 1968 and June 1969. Victims of this purge were theorists, philosophers, and writers influenced by the new-leftist revival of Marxist thought. Marchais, supported by the old guard in the leadership, took up the opportunity offered by Soviet support for “normalization” to eliminate all outspoken advocates of intellectual, strategic, or cultural renewal in the PCF. The best-known victim of the purge was Garaudy. In May 1968, he had opposed the party line with regard to the student movements, proposing more organic forms of interaction. His condemnation of the invasion of Czechoslovakia, and his critique of the People’s Democracies, combined with his continued attempts to revise the PCF’s theoretical positions and bring the party more in touch with new Marxist currents, led to his exclusion from the party in May 1970. Also purged were the writer and editor of *Démocratie nouvelle* Paul Noirot, historian Madeleine Rebérioux, and renowned former resistance leader Charles Tillon.⁴⁹

The extent to which the PCF was re-aligned on Soviet positions, not only with regard to post-fact interpretations of the situation in Czechoslovakia, but also with regard to matters of theory and strategy more generally, became obvious at a meeting between the PCF and CPSU leaderships in Moscow in November 1968. Mostly, however, the discussion focused not on the events in Czechoslovakia, but on Gaullism and how to respond to it, which once more demonstrated the centrality of this issue in PCF-CPSU relations. The CPSU attempted to pressure the PCF into a common statement and (positive) interpretation of de Gaulle's European strategy. The PCF leaders refused, insisting instead on the danger to the European Left presented by Gaullism and its links with West Germany. This, however, was the one single point on which the PCF leadership effectively resisted Soviet pressure, and the final statement that was issued after the Moscow meeting made mention of the "friendly" state relations between France and the Soviet Union. The statement became a matter of great controversy in France as it blatantly revealed the PCF's near-total surrender to Soviet pressure.⁵⁰

Worse still, the Soviet leaders at the meeting bitterly criticized the PCF for what they now interpreted as the latter's failure to grasp the momentum that May 1968 had offered. This was both inconsistent and disingenuous, as they had previously voiced their support for a cautious line. Not only the Soviet leadership, but also the *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* (SED) now claimed that the PCF had held "superficial" analyses of the May events, and had failed to perceive the importance of non-parliamentary action and grasp the revolutionary potential of the movement.⁵¹ This did not indicate an actual change in these parties' interpretations of the French events or of European strategy, but did indicate the wish of these parties to undermine the PCF's bargaining position during the realignment process. Highlighting the PCF's failure to fully respond to the May '68 events was the perfect tool for keeping the party hostage by isolating it further from its domestic partners. The critiques also indicated the non-relevance of the strategies developed by the Western communist parties to the Soviet Union, and revealed the total subordination of the interests of West European communism and the cause of revolution in the West to Soviet state interests and its bloc interests in Eastern Europe. The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 illustrated this in a similar way: Western communist parties' objections that such an invasion would undermine their domestic strategy were known to the Soviet leaders but dismissed by them.

The combined effect of the purge of "revisionist" intellectuals and leaders, and of the PCF's weakness vis-à-vis Moscow in the realignment process, was absolute theoretical and strategic immobility. Among the French Left, one of the main short- and medium-term effects of the May events was a generalized investigation into the concept of revolution and France's revolutionary tradition.⁵² The institutional Left found itself in a state of crisis, and both the SFIO and FGDS came close to collapse after the June 1968 elections. All this led the PCF

to seek refuge in its inherited concept of revolution. It was a concept based on a historical narrative of the links between 1789 and 1917, two dates which corresponded to the two models of revolution available to the PCF. This concept of revolution drew from 1789 in terms of its understanding of French popular sovereignty, from the Leninist model in terms of party organization, and from the Popular Front of the 1930s in terms of relations with other parties and strategy toward the state. In 1968, revision of these models had clearly become necessary, but the post-invasion crisis in the communist world made this highly unlikely. In short, the PCF's concept of revolution could not be revolutionized in the aftermath of the May events, as this inherited concept of revolution was one of the very few core values and identities that held the party together.

That revolution continued to be understood as a mix of reformist parliamentary strategy and Leninist party organization was reflected in the party's new domestic program, drawn up at the above-mentioned Central Committee meeting held in Champigny in December 1968. The "leading role of the Communist Party" was reaffirmed, as was the existence of "general laws" on the path to socialism. The crux of the party's strategy remained the alliance with the socialist party, despite the fact that the latter found itself in a worse state of crisis than the PCF. With regard to the May events, the only significant innovation was a discussion of the notion of "communist intellectuals" and its expansion to include students and their organizations, and thus non-party members. However, the Central Committee failed to debate the crucial point, namely relations between the Communist Party—assuming a "leading role"—and the student organizations and other social movements.

The analysis of the PCF's behavior during May 1968 demonstrates the order of priorities within its strategy. First, the absolute priority given to an institutional and party-political approach to taking power; second, the importance accorded to controlled and conventional industrial action, although subordinate to the party's institutional strategy; and finally, the subordination of the student and street protests to both the institutional and industrial dimensions. The PCF's strategy in 1968 was not counter-revolutionary in its own terms, but certainly was perceived as such, not only by the student protesters, but also by thousands of (communist) workers on strike. Ultimately, it was a counter-revolutionary strategy undermining those who had started to hope that the events could give way not only to a change of government, but also to systemic change, and who believed that what was needed to this end, was the revolutionary will to fundamentally rethink power and reinvent democracy.

Notes

1. Relatively recent source-based contributions to an understanding of "1968" in a longer-term perspective include: P. Artières, M. Zancarini-Fournel, eds. 68: *Une*

- histoire collective (1962–1981)*, (Paris: La Découverte, 2008); R. Mouriaux, A. Percheron, A. Prost, D. Tartakowsky, eds. *1968: Exploration du mai français* (I: Terrains; II: Acteurs), (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1992); G. Dreyfus-Armand, R. Frank, M.-F. Levy, M. Zancarini-Fournel, eds. *Les années 68: Le temps de la contestation* (Bruxelles: Ed. Complexe, 2000); Zancarini-Fournel, M. *Le moment 68: une histoire contestée* (Paris: Seuil, 2008); Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey. *'Die Phantasie an die Macht': Mai 68 in Frankreich* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1995); P. Rotman, C. Rotman, *Les années 68* (Paris: Seuil, 2008).
2. One prominent proponent of this paradigm is A. Marwick. *The Sixties: Social and Cultural Transformation in Britain, France, Italy and the United States, 1958–1974* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). For the case of France, specifically, arguments surrounding the limited social and political significance of May 1968 have been put forward by: M. Seidman, *The imaginary revolution. Parisian students and workers in 1968* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004).
 3. Recent contributions to an analysis of the strike movement include: X. Vigna, *L'insubordination ouvrière dans les années 1968. Essai d'histoire politique des usines* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007); a number of contribution in Dreyfus-Armand, *Les années 68*, including: M. Zancarini-Fournel, "Retour sur Grenelle: la congestion de la crise?," 443-60; F. Georgi, ed. *Autogestion, la dernière utopie?* (Paris: Publ. de la Sorbonne, 2002). In English, one of few studies to focus on the workers' dimension of the French 1968 and its subsequent (partial) marginalization in historiographic debate, is K. Ross, *May '68 and its afterlives* (Princeton University Press, 2002).
 4. A critique of the "cultural revolution" paradigm can also be found in: Gerd-Rainer Horn, *The spirit of '68: Rebellion in Western Europe and North America 1956-1976* (Oxford University Press, 2007).
 5. Danielle Tartakowsky, "Le PCF en Mai-Juin 1968" in Mouriaux, Percheron, *1968: Exploration du mai français*, II, scrutinizing the day-to-day shifts in the party's political strategy in response to the May and June events; C. Pannetier, "Le PCF et CGT face à 68." in Artières, Zancarini-Fournel, *68, une histoire collective*: 336–48; Gael Moulléc, "Mai 1968, le PCF et l'Union soviétique, notes des entretiens entre les dirigeants du PCF et l'ambassadeur soviétique en France," *Communisme*, 53–54 (1998): 151–64, which sheds new light on the Soviet-PCF relations during this episode; M. Bracke, *Which Socialism, Whose Détente? West European Communism and the Czechoslovak Crisis of 1968* (Budapest-New York: CEU Press, 2007), for interconnections between the French May and the Czechoslovak crisis.
 6. Pierre Daix, *Tout mon temps. Révisions de ma mémoire* (Paris: Fayard, 2001); Thomas Hofnung, *Georges Marchais; l'inconnu du parti communiste français*, (Paris: l'Archipel, 2001); Jean Vigreux, *Waldeck Rochet, une biographie politique* (Paris français s: La Dispute, 2000); Gérard Streiff, *Jean Kanapa*, (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001).
 7. The concept used here of legitimation sources draws on the notion proposed by the Italian historian Franco de Felice in his analysis of the Italian Communist Party, PCI: Franco De Felice, "Doppia lealta' e doppio stato," *Studi storici*, n. 3 (July–September 1998): 493–563.
 8. See also François Hincker, "Le Parti communiste français et de Gaulle : la question de l'Etat," in Stéphane Courtois, and Marc Lazar, eds., *50 ans d'une passion française: de Gaulle et les communistes* (Paris: Balland, 1991), 181–94.

9. Annie Kriegel, "Le mythe Stalinién par excellence: L'antifascisme," in Marcello Flores and Francesca Gori, eds., *Il mito dell'URSS. La cultura occidentale e l'Unione sovietica* (Milano: Fondazione G. Feltrinelli, FrancoAngeli, 1990), 217–23.
10. On the PCF and the Union of the Left, see Marc Lazar, *Maisons rouges. Les Partis communistes français et italien de la Libération à nos jours*, Paris: Aubier, 1992), 124–26; on Mitterrand and the FGDS, see Jacques Kergoat, *Histoire du Parti socialiste*, (Paris: La Découverte/Repères, 1997), 144–51; for Rochet's perspective, see Vigreux, *Waldeck Rochet*, 234–36.
11. There is no monograph on the PCF and decolonization. Aspects of its positions on Algeria can be found in: Jean-Jacques Becker, "L'intérêt bien compris du Parti communiste français," in Jean-Pierre Rioux, ed., *La guerre d'Algérie et les français* (Paris: Fayard, 1990), 235–44.
12. For details on the UEC crisis, see Michel Dreyfus, *PCF Crises et dissidences*, (Paris-Bruelles: Ed. Complexe, 1990), 141–53.
13. For details on PSU support in the 1960s, see: Vladimir C. Fisera, "Le PSU face à son histoire: le tournant de mai 68," in Mouriaux and Percheron, *1968 Exploration du mai français*, 178–216.
14. Marie-Pierre Rey, *La tentation du rapprochement France et l'URSS à l'heure de la détente 1964–1974* (Paris: Publ. de la Sorbonne, 1991), esp. 277–84.
15. Raymond Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation. American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan* (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1994 (rev. ed.), 36–52.
16. Mark Kramer, "The Czechoslovak Crisis and the Brezhnev Doctrine," in Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert, and Detlef Junker, eds., *1968, The World Transformed* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 111–71.
17. It was extremely unusual for the PCF to express similar criticism of the Soviet Union. Francis Fejto, *The French Communist Party and the Crisis of International Communism*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1967), 199–201.
18. *Humanité*, 3 May 1968, 1.
19. Hofnung, *Marchais*, 140.
20. Hofnung, *Marchais*, 139; The author's main source is his 2005 interview with J. Chambraz, a CC member in 1968.
21. Tartakowsky, "Le Pcf," 146.
22. Hofnung, *Marchais*, 140.
23. Daniel Cohn-Bendit, *Le gauchisme, remède à la maladie sénile du communisme* (Paris, Le Seuil, 1968).
24. A new policy with regard to intellectuals and artists had been laid down at the CC meeting of March 1966 held in Argenteuil. It marked the loosening of party control over the arts, literature, and theory, but led to the diminished influence of intellectuals over political affairs. See Jeannine Verdès-Leroux, *Le réveil des somnambules: Le PC, les intellectuels et la culture 1965–1985*. (Paris: Ed. de Minuit, 1987), Ch. 4.
25. A critical reading of Daix's autobiography (*Tout mon temps*) is useful here; on Gaudy, see below.
26. Tartakowsky, "Le Pcf," 156.
27. Moullec, "Mai '68," 158.
28. Tartakowsky, "Le Pcf," 149.
29. René Mouriaux, "Le Mai de la CGT: les masses en mouvement sans issue politique," in Mouriaux and Percheron, eds., *1968. Exploration du mai français*, 17–31 (27).

30. Mouriaux, "Le Mai de la CGT," 27.
31. Tartakowsky, "Le Pcf," 154.
32. Tartakowsky, "Le Pcf," 152.
33. CGT statement from 22 May; A. Monchablon, "L'UNEF en Mai 68," in Mouriaux and Percheron, eds., *1968 Exploration du mai français* 111–119 (117).
34. Mouriaux, "Le Mai de la CGT," 27.
35. Mouriaux, "Le Mai de la CGT," 28–29.
36. Mouriaux, "Le Mai de la CGT," 30.
37. The minutes of these meetings, translated into French by Zoryn, can be found in Moullec, "Mai 1968," 159–64.
38. Moullec, "Mai 1968," 153.
39. An Italian translation of this article can be found in: Archivio Partito comunista italiano, Istituto Gramsci, Rome: Fund Berlinguer, 55.5.
40. While this last figure was certainly exaggerated, it is a fact that PCF membership did not suffer unduly from the French and Czechoslovak crises of 1968. According to Lazar, membership actually went up between 1967 and 1969, from about 350,000 to 380,000 (estimations); Lazar, 398.
41. The PCF vote fell from 22.5 percent to 20 percent. Lazar, *Maisons rouges*, 398.
42. Kriegel has labeled this mechanism, typical of PCF history, as "delayed consciousness." Annie Kriegel, "French Communism and the Fifth Republic," in Donald Blackmer and Sidney Tarrow, *Communism in Italy and France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 69–86 here 76.
43. Tartakowsky, "Le Pcf," 157–58.
44. Tartakowsky, "Le Pcf," 158–59. The Champigny final statement is published as: Waldeck Rochet, *Pour une démocratie avancée, pour une France socialiste* (Paris: Ed. Sociales, 1968).
45. More on the realignment of the communist world following the invasion of Czechoslovakia in: Matthew Ouimet, *The Rise and Fall of the Brezhnev Doctrine in Soviet Foreign Policy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).
46. On Marchais's rise to power and support for him in Moscow see Pierre Grémion, *Paris-Prague. La gauche face au renouveau et à la régression tchécoslovaques, 1968–1978* (Paris: Juillard, 1985), 224; Philippe Robrieux, *La secte. Place Col. Fabien*, (Paris: Stock, 1985), 70–72.
47. At the same time, Rochet never ceased to profess his and his party's loyalty to the Soviet Union and to Moscow-defined "internationalism." See "Avant-projet pour un article," anon (but Rochet), undated, Archives Parti communiste français (Place Col. Fabien, Paris), Fund Waldeck Rochet, box 13, folder 1. This document was most probably a draft for a *Humanité* article, to be published in the event of public Soviet attacks on the PCF following the invasion. In the text, the Soviet narrative of "invitation" by the Czechoslovak communists and of counterrevolution was refuted in the clearest terms. For a similar characterization of Rochet's almost self-unaware "heterodoxy" see Annie Kriegel, "French Communism and the Fifth Republic," in Donald Blackmer and Sidney Tarrow, eds., *Communism in Italy and France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 1975, 69–86.
48. "Avant-projet pour un article," anon (but Rochet), undated, APCE, Fund Waldeck Rochet, box 13, folder 1. In addition, the Secretariat meeting on 28 November decided that "in the event a number of brother parties would make an ideological

confrontation on the important questions of our movement inevitable, we will be ready for such a confrontation. Our party will defend its ideas...” APCF, Secretariat (28/11/1968).

49. Dreyfus, *PCF* 153–59.
50. The final statement in the: “Report Marchais,” CC December 1968, Archives PCF, “Événements in Tchécoslovaquie,” box 2, folder 2. The Soviet draft statement and extracts from the discussions can be found in: Anonymous, (Kanapa, Jean) *Kremlin-PCF Conversations secrètes* (Paris: Ed. Olivier Orban, 1984), 207–10.
51. Soviet criticism in “Sur une rencontre avec le PCUS,” anon (but probably Waldeck Rochet), n.d., 19, Archives PCF, Fund Waldeck Rochet, box 13, folder 3, and Streiff, *Kanapa*, 516.
52. Serge Bernstein, “Les forces politiques: recomposition et réappropriation,” in Geneviève Dreyfus-Armand, Robert Frank, Marie-Françoise Lévy and Michelle Zancarini-Fournel, *Les années 68. Les temps de la contestation* (Paris-Bruxelles: Complexe, 2000), 475–92.

1968 in Yugoslavia

Student Revolt between East and West

Boris Kanzleiter

The outbreak of the student revolt at Belgrade University in June 1968 did not come unexpectedly. However, the energy and dynamic of the protests surprised even its most engaged protagonists. During the night of 2–3 June, a brawl between youth and security forces on the fringes of a concert in the suburb of Novi Beograd escalated into an organized protest movement. In the early hours of 3 June, police used firearms to try and prevent a demonstration of thousands of students from making its way into the inner city.¹ Yet by early afternoon, the university buildings in the center of the Yugoslav capital had already been occupied. The strikers proclaimed a “Red University of Karl Marx,” and with their slogans, made reference to the global student protests which were shaking the world.² In a declaration, the protesters demanded the “abolition of all privileges, democratization of all information media and freedom of gathering and demonstration.”³

In the days that followed, the occupied university in Belgrade was transformed into an epicenter of unknown creativity. In heated debates, students, professors, and citizens discussed the country’s problems. With the police blocking the faculties, curious crowds gathered around them. Actors, writers, artists, and delegations of workers showed solidarity. The media reported the breaking news. During the second day of the protest, the movement had spread to other university centers in Yugoslavia. In Ljubljana, Zagreb, and Sarajevo, students organized their own meetings. The leadership of the ruling *League of Communists of Yugoslavia* (LCY) was deeply shocked: This protest was the first open revolt since the consolidation of power in the years following World War II. On 4 June at a meeting of the inner circle of the party, Stevan Doronjski, a leading functionary, declared that Belgrade was in a state of “extremely electrified psychosis.” If workers were to take to the streets, which he considered a possibility, then the army should be deployed.⁴ After a week of strike action, the party chairman and state president, Josip Broz Tito said at a meeting of the LCY’s leadership that the “volcanic explosion of discontent” showed that party functionaries could “fly from these chairs.”⁵

Political Context

The Yugoslav student revolt in June 1968 took place in a peculiar political context. The LCY was probably the only ruling party worldwide to interpret the global student revolt as a confirmation of its own ideological and political groundwork. In May 1968, the legendary LCY leader and Spanish Civil War veteran Veljko Vlahović, stated that the protests around the world should be “evaluated positively.” The slogans for “*autogestion*” in the demonstrations in France and elsewhere showed that Yugoslavia’s workers’ self-management socialism was heading along the right lines.⁶ Given the official statements, it was hardly surprising that newspapers covered the international protest events extensively. On 25 May, the daily party organ *Borba* published the famous interview between the French writer and philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre and the young “anarchist” student leader Daniel Cohn-Bendit.⁷ The sympathy, however, was not limited to the protest movements in the West. Events in Poland were also covered, although with more caution.⁸ Special attention was given to the developments in Czechoslovakia. The LCY leadership openly stated its sympathy with the reform experiment of Alexander Dubček. Yugoslav leaders especially emphasized the right of the “Czechoslovakian people” to decide for themselves the path they would take to “build socialism.” To show public support, Tito visited Dubček in Prague from 9–11 August, just ten days before the Soviet-led intervention.⁹

The unique attitude of the LCY can only be understood against the background of Yugoslavia’s postwar history. The communists had taken power in Yugoslavia in 1944–45 after a fiery four-year anti-fascist partisan struggle against German and Italian occupation, as well as against strong local collaborationist movements. After the war, Yugoslav communists, who had won mostly due to the mobilization of their own resources, resisted the demands to subordinate themselves to the center of world communism in Moscow. Opposing Stalin’s Communist Information Bureau (*Cominform*) in 1948, the Yugoslav communists insisted on following their “own way to socialism.” Central to their new vision was their commitment to “workers’ self-management.” The introduction of mechanisms for direct workers’ control was supposed to prevent the bureaucratization of the state and the party that they bitterly criticized in the Soviet Union. The creation of an “association of direct producers” was to lead to the “withering away of the state” in the near future.¹⁰ Further, on the international scene, the Yugoslav communists introduced a new idea. To balance between the power blocks of Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe and the U.S.-dominated West in the 1950s, they started to create the Non-Alignment Movement, which tried to stimulate economic and political cooperation between a number of important postcolonial and developing countries like India, Mexico, Egypt, and socialist Cuba. The *Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia* (SFRY) was, with the exception of Cyprus, the only European member of the alliance, which was officially founded in September 1961 in Belgrade.¹¹

In this period of the Cold War and bipolar antagonism, the “Yugoslav model” attracted sympathy from liberal and left-oriented intellectuals around the world. Inside Yugoslavia, however, the picture was less idyllic. Certainly, the partisans had liberated the country from fascist occupation. But on the other hand, the Communist Party had enforced its rule with draconian measures against any kind of opposition. The proclamation of “workers’ self-management” was widely perceived as pure demagogy. In fact, the socially-owned companies remained under the control of local party leaders and directors, rather than being democratically managed by the “direct producers.”¹² The rapid economic growth triggered an exceptionally rapid process of urbanization and industrialization. But, while segments of the growing population in the cities developed a consumer-orientated lifestyle, the LCY leadership’s development policies failed to close the gap between the traditionally poor regions in the south and the relatively prosperous regions in the north. Indeed, the relative regional imbalances even increased.¹³ Social imbalances grew, particularly after a fundamental economic reform program was introduced in 1964–65. The introduction of market mechanisms to overcome stagnation and stimulate economic growth led to massive unemployment, especially among the youth. Wage differences grew at high speed.¹⁴

The increasing problems led to open conflicts within the LCY. In summer 1966, the long-standing interior minister and chief of the secret police, Aleksandar Ranković, was removed from office. With his dismissal, the so-called “liberal wing” of the LCY wanted to push for more reforms. Also, open controversy about the complex “national question” re-surfaced. In the context of the economic reforms, regional leadership groups of the LCY defended the interests of “their” republic with increasing passion. This led to emotionalized debates and conflicts, which, in turn led to openly nationalist statements.¹⁵

Structure of the Yugoslav Protest Movement

Given the monolithic political system, independent forms of political self-organization did not exist in Yugoslavia in the middle of the 1960s. However, the course of economic reform was accompanied by a constant rhetoric about the need for “party reform,” “democratization,” and “developing the self-management relationships,” which implied the need for more real participation of the workforce in decision-making. While the bitter power struggles within the party dominated the political scene, the climate of growing openness enabled intellectuals, journalists, and writers to discuss taboo themes like the Goli Otok prisoners camp, in which thousands of real or imagined “enemies” of the LCY rule were being held in inhuman conditions.¹⁶ At the same time, workers began to take strike action to protest against poor working conditions and perceived injustices. While state organs tried to suppress media reporting about the rather sporadic first strikes in 1958, by the middle of the 1960s the growing phenom-

ena could no longer be neglected. The official explanation for the strikes was that the workers were protesting against insufficient mechanisms in the self-management system. The recommendation was that their criticisms should be taken into consideration to overcome shortcomings. Although strikes were not formally legalized, neither were they banned.¹⁷

In this political context, groups of students articulated their interests with growing passion and the with the expectation that they could improve their situation. Intellectual ferment first came into the open at Ljubljana University. From 1960 onward, young social scientists and writers had edited the magazine *Perspektive* here, which developed into an organ of outspoken discontent. In May 1964, the magazine was accused of acting against the “socialist order” and banned.¹⁸ But soon other critical voices emerged. Beginning in 1966, the editors of *Student* (Belgrade) and *Tribuna* (Ljubljana) wrote increasingly bitter articles about the everyday problems in the universities and of young people in general. The first stage addressed obvious shortcomings, like bad housing conditions in student hostels, poor conditions and insufficient materials in universities, and the low standard of teaching. The rapid expansion of the university system, which had grown from 21,195 students after the war (1945–46) to 140,647 students in 1968–69, had obviously led to serious structural problems.¹⁹ The second stage discussed more general social and political problems. At the beginning of 1968, the magazine *Susret* of the Belgrade Youth League published a series of reports about youth unemployment, the migration of young people as “*Gastarbeiter*” (guest workers) to Germany and the miserable housing conditions of the Roma people in the forgotten slums in Belgrade.²⁰ By this point, *Tribuna* and *Student* were also publishing texts by authors of the western Left and New Left like Herbert Marcuse, Rudi Dutschke, and Daniel Guerin, as well as the “classical” anarchist authors like Peter Kropotkin.²¹

The formation of a genuinely critical student press reflected developments within the official Student League, which published the magazines. Established in 1951, the organization was designed as a classical “transmission belt” for LCY politics. By the mid 1960s, however, the Student League had fallen into a deep crisis and lacked credibility among most students, who considered it a boring organization, which only served the interests of its leaders. Trying to overcome its problems in 1967, the leadership began a reorganization process. Encouraged by the reform politics of the LCY, student leaders adopted official rhetoric for “democratization” and pressed for more autonomy for their own organization. “Routinism” was to be overcome. Students were encouraged to be critical and to become active in order to overcome “bureaucratic” power structures.²²

While these intentions were generally in line with the official party politics, they opened a space for grassroots activism, which was soon outside the control of the party leadership. In March 1968, the Student League branch at the Faculty of Philosophy (which included history, sociology, literature, and other social and human sciences) in Belgrade adopted a platform which called for a “new

activism.”²³ Under the influence of the international protest movements, calls for open protest to end the shortcomings in the student hostels and universities became louder. In a number of official Students League and even LCY meetings, students called for protests and even “violent” demonstrations.²⁴ The possibility of a strike was now openly discussed in the student press.²⁵

In this context, a group of already politicized students started to take direct action. In April 1968, students from the department of Sociology at Belgrade University issued a solidarity letter to the protesting Polish students. In just a few days, they managed to collect 1,500 signatures of students from different faculties. This action triggered a sharp conflict within the Student League and the LCY organization at the university. The leadership of the Student League argued that Yugoslav students should not “intervene in the internal affairs” of other socialist countries and echoed the official political line of the party, which defended the principle of non-interference.” Additionally, the leadership criticized the initiators of the letter for not informing the student leadership and the party organization at the university level of their initiative. The debate was published in *Student* and turned into an open conflict on democratic rights.²⁶

This example illustrates a general feature of the Yugoslav student movement: Student activists never managed to form long-lasting independent formal organizations outside of the official mass organizations and the LCY. On the other hand, a considerable number of activists were connected through various intertwined informal groups and networks, which developed at faculty or university level, as well as in the student hostels. The official Student League was not completely controlled by the party apparatus and offered space for critical discussions. This was particularly true not only for the student press, but also for branches of the Student League, especially at the philosophy faculties all around the country. An exception to this general picture, however, was the strike at Belgrade University in June 1968. With the spontaneous establishment of so-called “action committees” (*akcioni odbori*) and “meetings” (*zborovi*), independent embryonic forms of formal self-organization were established during the week-long occupation.²⁷

Cognitive Orientation of the Movement

The student protest movement in Yugoslavia shared the underlying moral and political principles of the global 1968 movement, which Fink, Gassert, and Junker define in a very broad sense as the struggle for “freedom, justice and self-determination.”²⁸ However, the differentiating characteristic of the Yugoslav movement was that students articulated their demands within the framework of the official ideology. This is summarized by a statement issued by striking students and professors from the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade on the second day of the occupation on 4 June 1968: “We do not have our own program.

Our program is the program of the most progressive forces of our society—the program of the LCY and the constitution. We demand that it should be put consequently into practice.”²⁹ The conflict potential which had built up was not that of an antagonistic confrontation of students, who fundamentally questioned the basic political and moral values of the existing society, as was the case, for example, in West Germany, France, or the USA. On the contrary, Yugoslav students subscribed to the hegemonic values and contrasted them with the disappointing political and social reality, which failed to fulfill the promises made by the party and the constitution. The demands of the revolting Yugoslav students at the time could be considered as “more communist than the communists,” as one former activist put it.³⁰

A fundamental question in the research is to what extent the slogans corresponded with the cognitive orientation of the majority of the students. In his study, the Australian historian Ralph Pervan doubts that they did correspond. He concludes that the majority of protesting students in 1968 were “closer to being a cynical mass of individuals” than to an “idealistic group of young socialist experts,” as the symbols and slogans of the movement suggested. He gives evidence to this statement by describing the lack of political enthusiasm and passivity of the majority of students before the strike broke out.³¹ There may be some truth in Pervan’s consideration, as is shown by the ability of the LCY to pacify a large part of the protesters with simple promises and cosmetic improvements in the months following the strike. However, there is clear evidence that the more active of the strikers stood by their demands. Analyzing informal and semiformal activities of the student movement over the decade from the mid 1960s to the mid 1970s shows that there were considerable forces among the students that developed a relatively coherent political agenda.³² Whereas they confirmed the anti-fascist and internationalist ideology of the LCY, they also criticized nationalist tendencies within the party bureaucracy and the society. The movement defined itself clearly as a pro-Yugoslav force.³³ Nevertheless, student activists criticized the increasing social stratification and authoritarianism. The problems of social equality and democratization were persistently articulated in numerous discussions and statements.³⁴

An analysis of the cognitive orientation of the protest movement and its identity has to take into account the unique political situation in Yugoslavia in the late 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s. In spite of all the shortcomings, no other socialist country had achieved a greater degree of political and cultural freedom. Although the LCY never considered giving up its ultimate political monopoly and its instruments to manipulate and control society, Yugoslav citizens had access to a wide range of western and eastern press publications and could travel freely without visa restrictions. Yugoslavia was by no means an isolated country. On the contrary, to a certain extent, citizens could feel that they related equally to the East, the West, and the South. Tito’s role as an internationally respected statesman underlined that feeling.

As the reporting in the student newspaper shows, students were relatively well informed about the international development of protests. They also had access to books and texts of critical intellectuals in the East and the West. The works of Herbert Marcuse, for example, one of the intellectual founders of the New Left, were published in Serbo-Croatian from 1965 on. Other works of philosophers from the Frankfurt School were also widely published. The magazine *Praxis*, edited by university professors in Belgrade and Zagreb, also provided a platform for the discourses of the New Left.³⁵ At an annual summer school on the Croatian island of Korčula near Dubrovnik, critical intellectuals including Marcuse, Erich Fromm, Lesek Kolakowski, and Ernest Mandel were frequent guests. Every year between 1964 and 1974, hundreds of Yugoslav students were able to participate in discussions with them.³⁶ In theaters, the Yugoslav youth could see the musical *Hair*, which articulated the feelings of the American youth against the Vietnam War.³⁷ Influenced by the avant-garde film movements in Western Europe—particularly France and Italy—in Yugoslavia the “new film” (*novi film*) and “black wave” (*crni talas*) genres developed, which promoted stylistic experimentation in form and language, touching contemporary problems of human alienation.³⁸

Probably a unique characteristic in the cognitive orientation of the Yugoslav protest movement was that students could identify with the student revolts in both East *and* West on the grounds of their own experiences. As the political system was neither entirely Stalinist nor capitalist, but contained certain elements of both, students in Yugoslavia were not protesting against Stalinism or capitalism alone, but explicitly against both. This is clearly marked by the resolutions of the strike in June 1968, which protested equally against elements of “capitalist restoration,” which were encouraged by the economic reform program of 1964–65 and the oligarchic rule of the LCY. This double orientation was summarized in the popular parole: “Down with the red bourgeoisie!”³⁹

Key Events

The strike in June 1968 was undoubtedly the climax of the Yugoslav student movement. But, from a long-term perspective, it represents only the most visual event of a protest cycle which lasted a full decade, from the mid 1960s to the mid 1970s. The constitutive phase of the protest movement started with the controversy around the student magazine *Perspektive* in Ljubljana in 1964 and the following politicization of other student papers like *Polja* (Novi Sad), *Vidici*, *Student* and *Gledišta* (Belgrade), *Tribuna* and *Problemi* (Ljubljana), *Naše teme* and *Razlog* (Zagreb), which took up critical issues and organized common meetings.⁴⁰

The first large-scale violent confrontation with the police took place in December 1966 in Belgrade. The increasing protest movements in the U.S. and

in Western Europe against the escalating war in Vietnam had caused sympathy among the Yugoslav public. In autumn 1966, the official Student League—in accordance with the politics of the LCY—organized a series of protest activities culminating in demonstrations in Zagreb, Belgrade, and Sarajevo. But the dynamic of the protests spiraled out of control. Students were asking why the LCY on one hand condemned the war in Vietnam and on the other cooperated with the U.S. government on other issues. At the end of an official antiwar meeting in Belgrade on 23 December 1966, a group of students attempted to continue to protest with a march to the American Cultural Center and the U.S. Embassy. They were beaten by riot police, causing turmoil around the university in the center of Belgrade.⁴¹

The violence had lasting consequences. Within the Student League and the party organization at the university, a group of critical members protested against the violation of the autonomy of the university by the police, who had entered the campus. Their critique was dismissed by the LCY leadership, which expelled the chairman of the party organization at the Faculty of Philosophy after he had been identified as being at the center of the dissenters. The conflict led to the constitution of an informal network of student activists which involved key figures like Vladimir Mijanović and Alija Hodžić, who were to play a leading role in future protests. The Vietnam War protest of December 1966 can be considered a breaking point in the development of the student movement in Yugoslavia. It began a phase of open activism that culminated in the strike action of June 1968.⁴²

The second phase of the movement started with the protests of June 1968. Tito and the party leadership reacted to the “volcanic explosion of discontent” with a remarkable combined strategy of inclusion and repression. In a televised speech on 9 June, the party chairman admitted that students had good reasons to protest. Tito said he supported most of the demands of the strikers but condemned the “infiltration” of “reactionary elements.” He asked the students to return to work and promised he would resign from office if the problems were not solved.⁴³ In the following weeks, the manipulative meaning of Tito’s speech became apparent. Under the title “Guidelines” (*Smernice*), the party leadership issued a programmatic document in which it promised to fight against all negative social effects of the reform politics. The demands for democratization, however, were not included.⁴⁴

Tito instead opened a long-lasting repressive campaign against the more radical part of the student movement and its supporters in the critical intelligentsia. The first to be targeted were the professors in the *Praxis* group in Belgrade and Zagreb, who were accused of creating “chaos” in the universities.⁴⁵ On 19 July 1968, two entire party organizations at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade were expelled from the LCY.⁴⁶ After the Soviet Red Army-led invasion of the Warsaw Pact in the ČSSR on the 20 August 1968, the LCY leadership alerted the army to the possibility of a Soviet intervention in Yugoslavia. In this atmosphere of tension, the LCY started to move against the critical student press

and intentions in the autumn of 1968, to continue the work of the independent action committees that were formed during the strike.⁴⁷

Although the pressure on the student movement increased, initiatives were taken to continue the protests. In particular, two events stand out. In June 1970, a group of students in Belgrade started a hunger strike in solidarity with a miners' protest in Bosnia. The students were joined by the popular politically engaged actor Zoran Radmilović, and they demanded the fulfillment of the claims of the miners who were striking for better working conditions and payment.⁴⁸ Shortly after the strike ended, Vladimir Mijanović, now chairman of the Student League at the Faculty of Philosophy, was arrested by the police and accused of "enemy propaganda." In September 1970, Mijanović was condemned to twenty months "severe imprisonment." The reaction at Belgrade University showed that the activists could still mobilize a considerable number of students. Approximately 6,000 students at three faculties went on ten days of strike action against the court decision, but finally had to back down.⁴⁹

The second major event of the ongoing protest was a week-long occupation of the Faculty of Philosophy in Ljubljana at the end of May 1971. Here students protested against the repression of the activists who had led the first ecological protest in Yugoslavia. In a process of radicalization, student activists in Ljubljana centered on the editor of the student paper *Tribuna* in autumn 1971, proclaimed the establishment of a "Communist League" and a "Movement of 13 November," which echoed the formation of small Marxist-Leninist parties in Western Europe, and identified itself with the ideas of Mao Tse Tung and Leon Trotsky. In Belgrade, small underground Trotskyite groups were also formed from 1970 onwards.⁵⁰

The end of the second phase in the protest cycle was marked by dramatic events in Croatia in 1971. The party leadership in the republic had mobilized around a national program claiming that the Croatian Republic was structurally discriminated against. While Tito generally supported the Croat leadership in its fight for more decentralization during the second half of 1971, the "Croatian Spring," as the movement was later called, developed into a serious crisis.⁵¹ Radical nationalist circles had gained a growing influence over the situation, which threatened to get out of control. By the beginning of December 1971, the situation had escalated into a week-long student strike at Zagreb University. The protesters demanded more rights for national self-determination, the right for Croatia to control the foreign currency that was flowing into the republic from the increasing tourism on the Dalmatian coast, and even Croatia's own seat in the United Nations.⁵² The regime reacted harshly. Starting on 12 December 1971, more than 550 people involved in the protests were arrested. The leadership of the Croatian LCY and hundreds of members were expelled from the party.⁵³

The "Croatian Spring" was not only a serious crisis for the LCY; it was also a blow for the student movement of the New Left, which had been defeated by the nationalist groups at Zagreb University. The conflict in Croatia had changed

the political landscape in the whole of Yugoslavia. The national question now dominated over the problems of social justice and democratic rights raised by the New Left students in 1968. A new authoritarianism ruled the politics of the LCY. In the course of 1972, the federal leadership of the LCY extended the repression in Croatia to the other republics—especially Serbia—removing thousands of functionaries from their positions. At the same time, however, the party leadership included key demands of the Croatian Spring for more decentralization and national self-determination into the drafts for a new constitution, which was finally adopted in 1974. The reform phase, which had started in 1963–64, ended in “Decentralization without Democratization,” as sociologist Laslo Sekelj described it.⁵⁴

With the crisis in Croatia, the New Left–orientated student movement in Yugoslavia entered its final stage. Open protest activities were now unthinkable. In 1972–73, key protagonists in the movement were brought to trial and sentenced to prison.⁵⁵ Renewed attempts to reorganize a network of student groups on the platform of a democratic socialist reform agenda ended in the arrest of key activists—among them, later Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjić—in 1974.⁵⁶ By 1974, the LCY leadership started the final campaign to silence the critical philosophers and sociologists around *Praxis* who, despite conflicts, had always been sympathetic to the New Left students. In February 1975, eight *Praxis* professors and academics were expelled from Belgrade University, triggering a final moment of open student protest.⁵⁷ By then, however, activists had reorganized their political activity into illegal dissidence, which lasted until the end of the 1980s, when new, open opposition movements appeared, although now in the fundamentally different context of the collapse of the socialist utopia in Eastern Europe.⁵⁸

Consequences, Narratives and Politics of Memory

Although the student movement of the New Left in Yugoslavia did not fundamentally confront the political and moral values of society, it deeply shattered the public and the political system. The protests of the June 1968 were the first open revolt involving protesters around the country since World War II. Especially serious for the communist leadership was that after more than twenty years of “building socialism,” it was the youth who showed signs of discontent, anger, and resistance. In the official party discourse, the young people embodied the brighter future of socialism.⁵⁹ In the long run, the protests of June 1968 symbolized the end of the socialist myth of a “conflict-free society” that had been created by the LCY. Some observers interpret the events of June 1968 as the beginning of the end of Yugoslavia. This may be an overestimation given that the factors for the later breakup of Yugoslavia were multiple and involved complex internal and external developments. Surely it can be stated, however,

that the student movement left behind a generation of young people whose disappointed identification with the ideals of communism turned into a critical attitude toward the ruling system and its obvious failures.⁶⁰

As in other countries around the world, in the new states formed after the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, it is former activists of the 1968 student movements who today play a leading role in the public sphere, especially in Serbia, where the movement was strongest. Filmmakers like Želimir Žilnik, who was awarded the “Golden Bear” at the Berlin film festival “Berlinale” in 1969 for his drama *Early Works (Rani radovi)*, which takes up the theme of the Yugoslav student movement, continue to be voices of critical reflection on society. In the non-governmental organizations (NGO) sector, which plays a crucial role in the anti-war and anti-nationalist movement, figures like former strike leader Sonja Liht and Borka Pavičević are prominent. Former student activists like Zoran Djindjić and Dragoljub Mićunović were founding members and prominent leaders of the social-democratic *Democratic Party (DS)*, which played a leading role in the overthrow of Slobodan Milošević in October 2000. The charismatic Djindjić was elected as Serbia’s prime minister at the end of 2000 but was killed by former paramilitaries in March 2003. In contrast, some of the intellectuals in the *Praxis* group, like former anti-fascist partisan fighter and professor of sociology Mihailo Marković, turned their commitment to socialist Yugoslavia at the end of the 1980s into support for Milošević’s populist Serbian “patriotism,” which contained a rhetoric of defense of “Yugoslavia” against the “secessionists” in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, and in particular, Kosovo.⁶¹ This late national turn of a small number of former student activists and some of their intellectual mentors in the *Praxis* group is used by some historians, mainly from Croatia, to discredit the student movement in Belgrade as being “Serbian nationalist.”⁶²

Given that events of June 1968 and the long-term role of the student movement are widely considered as important factors for the later development of Yugoslavia, it is astonishing that academic investigations of the student protests are still in their very beginnings. The most detailed and differentiated study on the topic was completed in 1978 by sociologist and former *Praxis* member Nebojša Popov. The study, however, was banned from publication until 1990.⁶³ Since then Popov has continued to publish on the topic.⁶⁴ Apart from Popov’s work, Pervan’s study, published in 1978 in Australia, is the only academic work on the student movement.⁶⁵ In 1984, Arisić and Marković published a rather journalistic account of the protest movement.⁶⁶ In the anniversary year of 2008, an interesting collection of memories of eighty former participants of the movement was published.⁶⁷ In historiographical literature on the development, crisis, and disintegration of socialist Yugoslavia, the student protests are frequently mentioned, but are not analyzed in detail.⁶⁸

The reasons for the lack of investigation into the Yugoslav student protest movement seem to be multiple. First and foremost, the topic was taboo in socialist Yugoslavia. As the ban of Popov’s book and the repressive measures taken

against intellectuals who were associated with the student movement show, a critical analysis of the events in Yugoslavia was simply not possible until the mid 1980s, when a liberalization process began after Tito's death (1980) and economic and political crises emerged. The interest that developed in the topic at the end of the 1980s, however, was only of short duration. During the wars of the 1990s in all former republics of Yugoslavia, the "national question" dominated not only the political agenda, but also intellectual life. The outspoken pro-Yugoslav student movement of 1968 was not a topic that could deliver material for new narratives of the "national" histories in this context, which defined the multinational Yugoslavia as an "artificial" state that was shaped by pure force. As the nationalist agendas still dominate intellectual and political life, it is to be expected that any differentiated research on the student movement will remain on the margins of the post-Yugoslav historiography, at least in former Yugoslavia itself. The lack of attention given to the topic in former Yugoslavia is probably the reason for the almost complete absence of the Yugoslav student movement in the academic discussion of the global 1968 movement.⁶⁹

Notes

1. For a detailed account of the events on 2 and 3 June, see the report of an investigation commission set up by party organs and students: "Izveštaj Komisije za ispitivanje događaja na Novom Beogradu," in *Student vanredni broj* III (11.6.1968). For an account in English, see: Ralph Pervan, *Tito and the Students: The University and the University Student in Self-Managing Yugoslavia* (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1978), 18ff. and Dennison I. Rusinow, "Anatomy of a Student Revolt. 1. A week in June," in *American University Field Staff Reports. Southeast Europe Series* 15 (4), 1–24 (1968).
2. The term "Red University of Karl Marx" made reference to the Frankfurt University, which was occupied by German students in May 1968 and renamed "Karl-Marx-Universität." Michael Schmidtke, *Der Aufbruch der jungen Intelligenz. Die 68er-Jahre in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und den USA* (Frankfurt a. M.: Campus, 2003), 238. The most elaborated programmatic document of the Belgrade students was the "Political Action Program" (*Akciono-politički program*). The title was a clear reference to the "Action Program" of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (*KPČ*), adopted on 5 April 1968. It was published by the party organ *Rudé Právo* on 10 April. In the Yugoslav party organ *Borba* it appeared on 11 April. For the "Political Action Program" of the striking Belgrade students, see: "Akciono-politički program" in Editorial Board Praxis (ed.), *jun—lipanj 1968. Dokumenti* (Zagreb: Praxis, 1971), 139–41.
3. Rezolucija studentskih demonstracija, in Editorial Board Praxis, *Dokument*, 61–63.
4. Arhiv Jugoslavije (AJ), A CK SKJ, CK SKJ, IV/41 prilog 2: Stenografske beleške sa 41. sednice Izvršnog komiteta CK SKJ od 4. juna 1968.godine /neautorizovane/.
5. AJ, A CK SKJ, CK SKJ, III/132 prilog 2: Autorizovane stenografske beleške sa Devete zajedničke sednice Predsedništva i Izvršnog komiteta CK SKJ, održane 9. juna 1968. godine.

6. *Borba*, 23 May 1968.
7. *Borba*, 25 May 1968. The original interview appeared only five days earlier in *Le Nouvel Observateur*.
8. See, for example, the widely distributed weekly magazine *NIN*, 24 March 1968.
9. For a good account on Yugoslav politics on the reforms and crisis in Czechoslovakia see: Irena Reuter-Hendrichs, *Jugoslaviens Osteuropapolitik in den Krisen des sowjetischen Hegemonialsystems Eine Fallstudie zu den Entwicklungen in Ungarn/ Polen (1956), der ČSSR (1968) und Polen (1980/81)* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1985), 95ff.
10. For the particular ideology of the LCY, see the party program which was adopted at its seventh congress in Ljubljana in April 1958: Savez Komunista Jugoslavije, *Program SKJ* (Beograd: Komunist, 1958).
11. Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Yugoslavia and the Nonaligned World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).
12. For a critical evaluation of the “Workers Self-management” system see: Laslo Sekelj, *Yugoslavia: The Process of Desintegration* (New York: Atlantic Research and Publications, 1993).
13. In 1947, the average wage in Slovenia was 175 percent of the average wage in Yugoslavia. The average wage in Kosovo was only at 53 percent of the Yugoslav average. By 1978, this already high imbalance was growing further. The average wage in Slovenia was now 195 percent of the Yugoslav average and the average in Kosovo was down to 29 percent. Fred Singleton and Bernard Carter, *The Economy of Yugoslavia* (London: Croom Helm, 1982), 221.
14. Depending upon industry and qualification, the wage difference of workers at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s could have been as high as 1:7. John B. Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia* (London: Hurst & Company, 2000), 190f.
15. On the reforms of 1964–65 and the following crisis, see: Dennison I. Rusinow, *The Yugoslav Experiment 1948–1974* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); John R. Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History: Twice there was a Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); and Sabrina P. Ramet, *The Three Yugoslavias. State-Building and Legitimation, 1918–2005* (Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2006).
16. After the split with Moscow in 1948 on the Adriatic island of Goli Otok, thousands of real or alleged sympathizers of the *Communist Information Bureau* were detained in prison. Rajko Danilović, *Upotreba neprijatelja. Političa sudenja u Jugoslaviji 1945–1991*, 2nd ed. (Beograd: Montena, 2002), 224ff.
17. According to official statistics, between 1958 and 1969 a total of 1,732 workers’ strikes were registered. Between 1969 and the beginning of 1972, at least another 1,400 strikes took place. The strike wave peaked in the middle of the 1960s when economic reforms were introduced, and after the student strike of 1968. Nebojša Popov, *Sukobi. Društveni sukobi—izazov sociologiji*, 2nd ed. (Beograd: Centar za filozofiju i društvenu teoriju, 1990), 123ff.; Darko Marinković, *Štrajkovi i Društvena kriza* (Beograd: Institut za političke studije, 1995); Wolfgang Höpken, *Sozialismus und Pluralismus. Entwicklung und Demokratiepotehtial des Selbstverwaltungssystemes* (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1984), 234f.
18. *Radio Free Europe Research Communist Area*, 12 July 1964; Popov, *Sukobi*, 142ff.
19. Miodrag Milenović, “Dinamika razvoja visokog školstva i zapošljavanja diplomira-

- nih studenata,” in *Ideje* 1(2), 240 (1970). Pervan (1978) gives a good account of the material shortcomings and structural problems at the universities.
20. The social problems of the youth were also registered in the official statements of the Youth League and the Student League. This is shown, for example, in an interview with the chairman of the Youth League, Janez Kocijančič, in the party organ *Borba* under the title “Creative Unrest of the Youth,” *Borba*, 25 May, 1968.
 21. For an analysis of the student press in early 1968, see: Lev Detela, “The Yugoslav student revolt. An attempt at interpretation,” in *Review of the Study Centre for Yugoslav Affairs* 10(2), (1970): 768–88.
 22. AJ, Savez studenata, 145-26-256: Predlog teza o reorganizaciji SSJ, 1967.
 23. AJ, Savez studenata, 145-27-508: Predlog za Reorganizaciju Saveza studenata na Filozofskom fakultetu, March 1968.
 24. An interesting example was a meeting of student LCY members on 20 March 1968 in the student hostel complex in Novi Beograd. In an internal report to the leadership of the LCY at city level an observer states that the atmosphere during the discussion about material shortcomings at the university was “bitter.” One participant proposed a protest action during which “some windows of nice buildings” should be smashed to draw attention to the problems of the students. Istorijski Arhiv Beograda (IAB), Fond GK SKS Beograd, god. 1968, Materijali o idejno-političkim i kulturno-prosvetskim pitanjima, agitaciji i štampi, inv. br. 520.: Beleška o sastanku članova SK u Studentskom gradu (Autor: N. Radaš, 29.3.1968).
 25. To my knowledge, the first time the issue of a “strike” was publicly raised was by an editor of *Student* at the beginning of April 1968. *Student*, 9 April 1968.
 26. On the issue of the resolution to Poland see *Student* 9 April 1968, 16 April 1968 and 23 April 1968.
 27. On the function of these organs see: Popov, *Sukobi*, 54f.
 28. Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert, Detlef Junker, *Introduction*, in Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert, and Detlef Junker (ed.), *1968—A World Transformed* (Washington: The German Historical Institute and Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1–27, here 3.
 29. Drugovi radnici, građani i omladinci, in Editorial board Praxis, *Dokumenti*, 83.
 30. Dragomir Olujić in an interview with the author in Belgrade, 11 June 2005.
 31. Pervan, *Tito and the students*, 171.
 32. For a detailed discussion of this topic, see: Popov, *Sukobi*.
 33. The anti-nationalist orientation was remarked also by Tito in his internal analysis of the protests in a closed meeting of the party leadership: “I have to say one positive thing, and that is, that neither one slogan amongst these young people was on the line of national chauvinism.” AJ, A CK SKJ, CK SKJ, III/132 prilog 2: Autorizovane stenografske beleške sa Devete zajedničke sednice Predsedništva i Izvršnog komiteta CK SKJ, održane 9. juna 1968. godine.
 34. The issues of social equality and democratization were in fact the first demands in the “Political Action Program.” Akciono-politički program, in Editorial board Praxis, *Dokumenti*, 139–41.
 35. The magazine *Praxis* was founded in 1964. Although diverse in their political orientation, the editors committed themselves to “humanist Marxism” and “Anti-Stalinism.” *Praxis* quickly achieved a considerable international reputation and edited an issue in French, English, and German, which was widely distributed in New Left

- circles in the West. Gerson S. Sher, *Praxis—Marxist Criticism and Dissent in Socialist Yugoslavia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977).
36. Božidar Jakšić, *Praxis i Korčulanska ljetnja škola: Kritike, osporavanja, napadi*, in Nebojša Popov, ed., *Sloboda i nasilje: Razgovor o časopisu Praxis i Korčulanskoj letnjoj školi* (Beograd: Res Publica, 2003), 167–232.
 37. The musical *Hair* was shown in the Belgrade theater Atelje 212 in 1968 only a few months after its premiere in New York. On the theater scene, see: Ana Suša, “*Bitefi pobuna. Šestdesete i recepcija internacionalnih pozorišnih uticaja u Jugoslaviji*” in *Teatron. Časopis za pozorišnu umetnost* 26 (116–117), 32–38 (2001–2002).
 38. Daniel. J. Goulding, *Liberated cinema. The Yugoslav experience* 2nd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003).
 39. The protest against market reforms was frequently articulated. In the characteristic resolution of the students of the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, it is stated: “We are in favor of social ownership and against intentions to form joint stockholding capitalist enterprises.” The same resolution states in respect to the migration of “Gastarbeiter”: “It hurts us that thousands of our people have to go and serve and work for world capital.” Drugovi radnici, građani i omladinci, in Editorial board *Praxis, Dokumenti*, 83.
 40. Of particular importance was the “III Stražilovski susret,” in June 1963 in Novi Sad. Here young critical intellectuals from all parts of Yugoslavia met. See the edition of the Novi Sad student paper *Polja*, 10 September 1963.
 41. Izveštaj komisije izabrane na sastanku komunista Filozofskog fakulteta (29.12.1966), in Editorial board *Praxis, Dokumenti*, 13–22 and Izveštaj komisije UK SKS (6. marta 1967), in Editorial board *Praxis, Dokumenti*, 22–33.
 42. Mirko Arsić and Dragan Marković, *Studentski bunt i društvo* 2nd ed. (Beograd: Istraživačko centar SSO Srbije, 1985), 36ff.; Popov, *Sukobi*, 161 and an interview with Vladimir Mijanović conducted by the author on 27 May 2005.
 43. Tito govori, in Editorial board *Praxis, Dokumenti*, 337–40.
 44. “Smernice o najvažnijim zadacima komunista u razvijanju sistema društveno-ekonomskih i političkih odnosa,” in Editorial board *Praxis, Dokumenti*, 361–65. This document was adopted by the Presidency of the Executive Committee of the Central Committee of the LCY on 9 June and debated in the public in the weeks after the strike.
 45. The public attack on the Belgrade *Praxis* members was opened by Tito at a speech in front of the Trade Union Congress on 26 June. Tito govori, in Editorial board *Praxis, Dokumenti*, 376–80.
 46. Raspustanje ogranka SK na odeljenju za filozofiju i sociologiju, in Editorial board *Praxis, Dokumenti*, 416–22. In Zagreb already on 8 June, prominent *Praxis* member and Professor Gajo Petrović, with two other participants of the protests, was expelled from the party. *Vjesnik*, 9 June 1968.
 47. Popov, *Sukobi*, 168ff.
 48. Radmilović (1933–85) played in dozens of theater plays and films. Internationally, he became known for his role in Dušan Makavejev’s “W.R.—Misterije organizma” (1971), a key film of the Yugoslav “black wave” that explores the relationship between communist politics and sexuality, as well as the life and work of the Marxist psychoanalyst Wilhelm Reich.

49. *Radio Free Europe Research Communist Area*, 29 October 1970.
50. Popov, *Sukobi*, 199ff. Dragomir Olujic in an interview with the author in Belgrade, 11 June 2005.
51. For a good discussion on interpretations of the “Croatian Spring” see: Marko Zubak, “The Croatian Spring: Interpreting the Communist Heritage in Post-communist Croatia” in *East Central Europe/ECE* 32 (1–2) (2005): 191–225.
52. For the demands see: *Preporod hrvatskih sveučilištaraca. Anatomija slučaja Čičak 1971* (Zagreb: Kritika, 1971).
53. Rusinow, *Experiment*, 309f. According to Savka Dabčević-Kučar, the leading figure in the LCY in Croatia during the Croatian Spring, up to 70,000 party members were expelled. Dušan Bilandžić, *Hrvatska moderna povijest* (Zagreb: Golden Marketing, 1999), 655.
54. Sekelj, *Yugoslavia*, 6.
55. Among them were figures who had maintained constant activity in the protest movement since 1968 or even before, such as Milan Nikolić, Pavluško Imširović, Jelka Kljajić, Božidar Jakšić, Lazar Stojanović, Kosta Čavoški, Ljiljana Mijanović-Jovičić, Danilo Udovički, and Vladimir Mijanović. (ed.) *Poslednja instanca*, 3 vols (Belgrade: Helsinški odbor za ljudska prava u Srbiji, 2003) vol. 2, 443ff.
56. On 30 and 31 January 1974, representatives of philosophical faculties from the whole of Yugoslavia met in Ljubljana to discuss a new initiative of common action on the platform of a “left critique” of society. The representative of the Belgrade Faculty was Zoran Djindjić who later emigrated to Germany. He was arrested and brought to court for “enemy propaganda” together with Miodrag Stojanović, Lino Veljak, Mario Rubbi, Darko Štrajin, and Vinko Zalarj. Popović, *Poslednja instanca*, vol. 2: 555ff.
57. Nebojša Popov, *Contra Fatum. Slučaj Grupe Profesora Filozofskog Fakulteta u Beogradu 1968—1988*, Beograd: Mladost, 1989.
58. Many student activists remained politically active and formed part of the dissident scene until the end of the SFRY. Nebojša Popov, “Disidentska skričalica” in *Republika* 7 (2000): 242–243. In 1984, a last spectacular court process was initiated against former students leaders Vladimir Mijanović, Dragomir Olujic, Jelka Imširović and Pavluško Imširović. Popović, *Poslednja Instanca*, vol.2: 931ff.
59. The “youth” had a strong symbolic importance in the official ideology. Every year, Tito’s birthday on 25 May, was celebrated as the “Day of the Youth,” with huge mass rallies, where the youth was supposed to show loyalty to the party leader and communism.
60. See the interesting discussion of former *Praxis* intellectuals Zagorka Golubović, Mihailo Marković, Ljubomir Tadić, Svetozar Stojanović, Dragoljub Mićunović, Miladin Životić, Trivo Inđić, Nebojša Popov: Slobodan Divjak, “Studentske demonstracije 1968. i 1991—Sličnosti i razlike,” in *Treći program* 23 (1–2) (1991): 39–101.
61. On the “national turn” of a segment of former left-oriented intellectuals in Serbia. Jasna Dragović-Soso, *Saviours of the Nation: Serbia’s Intellectual Opposition and the Revival of Nationalism* (London: Hurst, 2002).
62. Most prominent advocate of this opinion is Bilandžić, *Hrvatska*, 518ff. He argues that the students’ egalitarian position had “objectively” favored the “state monopol on property” and thereby centralist tendencies favorable to Serbian nationalism. Popov

dismisses this critique and points out the Bilandžić had already backed Croatian nationalist opponents of the student movement of the New Left in 1968. Popov, *Sloboda i nasilje*, 60f.

63. Popov, *Sukobi*.
64. His latest publication is an edited conversation of former *Praxis* intellectuals which also deals with the student movement. Popov, *Sloboda i nasilje*, 2003. Popov was also one of the editors of a compilation of documents on the protests which was published already in 1971. Editorial board Praxis, *Dokumenti*.
65. Pervan, *Tito and the Students*.
66. Arsić/Marković, *Studentski bunt*.
67. Djordje Malavrazić, *Šestdeset osma lične istorije. 80 svedočenja* (Beograd: Službeni glasnik, 2008).
68. An exception is the American historian D.I. Rusinow who was an eye witness of the June 1968 protests in Belgrade. Rusinow, *Yugoslav Experiment*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977).
69. None of the recent studies on the global 1968 movement includes a chapter on Yugoslavia.

Part II

Protest Without Borders

Recontextualization of Protest Cultures

Chapter 6

“Johnson War Criminal!”

Vietnam War Protests in the Netherlands¹

Rimko van der Maar

Introduction

The year 1968 has never been exceptionally important in Dutch historiography. This is because, in the Netherlands of 1968, there were no riots between students and the police. Furthermore, the flash points of 1960s-conflict in the Netherlands were in 1966 and 1969. June 1966 was also referred to as the “Dutch May 1968.”² On 13 June, disorder broke out on the streets of Amsterdam between youths and the police following the death of a bricklayer during a protest among construction workers;³ and in May 1969, students staged sit-ins demanding democratization in the main buildings of their universities.

However, if 1968 is ignored, it is not deservedly so. Having been partially inspired by student protests in West Germany, in February and March students throughout the Netherlands held demonstrations calling for freedom of speech and protesting against the American military operation in Vietnam. This was a reaction to the arrest of a number of students who had displayed posters with the slogan “Johnson War Criminal” or carried these with them at demonstrations.

There are a number of salient issues and affairs characteristic of the 1960s that commingle in the controversy surrounding this slogan. First, we see an indecisive Dutch government, indecisive due to both the events of June 1966 and the increasing social critique of the Vietnam War. Second, the slogan affair sheds light on the importance of the media in relation to social protest during this period.

The third striking issue is that Dutch students felt encouraged and inspired by student protests abroad, particularly in West Germany. Although to a lesser degree, the Netherlands also shared in the upsurge of student protests following the Tet Offensive.⁴

Fourth, the slogan affair enables us to see how the Vietnam War could become so closely related to national issues, which also explains to a certain degree the authorities’ confusion. Finally, the affair surrounding the “Johnson War Criminal” slogan demonstrates how World War II served as an important frame of reference during this period.

The Early Years

The first Dutch Vietnam activists generally had a pacifist background. They were members of the Pacifist-Socialist Party, established in 1957, or were active participants in similar pacifist groups. Youths quickly allied themselves with the activists. In 1965, the first Dutch Vietnam committee, the Youth Committee for Peace and Self-Determination for Vietnam, was established from the ranks of a number of left-wing student organizations and youth organizations. The activists involved usually already knew one another from earlier protests, such as those against the atomic bomb or Portuguese rule in Angola.⁵

The first Vietnam protests were directed at the Dutch government and parliament. This was not only because these were the parties which supported intervention, but also because protesters expected that the Netherlands would be able to play a mediating role as it was a member of the United Nations Security Council in 1965 and 1966.⁶ In addition to sending letters of protest and organizing petitions and small demonstrations, the first Vietnam activists occupied themselves with exposing the “true” motives of the American government and providing information about the conflict by publishing brochures, organizing local protest meetings, and from 1966, publishing a bi-weekly magazine (the *Vietnam Bulletin*).

The early actions were, however, too insignificant to successfully mobilize public opinion. In 1965, the American government’s reasoning that intervention in Vietnam was necessary in order to prevent the spread of communism in Asia and even the world was commonly accepted. At the same time, criticism of the United States was considered ungrateful because the U.S. had been one of the liberators of the Netherlands from Nazi Germany and had become its provider of nuclear protection.

Nonetheless, criticism continued to increase. The continual bombings in particular caused an outcry among the people. In October 1965, modeled on an appeal by the American Christian peace organization Fellowship of Reconciliation, a full-page petition appeared in the liberal newspaper the *Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant*, in which over 250 intellectuals called upon the Dutch government to protest the bombing of North Vietnam.⁷ At about the same time, two Amsterdam student organizations held the first Dutch teach-in on the subject of Vietnam. The debate, which was again structured on a U.S. model, drew an audience of approximately 2,000 people, largely students, and received broad coverage in the press.⁸ For many, the Amsterdam teach-in was an eye-opener, as it made it unmistakably clear that it was not just small left-leaning groups that were making a fuss about the events in Vietnam. Furthermore, for the first time it became evident that the issue of Vietnam was part of a burgeoning anti-authoritarian wave of protest.⁹

The question of the justness of America’s military effort had been a topic of debate in the national media since the beginning of 1966. The key questions

revolved around the extent to which the continual bombings were necessary and effective, whether the Chinese were actually advancing into Southeast Asia, and how strange it seemed that the American government should champion the free world while backing a non-democratic regime in South Vietnam.

Meanwhile, Vietnam War protests in Amsterdam were getting out of hand. Young demonstrators purposely sought confrontation with the police. The *Aktiegroep Vietnam* (Vietnam Action Group), established in April 1966 was a leading player. It was a motley group of anarchist youths (students and non-students alike) and older Christian pacifist activists. Their aim was to gain attention for the war in Vietnam by provoking the police and the law in a way similar to Provo's actions. The *Aktiegroep Vietnam* provoked the authorities by demonstrating without a permit. Many of the mostly young demonstrators shouted the "Johnson Murderer!" slogan because of the fact that it was illegal to "insult a friendly head of state" in the Netherlands. This provision dated from 1816 and was chiefly intended to emphasize Dutch neutrality in international politics. Although the Netherlands had abandoned neutrality after World War II, the police and the law initially tried to enforce strict compliance with this article of the law.¹⁰ That aspiration quickly proved to be a lost cause, as there were simply too many offenders. The demonstrators further complicated the job of the police by chanting slogans that were not explicitly offensive, such as "Adolf Johnson."¹¹

Just as the demonstrators had hoped, it was those demonstrations that got out of hand that received enormous attention from the national media. However, the target of protest, the American presence in South Vietnam, was largely ignored. Instead, attention shifted to the freedom to demonstrate. Debates were held on whether the article should be repealed. Disappointed, some of the activists pointed out that the riotous demonstrations had diverted attention from the war in Vietnam. Other activists argued that social change could only be brought about through serious confrontation with the authorities.¹²

Helping American deserters was another form of protest that occurred in this period. The U.S. soldiers had come from NATO bases in West Germany and were wandering through Amsterdam in search of shelter. The idea of providing assistance to deserters had come in part from French and West German students with whom the Dutch students maintained regular contact. It seemed more worthwhile and was more exciting than the demonstrations, which had begun to seem like going through the motions.¹³

The Spread of Protest

In 1967, just as in the United States, protest spread in the Netherlands. In May and October 1967, two Vietnam War demonstrations took place, drawing more than 10,000 people of all ages and backgrounds. The initiator was Piet Nak, a man from Amsterdam who was well-known in the Netherlands for playing a

leading role in the February Strike of 1941, a communist-initiated protest that citizens of Amsterdam carried out in opposition to the persecution of the city's Jews. After Nak broke with the Communist Party of the Netherlands, the press painted him as the personification of the strike. Throughout the 1960s, he appeared regularly in the media to recount his memories.¹⁴

The Piet Nak Committee succeeded in reaching the general public as anxiety about America's hard-line approach spread into larger segments of society. Increasingly, the media expressed the view that the U.S. government should have the courage and sense of honor to stop the bombing campaign in order to make way for peace negotiations. It was also important that Nak was a highly respected public figure and his participation encouraged many people to voice their opinion as well. Furthermore, he was mediagenic. In interviews, he was able to express his disgust of the Vietnam War clearly and dramatically. In order to show people his perception of their responsibility in the matter, Nak frequently drew comparisons between the American military presence in South Vietnam and the German occupation of the Netherlands during World War II, placing particular emphasis on the treatment of the Dutch Jews.¹⁵ He implied that those who did not protest against the Vietnam War had probably "stood aside" during World War II as well. This was a fairly controversial accusation considering that the question of whether the Dutch had sufficiently resisted German occupation was being widely debated in this period.¹⁶

The activities of the committee backing Nak can also account for the high turnout. The committee consisted not only of people from the left-leaning (Amsterdam) activist scene, but also included people from circles rarely associated with demonstrations. Lawyers, psychologists, teachers, religious leaders, professors, and local politicians were among the first members. Aiming to attract as diverse an audience as possible, the founders opted for a so-called decent demonstration, where provocative slogans such as "Johnson Murderer!" were taboo. They also took into account that overly severe criticism of the United States was unpopular in the Netherlands.¹⁷

The committee's success was further due to the process of social and political realignment that was rapidly gaining momentum at this time. The committee benefited from the fact that more and more people felt less of a connection to a single social group and the political party associated with it; consequently, people were more willing to express their political opinions freely. Three months before the first large demonstration organized by the Piet Nak Committee, the first signs of dissatisfaction with the political establishment—that had been brewing for some time—became evident in the election results for the Lower House. The major losers were the Dutch Labor Party (PvdA) and the Catholic People's Party (KVP), the two parties that ended up directly opposed to one another following the fall of the government. The major winners were the right-wing Peasants' Party and the newcomer Democrats 66 (D66), a left-wing liberal party, which made a case for more democratization by calling for an elected prime minister,

as well as other reforms. The results showed that voters were adrift and that the traditional parties were losing touch with voters.¹⁸

Despite growing criticism, the official Dutch stance on Vietnam did not change. Lacking an alternative, a relatively traditional and right-leaning government took office in April 1967. This government, consisted of the three big Christian parties and the liberal conservative People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD), strongly supported the United States. Prime Minister Piet de Jong and Minister for Foreign Affairs Joseph Luns claimed that the American government was justified in combating the threat of communism in Asia. De Jong and Luns also believed that criticism of the U.S. was one-sided.¹⁹

Due to its pro-American stance, the government came into conflict with Parliament in August 1967. Under pressure from public opinion, Parliament passed a motion that called upon the government to urge the American government to stop the bombing and pave the way for peace negotiations.²⁰ However, De Jong refused to act. In the following months, Minister Luns tried to meet the Lower House halfway by working the parliamentary motion into a speech delivered to the United Nations, but this was not enough. Finally, in February 1968, Luns promised to approach a number of countries with the aim of drawing up an international peace plan. Nothing ever came of this plan because on 31 March 1968, President Johnson announced that the bombing campaign would be stopped for the most part and that peace negotiations were in sight.²¹

Vietnam activists avidly followed parliamentary debates about Vietnam, but were disappointed by the results. For the activists, the fact that the government had ignored a motion and that the Lower House just accepted this, was proof enough that Dutch political life was not taking the unrest in its own society seriously enough.²² One group of activists continued trying to put pressure on politics while another group, disappointed, turned away from politics and focused on leading local Vietnam committees, as well as raising money and collecting medicine for the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam (NLF).²³

Tensions within the Vietnam movement also began to rise in early 1968 as a result of the escalating war and the Dutch government's support of American Vietnam policy, as well as because of internal frictions. Since the earliest protests, the activists had been at odds with each other, each suspecting the other of using the war in Vietnam to seek public attention. There were also constant rows about which protest methods were the most effective.²⁴

From 1967 on, the main point of contention was the Piet Nak Committee. Groups of young activists found the committee bourgeois and claimed that it had taken the sting out of the Vietnam War protests. They longed for more radical methods of protest and again sought confrontation with the police. In keeping with the mood of the period, prior to the parliamentary debate on the war in Vietnam on 6 February 1968, The Hague police hermetically sealed off the *Binnenhof* (Dutch Parliament grounds) with crush barriers for fear of disorderly conduct.²⁵

Post–Tet Offensive Upsurge

The brief revival of Vietnam War protest that occurred in the Netherlands in February and March 1968 had a number of causes. First of all, an important incentive was the Tet Offensive. The images of the fighting in Saigon made a deep impression in the Netherlands. Members of Parliament openly admitted that the American operation in South Vietnam had become hopeless and newspapers wrote articles stating that the United States should quickly find a political solution.²⁶ However, for many activists and scholars, the criticism still did not go far enough. They seized upon the Tet Offensive as an opportunity to renew their demands for the immediate and unconditional retreat of U.S. forces from Vietnam.

One example of this was the so-called Critical University. Students from Berlin, Louvain, Amsterdam, and Nijmegen established this transnational action group in 1967. Its aim was to increase student awareness of the problems, coupled with the mass character of education that was becoming the norm. The Critical University also wanted to promote solidarity with so-called liberation movements in Third World countries.²⁷ A few weeks after the Tet Offensive, the Critical University distributed a report of their investigation into the Dutch press coverage of the offensive at universities. They claimed that although some criticism existed, the press was still very biased toward the United States, despite the Tet Offensive.²⁸

A second influence on the upsurge of protest was the increasing unrest in West Germany. From 1966 on, a group of students from the German Student Movement (SDS), led by sociology student Rudi Dutschke began to take action against the U.S. military presence in Vietnam.²⁹ In the Netherlands, students and the media kept a close eye on the situation in West Germany.³⁰ The fascination for the active West German students was only strengthened by Dutschke's visit to Amsterdam on 21 February 1968, a few days after the SDS organized an International Vietnam Conference in West Berlin.³¹ With press photographers crowded around him, the student leader led a torch procession of several hundred students. He then gave a speech in the conference room of a reputable Amsterdam hotel, addressing approximately 1,200 students and a number of onlookers, including a television crew.³²

Dutschke had traveled to the Netherlands at the invitation of the General Student Union of Amsterdam (ASVA) and the Student Trade Movement (SVB) to speak at the International Day against Imperialism and Colonialism. By 1966, the ASVA and the SVB (established in 1963) had become both politicized and radicalized, with regard to international issues as well. The board of the ASVA felt it its duty to take a stand against injustice in the world, and particularly the “neo-colonial” violence in the Third World. From 1967 on, the student organization was actively involved in protests against the Franco regime in Spain, the 1967 military coup in Greece, and the Vietnam War.³³

In his Amsterdam speech, Dutschke stated that he had come to the Netherlands to emphasize the international character of his resistance. He underlined his view that terror against “[*West German Foreign Minister Willy*] Brandt and his kind” was pointless. “They are no better than Luns and other idiots,” he said. According to Dutschke, activism should take on “the war machine,” especially the NATO bases in Western Europe. “The new terrorism is not to be waged on humans, but on inhuman machines,” stated Dutschke.³⁴

A third factor, and also a national issue, contributed to the upsurge in Vietnam protests in February and March 1968. The issue revolved around a philosophy professor in Groningen, Bernhard Delfgaauw. Delfgaauw had been an important intellectual leader of the Vietnam movement for years. He spoke at protest meetings, was on the recommending committee of the Vietnam Youth Committee, and gave interviews in which he firmly condemned the American action. Delfgaauw had various reasons for his opposition. First and foremost, it troubled him that Vietnam’s struggle for independence was being hindered. His view was that apparently the West refused to grant the Third World the same rights that it had claimed for itself. Furthermore, he felt that the United States had to be stopped because, to his mind, what was happening proved that not only the German nation, but any nation, was capable of committing atrocities.³⁵ Delfgaauw, like many Vietnam activists and left-wing intellectuals, was also convinced that the Netherlands could play a much more important role in international life than it actually did.³⁶

After the Piet Nak Committee demonstration in October 1967, Delfgaauw announced in front of thousands of people that President Johnson was a war criminal according to the criteria of the war crimes tribunals at Nuremberg and Tokyo after World War II. With this assertion, Delfgaauw hoped to draw attention to the International War Crimes Tribunal on Vietnam that had been set up by the elderly British philosopher, pacifist, and winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, Bertrand Russell. Led by the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, the tribunal had two sessions, one in Stockholm and one in Roskilde. Its goal was to investigate whether the United States was guilty of crimes against peace and humanity and of war crimes in Vietnam on the basis of the Charter of the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg. Much to Delfgaauw’s annoyance, the tribunal received little international media attention. In the Netherlands, it was mainly the Amsterdam student activists Ton Regtien and Maarten van Dulleman who reported on the sessions via the alternative left-wing media.³⁷

For the Dutch authorities, Delfgaauw’s assertion was problematic. The question was whether the professor, like the students who had cried “Johnson murderer!” had offended a friendly head of state and should be prosecuted. The day after the demonstration in October 1967, Delfgaauw was interrogated by the police but afterwards not contacted again. When the Vietnam War became the center of attention following the Tet Offensive, Delfgaauw called upon judicial authorities to announce publicly whether he was to be prosecuted or not. The

parliamentary questions that followed forced the Minister for Justice, Carel Polak, to clarify his position on the matter.³⁸

The minutes of the cabinet proceedings show that the government was divided on the issue. It had to decide between two evils. If Polak decided not to prosecute Delfgaauw, it could provoke even more “insults,” and the minister could also be accused of practicing class justice. But were the minister to decide to prosecute Delfgaauw, the trial would most likely result in media hype. Moreover, Polak suspected that Delfgaauw had a reasonable chance of being acquitted because the professor’s statement had been part of one coherent argument. This made it unclear whether his words were actually liable for punishment. After a great deal of internal discussion, Polak finally decided not to prosecute Delfgaauw.³⁹

Subsequently, students began to follow Delfgaauw’s lead, displaying posters that read “Johnson War Criminal,” with or without the addition “according to the criteria of Nuremberg and Tokyo.” The public prosecutor of the district in question ordered the police to take action, because the posters, as opposed to Delfgaauw’s statement, were “insulting” to Johnson. Not only were dozens of youths detained, but police also raided the ASVA headquarters, which had distributed hundreds of posters actually citing the professor literally, even providing the appropriate reference.⁴⁰

However, it quickly became clear that the police action had produced an adverse effect, just as it had done in 1966. Students displayed posters all across the Netherlands and a demonstration followed in Utrecht on 2 March 1968, attracting more than 2,000 youths. The banners carried by the students illustrated their sense of being strengthened by the ongoing student revolt abroad. One student carried a sign that stated “Berlin, Rome, and Utrecht, we demand the right to tell a ‘friendly head of state’ what we think.”⁴¹ The protest was followed up with the “Take Johnson to Court” action which consisted of providing legal advice and information for students (and non-students) who had to appear in court under Article 117 of the Dutch Penal Code.

Meanwhile, the media was having a field day with the police action. The central question under discussion was to what extent it was legally and morally justifiable to prosecute the students while Delfgaauw was in the clear. It was also favorable for Delfgaauw that more attention was finally being given to the alleged war crimes of the U.S. Army.⁴² The professor encouraged the debate by openly challenging the Minister for Justice. Delfgaauw and his colleagues in Groningen sent an open letter to him in which they expressed their anxiety about what they perceived as the authorities’ repressive attitude. Their action garnered a great deal of respect in the university sphere.⁴³ Although scholars had been active in the Vietnam movement since 1965, they had never before been so much in the spotlight. Their participation added intellectual depth to the protest and gave it significantly more weight.

Carry On or Give In?

The continuous provocations caused Polak to pursue behind-the-scenes discussions on the future of Article 117 of the Dutch Penal Code. Should the prosecutions be pursued at the risk of the situation escalating, as had happened in June 1966? Or was it better to yield in order to keep the situation under control? Policymakers and Members of Parliament specialized in legal affairs advised Polak to take the second option, because experience had shown that adopting too severe a stance would only lead to further provocation.⁴⁴

But for Polak, a progressive liberal conservative of the VVD, that was too simple. He was annoyed at how easily the academic world had provoked the authorities and even saw it as a personal attack.⁴⁵ Upon receiving Delfgaauw's open letter, Polak decided to reply immediately. The letter made front page news. Polak wrote that it was morally and ethically unacceptable for professors to encourage students "to commit acts which were not only criminal, but also needlessly hurtful, increasingly indecent and contrary to the achievements of a democratic society." Polak argued that the discussion surrounding Article 117 threatened to obscure the debate on the Vietnam War. He wrote that the insults lacked "all cogency" and prevented a proper discussion.⁴⁶

Polak unrelentingly decided to pursue the prosecution of the people who had violated Article 117. He decided to justify his decision in detail at the budget debate in the Upper House before the critics had time to respond. He argued that the government could not just stop enforcing the law just because a "mass infringement" had occurred or because a law was regarded as outdated. In Polak's opinion, if the government capitulated to a particular minority group's objections to a rule of law, it was no better than "accepting the first principles of anarchy."⁴⁷ A law could only be changed according to the appropriate procedures as specified in the Constitution.

Polak's closing statement made it clear how seriously he took the situation. In this candid statement, the minister initially expressed his understanding for the protest. He said that he could imagine why the youth, who were being confronted on a daily basis by the media with "so much injustice, such immense suffering" in other parts of the world, were directing their frustration at the government, despite it being just as powerless as the people it represented in most cases. "They also feel abandoned by us. And I believe they consider us cowardly, indifferent and complacent," he said.⁴⁸

Thereupon, Polak lashed out at the offenders, giving them a taste of their own medicine. While Delfgaauw and his supporters warned against a "second Auschwitz" in Vietnam and acted as though they had the moral upper hand, Polak accused them of undermining the hard-won democracy of World War II with their protest actions. According to Polak, social unrest should *never* justify deliberate violation of rules of law; democracy was too fragile for this. "Our gen-

eration has seen democracies fall into the hands of the most terrible dictatorships as a result of internal strife and intolerance because the freedom of demonstration deteriorated into terror," he said.⁴⁹ At no other time in the 1960s did a Dutch minister take such a frank and well-grounded stance against demonstrators.

Polak's uncustomary reaction resulted in two things. On one hand, it generated even more media attention for the issue, to the advantage of Delfgaauw and his sympathizers.⁵⁰ But on the other hand, Polak had discredited Delfgaauw. Increasingly, the professor was accused of having used unsound methods to gain attention for the Vietnam War, namely, a disputed rule of law.⁵¹ Furthermore, questions were raised as to the students' sincerity. Were they actually interested in Vietnam or were they just interested in cop baiting? In April 1968, Delfgaauw admitted that the situation had gotten out of hand. Although he still stood squarely behind his statement, he added that he had never demanded that Johnson be tried and that it had never been his intention to equate the president directly with Hitler, as the students had done.⁵²

The fact that the prosecutions were pursued did not lead to further escalation of the situation. Protest against the prohibited "Johnson War Criminal" slogan suddenly stopped in early April 1968 when the American president unexpectedly announced that the bombing campaign would for the most part be stopped and that he would not run for reelection. Other forms of protest against the Vietnam War also became less frequent after the summer of 1968.

There was another upsurge of Vietnam War protests after the American invasion of Cambodia in May 1970, but this lacked the fervor it had had in the 1960s. As this chapter has shown, Vietnam activists in the 1960s opposed not only the war, but also the national authorities. This can be explained in relation to a combination of factors, the most noteworthy of which were the continuing escalation of the Vietnam conflict and the way it was represented, the government's passive stance to the Vietnam War combined with the ardent police response to demonstrations, and the fact that the Netherlands still had to come to terms with World War II and the German occupation. The use of the provocative "Johnson War Criminal" slogan was a new type of protest. Following the failed debate in the Lower House, new methods were sought to gain attention for the Vietnam War and to confront the government with respect to its passive stance.

By the 1970s, the symbolic meaning of the Vietnam War had lost much of its significance. Criticism of the United States was no longer controversial and had even become socially acceptable. This was largely due to the beginning of the peace negotiations, the American retreat and emerging détente between the superpowers. Furthermore, many people found it difficult to reconcile the American bombardment of North Vietnam with the United States' wish to withdraw. At the height of the protest, in January 1973, more than 50,000 Dutch citizens took to the streets in Utrecht to protest against the so-called Christmas bombings.⁵³

The Vietnam protests had also lost some of their symbolic value because demonstrations had become a socially accepted occurrence in the Netherlands by the early 1970s. From 1969, countless action groups organized actions for all kinds of causes.⁵⁴ The police and the law became used to it and reacted flexibly to demonstrations. To keep the situation under control, they frequently avoided severe methods or harsh sentences.⁵⁵ In the early 1970s, no action was taken on youths who provoked the police with the slogan, “Nixon Murderer!” even though Article 117 was still in place. It was not until the mid 1970s that the article was removed from the Penal Code. Insulting friendly heads of state and government members did remain punishable by law, but only after the concerned head of state had filed a complaint through the appropriate diplomatic channels.⁵⁶

Notes

1. I would like to thank Alana Gillespie for translating this chapter. It was translated with the generous support of the Translation Fund of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW).
2. Hans Righart, *De Eindeloze jaren zestig. Geschiedenis van een generatieconflict* (Amsterdam: De Arbeiderspers, 1995), 261–62.
3. *Ibid.*, 224–235.
4. Ingrid Gilcher-Holthey, *Die 68er Bewegung. Deutschland—Westeuropa—USA* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2001), 72–80; Hans Righart, *De wereldwijde jaren zestig: Groot-Brittannië, Nederland, de Verenigde Staten* (Utrecht: Utrecht University, 2004), 66–72.
5. Paul Denekamp, ed., *Ontwapenend: Geschiedenis van 25 jaar PSP* (Amsterdam: Stichting Wetenschappelijk Bureau PSP, 1982), 75–79. The Communist Party of the Netherlands did not wish to commit initially because it did not want the protests against the Vietnam War to divert attention from what they considered to be the real danger, namely, the revival of fascism in West Germany. However, the party’s youth movement was involved in the first Vietnam Committee.
6. In May 1965, Parliament passed a motion that supported the American military intervention in Vietnam. Lower House Proceedings, 1964–1965, 39th Assembly 18 May 1965, 1423.
7. The petition was published on 16 October 1965.
8. For more information about the origin and background of the teach-in, see Charles DeBenedetti, *An American ordeal: The Anti-war Movement of the Vietnam Era* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1990), 107–8 and 114–15.
9. Rimko van der Maar, *Welterusten mijnheer de president: Nederland en de Vietnamoorlog, 1965–1973* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2007), 50–52; Ton Regtien, *Springtij: Herinneringen aan de jaren zestig* (Houten: Het Wereldvenster), 147–49.
10. Van der Maar, *Welterusten*, 107–108; Niek Pas, *Imaazje! De verbeelding van Provo 1965–1967* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2003), 188–90.
11. *Slotrapport van de commissie van onderzoek Amsterdam: Onderzoek naar de achtergronden van de ordeverstoringen te Amsterdam september 1965–september 1966* (The Hague, Staatsuitgeverij, 1967), appendix 128.1.
12. Van der Maar, *Welterusten*, 65.

13. For more information on this topic, see Van der Maar, *Welterusten*, 143–66.
14. Annet Mooij, *De strijd om de Februaristaking* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2006), 133–36.
15. See, e.g., “Drie Vietnam-betogers,” in *De Nieuwe Linie*, 13-5-1967.
16. Doeko Bosscher, *De dood van een metselaar en het begin van de jaren zestig in Nederland* (Groningen: Forsten, 1992), 26ff.
17. For several years, opinion polls indicated that the Dutch considered the United States its second-closest ally (after Belgium). See *Buitenlandse politiek in de Nederlandse publieke opinie; inventaris van in Nederland in de periode 1 januari 1960 tot 1 januari 1975 gehouden onderzoek naar meningen en attitudes t.a.v. de buitenlandse politiek* (Den Haag, 1975), for example, no. 1068, 76.
18. Righart, *Eindeloze jaren zestig*, 203ff; P.F. Maas, *Kabinetformaties 1959–1973* (Den Haag: Staatsuitgeverij, 1982), 110–11.
19. National Archive, The Hague, Dutch Cabinet Minutes, 1823–1984, 2 June 1967, 24 and 25 August 1967.
20. Lower House Proceedings, Extraordinary Session 1967, 683–684.
21. Van der Maar, *Welterusten*, 87–101.
22. *Ibid.*, 90–91.
23. Ruud Stapel, *De Vietnam-beweging in Nederland. De eerste aktieperiode, 1964–1968* (Master’s thesis, Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen, 1982), 97.
24. *Ibid.*, 109–14, 137–41.
25. See, e.g., “Ruim vijfhonderd personen namen deel aan Haagse Vietnam-betoging,” in *Het Parool*, 7 February 1968.
26. Van der Maar, *Welterusten*, 104.
27. Hugo Kijne, *Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Studentenbeweging 1963–1973* (Amsterdam: SUA, 1978), 69ff; Jos Dohmen en Oscar Steens, *Bevrijding en bezetting: vijftig jaar Algemene Studenten Vereniging Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Vossiuspers Amsterdam University Press, 1995), 182–84.
28. “Pers en Vietnam. 29 januari tot 3 februari. Het offeniief” This brochure was written by L. Lewin, A. Itenburg and M. van Dullemen.
29. Wolfgang Kraushaar, “Decisionisme als denkfiguur: Over de theoretische basis van de escalatie naar geweld binnen de antiautoritaire beweging van de jaren zestig,” in Jacco Pekelder and Frits Boterman, *Politiek geweld in Duitsland: Denkbeelden en debatten* (Amsterdam: Mets en Schilt, 2005), 218; Cf. Jost Dülffer, “The Anti-Vietnam Movement in West Germany,” in Christopher Goscha en Maurice Vaisse, eds., *La Guerre du Vietnam et L’Europe 1963–1973* (Bruxelles: Bruylant, 2003), 287–305.
30. See e.g., “Een weekend Berlijn,” in *Haagse Post*, 24 February 1968.
31. For this conference see Nick Thomas, *Protest movements in 1960s West Germany: A Social History of Dissent and Democracy* (Oxford: Berg, 2003), 155–61.
32. “Het nieuwe terrorisme,” in: *Haagse Post*, 2 March 1968; Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Television Archive, *Achter het Nieuws*, 22 February 1968, V 24921 (VHS).
33. Dohmen and Steens, *Algemene Studenten Vereniging Amsterdam*, 158–66; 175–85.
34. Translated from German. Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Television Archive, *Achter het Nieuws*, 22-2-1968, V 24921 (VHS); “‘Profeet’ Rudi Dutschke kreeg twee waarschuwingen,” in *Trouw*, 22 February 1968.

35. Bernard Delfgaauw, "Autobiografie," in Reinout Bakker en Hubertus Gezinus Hubbeling, ed., *De filosofie van Bernard Delfgaauw* (Bussum: Het Wereldvenster, 1982), 33–36.
36. "Dwaas superioriteitsgevoel in Amerika," in *De Nieuwe Linie*, 10 February 1968.
37. Regtien, *Springtij*, 153; Ton Regtien and Maarten van Dullemen, *Het Vietnam-tribunaal Stockholm-Roskilde 1967 met een voorwoord van Jean-Paul Sartre* (Amsterdam: Polak en Van Genneep, 1968).
38. Lower House Proceedings, 1967–1968, Appendix, Parliamentary Questions, 643, nr. 320.
39. National Archive, Dutch Cabinet Minutes, 9 February 1968.
40. Dohmen and Steens, *Algemene Studenten Vereniging Amsterdam*, 179–81; Stapel, *Vietnam-beweging*, 134.
41. A picture of this sign is included in Van der Maar, *Welterusten*.
42. See e.g., an interview with Bernard Röling in *de Volkskrant*, 8 March 1968.
43. "Prof. Heringa roept op tot steun aan Delfgaauw," in *Trouw*, 7 March 1968.
44. Especially Ministry of Justice Archive, A68/83, VI, memorandum Mijnlieff to Beernink, 5 March 1968, also sent to Polak on 14 March 1968; Van der Maar, *Welterusten*, 117–18.
45. Ministry of Justice Archive, RA 1967/008, C.H.F. Polak to C.L. Polak, 19 March 1968.
46. "Letterlijk tekst brief van minister aan dr. Delfgaauw," in *Het Parool*, 6 March 1967.
47. Upper House Proceedings, 1967–1968, 20th Assembly, 13 March 1968, 448–50.
48. *Ibid.*, 450.
49. *Ibid.*
50. See e.g., Netherlands Institute of Sound and Vision, Television Archive, *Achter het Nieuws*, 9 March 1968, M28946.
51. See e.g., Lower House Proceedings, 1967–1968, 20th Assembly, 13 March 1968, 450–56. According to *Opinie*, the magazine of the PvdA, Polak's statement made a profound impression. See "Niemand weet precies wat een wijs en verstandig besluit is," in *Opinie*, 30 March 1968.
52. "Schuld voor Vietnam ligt niet bij Johnson alleen," in *De Telegraaf*, 6 April 1968.
53. Van der Maar, *Welterusten*, 182–96.
54. Jan Willem Duyvendak ed., *Tussen verbeelding en macht: 25 jaar nieuwe sociale bewegingen in Nederland* (Amsterdam: SUA, 1992), 251–56, 262.
55. James Kennedy, *Nieuw Babylon in aanbouw: Nederland en de jaren zestig* (Amsterdam: Boom, 1995), 164–68. This dissertation was originally published in English. See James Kennedy, "Building new Babylon: Cultural Change in the Netherlands during the 1960s" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1995).
56. Alfred Janssens, "Strafbare belediging" (Ph.D. dissertation University of Groningen, 1998), 62.

Shifting Boundaries

Transnational Identification and Disassociation in Protest Language

Andreas Rothenhöfer

Never trust the artist, trust the tale.
—D.H. Lawrence

Transnationality in Perspective

There is no such thing as an impartial account of history or an ultimate meta-level of objective description. For the most part, historiography, as a hermeneutic discipline, depends on the art of interpreting source texts. Every interpretation is more than just a summary of facts. It is a delicate texture achieved by selecting, prioritizing, summarizing, and evaluating sources, reconstituting one's tacit knowledge, text understanding, and reception of previous research. Especially contemporary history, with its recent and mostly familiar source language, may lend itself easily to a merging of separate cultural horizons, a merging of contemporary source language and concepts with the concepts of our interpretive language. All this is hardly new and surprising.¹ And yet, there seem to be no better terms than *freedom*, *justice*, *self-determination*, *emancipation*, and *democracy* to describe the aims and demands of the 1968 protest generation around the globe:

1968 was a global phenomenon because the protagonists believed in a common cause: They struggled in opposition to the domestic and international status quo in East and West as well as in North and South, and in support of freedom, justice, and self-determination. In the communist world, they fought against authoritarian governments and for liberal democracy; in the West, they fought against social repression, hierarchical structures, the tyranny of consumption, for personal emancipation and “true” participatory democracy.²

The aforementioned buzz words: *freedom*, *justice*, *self-determination*, *emancipation*, and *democracy*, were already common currency during the 1960s. And

while we may not need a dictionary to decipher their meanings in contemporary texts, some deviant conceptual relations may take us by surprise: “*Weg muß der Kapitalismus, her muß die Demokratie*” (Away with capitalism, bring in democracy!) are the demands in one striking line of Franz-Joseph Degenhardt’s 1968 protest song “Manchmal sagen die Kumpanen.”³ In fact, if *Kapitalismus* versus *Demokratie*, and not, as one might have expected, *Demokratie* vs. *Diktatur* (dictatorship) were considered the conceptual oppositions of the day, we may easily fail to grasp the ideological implications of these source terms altogether if we equate them too readily with present-day meanings. *Diktatur*, for instance, as conceptualized by Herbert Marcuse in the following example, may not have had connotations all that despicable. It was used to denote the ‘privileging of intellectuals,’ a process which Marcuse considered a desirable or even necessary preliminary stage toward a more extensive transformation of society.⁴

The radical critiques of the established social process are ... often reproached as being ... in favor of an “elitist rule,” a dictatorship of the intellectuals. What we have today, in contrast, is the non-representative government of a non-intellectual minority of politicians, generals and business people. One cannot exactly expect much of any such “elite,” and all in all, the alternative of awarding political privileges to intellectuals wouldn’t have to be worse for society by any means.⁵

As a consequence, any discourse-extrinsic, present-day reconstruction of historical group mentalities, world views and concepts (including references to an international unity of protest) must not be derived from a contamination of terms and concepts originating from deviant historical or social discourse perspectives. Historical concepts of discourse can only be verified to the degree to which the historiographer is prepared to elaborate on certain constitutive premises, such as principles of object modeling and methods of conclusion.

In the course of my paper I will therefore suggest a corpus-based approach that requires (1) a strict separation of historical object language from the language of the descriptive meta-level, (2) a thorough definition of descriptive concepts, and (3) a systematic selection and compilation of sources in terms of text corpora. The corpus sections will serve as empirical bases of abstraction, to represent coherent discourse communities. After looking at a few established uses of *transnational* in recent publications, I will deal with partially contradictory concepts of global protest coherence around 1968 from different perspectives of participation. In the final section of my paper I will observe implicit and explicit references to the nation in the context of 1968 German protest discourse.

To begin with, the implications of one’s descriptive terminology ought to match one’s methodological framework. As a transparent coinage, the adjective *transnational* can be analyzed in structural analogy and conceptual opposition to related word formation types, such as *international*, *intercultural*, *multicul-*

tural, *cross-cultural*, *trans-cultural*, or *transatlantic*. Thereby, *transnational* will be conceived as referring to something exceeding the confines of one particular national or cultural context. If contrasted with *global*, *transnational* may be chosen to characterize some kind of phenomenon that is not yet global but still firmly grounded in one or more national origins:

... [We] must distinguish between forces that are global and forces that are transnational but only “macro-regional.” The effect of these arguments is to dissolve the conventional antinomy between nation-states and globalization, and to re-assert the importance of places, both national and macro-regional, in processes of globalization.⁶

Another specification may refer to a “sub-governmental” but nation-transcending level of bilateral or multilateral relations, to relations that only include non-governmental contacts. In that sense, *transnational* can be set apart from *international*, which is often used to characterize relations on a governmental level, that is, on a level of contact between representative bodies of nation states in their entirety. However, *transnational* can also be conceived as the least binding term in choice, as expressing the vaguest of all concepts. In that sense, the aforementioned distinctive feature of ‘non-governmental’ may or may not be implied. Therefore, in colloquial writing and historical narratives, terms like *global*, *transnational*, and *international* tend to be used as stylistic variants rather than as technical distinctions.

In line with my previous arguments, however, the most important clarification will be a distinction made between *discourse-intrinsic* (national) perspectives of transnationality, where identification with a transnational entity, for example, ‘the global revolt,’ occurs out of one contextual perspective, as opposed to multiperspective abstractions from a historiographer’s extrinsic viewpoint. Additionally, a certain degree of an intrinsically multinational perspective may be seen in contemporary accounts of cultural mediators with nation-transcending insights. In our late 1960s context, this category may include people like Daniel Cohn-Bendit or Herbert Marcuse.

From the point of view of Herbert Marcuse, integrative idol to various student movements across Europe and America, global protest activities were construed as one unified, although not institutionalized, movement. In his opening remarks of a guest lecture at the Freie Universität in Berlin in 1967, Herbert Marcuse emphasized the necessity of understanding the concept of opposition in a global context:

Today, every opposition can only be considered in a global framework; as an isolated phenomenon, it will be distorted from the start. I will, therefore, take the liberty to discuss this opposition with you in such a framework, in particular, by using the United States as an example.⁷

As he was at the center of attention and courtship from various national directions, Marcuse gave testimony to his emotional involvement with the global extension of contemporary student unrest:

It was one of the most gratifying experiences of my life to observe that the student movement is an international movement that has evolved without clearly defined forms of organization and that continues to evolve. In other words, there is some kind of solidarity, some kind of agreement in goals, and all this without the traditional forms of organization.⁸

On one hand, Marcuse will have perceived as essential all aspects of protest connected to his own teachings and person, thereby producing some very distinctive, though self-centered impressions of transnational protest coherence. On the other hand, the dissemination of Marcuse's teachings, as well as reverberations of other revolutionary authors, can be established on the basis of terminological internationalisms. A contemporary BBC program on "Students in Revolt" (broadcast 13 June 1968), featuring a discussion between international student leaders,⁹ reveals striking lexical and syntactic analogies in the contributions from both sides of the Atlantic. Lewis Cole, the American student leader from Columbia University, uses political jargon very comparable to that found in the language of contemporary German protest activists. This observation deserves more extensive examination.¹⁰

It is not surprising, however, that a much more critical and reserved approach toward the idea of a transnational movement is taken by Jürgen Habermas, who was involved at the center of the everyday quarrel about university reform, student participation, and direct protest action in Frankfurt. In his 1969 paper "Protestbewegung und Hochschulreform," Habermas argues that statements made about a globally connected protest movement are to be judged, for the most part, as justifications for local protest actions. According to Habermas, these actions were primarily motivated by situational needs, drives, and impulses of the activists. For Habermas, global resistance was first and foremost a cunning strategy of self-justification, or rather, some kind of self-deception:

Those militant students [*are using*] the theory of imperialism to integrate their own protest into a false global context. They fabricate a global historical unity of resistance against capitalism, which is supposed to extend from guerrilla fighting in Southern America and Asia through the Negro revolts in North American cities and the Cultural Revolution in China up to the resistance in the [*European*] "metropolises." In this context the clear differences between the motives and goals of the student revolts in wealthy and poor, in capitalist and socialist countries disappear. The correspondence of slogans and techniques as a result of diffusion conceals this.¹¹

It is clear that we can neither qualify Marcuse's and Habermas's accounts to a satisfying degree as "objective," nor can we dismiss either of them as irrelevant or incorrect. Both were eyewitnesses reporting the course of events from their own particular viewpoints, intrinsic of their respective life worlds. Quite obviously, the discussion here revolves around the problem of perspectivity. Perspectivity has been accepted as a key model in the description of human perception, cognition, and communication.¹² It will allow for the aforementioned distinction between the intrinsic viewpoint of an individual or a historical group on one hand, and the historiographer's multi-perspective, extrinsic reconstruction, on the other.

Intrinsic perspectivity may also be evident in text types which claim to give an objective account of facts. By analyzing the conceptual premises in Reimut Reiche's famous essay "Studentenrevolten in Berkley und Berlin,"¹³ one will find intrinsically German constructions of American student protests the author may not even have been aware of. To his fellow German students, Reiche construes and conveys an idea of American protest activities to which they could easily relate. Thereby, the model of Berkeley serves as an argumentative framework within German discourse. Alleged failures of the Berkeley revolt, especially the lack of a coherent political and ideological superstructure, are used to dismiss as ineffective all merely situationist, apolitical motivations of protest at home. Despite a few references to cultural differences, the author keeps falling back into models of conceptualization derived from his native student background. While stressing that there was a much higher degree of course discipline in the U.S. ("die Studenten unterliegen besonders in der USA einer strengen Ausbildungsdisziplin"¹⁴), he continues to suggest that students were left with little individual appreciation and attention due to their mass education environment ("[Die Studenten] haben nur eine geringe Chance, im Massenausbildungsbetrieb Bedürfnisse nach individueller Achtung und Beachtung zu befriedigen"¹⁵). These arguments seem inspired by the debate on the German education crisis (*Bildungsnotstand*)¹⁶, rather than by a thorough analysis of a different model of education more clearly oriented toward individual supervision and vocational guidance. In a similar way, remarks about psychosocial role compulsions, such as an excessively elongated period of adolescent "role ambivalence" or "status insecurity" show an understanding grounded in Reiche's native Humboldtian-style university model.¹⁷ In merging two conceptual horizons, the author makes little effort to provide his readership with a sense of proportion. When applying the concept of 'status insecurity' to the reference context of Berkeley University, its significance is exemplified in terms of characteristic German career paths (e.g., *Studierrat, Meinungsforscher*). By implying a rigid correlation between the choice of degree course and corresponding professional options, Reiche relates to a phenomenon particularly characteristic of the German professional world:

Status insecurity will have a particularly drastic effect on students of those subject areas which cannot provide them with status security in

the form of acceptable professions after graduating, e.g. professional options for graduates of sociology, German studies, philosophy etc. such as *Studierrat* [a specialized German high school teacher employed as a civil servant] or opinion pollster are not particularly attractive, especially if they have had the opportunity to develop a social theory of their own, as was the case at Berkeley or at a few West German universities. For such students, status insecurity will tend to perpetuate.¹⁸

Thus, we can summarize that the author applied concepts intrinsic to the perspective of German discourse, seemingly to metaphorically map some new and foreign territory and to get a political message across to readers of his own cultural background. As we know, metaphorical conceptual transfer is the way in which our cognitive system works.¹⁹ Only with increasing life-worldly experience in a different environment can writers and readers start to develop a practical sense of contrastive concepts.

Methodological Implications

As we have seen, attempting to infer a unified, extrinsic transnational protest description out of contemporary statements will most likely get us caught in the traps of intrinsic objectivist projections. We may therefore be better off following a “bottom-up-approach” of reconstructing and eventually contrasting two or more distinctive discourse perspectives. This can be achieved by using a corpus-based method of empirical induction. While an analysis of individual texts may yield insights into individual attitudes, intentions, and action strategies, lexical abstraction from a well thought-out text corpus can yield insights into habitualized social mentalities and world views²⁰. Hence, the following levels of factual assertion should be distinguished:

1. Phenomena of transnational contact that can be verified by extrinsic hard facts (e.g., letters, objectified accounts of contact), independently of persuasive strategies or self-images of contemporary communicators.
2. Habitualized world views of discourse-intrinsic transnational identification that become manifest in frequent patterns of spoken or written discourse or in protest iconography.
3. Consciously applied, text-intrinsic, argumentative strategies of transnational identification (= individual speech acts) that seek to lend more importance to an otherwise marginal political group and its goals.

Suitable boundaries for units of abstraction are boundaries of community discourse and cultural coherence, which ought to be represented by corpus parameters in line with Busse and Teubert's²¹ conception of *discourse* as a virtual text corpus. The most basic categories of abstraction may include:

1. a textual perspective (= individual text analysis)
2. an inter-textual perspective (= discourse analysis)
3. a discourse-contrastive perspective (= transnational comparison)

In the following section I will focus on intrinsic conceptualizations of national and transnational issues from a German perspective. While Marxist ideology (cf. the Communist Manifesto mission of “Proletarians of all countries, unite!”) would provide the protest generation with a powerful framework of self-interpretation as a transnational collective, the prevalence of an Internationalist ideology must not be equated with an absence of characteristic national traits and perspectives. An examination of textual references to the nation and the dissolution of its boundaries may reveal conceptual coinages peculiar to the historical situation and mentality of German protest participants.²²

German Constructs of Transnationality in 1968

Welt, weltweit, global

The most prominent lexical type in our corpus relating to a concept of ‘internationalism’ is *Welt*, including all its various meanings and lexical derivations. On a very general level, two prominent uses of *Welt* may be specified as follows:

1. A term referring to a general state of (social) reality or existence (as opposed to imagination or theoretical reasoning);
2. A term referring to the Planet Earth with its totality of inhabitants and objects.

Further readings may eventually relate to particular aspects of either of the earlier readings. Its most prominent word formations, which flourished around 1968 include those denoting a global scope (e.g. *weltweit*, *Weltgesellschaft*, *Weltrevolution*), as well as others denoting a particular sphere or view of reality (e.g., *Dritte Welt*, *freie Welt*, *Arbeitswelt*, *bürokratisierte Welt*, *bestehende Welt*, *kommunistische Welt*, or *kapitalistische Welt*). Frequent uses of these terms seem to support the notion of a thoroughly interrelated, homogenous, and partly globalized organization of mankind.

Both of the aforementioned readings, the one related to ‘reality’ and the other to ‘global extension’ appear in Jürgen Habermas’s 1967 “Speech on the political role of students”²³. Habermas argues that any attempt to change the world (in the sense of ‘political reality’) would eventually be challenged by a complex system of global interaction, thereby making all revolutionary intentions futile:

I am talking about difficulties in attempting not only to interpret the world but also to change it. The more complex and comprehensive a

system becomes—and in this situation, where we can, for the first time, speak about world history in a strict sense, the system comprises social interactions around the globe—the more the system will evade immediate intervention and the weaker the prospects will become for what used to be called direct action.²⁴

On the activists' side, Rudi Dutschke applies a similar cognitive model of international dependence. Nevertheless, by advocating global change to influence one's life-worldly circumstances, he comes to a diametrically opposed conclusion to that which Habermas proposes:

Today, the concept of revolution can only be understood from an international perspective. There will not be a German revolution. However, there will be a global process of emancipation in the longer term. Peoples are already fighting.²⁵

While critical minds may join Habermas's earlier quotation in faulting a blurring of motivations, aims, and tools for the movement's misconceptions of its global status, there is little reason to assume that Dutschke was not serious about his revolutionary goals. For the time being, however, global protest activities would have to become a communicative subject of teach-ins, rather than some form of transnational reality:

The self-organization of the anti-authoritarian camp within the university has taken the next possible step by organizing a "counter-university" within the existing university in which critical counter-lectures and seminars are held about the theory and practice of emancipation movements around the world.²⁶

In order to adjust conceptions and strategies of protest to an adverse reality, they may have been either reinterpreted or reinforced. Along those lines, appeals to maximize the radius and intensity of protest by aspiring to a 'permanent exposure of society to global confrontation' can be interpreted either as an appeal for increasing one's efforts, or as a watering down of revolutionary expectations, motivations, and action strategies:

Attacking the unresponsive, dead apparatus of society can, on this level, only mean a permanent exposure to global confrontation with revolutionary protest, which cannot be expected to translate immediately into socialist transformations.²⁷

We have seen that both Habermas and Dutschke conceived the achievability of protest objectives as something determined by global interdependencies. While

Habermas interprets these interdependencies as inhibitors of revolutionary goals, Dutschke perceives them as prerequisites to a future, though not immediate world revolution, as part of a longer process of global emancipation. As the extension of these global concepts will often seem obscure and hard to grasp, discourse intrinsic, explicit references to the nation may yield strategies of identification or disassociation that are more tangible. Let us, therefore, observe characteristic usage patterns of three exemplary nation-related terms: *Gesellschaft*, *Volk*, and *Deutsch*.

Gesellschaft

With systems' theory and sociology gaining ground in political discourse, it seems little wonder that *Gesellschaft*, *sozial*, and *gesellschaftlich* ('social,' 'societal,' 'society') are the most frequently used collective terms in our corpus. Having come to denote a predominantly descriptive concept, *Gesellschaft* seemed particularly suited to describe one's environment from a distant and emotionally unaffected point of view. In relation to more than 1,000 tokens of *Gesellschaft* and its derivatives, there are scarcely more than twenty references involving self-inclusive uses such as *unsere Gesellschaft* (our society).

The following examples illustrate uses of the term by Rudi Dutschke. In his political jargon, uses of *Gesellschaft* are often nested in characteristic word formations and phrases such as *gesamtgesellschaftliche Bewusstlosigkeit* (unconsciousness related to society as a whole). Dutschke and other student activists tend to use *Gesellschaft* predominantly in two readings: One regularly sets aside 'society in its entirety' from the 'student community.' Thereby, activist peer groups are explicitly distinguished from "the passive and shapeless remainder of society":

We posed the decisive question about the maturity or immaturity of the students in our university. The result was paradoxical. The unconsciousness related to society as a whole, to the systematically disabled masses which are periodically invited to provide evidence of their mental reduction in the elections, did not reproduce itself. Almost 50 percent of students voted for the anti-authoritarian camp.²⁸

On the other hand, we can find examples reflecting a more pragmatic and missionary approach toward society. In this connection, *unsere Gesellschaft* (our society) is seen as denoting an almost timeless object of reference. In the following example, it is not "society as such" which is being challenged, but aspects of the particular political shaping of West German society (eg., *autoritär-faschistoide Tendenzen*) and its harshly criticized representatives (*die unfähigen und impotenten Politiker*). In his typical agitative manner, Dutschke apodictically predicts the fulfillment of his political demands ("*Kampf gegen autoritär-faschistoide Tendenzen in unserer Gesellschaft und der Welt*"). He thereby presupposes a national

unity of action as well as a transnational expansion of the movement while taking a self-inclusive, identifying perspective on society:

The incapable and impotent politicians of the Federal Republic and West Berlin can decide as much as they like, the anti-authoritarian groups at universities, schools, colleges, in companies and in society won't let themselves be made to give up their fight against authoritarian and fascistoid²⁹ tendencies in our society and in the world.³⁰

It should be noted that the Marxist dichotomy of 'class society' versus 'classless society' provided a dominant superstructure in political argumentation, which would hardly allow for shades of individual opinion, let alone, for the affirmation of any factual political reality:

The uniform, centralized leadership of society, forced by the functional necessities of the subsidy state, the application of modern controlled economy and the organized unemployment make our society appear as a "parody of the classless society."³¹

We can summarize that in the lexical field of nation-related terms, *Gesellschaft* gained significance in the 1960s as a very prominent expression to denote an institutionalized community of people. However, the referential and evaluative implications of *Gesellschaft*—used either in a self-inclusive or an exclusive way—would differ considerably. In contrast, it will be interesting to observe how the uses of terms traditionally held as symbols of German national self-reference and identification, *Volk* and *Deutsch*, evolved.

Volk

The German term of *Volk* combines two clearly distinguishable readings, which are, nevertheless, often merged in one particular context. They comprise, on one hand, a class-oriented distinction between *Volk* as the 'body of subjects to a ruler or ruling class,' being roughly equivalent to certain readings of the English terms *the masses* or *the people*. On the other hand, there is a concept of *Volk* denoting 'a large aggregate of people closely associated by factors of descent, language, culture, history or occupation of territory,' which is more equivalent to particular readings of the English term *nation*. Moreover, in recent German history, *Volk* has come to carry connotations derived from nationalistic discourse. In particular, the National Socialist triad of *Führer, Volk, und Vaterland* as well as Nazi legal concepts based on criteria of racial discourse (e.g. *Volksgemeinschaft*), have left their obvious marks on present-day German semantics of *Volk*.

Nineteen sixty-eight is often considered a turning point in the use of nation-related concepts. It may therefore seem astonishing that in 1968 both readings,

the class- and the nation-related one were still allowed to exist side by side. On one hand, there are numerous references to ideology-laden Nazi jargon. Excerpts from National Socialist discourse were quoted to reveal and criticize historical participation roles of certain members of the contemporary establishment:

One cannot have read this often enough: The “bastardization of Europe” by the Jewish “bug of nations,” the “force of the elementary,” the “eternally endangered German purity of lineage” the “race-bound national soul,” “the German youth type... Siegfried, Parsifal, Horst Wessel,” the “extermination of the unfit”—in those days things like that would have been academically discussed and researched at our universities.³²

On the other hand, Marxist and revolutionary discourse implied a means of denoting some collective, underprivileged revolutionary subject, a conceptual slot that has traditionally been filled by terms such as *Arbeiterklasse* (working class) *Proletariat* (proletariat), or *Volk* (nation or people). Following this tradition, Rudi Dutschke can be seen as using *Volk* in a synonymous way to *Bevölkerung* (population), a term sometimes preferred today as a politically correct alternative to *Volk* to exclude unintended allusions to criteria of blood or descent.³³

We do not have representatives in our parliament who express the interests of our population—the real interests of our population. You may well be asking: What real interests? Nevertheless, there are demands. Even in parliament. However, they can only be met if [*parliament*] establishes a critical dialogue with the population. Yet there is a complete separation between parliamentary representatives and the people, which is kept in political immaturity.³⁴

When observing contemporary 1968 references to popular revolts and liberation movements,³⁵ however, it seems less clear which of the aforementioned meanings of *Volk* is applied. In the context of German student protest against the Vietnam war, effects of American intervention policies may be referred to (in obvious allusion to German history) in terms of *Tötung des Volkes* (‘killing of a people’), *Ausrottung* (‘extermination’) or *Völkermord* (‘genocide’) while Viet Cong warfare activities are regularly denoted in much friendlier terms, such as *Freiheitskampf des Vietnamesischen Volkes* (‘struggle for freedom of the Vietnamese people/ nation’) or *Befreiungsbewegung als nationaler und sozialer Befreiungskampf* (‘liberation movement as a national and social struggle for liberation’). Here, a gradual merging of class-related and nation-related concepts of *Volk* becomes evident.

It may, therefore, be peculiar to 1968 German left-wing discourse that nation-related concepts were permissible with reference to Third World liberation movements³⁶ while affirmative combinations of *deutsch* and *Volk* have come to be intolerable today. As a prominent exception, Hannes Stütz’s unofficial Easter peace

march hymn, “*Unser Marsch ist eine gute Sache*” may be quoted. Stütz evokes a personification of “*deutsches Volk*,” which is addressed in his song as a rhetorical target for collective self-reflection and social criticism. In his romanticizing and nostalgic reference to the nation, the 1936-born author may be giving evidence of some vanishing commitment to an explicitly German path of protest action:

<p>Du deutsches Volk, du bist fast immer für falsche Ziele marschiert. Am Ende waren nur Trümmer. Weißt du heute, wohin man dich führt? Nimm dein Schicksal in die Hand, steck den Kopf nicht in den Sand, und laßt euch nicht mehr verführen. Chorus: Marschieren wir gegen den Osten? Nein! Marschieren wir gegen den Westen? Nein! Wir marschieren für die Welt, die von Waffen nichts mehr hält, denn das ist für uns am besten.³⁷</p>	<p>(You German people, you have always marched for the wrong goals. At the end there were only ruins. Do you know where you are being led? Take your fate into your own hand, don't bury your head in the sand, and don't let yourselves be seduced again. Chorus: Are we marching against the East? No! Are we marching against the West? No! We are marching for the world, Which no longer holds weapons dear, For that is the best for us.)</p>
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Deutsch

In analytical or political discourse, *deutsch* (German) and *Deutschland* (Germany) appear predominantly as descriptive terms to clarify reference to one particular geographic, political, or social entity. Due to the increasing popularity of sociological terms, such as *Gesellschaft*, explicit references to nation-related concepts may be avoided today in cases where they would have been common currency in earlier times, even when focusing on aspects of a predominantly German reality. According to Dutschke's creed, revolutionary activity limited to a German scope is doomed to fail from the start. Thereby, all considerations for issues of an exclusively German nature are rendered irrelevant.

Political disregard for a distinctly German course of events may be accompanied by a predominantly emotive distance to traditional values and virtues, which were associated with the German cultural identity at that time. Oskar Negt indicates how traditional virtuous concepts such as 'orderliness,' 'diligence,' 'cleanliness,' 'state-consciousness' and a 'readiness to make sacrifices' had come to represent mere justifications of repression. In the mind of critical activists, they were primarily associated with well known German political failures of the past:

Many liberals will provide legitimization support, usually unwillingly, for those who have long been demanding brave and fearless action against student troublemakers. They only have some very poor legitimization arguments which have been handed down to them by German

tradition: orderliness, diligence, cleanliness, state-consciousness, and a readiness to make sacrifices—virtues which cannot be separated from the political catastrophes in German history.³⁸

Nevertheless, there is also a great amount of artistic expression focusing on ambivalent attitudes toward one's nation. Beyond all objectivist claims in agitating and theoretical text types, contemporary essayists, songwriters, and poets such as Wolf Biermann, Franz Josef Degenhardt, and Hans-Magnus Enzensberger may provide us with a wealth of artistic evidence of the protest generation's characteristic love-hate relationships toward their country. While explicit references to German identity were out of place in political discourse, text types allowing for emotional expression may reveal an abundance of symptomatic nation-related language, often flavored with obvious ironic undertones.³⁹

Conclusion

I conclude this chapter by looking back at Marcuse's opening remarks. Can we understand opposition only in a global context? The precise term used by Marcuse is *globaler Rahmen* (global framework). My personal answer would be yes and no—depending on how we interpret 'framework' and 'understanding'. Unless our model of description pays tribute to distinctive intrinsic perspectives of discourse, based on the assumption of cultural, geographical, linguistic, and social boundaries, as well as a few limited instances of (relative) intrinsic multiperspectivity, we will not grasp the communicative and socio-dynamic nature of identity construction, and group constitution.

Descriptive consistency will require intercultural (and if necessary inter-linguistic) sensitivity by the analyst. He or she will be required to find means of comparison that incorporate contextual distinctions as well as contrastive semantic aspects of reality construction and evaluation. While lexical internationalisms and abstract revolutionary concepts may serve as starting points when contrasting national protest discourses, a thorough interpretation of source texts and a systematic approach to corpus analysis will be necessary for determining the respective value of collective symbols, terms and concepts in each communicative context. Despite patterns of exchange and transfer, the German student revolt had a distinctively German perspective on nation-related and nation-transcending topics. In itself, the rejection or avoidance of national identification can be seen as a particularly characteristic trait of the German student rebellion.

Notes

1. Cf. Vierzig Jahre Begriffsgeschichte—"The State of the Art," in *Sprache. Kognition. Kultur: Sprache zwischen mentaler Struktur und kultureller Prägung*, eds., H. Kämper and L.M. Eichinger (Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 2008), 174–97.

2. C. Fink, P. Gassert, and D. Junker, eds., *The World Transformed* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 3.
3. In Franz-Joseph Degenhardt, *Spiel nicht mit den Schmuttelkindern* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1969), 113–14. The song, which may be seen as self-ironic, claims to defend the songwriter against his comrades' reproach of having substituted all shades of poetic expression for a starker revolutionary black and white: 'At times of class struggle, all nuances are a pain,' is the chorus line. Whether ironic or not, the opposition of 'capitalism' vs. 'democracy' appears to be in line with the protest movement's defining meta-critiques of antifascism, anti-capitalism and anti-imperialism. Cf. Wolfgang Kraushaar, "Denkmodelle der 68er-Bewegung," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte B* 22–23 (2001): 15.
4. The "dictatorship of the intellectuals" or much rather the "privileging of intellectuals," as Marcuse puts it, is an obvious intertextual allusion to the Marxist phrase of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*.
5. Herbert Marcuse, "Das Problem der Gewalt in der Opposition," *Das Ende der Utopie*, eds., H. Kurnitzky and H. Kuhn (West Berlin: Von Maikowski, 1967), 47–54.
6. Michael Mann, "Globalization, Macro-Regions and Nation States," *Transnationale Geschichte: Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien*, eds., G. Budde, S. Conrad, and O. Janz (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 22.
7. Herbert Marcuse (1967), "Das Problem der Gewalt in der Opposition," in *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbewegung. Von der Flaschenpost zum Molotowcocktail 1946–1965*, ed., W. Kraushaar (Hamburg: Rogner und Bernhard, 1998), vol. 2, 272.
8. Herbert Marcuse (1968), "Probleme der Emanzipationsbewegung," in *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbewegung*, vol. 2, 476.
9. I am particularly grateful to Rolf Werenskjold for this insight.
10. I will discuss the issue of stylistic and conceptual borrowing in protest language in my forthcoming publication: Andreas Rothenhöfer, "Jenes knisternde Vietnam-Gefühl: Perspektivischer Internationalismus und globalisierter Politjargon im deutschen und amerikanischen Protestdiskurs," in: *Teach-ins, Demokratisierung und der lange Marsch: Sprach- und kommunikationsgeschichtliche Umbrüche von "1968"*, eds., Heidrun Kämper, Joachim Scharloth, and Martin Wengeler (forthcoming).
11. Habermas, Jürgen. *Protestbewegung und Hochschulreform* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1969), 19.
12. As a metaphor originally derived from graphic art and photography, the concept of perspectivity has been successfully introduced into communicative studies. Cf. Wilhelm Köller, *Perspektivität und Sprache: Zur Struktur von Objektivierungsformen in Bildern, im Denken und in der Sprache* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2004).
13. Reimut Reiche, "Studentenrevolten in Berkeley und Berlin," *Neue Kritik* 38/39 (Oktober/December 1966), 21–27.
14. *Ibid.*, 23.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Cf. Georg Picht, *Die Deutsche Bildungskatastrophe. Analyse und Dokumentation* (Olten: Walter, 1964).
17. Cf. Wolfgang Kraushaar, "Denkmodelle der 68er-Bewegung," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte B* 22–23 (2001), 17, for a summary of contemporary criticism of Humboldtian ideals in the German debate on education.
18. Reimut Reiche, "Studentenrevolten in Berkeley und Berlin," *Neue Kritik* 38/39 (Oktober/December 1966), 23–24.

19. Cf. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).
20. Cf. Fritz Hermanns, "Sprachgeschichte als Mentalitätsgeschichte. Überlegungen zu Sinn und Form und Gegenstand historischer Semantik", in *Sprachgeschichte des Neuhochdeutschen. Gegenstände, Methoden, Theorien*, eds., A. Gardt, K. J. Mattheier, and O. Reichmann (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1995), 69-103.
21. Cf. Wolfgang Teubert and Dietrich Busse, "Ist Diskurs ein sprachwissenschaftliches Objekt? Überlegungen zu einer linguistischen Diskurssemantik," in *Zeichengeschichte, Begriffsgeschichte, Diskursgeschichte*, eds., D. Busse, F. Hermanns, and W. Teubert, (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag), 10-28.
22. I am very grateful to have been able to use a comprehensive corpus compiled by my own project group under the supervision of Heidrun Kämper at the Institut für Deutsche Sprache (IDS) in Mannheim. Our project is aimed at reconstructing reflections of 1968 Germany from a variety of different text types. Methodological perspectives of discourse include protest activists, on one hand, and members of the so-called "intellectualist establishment" (i.e., their academic mentors, idols, and benevolent critics), on the other.
23. Jürgen Habermas, "Rede über die politische Rolle der Studentenschaft," in *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbewegung. Von der Flaschenpost zum Molotowcocktail 1946–1965*, ed., W. Kraushaar (Hamburg: Rogner und Bernhard, 1998), vol. 2, 246–51.
24. *Ibid.*, 248.
25. Rudi Dutschke, *Mein langer Marsch, Reden Schriften und Tagebücher aus zwanzig Jahren*, eds., G. Dutschke-Klotz, H. Gollwitzer, and J. Miermeister (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1980), 15.
26. Rudi Dutschke, "Vom Verhältnis von Organisation und Emanzipationsbewegung—Zum Besuch Herbert Marcuses," in *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbewegung. Von der Flaschenpost zum Molotowcocktail 1946–1965*, ed., W. Kraushaar (Hamburg: Rogner und Bernhard, 1998), vol. 2, 259.
27. Oskar Negt (1967), "Politik und Protest," in *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbewegung. Von der Flaschenpost zum Molotowcocktail 1946–1965*, ed., W. Kraushaar (Hamburg: Rogner und Bernhard, 1998), vol. 2, 303.
28. Rudi Dutschke, 1967, "Referat auf dem Kongreß 'Bedingungen und Organisation des Widerstandes' in Hannover," in *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbewegung*, vol. 2, 251–52.
29. The term 'fascistoid' has the sense of "resembling (that of) a Fascist; tending toward Fascism" (SOED), in contrast to "fascist," which denotes a means of, or pertaining to, fascism or fascists, or having fascist ideals.
30. Konkret interview, held on 3 March 1968, repr. in Rudi Dutschke, *Geschichte ist machbar: Texte über das herrschende Falsche und die Radikalität des Friedens*, ed., J. Miermeister (Berlin: Wagenbach, 1991), 102–3.
31. Dutschke, 1967, "Demokratie, Universität und Gesellschaft," in *Dutschke, Geschichte ist machbar*, 73.
32. Rolf Seeliger, 1968, *Die außerparlamentarische Opposition*, (München: Rolf Seeliger, 1968), 209.
33. Cf. Berthold Brecht, "Fünf Schwierigkeiten beim Schreiben der Wahrheit" in *Bertolt Brecht. Schriften zur Literatur und Kunst 2. 1934–1941*, ed., W. Hecht (Frankfurt, 1967), 23: "Wer in unserer Zeit statt Volk Bevölkerung und statt Boden Landbe-

sitz sagt, unterstützt schon viele Lügen nicht. Er nimmt den Wörtern ihre faule Mystik.”

34. Dutschke, *Mein langer Marsch*, 43.
35. It should be noted that liberation cannot be considered a descriptive term, but like most other quotations in this context, it is a political keyword constructing a particular reality of events by implying particular normative participant role perspectives.
36. Cf. previous note.
37. Hannes Stütz (1966), “Unser Marsch ist eine gute Sache,” in *Linke Lieder*, ed., K. Budzinski (München: Scherz, 1966), 90.
38. Oskar Negt “Politik und Gewalt,” in *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbewegung*, vol. 2, (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1998), 359.
39. One particularly good example for this attitude can be seen in Gerd Semmer, “Ich vermisse Nationalgefühl,” in *Linke Lieder*; 80.

A Tale of Two Communes

The Private and the Political in Divided Berlin,
1967–1973

Timothy Brown

The changing relationship between the private and the political is a central motif of the 1960s. Where the Marxist mass parties of the pre-1945 period had been content to keep the private and political spheres separate, the radicals of the New Left aspired to bring them together. The attempt to eliminate the boundaries separating the myriad concerns of daily life from the reach of the political was part of a broader project of creating a new and more total form of politics transcending older boundaries of action and categories of analysis.¹ This fundamental reconceptualization of the nature of politics, a salient feature of the movements of “1968” in Europe and North America, reached its most iconic expression in the development of the *commune*.²

Often thought of in connection with the “back to the land” movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s, the commune was, in its original incarnation, an urban phenomenon.³ It was important not merely as a key site in the attempt to politicize the private sphere—a goal that in the later rural phase came to be formulated in terms of an escape from society—but as a part of a broader conflict pitting the new youth culture of the 1960s against the rules (written and unwritten) governing the behavior of young people in the urban environment.⁴ Here, in the very heart of society, the commune functioned as the physical-spatial analog to the broader 1960s’ push for new forms of expression and social action. The commune can thus be seen to embody two kinds of spatiality, one related to the status of interior, private space; the other to the relationship of this politicized interior space to society at large.

This chapter examines two communes—one famous, one less so—operating at the urban epicenter of the Cold War. The notorious *Kommune I* in West Berlin achieved media stardom while helping to redefine the nature of student politics in West Germany. The “K1-Ost”—an eastern imitation—attempted to enact a politicized lifestyle revolution of its own in the heart of Communist East

Berlin. Together, the two communes illustrate how the attempt to realize a key 1960s' project played out on opposite sides of the Berlin Wall.⁵

Divided Berlin provided a unique setting for such experiments. A site of contention between East and West even prior to the founding of the two German states in 1949, and physically divided by the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961, Berlin mirrored in its very physicality the larger conflicts shaping the experience and politics of daily life. A capitalist island in a communist sea, West Berlin was simultaneously a front-line city in the larger Cold War and a showcase for the prosperity and freedoms of the West. Its status as a *Frontstadt* under allied military occupation made it home, on the one hand, to a fiercely anti-Communist population largely grateful for American protection, and on the other, to draft dodgers seeking immunity from military conscription and radical instigators searching for an ideal stage on which to mock the pieties of Cold War anti-communism. Slow to take part in the postwar "economic miracle," with its rebuilding being disrupted by the wall that turned once central districts like Kreuzberg into backwater districts on the margins, West Berlin was both closed and open, a site of agitation and experimentation stuffed into the most confined Cold War box imaginable.⁶ East Berlin, by contrast, was no isolated backwater, but the capital of the German Democratic Republic. Its status effectively settled by the building of the Berlin Wall, which stopped the crippling out-flow of population to the West, East Berlin became a key site in the communist regime's ideological battle with the West, a battle which included regular attempts to meddle in the politics of the western half of the city. Simultaneously, because of the availability of western media and the activity of western journalists, diplomats, and private individuals, East Berlin was a site of potential contagion from the West.⁷

If divided Berlin mirrored in its very topography the strictures of Cold War culture, it was also home to the struggles over the relationship of youth to the urban landscape common to other large cities. These struggles frequently revolved around the reception of Anglo-American popular culture.⁸ Popular music, in particular, served as a catalyst for conflict with the authorities, exemplified by well-known riots in both halves of Berlin.⁹ The dispute over the place of young people in the urban landscape was particularly intense in the East, where youth behavior was relentlessly politicized by the regime.¹⁰ In the West, the rise of the extra-parliamentary opposition—an outgrowth of the anti-nuclear and peace movements of the 1950s—corresponded with an intensification of the struggle over public space from the mid 1960s. In particular, the rising prominence of the Socialist German Student League (SDS), signaled the creation of an ever-stronger link between the appearance of youth in the street and the making of claims challenging the Cold War consensus.¹¹ The founding of a commune in West Berlin developed very much as a part of these claims, for it represented, first and foremost, a drive for a more profound form of political engagement.

West Berlin: The *Kommune I*

A “commune discussion group” within the anti-authoritarian wing of SDS met in the summer of 1966 to work out a means of closing the gap between the “leisure time socialism” of the student movement and the private existence of everyday life. Continued discussions through the autumn of 1966 resulted in the founding of two communes in early 1967. The *SDS Kommune*—later the *Kommune 2*—began in early February as an attempt within SDS (literally at the SDS headquarters at Kurfürstendamm 140) to deepen the organization’s political work through experiments in communal living. The subsequent development of the *Kommune 2* focused heavily on personal and inter-personal psychology, the assault on repressive gender roles, and anti-authoritarian child-rearing. The *Kommune I*, founded not long after the SDS commune, was strongly influenced by the spectacular politics of the Dutch Provo movement as well as by the situationist background of co-founder Dieter Kunzelmann. A former member of the *Gruppe SPUR* in Munich, and a co-founder of the *Subversive Aktion* group that included future student leaders Rudi Dutschke and Bernd Rabehl, Kunzelmann was a veteran provocateur. In part through his instigation, the *Kommune I* quickly displayed a talent for the spectacular *coup de Main* that pushed them to the forefront of the struggle between the students and the authorities.¹²

The communards carried out a program of agitation on parallel tracks: on the one hand, a situationist-inspired campaign of provocation; on the other, a push to solve personal problems through work on the self. Characteristically, personal liberation was to be achieved not alongside, but rather through political action. Expeditions into the public sphere—the thwarted “pudding assault” on the motorcade of visiting American vice president Hubert Humphrey in April 1967; the scandalous series of fliers that resulted in a lengthy trial for Langhans and Teufel from June 1967 were meant as much to transform the consciousness of the participants as to transform society.¹³ The goal of self-liberation through action—an aim that stretched back to the earliest protests of the *Subversive Aktion* group—was predicated on the idea that finding the courage to act in the face of society’s disapproval was itself an act of personal liberation.¹⁴

Provocative actions in the public sphere thus reflected back to the attempt to revolutionize private existence. Yet attempts to transform private existence in the daily life of the commune proved problematic. Group psychology sessions aimed at mercilessly exposing and elaborating upon the “hang-ups” of the individual under investigation contributed to the *Kommune I*’s reputation in the SDS as the “Psycho-” or “Horror-Commune.” At the same time, the commune’s claim to its status as a site of sexual liberation—projected through images like the famous *Stern* magazine photo of the naked communards with their backs to the camera—was received skeptically by some contemporaries and has come in for close scrutiny in recent scholarship.¹⁵ From the time of the group’s move to the so-called *KI Fabrik* at Stephanstraße 60 in August 1968, this sexual mythol-

ogy came increasingly to revolve around communitarian Rainer Langhans and his girlfriend, the model Uschi Obermaier. This new phase, which corresponded with an inward turn toward countercultural self-discovery, saw the *Kommune* transformed into a radical clearing house that attracted visits from the famous (the rock guitarist Jimi Hendrix among others) and the infamous (young soon-to-be-terrorists like Andreas Baader and Georg von Rauch). Langhans and Obermaier become media stars, easily recognizable faces of the growing hippie counterculture in West Germany and beyond.

This development was badly received by some radicals who argued that selling images of oneself to the capitalist press—a significant source of income for Langhans and Obermaier—was not only an unworthy method of earning one’s daily bread, but worked to the detriment of the commune’s original mission by emphasizing celebrity at the expense of political content.¹⁶ Yet, in larger terms, it was precisely celebrity that gave the *Kommune I* its cultural effect. Closely monitoring the impact of its actions on a scandalized public, the commune succeeded in forging a link between the revolutionization of private life and the revolutionization of society, even if the former was incomplete, and the latter accomplished within, rather than against, capitalist modes of production.¹⁷ When it officially disbanded in November 1969 as a result of factionalism, legal, drug, and other troubles, the *Kommune I* had, for good or ill, done its work; it had inspired the formation of other communes, helped to disseminate countercultural ideas, and—critically—served to rally a new generation of radicals who would escalate the conflict with the authorities into the 1970s and beyond.¹⁸

East Berlin: The K1-Ost

The exploits of the *Kommune I* had an impact far beyond the boundaries of West Berlin, and like other aspects of the western counterculture and student movement, its influence was strongly felt in the East.¹⁹ Western communards Fritz Teufel and Rainer Langhans visited the communist half of the city themselves on more than one occasion to mingle with its young dissident intelligentsia, and it was in part due to this trans-wall interplay that the inspiration arose for the founding of a commune in East Berlin.²⁰ However, while the *Kommune I* had been born out of the fertile intersection of dissident artists and secondary-school intellectuals, developing subsequently as a sort of growth on the West German student body politic, the eastern imitation could draw on no analogous constellation of forces. Indeed, the “K1-Ost”—as it was dubbed by its founders—was the work of a small and relatively privileged group of children of leading cultural and political luminaries, prominent among them two sons and one daughter of the dissident scientist Robert Havemann. Members of this group were heavily influenced both by the ideas of the western student movement and counterculture—of which they were well-informed through western media and personal

contacts—and of contemporaneous attempts to develop a “socialism with a human face” in neighboring Czechoslovakia.²¹ Members of this circle took part in the spontaneous wave of protests that greeted the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 and suffered jail terms and loss of educational privileges as a result. Shocked and disillusioned by the outcome of this all-too-brief foray into the public sphere, some of these would-be 68ers regrouped around the idea of a commune.²²

The *K1-Ost* was no mere gesture of retrenchment after the failed protests but, like its counterpart in the West, part of a search for deeper political engagement. Founded in June 1969, the K1-Ost existed in different apartments in East Berlin until 1973.²³ It had a particularly important practical function, as unlike West Berlin, with its left-wing bars and hang-outs, East Berlin lacked semi-private venues for oppositional sociability. Yet, as in the West, the goal of breaking through old strictures on personal behavior was at the forefront. In the face of a regime whose repressive moralizing and self-assured belief in its own rectitude was even more stifling than the “repressive tolerance” lamented by radicals in the West, the task became all the more urgent. Practicing partner-swapping and anti-authoritarian childrearing in their efforts to “destroy the ‘bourgeois family,’” the communards attempted to overcome their social programming through “group therapy” sessions on the West Berlin model. “We ... endeavored from the beginning to crack the psychological stuff,” recalls one. “We imported that [from] the *Kommune 2*. ... We set a time, and then everyone reported, from his own viewpoint, from his own biography, about the problems he was dealing with at the time. Relationships, child-rearing, and so on. Then it was all explored. ...”²⁴

The similarities with western attempts to open up previously closed areas of personal inquiry are striking. Yet the *K1-Ost*'s attempts to revolutionize the private sphere were hardly private. The founders were, after all, well-watched children of leading regime figures, a fact that not only accounts for the “light” sentences they received in the wake of the protest action of autumn 1968, but also played a role in their decision to found the commune in the first place.²⁵ The pressure of attempting to embrace western styles of dress and music under a regime that tolerated neither, while simultaneously bucking the conformity of social roles embraced by the overwhelming majority of the population, and all the while living in a fishbowl of state security surveillance was bound to take its toll. But there was an even more fundamental problem. A tension existed, throughout the life of the commune, between the need to partake of the youth revolution in appearance, music, mores, and the need to be politically active. Increasingly, these two goals—more or less fused together in the West—came into conflict in the East. The activity of the commune came more and more to revolve around the search for a “common political praxis,” a search to be achieved in part through the study of classic texts of Marxism-Leninism, in part through support for revolution in the Third World. This search for political effectiveness,

impossible to pursue in the public sphere, as the events of fall 1968 had proven, eventually led leading communards into the arms of the party.

This development occurred in connection with a split within the group occasioned by Fidel Castro's statement of support for the crushing of the Prague Spring. It now became necessary to choose. Some entered the party while others began to flee the country for new lives in the West.²⁶ After the split, the remaining communards moved to a second apartment in Berlin Friedrichshain. Here, a growing "bureaucratization of daily life" within the commune saw fun and parties replaced by rules and regulations expressed in "terms hardly different from the most official GDR communiqués."²⁷ Indeed, the commune's identification with the regime became sufficiently intense that both Wolf Biermann and Robert Havemann were, on account of their refusal to leave "the camp of the counterrevolutionaries" (i.e. their refusal to cease their loyal criticism of the regime) forbidden entry to the apartment.²⁸ Distrusted by a government that feared the appearance of any possible alternative center of initiative, cut off by the logic of their own position from erstwhile allies, and shunned by young people for whom any association with the government was de-legitimizing, the communards lost the very agency they had hoped to gain by cooperation with the regime.²⁹ Eventually, in a predictable *denouement*, a number of them went on to become unofficial co-workers of the State Security.³⁰

Conclusion

Unable to forge a meaningful connection between internal and external space, between private and public revolution, the eastern communards were doomed to impotence. In a surveillance society in which the state, too, wanted to break down the boundaries between public and private, the attempt lost much of its meaning. It is striking, nevertheless, how much events in East and West paralleled each other, and not only in terms of the search for new ways of living and relating to others. As in the Federal Republic, the failure of utopian expectations led young radicals to try to reach out to the working class; some of the eastern communards subsequently went to work in factories, where they were quickly disabused of romantic notions about the political potential of the proletariat. The East also saw the attempt to enact a "march through the institutions" similar to that in the West, even if these institutions were those of a communist dictatorship. In both East and West Berlin, the post-1968 period further saw attempts to live "off the map" in the marginal zones alongside the wall, with their dilapidated squats and relative freedom from the prying eyes of the authorities. In retreating to these "counter-culture islands," the "disillusioned utopians" of western districts like Kreuzberg, and the *Aussteiger* (drop-outs) of East Berlin's Prenzlauer Berg, attempted to mark their growing separation from society.³¹

However, the *Kommune I* and the *KI-Ost* were by no means efforts to retreat from society; rather they were attempts to establish new fields of revolutionary activity within society. Each expressed the optimism of revolutionary hopes and expectations characteristic of the 1960s, but each was also an attempt to escape a revolutionary impasse at home. In the West, this meant the attempt to find a way to “live” the politics of the Extra-Parliamentary Opposition; in the East, it meant finding a way to regain the agency denied to young people who had wanted, among other things, to protest the crushing of “socialism with a human face” in Czechoslovakia. In each case, the attempt to erase the distinction between the private and the political, to overcome the moralistic programming of a repressive society, was understood as part of a global context; but only in the West was it possible to attempt to forge an organic link between the expected breakthrough to a new personal freedom and new revolutionary consciousness with the attempt to revolutionize society as a whole. In the East, both aspects of the project faced insurmountable obstacles. To dissolve the distinction between public and private in a society that recognized no such distinction to begin with was a hopeless undertaking; and in the face of the ruling party’s totalizing claims on the public sphere, it was impossible to extend whatever revolution could be accomplished on the inside to the outside. Close in terms of physical proximity, but a world away in terms of setting and prospects, the two communes illustrate, in their own way, some of the characteristic dilemmas of 1960s activism.

Notes

1. Karl E. Klare, “The Critique of Everyday Life, the New Left, and the Unrecognizable Marxism,” in Dick Howard and Karl Klare, eds., *The Unknown Dimension* (New York: Basic Books, 1972), 18.
2. For an excellent recent treatment of “1968” see Gerd-Rainer Horn, *The Spirit of ’68: Rebellion in Western Europe and North America, 1956–1976* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). For the North-American perspective on communes see Timothy Miller, “The Sixties-Era Communes,” in Peter Brainstein and Michael William Doyle, eds., *Imagine Nation. The American Counterculture of the 1960s and ’70s* (New York and London: Routledge, 2002), 327–51. On West Germany see Alexander Holmig, “Private ist politisch’: Kommune und Wohngemeinschaft Zäune anrempeln, die den Alltag begrenzen! Von Kommunen und Wohngemeinschaften,” in Andreas Schwab, Beate Schappach, and Manuel Gogos, eds., *Die 68er: Kurzer Sommer—lange Wirkung: Schriften des Historischen Museums Frankfurt am Main 27* (Essen: Klartext-Verlag, 2008), 52–59.
3. See also the material on the New York City “Motherfuckers” commune and the *Kommune I* in Peter Stansill and David Zane Mairowitz, eds., *Bamn (By Any Means Necessary): Outlaw Manifestos & Ephemera, 1965–1970* (New York: Autonomedia, 1999).
4. See Axel Schildt and Detlef Siegfried, “Introduction,” in Axel Schildt and Detlef Siegfried, *European Cities, Youth And The Public Sphere In The Twentieth Century*

- (Aldershot U.K. and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 1–7, 1–2. See also Mark Fenimore, *Sex, Thugs, and Rock & Roll: Teenage Rebels in Cold-War East Germany* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007).
5. For a broader treatment of “1968” in the two halves of Germany, see Timothy S. Brown, “1968 East and West: Divided Germany as a Case Study in Transnational History,” *American Historical Review*, Volume 114 (February 2009) AHR forum on the “International 1968.”
 6. Hans-Liudger Dienel and Malte Schophaus, “Urban Wastelands and the Development of Youth Cultures in Berlin since 1945, with Comparative Perspectives on Amsterdam and Naples,” in Axel Schildt and Detlef Siegfried, *European Cities, Youth and the Public Sphere in the Twentieth Century* (Aldershot, U.K., and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 111–33, here 123.
 7. Jürgen Rostock, “Ost-Berlin als Hauptstadt der DDR,” in Werner Süß and Ralf Rytlewski, eds., *Berlin. Die Hauptstadt. Vergangenheit und Zukunft einer europäischen Metropole* (Berlin: Nicolai, 1999), 259–94; 288–89.
 8. See Uta Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany* (Berkeley: UC Press, 2000); Dorothee Wierling, “Der Staat, die Jugend und der Westen: Texte zu Konflikten der 1960er Jahre,” in Alf Lüdtke and Peter Becker, eds., *Akten, Eingaben, Schaufenster. Die DDR und ihre Texte. Erkundungen zu Herrschaft und Alltag* (Berlin, 1997), 223–40; Marc-Dietrich Ohse, *Jugend nach dem Mauerbau: Anpassung, Protest und Eigensinn (DDR 1961–1974)* (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2003) 139–40.
 9. See Wierling, “Der Staat, die Jugend und der Westen,” 223; see also Dorothee Wierling, “Beat heißt schlagen. Die Leipziger Beatdemonstration in Oktober 1965 und die Jugendpolitik der SED,” in Adolf-Grimme-Institut, *Unsere Medien, Unsere Republik 2: “1965: Warten auf den Frühling,”* Heft 4, (1993).
 10. See Dienel and Schophaus, “Urban Wastelands,” 113.
 11. On the student movement see Martin Klimke, *The Other Alliance: Student Protest in West Germany and the United States in the Global Sixties* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); Nick Thomas, *Protest Movements in 1960s West Germany: A Social History of Dissent and Democracy* (New York: Berg, 2003); Wolfgang Kraushaar, *1968 als Mythos, Chiffre und Zäsur* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2000).
 12. On the *Kommune I* see Alexander Holmig, “Wenn’s der Wahrheits(er)findung dient. ...” *Wirken und Wirkung der Kommune I (1967–1969)*, (Magisterarbeit: Humboldt Universität, August 2004); Ulrich Enzensberger, *Die Jahre der Kommune I. Berlin 1967–1969* (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2004).
 13. Wilfried Mausbach, “‘Burn, Ware-house, Burn!’ Modernity, Counterculture, and the Vietnam War in West Germany,” in Axel Schildt and Detlef Siegfried, *Between Marx and Coca-Cola. Youth Cultures in Changing European Societies* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2006), 175–202. See also Uta G. Poiger, “Imperialism and Consumption: Two Tropes in West German Radicalism,” in Axel Schildt and Detlef Siegfried, *Between Marx and Coca-Cola. Youth Cultures in Changing European Societies* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2006), 161–72, 163–64.
 14. See Uwe Bergmann, Rudi Dutschke, Wolfgang Lefevre, and Bernd Rabehl, *Rebellion der Studenten oder Die neue Opposition* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1968), 63.
 15. See Dagmar Herzog, *Sex after Fascism. Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005), ch. 4.

16. "Rainer und Uschi go out very seldom," the caption under a picture of the couple in the radical newspaper 883 sarcastically observes; "the curiosity of strangers is disagreeable to them;" "Der Sonderbare Drive der Kommune I," 883 Nr. 40, 13 November 1969.
17. See Detlef Siegfried, *Time Is on My Side. Konsum und Politik in der westdeutschen Jugendkultur der 60er Jahre* (Hamburg: Wallstein, 2006).
18. See Mausbach, "'Burn, Ware-house, Burn!,'" 188.
19. Lutz Kirchenwitz, "1968 im Osten—was ging uns die Bundesrepublik an?," *UTOPIE kreativ*, H. 164 (Juni 2004).
20. See Florian Havemann "68er Ost," *UTOPIE kreativ*, H. 164 (Juni 2004), 544–56, here 546; Frank Havemann, in Rainer Land and Ralf Possekel, *Fremde Welten. Die gegensätzliche Deutung der DDR durch SED-Reformer und Bürgerbewegung in den 80er Jahren* (Berlin, 1998), 220; Paul Kaiser, "Kommune 'K1—Ost,' Ostberlin," unpublished radio broadcast manuscript for Deutschlandfunk-Radio, copy in possession of the author, 28; Ulrich Enzensberger, *Die Jahre der Kommune I* (Köln, 2004), 233; Dieter Kunzelmann, *Leisten Sie keinen Widerstand! Bilder aus meinem Leben* (Berlin: Transit, 1998), 91.
21. Florian Havemann, interview with the author, Berlin, 12 April 2005.
22. See Timothy S. Brown, "1968 in the German Democratic Republic," in Martin Klimke and Joachim Scharloth, eds., *1968 in Europe: A History of Protest and Activism, 1956–1977* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008). On the comparison of the East and West German "1968s" see the pieces in special issue of *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, (B 45/2003). See also Dietrich Mühlberg, "Wann war 68 im Osten? Oder: Wer waren die 68er im Osten?," in *Berliner Blätter. Ethnographische und ethnologische Beiträge* (Berlin: Institut für Europäische Ethnologie der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Heft 18, 1999), 44–58.
23. Kaiser, "Kommune 'K1—Ost,' 21.
24. Gerd Grosser, interviewed by Paul Kaiser, in Kaiser, "Kommune 'K1—Ost,' Ostberlin," 29.
25. Kaiser, "Kommune 'K1—Ost,' 23.
26. Florian Havemann, interview with the author, Berlin, 12 April 2005. Those who emigrated were Rosita Hunziger, Hans-Georg Utzkoreit, Sandra Weigel, Florian Havemann, and Thomas Brasch; Paul Kaiser and Claudia Petzold, "Perlen vor die Säue. Eine Boheme im Niemandsland," in Paul Kaiser and Claudia Petzold, *Boheme und Diktatur in der DDR. Gruppen, Konflikte, Quartiere, 1970–1989*. Katalog zur Ausstellung des Deutschen Historisches Museums vom 4. September bis 16. Dezember 1997 (Berlin: Fannei & Walz, 1997), 13–33.
27. Kaiser, "Kommune 'K1—Ost,' 32.
28. Frank Havemann distanced himself from his father, Robert Havemann, because the latter gave an illegal interview to a West German magazine in the commune's apartment; Kaiser, "Kommune 'K1—Ost,' 35.
29. Kaiser, "Kommune 'K1—Ost,' 34–35.
30. *Ibid.*, 39.
31. Dienel, Hans-Ludger and Malte Schophaus, "Urban Wastelands," 122.

“Stadtindianer” and “Indiani Metropolitani”

Recontextualizing an Italian Protest Movement in West Germany

Sebastian Haumann

In 1977 and 1978 a protest movement that took up the motif of the archetypical Native American as a symbol caused a stir in West Germany. Young people dressed as Indians organized festivals resembling Indians' meetings and developed some degree of militancy against the “non-Indian” majority. The existence of the “*Stadtindianer*”—as the “urban Indians” called themselves—was an indication of a paradigm shift within West Germany's protest culture. In the late 1970s the focus of Left-wing protest turned away from revolution as an aim toward autonomy as an end.¹ The goal that the “Indians” pursued was no longer to change the political and economic system and thus, following Marxist thought, society as a whole. Instead, they took up the idea of social exclusion and turned it into a call for extensive self-determination. The protagonists of this movement saw themselves as laying the foundations for a separate society for those who had been excluded or had retreated from the society structured by capitalist logics. Instead of overthrowing the political and economic system and gaining power in a conventional way, the “Indians” stood paradigmatically for a different conceptualization of power, one that rested on the division of society according to two systematically divergent forms of societal organization.²

One of the reasons for the shift within the West German Left from revolutionary goals to the call for autonomy was the apparent failure of terrorism, which was perceived as the radicalization of revolutionary tendencies. More important was the Italian discourse on “*autonomia*,” which had begun in the late 1960s, and gained a strong impact in the West German protest movements in the late 1970s. Among the very diverse movements adhering to autonomy in Italy, it was those acting in the field of cultural politics that were the most dazzling, like the numerous groupings known as “*indiani metropolitani*.” For part of the West German Left, the self-stylization as Native Americans, popular among Italian young people, bore the essence of a successful path toward the creation

of an alternative society. Through the identification with the archetypical Native American, the Italian Left seemed to have found a symbol to bundle a set of ideals that their West German counterparts were aspiring to. It was the West German Left that sensed similarities between protesting youths in both countries, in terms of self-perception, political aims, and strategies, which in turn also led them to adopt the symbolic expression of that dissent as *Stadtindianer*.

This article will therefore analyze how protest practices and their underlying concepts, which originated in Italy, were recontextualized. It will look beyond the process in which ideas were transferred and shed light on the reception and adoption of the Italian *indiani metropolitani* in West Germany, where the *Stadtindianer* were a phenomenon that was both ubiquitous, and at the same time, left few traces. As evidence from the city of Hilden, near Düsseldorf, shows, this phenomenon was not led solely by the notorious “*Sponti*” groups in Berlin, Frankfurt, or Göttingen.³ Yet the scarcity of primary sources—there are only a few articles in contemporary leftist papers, such as the *Pflasterstrand*, *Carlo Sponti*, and *Info-BUG*, as well as two anthologies containing documents and analyses of the Italian and West German situation⁴—makes it extremely difficult to even confirm the very existence of the *Stadtindianer*.

The Evidence

On the evening of 28 October 1978, approximately 300 young people gathered in Hilden in front of the “*Stadthalle*,” the city’s convention and cultural center. They had painted their faces and a number of them wore Indian-style accessories and clothes. Most of them simply sat around drinking alcohol and some played their instruments. However, their presence interfered with people trying to enter the *Stadthalle* to see a play being performed that night. Police said that the purpose of the gathering was to prevent the audience from attending the show and also claimed that later on a group of young people tried to invade the *Stadthalle* to disrupt the play. This attempt was accompanied by loud “Indian howls” but was not successful. At nine o’clock, the group dispersed, only to return half an hour later. By that time, the police were present to seal off the area. Some of the demonstrators were arrested and a number of clashes took place injuring several people.⁵ A week later, a silent protest march was intended to contrast the aggressive behavior of the police with the allegedly peaceful means of protest exercised by the “Indians.” Yet, resignation spread among the protesters and many of them felt that their original goals had been drowned in a discussion on violence and counter-violence.⁶

Police and city officials had no doubt that the purpose of the gathering on 28 October 1978, was to stage an open confrontation. They pointed out that demonstrators had violently blocked the entrance of the *Stadthalle*, had solicited people on their way to the show, and had refused to talk to city officials about the

intentions of the gathering.⁷ Hilden's City Manager even claimed that the meeting was systematically exploited by "extremely left oriented circles" from Göttingen and Heidelberg.⁸ While police and city officials singled out the violent and destructive character of the protest, the young demonstrators themselves described the gathering as a "festival with music, dance and cheerfulness."⁹ They maintained that their intentions were absolutely peaceful and that it was the police that had triggered the escalation of the incident.¹⁰ To some extent, both sides were right, but it is important to note the severe lack of channels through which communication was possible. In fact, non-communication was an eminent source of violence, and it was conceived as a structural problem that was deepening the rift between protesters and public officials. The *Stadtindianer* felt that their idea of separating themselves from the society of the majority—in the symbolic juxtaposition of their "festival" with the play at the *Stadthalle*—was misinterpreted as an attempt to overturn the political system. And only on this basis did the brute police action lead them to defend their oppositional culture, with force if necessary, as was expressed in one leaflet that declared that the state was about to turn "peace loving boys and girls into terrorists."¹¹

What was the reason for the gathering on 28 October 1978? Only a few weeks earlier the *Stadthalle* had been opened to the public in a festive ceremony. On that occasion, the mayor had presented it as a gathering place for all citizens. In their invitation, the organizers of the "Indian" gathering quoted that statement and claimed to put it to the test.¹² The young protesters actually felt excluded from that promise, because their concept of cultural activity differed widely from what the city officials had envisaged. From their point of view, the events proposed for the new *Stadthalle* were confined to the reception and consumption of culture, as opposed to the idea of culture based on participation and creativity.¹³ The second controversial point was that admission fees were too expensive for many young people, effectively excluding them.¹⁴ At the same time, there was a lack of public places available for the city's youth. There was nowhere for young people to meet, unless they turned to commercial options or subordinated themselves under the regimentations of the communal "*Haus der Jugend*." The young people demanded they be given a building in which they could establish an autonomous youth center according to their own values and rules. By 1978, a small group had been campaigning for such a center for four years.¹⁵ Although there was one building that could have easily been turned into a youth center just a few meters away from the *Stadthalle*, the city's interest in supporting the young peoples' initiative was limited.¹⁶ What struck the protagonists of the youth center initiative at the opening of the *Stadthalle* was the discrepancy between the large amount of money being spent on the established culture and the lack of response when they demanded support for an alternative understanding of culture.¹⁷

Only at this point in the local debate about a self-governed youth center did the allusion to the archetypal Native American come to reflect the young

protesters' self-perception. It marked the implosion of a paradoxical situation: The young peoples' initiative had for years demanded a space that would be free of control by the authorities and shielded from the market for youth culture. In voicing that demand, they had turned to the city to provide that space, which was to be explicitly exempt from their control.¹⁸ With the opening of the *Stadthalle* in 1978, the overemphasis of such expectations overarching this paradox became evident. The appearance of the *Stadtindianer* in Hilden thus indicates the point at which the youths' initiative departed from the idea that it was possible to form a subcultural society within the prevailing society of the majority and instead conceptualized themselves and the majority as two separate and ultimately irreconcilable societies.

Self-Perception as a Marginalized People

What was intriguing about making use of the Indian motif was that it seemed to reflect the feelings of many of the young people involved in protest movements. The protesters in Hilden, just as in other places throughout West Germany and Italy, had a very specific idea about why reference to Indians was needed to represent their sentiment. By symbolically affiliating themselves with Native Americans, they dissociated themselves from the society of the majority. This implied the negation of an Italian or German identity. It turned a feeling of exclusion—against the background of diminishing economic, educational, political, and cultural opportunities for young people—into the positive notion that a radical alternative for the organization of society could be established.¹⁹ Based on a divergent set of values, the *indiani metropolitani* and the *Stadtindianer* constituted a counterculture to the utmost, attempting to establish autonomous norms and institutions in the broadest sense.

In the eyes of the *indiani metropolitani* and the *Stadtindianer*, the Native Americans' philosophy stood for values such as respect for nature, egalitarian relationships with other human beings, and solidarity. These ideals were contrasted with the values of the affluent society of the Western countries, which seemed to reduce social interaction to acts of consumption and subdued life under the rules of work ethics.²⁰ From the "Indians'" perspective, these values would inevitably lead to the ruin of the environment and the dissolution of humanity.²¹ It was utopia against anti-utopia and the Indian theme was a device to quite literally stage an alternative utopia.²² Organizing life according to what was perceived as the Indians' philosophy would ultimately lead to a society without coercion. In contrast to Western society, which compelled individuals to consume in order to generate profit for few, private property and consumption seemed to be unknown to Native Americans. The European youth adopting the Indian image perceived Native American society as voluntary and organized on the basis of absolute self-determination.²³

To be sure, the Indian motif that young Italians and Germans took up was based on popular images rather than knowledge of Native American societies. The well-established clichés of North American Indians as noble savages was complemented at that time by the reception of the Native Americans' Red Power movement emerging in the United States. To show themselves as representatives of the perceived Indian values, the *indiani metropolitani* as well as the *Stadtindianer* dressed up as Indians, gathered for festivals such as the one in Hilden, and most significantly, used a colorful and mystical language in their statements. It is striking to see how the *Stadtindianer* tried to establish a distance to Western concepts by circumscribing them in a way that implied that they could not be reasonably understood: They described Western rationality and its outgrowths as nonsense in the light of human nature. For example, the Berlin “FU-Indianer” used the term “gray wigwams that are higher than any tree” to imply that they regarded high-rise buildings as destructive for life in accordance with nature.²⁴ Such an overblown phrasing once again shows that the young Europeans imitating Indians orientated themselves toward a romanticized image of Native Americans that had been cultivated in Europe for centuries and had little in common with the actual situation and culture of Native Americans.²⁵

Nonetheless, the experimental and abundant use of symbols was an outstanding characteristic of the protest movements of the 1970s and 1980s. This is especially true for movements with strong anti-intellectual tendencies that substituted rational argumentation with symbolic statements. Making abundant use of symbols also had the advantage of reducing complexity to facilitate communication and identification within the group, and it left much room for—at times ambivalent—interpretations.²⁶ Modeling one's identity on Native Americans was a rather broad expression of one's perceived alienation from Western society.

Even though both the Italian *indiani metropolitani* and the West German *Stadtindianer* referred to a similar set of symbols that expressed similar feelings of alienation, critics within the West German Left pointed out that the situation in which the *indiani metropolitani* emerged was very different from the situation of most *Stadtindianer*. It was not only the socio-economic circumstances that seemed to be more difficult for Italian youth. It was also an entirely different political context that was addressed in Italy. Up to the early 1970s, the Italian Communist Party (PCI) had managed to integrate many protest movements by taking up a very general oppositional stand within the political system. After the electoral success in the mid 1970s, the PCI was obliged to live up to its growing responsibility. The “Historical Compromise,” an attempt to develop constructive policies for the working class by cooperating with conservative politicians, alienated many who remained in fundamental opposition. For those mainly young people, who were to a large extent unemployed or students at the overcrowded universities, and who had sympathized with the PCI, it became necessary to construct a new identity. In this context the *indiani metropolitani*

were just one solution to reconstruct a radically oppositional identity—one that made extremely abundant use of symbolism.²⁷ All this differed widely from the situation in Germany where the *Stadtindianer* were perceived as a superficial phenomenon, lacking a profound background. The Indian motif was adopted only by “sympathetic association” as the Italian-born, leftist political scientist Johannes Agnoli argued.²⁸

By 1977, when the first “Indians” appeared in West Germany, the Italian role model they based their protest practices on had become a symbol of the ultimate separation from civil society. Just like the *indiani metropolitani*, the *Stadtindianer* aimed to construct an emotionally underlined symbolic caesura within their respective societies of the majority, reflecting their perceived economical and political marginalization.²⁹ By this point the Italian communist intellectual Alberto Asor Rosa had already coined the term “*le due società*,” referring to a variety of oppositional groups, such as the *indiani metropolitani*. Rosa was the first to interpret the “Indians” opposition as so fundamental that he did not believe that any political party would be able to integrate such tendencies. He also introduced the notion that non-communication caused the rise of a “second society,” using such labels as the Indian motif.³⁰

Fighting at Places of Culture

Compared to Rosa’s “*due società*,” the German translation “*Zwei Kulturen*” seemed rather pale. It suggested that the opposition of groups such as the *Stadtindianer* predominantly concerned conflicts in the field of cultural politics. Indeed, conflicts involving *Stadtindianer* most commonly evolved around places intended for cultural activities. The “Indians” in Hilden were outraged about the reluctance of the city to support an autonomous youth center and the concurrent sponsorship of the *Stadthalle*. What the German translation did capture more precisely was that places of cultural activity were the major “battle-grounds”—both in Italy and West Germany.

The call for the establishment of autonomous youth centers had evolved in West Germany after 1971. By the mid 1970s, a widespread youth center movement with initiatives in up to 2,200 towns addressed the problem of the lack of spaces for young people to spend their spare time in ways they wanted to. In most cases, they took up negotiations with city officials. However, the officials did not seem to understand the concept of self-governed youth centers as “free” spaces—partially due to the paradoxical demand for the city to provide those “free” spaces. Agreement was possible as long as the city’s supremacy over such centers was guaranteed, but this was exactly what the initiatives did not want. City councils often expected that the initiatives would name single persons to take responsibility, which would have meant setting up a formal hierarchy within the group of young people, a tendency they tried to avoid. In most cases

in which cities gave in, the possibility that social workers would remain in charge of the fundamental decisions, as well as the power to intervene, was held up. What the youth center initiatives wanted were “free” spaces, not only as places for them to spend their spare time but also as a core for the development toward a different society. Self-determination, grassroots democracy, and solidarity were to be exemplarily put to the test in such spaces, isolated from the majority’s norms and spread throughout the entire society.³¹

Places for young people to meet outside the commercial offerings and free of strict regulations were scarce. One either had to spend money to visit pubs and discotheques or subordinate oneself to organizations like the church or sport club, who ran youth centers. Groups in numerous cities demanded spaces for activities without any compulsion or restrictions. This seemed even more of a necessity as the commercialization of youth cultures was perceived by many youths to appropriate and ultimately destroy young people’s independence in cultural politics. Those who eventually employed the Indian motif to represent their criticism were concerned that culture was becoming increasingly commercially exploited and subordinated to financial interests. Alternatively, they demanded there be places where cultural and social interaction was honored as a value in itself. Spaces such as the envisioned autonomous youth centers were intended to provide room for individual creative development that was neither measured on the basis of its commercially usable output nor restricted by societal conventions.

In voicing this criticism, West German initiatives for autonomous youth centers increasingly drew on Italian examples, where the *indiani metropolitani* had first appeared at a time when the squatters’ movement was extending its scope from providing space to live to establishing places of cultural activity.³² In both countries, the general friction underlying confrontations over places of cultural activity ran along the line of what purpose cultural activity was to serve: Was culture about a creative process or about a consumable product? This question was not only a matter of taste, but became highly politicized as the *indiani metropolitani*, as well as other groups drawing on the discourse on autonomy, claimed that mainstream culture bore in it the core of corruption, numbing radical potentials in society. In this context, the term “*autonomia creativa*” was coined in Italy, blending aspects of the structure of society with aspects of culture reflecting and reinforcing this structure.³³

Furthermore, the Italian role model conveyed an image of the self-perception of the “Indians” as victims of violent intrusion of the state and capitalism into the alternative community of young people in analogy to the conquest of the American West.³⁴ This pattern of self-conception had strong spatial connotations. In accordance with the Indian motif, autonomous cultural spaces were “freed” spaces that had to be defended against the “second conquest” of “Indian territory.” This second conquest was brought about by the authorities’ intervention and by capitalistic penetration of the young peoples’ *Lebenswelt*. The *indiani*

metropolitani and the *Stadtindianer* saw themselves as defending spaces that were not subject to the values of Western society. A mix of resignation and latent aggression was arising from their perception of being threatened with the loss of individuality and their right to dissent from the norms of Western society.³⁵ When a number of Berlin groups organized a meeting in January 1978, they propagated the retreat from the established society heading for an imaginary place called “TUNIX,”³⁶ envisaged as a faraway place to escape from the “repressive German state.”³⁷ In this case, TUNIX figured as the imaginary equivalent of the many initiatives that failed to establish autonomous youth centers and other spaces that were “freed.”

War As a Protective Strategy

In Italy, a phenomenon known as “*autoriduzione*” was a more aggressive valve for the same feeling. It was the practice of raiding or squatting at commercial cultural events and in places, such as concerts or cinemas, and demanding reduced or free admittance.³⁸ It was rationalized by those involved as a means of undermining commercialized youth culture, extracting its profits, and returning it as compensation for those young people whose subculture was penetrated. Although neither TUNIX nor *autoriduzione* were exclusively carried by the *Stadtindianer* or the *indiani metropolitani*—in fact they did not even make up the majority of those involved—the “Indian” symbol they resorted to did provide the most illustrative representation of the participants’ attitudes.

Raiding commercialized cultural offerings by force grew into actions that were directed at the heart of European high culture. While the attack on Hilden’s *Stadthalle* and its visitors might not seem to have been an assault on the very core of Western culture, a preceding incident in Milan reveals the central point of the “Indians” argumentation. In December 1976, a group of *indiani metropolitani* charged the Milan Scala, one of Europe’s most renowned opera houses, during a performance. The well-to-do opera visitors were confronted by a group of young people showing their disaffection for the establishment’s lifestyle. The “Indians” took control over a location that represented and cultivated that very lifestyle as did few other places in Europe.³⁹ Even though the two places—the *Stadthalle* in Hilden and the Scala in Milan—differ in prominence, both incidents were directed at the same issues. First, both places represented high culture. Quite literally, culture performed at the *Stadthalle* or the Scala was established as culture in conformity with the norms of Western society. Cultural activities, by taking place within these buildings, were defined as being appropriate and a model to follow. Second, and resulting from this standard, the young people saw a discrepancy between the privileges—both financial and social—granted to established culture connected with these locations compared to the space they demanded for autonomous centers. The pattern of deliberately neglecting or even

outlawing independent youth center initiatives, while at the same time funding and fostering mainstream or high-end cultural activities, was a common feature of urban policy during the 1970s.

The assaults on places representing cultural hegemony were on one hand meant to be a form of retaliation, while on the other hand their protagonists marked them as preventive strikes warning the establishment not to intrude into their *Lebenswelt* and not to impose on them culture as modeled in these places. Again, in analogy to the Native Americans' situation, the *indiani metropolitani* and *Stadtindianer* constructed a society of their own, separated from the society of the majority, but felt forced to comply with the norms of the latter. The assumption that their struggle had a defensive character against the attempts at integration, which ranged from the authorities' law enforcement to economic pressure to yield to a capitalist lifestyle, seemed to legitimate a militant response.

This line of reasoning became highly influential in West Germany when, at the time the first *Stadtindianer* appeared in the spring of 1977, the country's political Left was caught up in discussions on the character and strategies of oppositional movements.⁴⁰ New social movements including middle-class and even conservative views, such as citizens' initiatives, were on the rise, while a growing number of young women and men were retreating from society instead of trying to change it. This development set off a broad controversy over the goals and strategies of protest, leaving the West German Left in uncertainty and triggering a process of reorientation. By the end of 1977, the dispute took a further turn. The terrorist attacks of that year and the state's reaction had brought topics such as militancy, terrorism, and repression back on the agenda. By this time, it had become evident that the West German Left was not able to integrate even parts of the working class into their schemes of mass based militancy. Instead, terrorism and militancy was increasingly denounced as isolating the Left from the "masses."⁴¹ The incidents of 1977 compelled the West German Left to take a stand on the issue of terrorism and militancy.

The concepts condensed in the "Indian" motif offered one solution to the difficulty of integrating the claim for social change into a concept of autonomy that also embraced militancy. As a matter of fact, one of the most widely known reactions from within the radical Left to the terrorist attacks of 1977 was aired by a group of *Stadtindianer*. In the so-called "*Buback-Nachruf*"—an open letter in which the author hinted at sympathy for the murderers of Attorney General Siegfried Buback—the author who referred to himself as member of the "Mescalero"-Tribe drew extensively on the images and vocabulary of the *Stadtindianer*.⁴² The *Buback-Nachruf* can be interpreted as one particular, and at the time highly influential, attempt to find an adequate way of reintegrating terrorism and militancy into a radical political agenda. The concept and symbol of the "Indian" seemed to be a suitable answer because it rendered militant actions a means of self-defense for a diverging culture, and in extension, a diverging and separate alternative society.

Even though the *Stadtindianer* disappeared from the scene shortly after 1977–78, such concepts as that the “Indian” motif had connoted lived on. Partially due to the “Indians” self-conception, a new understanding of militancy that drew on the notion of defending an autonomous *Lebenswelt* had emerged in West Germany as legitimization for violent action that the “Indians” had introduced. Both the spatial and cultural claims underlying the friction prevailed as the militant “*Autonome*,” taking on many of the *Stadtindianer’s* ideas, came to dominate the resurgence of the squatters’ movement in 1980–81 and an increasing number of controversial issues throughout the 1980s.⁴³ The incident that ignited a new wave of protests north of the Alps in 1980 is indicative of this connection. In 1980, controversies over an autonomous youth center in Zurich escalated when the city’s opera received a substantial grant, while no space was made available for alternative cultural activities. Again, the discrepancies between officially promoted high culture and neglected youth culture became evident. And again, the claim for cultural autonomy was spatially constructed as the opera house was raided by enraged supporters of the “*Autonomes Jugendzentrum*.”⁴⁴

Conclusion: Perception and Transfer

Analyzing the self-perception, aims, and strategies of the *indiani metropolitani* and the *Stadtindianer* as a transnational phenomenon reveals many similarities, but also points to a number of ways in which recontextualization skewed the meaning the Indian motif had in West Germany. Italy had been one of the role models for the West German Left ever since the late 1960s. Due to a more confrontational political climate in the south European country, protest forms such as squatting or abstract concepts like “*autonomia*” seemed more forceful and effective in promoting societal change. Especially those groups that perceived themselves as part of an “undogmatic” Left led in the adoption of Italian discourses and phenomena such as the *indiani metropolitani*.⁴⁵ The observation that the *Stadtindianer* had disappeared just as fast as they had appeared leaving no trace is the reason it is widely assumed that they were just an odd expression of the disintegration of the West German Left around 1977.⁴⁶ In fact, they were more than that. The Indian motif was a means of transmission that led to the reinforcement of the idea of autonomy in West German protest movements.

The “Indians” movement fit the conception of two disconnected societies paradigmatically, since they did not aim to transform society at some point in the future, working toward a revolution, but started living their diverging culture and forms of societal organization in the present. From their point of view, an alternative society could exist autonomously with its own values and rules, separated from the Italian or German societies of the majority.⁴⁷ Accordingly, the focus of protest shifted. From the mid 1970s onward, controversies increasingly

ran along the lines of how much the values and norms of the mainstream society interfered with the individuals' lives and of how free choice was restricted by culturally encoded hegemony.

In a phase of fundamental reorientation of the West German Left, the Indian motif became the medium through which a political identity was created that drew on the supposedly more successful Italian protest movements. In particular, the struggle for self-governed youth centers in both countries showed a range of similar fears of cultural hegemony that suggested the adoption of concepts representing cultural deviance.⁴⁸ The identification with the archetypically Native American condensed the self-perception of many young Italians and Germans as marginalized and exploited by the dominating society. Via analogy, it also legitimized militancy as a means to protect an autonomous parallel *Lebenswelt* as the core of an alternative society and to safeguard its existence in hostile surroundings dominated by the “repressive” intrusion of the state and the commercialization of youth cultures in a capitalist economy.

Notes

1. Detlef Siegfried, “Urbane Revolten, befreite Zonen. Über die Wiederbelebung der Stadt und die Neuaneignung der Provinz durch die ‘Gegenkultur’ der 1970er Jahre”, in *Stadt und Kommunikation in bundesrepublikanischen Umbruchzeiten*, ed., Adelheid von Saldern, (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2006), 351–66.
2. Katsiaficas, George N., *The Subversion of Politics: European Autonomous Social Movements and the Decolonization of Everyday Life* (Oakland: AK Press, 2006).
3. I came across this piece of evidence while working on my master's thesis on the West German squatters' movement. Despite the cliché that protest movements were concentrated in large cities, it is rewarding to analyze medium-sized towns such as Hilden paradigmatically: Sebastian Haumann, “Hausbesetzungen 1980–1982 in Hilden,” *Mitteilungsblatt des Instituts für soziale Bewegungen* 34 (2005): 155–71.
4. *Indianer und P38. Italien: ein neues 68 mit anderen Waffen* (München: Trikont Verlag, 1978); Dieter Hoffmann-Axthelm, et al., eds., *Zwei Kulturen?* (Berlin: Verlag Ästhetik und Kommunikation, 1978).
5. Polizeistation Hilden: Bericht Demonstration an der Stadthalle (28.10.1978), Stadtarchiv Hilden (StAH), Dez. I, Amt 10, Ablief. 9.2.1983, P1: “Demo's Jugendl.”; Rheinische Post (RP) 30.10.1978: “Polizei sicherte die Stadthalle ab.”
6. Westdeutsche Zeitung (WZ) 6.11.1978: “Großer Knall blieb beim Schweigemarsch aus”; WZ 7.11.1978: “Zum ursprünglichen Ziel zurückkehren.”
7. Stadt Hilden, Stadtdirektor: Offener Brief (3.11.1978), StAH, Dez. I, Amt 10, Ablief. 9.2.1983, P1: “Demo's Jugendl.”
8. Stadt Hilden, Stadtdirektor: Aktennotiz: Demonstration am kommenden Samstag (2.11.1978), StAH, Dez. I, Amt 10, Ablief. 9.2.1983, P1: “Demo's Jugendl.”
9. Offener Brief an den Stadtdirektor der Stadt Hilden (30.10.1978), StAH, Dez. I, Amt 10, Ablief. 9.2.1983, P1: “Demo's Jugendl.”
10. Offener Brief an den Stadtdirektor der Stadt Hilden (31.10.1978), StAH, Dez. I, Amt 10, Ablief. 9.2.1983, P1: “Demo's Jugendl.”

11. Flugblatt: "Was ist das für ein Staat, der seine Nachkommen so behandelt?" (November 1978), StAH, Dez. I, Amt 10, Ablief. 9.2.1983, P1: "Demo's Jugendl."
12. MOB No.4 (October 1978), p.15; All oppositional periodicals cited in this chapter can be found at the Archiv für alternatives Schrifttum (afas) in Duisburg.
13. Flugblatt: "Aufruf zum Galaabend" (October 1978), StAH, Dez. I, Amt 10, Ablief. 9.2.1983, P1: "Demo's Jugendl."
14. Polizeistation Hilden: Pressebericht (29.10.1978), StAH, Dez. I, Amt 10, Ablief. 9.2.1983, P1: "Demo's Jugendl."
15. Klaus-Dieter Bartel, *Die Grünen in der Kommunalpolitik* (Köln: Diplomarbeit Universität zu Köln, 1988), 35.
16. WZ 28.11.1978: "Jugendliche müssen warten."
17. RP 1.11.1978: "Wir wollten feiern."
18. This had been a rather typical strategy in the early 1970s as illustrated in: Christian Heppner, "Von der 'Stadtkrone' zum Jugendfreizeitheim: Integrations- und Desintegrationsprozesse in der Gründungsphase eines Kommunikationszentrums in Garbsen," in *Stadt und Kommunikation in bundesrepublikanischen Umbruchzeiten*, ed., Adelheid von Saldern, (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2006), 328–49.
19. Robert Lumley, *States of emergency. Cultures of revolt in Italy from 1968 to 1978* (London: Verso, 1990), 296.
20. Detlef Siegfried, "'Einstürzende Neubauten'. Wohngemeinschaften, Jugendzentren und private Präferenzen kommunistischer 'Kader' als Formen jugendlicher Subkultur", in *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 44 (2004): 39–66.
21. "Manifest der 'indiani metropolitani' von Rom," translated and republished in *Indianer und P38. Italien: ein neues 68 mit anderen Waffen* (München: Trikont Verlag, 1978), 85–86.
22. Thomas Balistier, *Straßenprotest* (Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot, 1996), 236.
23. Carlo Sponti No.34/35 (June 1977), 8.
24. info-BUG No.153 (25.4.1977), 11; Rainer Paris, "Schwacher Dissenz," in *Jugendkulturen, Politik und Protest*, eds. Roland Roth and Dieter Rucht (Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 2000), 54.
25. Jens Huhn, "Die Stadtindianer auf dem Kriegspfad," in *Autonomie oder Getto? ed.*, Wolfgang Kraushaar (Frankfurt a.M.: Verlag Neue Kritik, 1978).
26. Balistier, *Straßenprotest*, 218f. and 224.
27. Otto Kallscheuer, "Kommentar zu Asor-Rosa," in *Zwei Kulturen?* ed. Dieter Hoffmann-Axthelm, et al. (Berlin: Verlag Ästhetik und Kommunikation, 1978), 63–79.
28. Johannes Agnoli, "Jesuiten, Kommunisten und Indianer," in *Zwei Kulturen?* ed. Dieter Hoffmann-Axthelm, et al. (Berlin: Verlag Ästhetik und Kommunikation, 1978), 90.
29. Massimo Ilardi, "Conflitti e movimenti sociali negli anni '70," in *Jugendprotest und Generationenkonflikt in Europa im 20. Jahrhundert*, ed., Dieter Dowe (Bonn: Verlag Neue Gesellschaft, 1986), 309–318; Paris, "Schwacher Dissenz," 57f.
30. Birgit Kraatz, "Der Traum vom Paradies," in *Aussteigen oder Rebellieren*, ed., Michael Haller (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1981), 41; Kallscheuer, "Systemkrise in Italien und Identitätskrise der Arbeiterbewegung," 9.
31. Egon Schewe, *Selbstverwaltete Jugendzentren* (Bielefeld: Pfeffer, 1980); Heppner, "Von der 'Stadtkrone' zum Jugendfreizeitheim."
32. Lumley, *States of Emergency*, 300.

33. Geronimo, *Feuer und Flamme* (Berlin and Amsterdam: ID-Verlag, 1997), 43ff.
34. Carlo Sponti No.34/35 (June 1977), 8, and info-BUG No.154 (2.5.1977), 16.
35. Huhn, "Die Stadtindianer auf dem Kriegspfad," 134; Paris, "Schwacher Dissenz," 56.
36. Translated literally, TUNIX means "do nothing." The meeting marked the height of a resigned mood within the West German Left after the terrorist attacks and the countermeasures in 1977.
37. Geronimo, *Feuer und Flamme*, 86; Ilardi, "Conflitti e movimenti sociali negli anni '70," 312.
38. Benini and Eisenhardt, *Indianer und P38*, 24.
39. Walter Franz, *Jugendprotest in Italien* (Frankfurt a.M.: Haag und Herchen, 1993), 78f.
40. "Manifest der 'indiani metropolitani' von Rom," translated and republished in *Indianer und P38*, 85–86; Huhn, "Die Stadtindianer auf dem Kriegspfad," 129–47.
41. Geronimo, *Feuer und Flamme*, 59f; Gerd Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt* (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2001), 332ff.
42. Mescalero, "Buback ein Nachruf," republished in ". . . da ist nur freizusprechen!," ed., Johannes Agnoli, et al. (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1979), 198–201; Mescalero, "Memoiren eines im Amt ergrauten Stadtindianers," in *Kursbuch* 58 (1979), 21–30.
43. Werner Lindner, *Jugendprotest seit den fünfziger Jahren: Dissenz und kultureller Eigensinn* (Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 1996).
44. Heinz Nigg, ed., *Wir wollen alles, und zwar subito!* (Zürich: Limmat-Verlag, 2001).
45. Otto Kallscheuer, "Systemkrise in Italien und Identitätskrise der Arbeiterbewegung," in *Zwei Kulturen?* eds., Dieter Hoffmann-Axthelm, et al. (Berlin: Verlag Ästhetik und Kommunikation, 1978), 7–35; Donatella della Porta and Dieter Rucht, "Left-Libertarian Movements in Context," in *The Politics of Social Protest*, ed. Craig Jenkins, et al. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 229–72.
46. Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt*, 353.
47. Laszlo Vaskovics, "Subkulturen und Subkulturkonzepte," *Forschungsjournal Neue Soziale Bewegungen* 8 (1995): 18; Radikal No. 34 (17.2.1978): 8; Huhn, "Die Stadtindianer auf dem Kriegspfad," 138.
48. Dieter Rucht, "Transnationale Öffentlichkeiten und Identitäten in neuen sozialen Bewegungen," in *Transnationale Öffentlichkeiten und Identitäten im 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Hartmut Kaelble, et al. (Frankfurt a.M.: Campus, 2002), 237–351; Kriesi et al., *New Social Movements in Western Europe* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 186ff.; *Indianer und P38*, 172.

Part III

The Media-Staging of Protest

Mediatization of the Provos

From a Local Movement to a European Phenomenon

Niek Pas

Introduction

In the autumn of 1966, young people all over the world tried to contact a Dutch protest movement called Provo, short for “provocateur,” that had dominated the international headlines that summer and that was still the subject of fierce debate in press and media. Three letters that were sent to Amsterdam give us an idea of the attention the group received.

In the first letter, written in June 1966, a dozen English activists in London, called the Notting Hill Libertarians and led by Brian McGrath, had decided to alter their name to the Notting Hill Provos, and concerning their actions in the future, refer to Provo symbolism and slogans.¹

Several months later behind the Iron Curtain, a Czech student, Boja Christovová, read about Provo in *Mladá Fronta* (Young Front). She wrote to Amsterdam about the Provos in Prague, who were found among students and working youth who protested “against restraint [of] personal freedom of youth.” Boja asked if she could act as a correspondent to the Dutch *Provo* periodical and signed her letters tenderly with “your provo girl.”²

On the other side of the world, in the United States, Bill van Petten contacted Provo after reading about the Dutch group in *The East Village Other*. Van Petten emphasized that “the interest in the Provos” in his hometown of Malibu, California, approached nothing less than “a mania.” He asked for a copy of the *Provo* magazine and one hundred copies of a Provo manifesto—to be translated in English—and longed to start “any kind of personal exchange of people between us and you.”³

These letters written by Brian, Boja, and Bill give rise to the questions of how, why, and in what respect did the Dutch protest movement Provo transcend boundaries and take up a place in the process of the transnational exchange of protest cultures and the action repertoire in the 1960s? What about the process of multiplication and the circulation of Provo’s ideas and tactics through vectors

such as personal itineraries (Provos, supporters); activist encounters (meetings, manifestations); publications (by Provos and others); and mass media (press, radio, and television)?⁴

Origins

Provo originated in the spring of 1965 as an action group in Amsterdam. It existed for two years and ended its activities in May 1967. The movement acquired world fame at this time because of major events that had put Holland in the international headlines: a controversial royal wedding (March 1966) and the riots in Amsterdam (June 1966).⁵

It is important to emphasize that well before “May 1968,” the Netherlands experienced its momentum of social revolt and political unrest. Aside from riots and activism, on a political stage, the country went through a relatively unstable phase: the government fell in October 1966 and new parties emerged—the left-liberal D’66 that wanted to cause the party system “to explode” and the rebellious New Left within the Labor Party. Furthermore, alternative cultural groupings and a free press advocating an exuberant design culture, sexual permissiveness, and a libertarian lifestyle (from hashish to hippies) placed the Netherlands in the international vanguard of counterculture. With “swinging London,” Amsterdam became the European youth capital and, in 1966 and 1967, a destination of pilgrimage for thousands of German, French, and Italian young people. There never was a Dutch “1968,” but there was a “1966.”

Provo was at the forefront of this revolt. It was rooted in several traditions, both political and cultural. Politically, it stemmed from anarchist currents, left-wing traditions, and pacifist movements that went back to the fifties, such as the Pacifist Socialist Party (PSP). This was a new third-way party whose youth movement had been the cradle of several Provos. Culturally, it stemmed from the art scene that had emerged in Amsterdam in the second half of the fifties, the multifaceted emerging youth culture in Amsterdam (from beatniks known as “nozems,” hanging around the Nieuwendijk, to the artistically inspired youth, who gathered at the Leidseplein) and the Montessori school system. The handful of young people that constituted the Provo group were not only politically or culturally engaged but were also a “bunch of boys,” a network of friends from different sociological and geographical origins. Roel van Duyn and Rob Stolk would become the best known of these “boys.”

In a little more than two years, Provo (the word was borrowed from a Dutch criminologist, Wouter Buikhuisen, who used it as an alternative to “beatnik”) would develop from an unknown local activist movement into an international media hype and much-debated phenomenon.⁶ Provo was an extremely diverse grouping, although not so much from a gender perspective as Provo was predominantly male (the feminist action group “Dolle Mina”, inspired by Provo

tactics and style, only appeared in the summer of 1969). Generally speaking, Provo proved to be an extremely open network, liberal (in the sense of personal freedom) and libertarian. Apart from the core group consisting of several dozen people in Amsterdam, the number of supporters that joined and left was quite astonishing: the majority of young people that associated themselves with Provo toward the end of 1966 stayed for an average of no more than three weeks.

Although Provo was rooted locally, its cognitive orientation had an undeniable international dimension; this included the American Civil Rights Movement; decolonization discourse; anarchist culture (connections to networks abroad, in Belgium, Sweden, and England); the international art scene (Simon Vinkenoog, a Dutch poet and mediator in the emerging international counterculture: an energetic advocate of Sigma, Fluxus, Pop Art, and Happening Art); and the international peace movement—especially the campaign for nuclear disarmament in Britain. For instance, just before Provo published its first leaflet in May 1965, Roel van Duyn wrote on several occasions to both the London Secretary Committee of 100 and the National Youth Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, asking for information about their organization, goals, and strategy.⁷

When, in 1968, the Dutch psychiatrist Frank van Ree (who, in the seventies, would come to visit and support RAF members held in Dutch prisons) considered Provo a “public-relations affair,”⁸ he meant that it skillfully played with existing social topics—such as housing problems, traffic, industrial and environmental pollution, and taboos related to sexuality—but presented these well-known items in a bold manner to the media and public opinion, and in new formats. These were the so-called “White Plans,” expressive ideas, utopian solutions to practical problems, and most of all, mind openers.

Provos aimed at and stood for the provoking of society. To provoke (Latin: *provocare*) implies action, constant movement and activity. This activist attitude was not without reflection. Provo presented a cocktail of ideas and ideals, a mixture of seriousness and fun, all aimed at creating a better world for tomorrow.

One of the central ideas was that the classical proletariat had lost its vanguard role in the coming of a socialist revolution. Far from being a new concept, it had been discussed by a Dutch anarchist in the thirties and had resurfaced in 1964, in an anarchist group frequented by Roel van Duyn. Van Duyn, who himself had grown up in a theosophical and Montessori environment picked up this notion and replaced proletariat” with “provotariat,” which was characterized as a coalition of students and beatniks that would lead the transformation of society. Van Duyn replaced the well-known dichotomy of “proletariat” and “bourgeoisie” with “provotariat” and “klootjesvolk,” a term that characterizes all those who were not students, beatniks or provos, and included the bourgeoisie, common people, and workers, who were thought to be addicted to consumer society.

Furthermore, Van Duyn merged the concept of provotariat (defining a new avant-garde of social change) with that of “Homo Ludens” (originally coined by the famous Dutch historian Johan Huizinga and later used by the Dutch painter

and sculptor Constant Nieuwenhuys—who had sided with the International Situationists for some years). The idea was that the provotariat would announce the Homo Ludens, who had previously been considered the ideal man of the future living in a computer-dominated (cybernetic) environment in New Babylon, where enjoying life was the most important aspect.

Concepts deriving from nineteenth-century ideology (Marxism, anarchism) fused with twentieth-century ideas of futurology and utopianism to form an attractive and provocative cocktail. Provocative because it was also meant as a gimmick: to “épater le bourgeois,” and it established Marxist or anarchist thinkers or groups that took themselves completely seriously. Although this “collage of ideas” received some attention abroad, it remains to be seen how, why, in what manner, and to what degree it influenced other groups. Traditional anarchist, Marxist, and avant-gardist (situationist) groups debated this so-called “Provo ideology” from a classical political point of view, but on the whole, would not take it very seriously. This was in contrast to some underground and alternative press adepts, who favored a more cultural and libertarian interpretation. This “Provo ideology” and the way it was presented was perhaps more a form of Pop Art than a serious contribution to social theory.

In general, Provo aroused a lot of admiration and at the same time contributed to much confusion and misunderstanding about its goals and tactics. The *Provo* magazine became a meeting place for the most diverse ideas (practical, constructive, and utopian) that had been around in Amsterdam. As such, it was of great significance as a laboratory of ideas and practices. The same process occurred in other places in the Netherlands and abroad, where groups, inspired by Provo constituted platforms for ideas, criticism, and tactics.

In addition to being derived from references to classical anarchism (Proudhon, Bakunin), inspiration was derived from works of contemporaries: Vance Packard (*The Hidden Persuaders*) or Rachel Carson (*Silent Spring*). That is to say, Provo referred more to the vulgarizers who appear in Jamison and Eyerman’s work *Seeds of the Sixties*, and not so much to intellectuals such as Marcuse, Fromm, or Wright Mills. As a matter of fact, Provo proved to be relatively a-intellectual (certainly not anti-intellectual) and derived much inspiration from popular culture, such as comics, Pop Art, and film. Of course, Provo deliberately expressed itself through the new medium associated with popular culture *par excellence*: television—a paradox, because Provo declared itself critical of consumer culture and the enslaving power of television. At the time, this relatively new medium was clearly one of the most powerful and attractive factors used for distributing Provo’s criticism, ideas, and tactics.

Whereas their vision of society was deeply *ethical*, the form Provos chose for expressing their ideas was primarily *aesthetical*. This style was artistic, expressive, and full of humor and by using it, the movement broke with conventional ways of “making” politics. It meant a break with traditional youth political parties, such as the PSP, that several of the founders of Provo were familiar with. Formal-

ism, assemblies, and functionary culture were all neglected, and instead, ritual and representation came to play an important role. As such, the Provos acted as “symbol creators.”⁹ In their provocations and appeal for social and political change, they emphasized cultural identity.¹⁰

Image

Provo was not a political organization in the sense that it had no executive committee, party platform, or membership. It can best be considered a movement with a small, informal nucleus surrounded by several circles of sympathizers. To put it differently: Provo Amsterdam was gathered around a printing press and actions, as opposed to being an organization or a well-defined program (at most, a list of action points and ideas). In the summer of 1965, it was still limited to Amsterdam, around the magazine *Provo* and happenings; in the course of 1966, it developed an infrastructure, consisting of a basement, a barge, and an abandoned cinema.

Gradually, a kind of network spread out into the country and abroad. In 1966, groups that identified themselves with Provo emerged in several towns, mainly university cities such as Groningen, Utrecht, and Rotterdam, but alternative presses also emerged in Arnhem and in Maastricht (groups affiliated with the local School of Arts). These groups did not form a united network, rather they worked autonomously. On an international level, identical groups appeared in Belgium, especially in Flanders: Ghent (periodical *Eindelijk*), Antwerp (*Anar*), Leuven, and—in a mixed Flemish-French spoken environment—Brussels (*Revo—Révo*). Also in West Germany (Frankfurt: *Peng*) and Italy (Milan: *Mondo Beat*); in France (Paris), and England (London) groups or magazines associated with Provo emerged.¹¹

Often these local groups and underground periodicals already existed before Provo Amsterdam manifested itself, but to them, the emergence of the Dutch activist group provided a strong sense of recognition with their own struggles, hopes, ideas, and ideals.

The transnational dimension of Provo is not so much explained by focusing on real social or organizational structures as it is by the idea of Provo as “image.” This means that the group played with its own image in the media as well as vis-à-vis public opinion. Although Provos had no real media strategy, they recognized the great significance of image and image creation in modern society. The term “image,” itself, derived from the American advertisement industry, came into Dutch advertising at the end of the fifties.¹² It was introduced to the group by Robert-Jasper Grootveld, a typical *intermédiaire culturel*,¹³ a visionary and charismatic personality, who animated happenings in Amsterdam well before Provo came into existence and who developed a critique of consumer society, inspired by *The Hidden Persuaders*.

Through their image, the Provos associated themselves with a range of anti-social archetypes (including the bomb-throwing anarchist, the outcast, the desperado or the guerrilla), that in reality most of them were not. Provo also invented a whole range of committees and absurd pastiches (e.g., terrorist councils, a lunatic shadow cabinet, a “Company Provo,” and the committee “Friends of the Police”).

The emergence of this spectacular counterculture in the summer of 1965 was accompanied by waves of hysteria in the press. According to Stanley Cohen’s well-established paradigm concerning the emergence and maintenance of media-driven “moral panics,” Provo was considered a problem by the media, by authorities and by scholars;¹⁴ its causes were simplified, its participants stigmatized as “folk devils,” and new frames of debate were constantly created that perpetuated this sense of panic.¹⁵ But the media reactions to Provo were not only limited to popular or tabloid press but even entered into serious papers, where attention to the movement fluctuated between “dread and fascination, outrage and amusement.”¹⁶

This media exposure can be considered an integral part of Provo’s style and tactics. It also had an entrepreneurial dimension. The movement created its own, locally based and small-scale “economy” that was alternative to both capitalism and Marxism. Income derived from interviews for the press and television and from the sale of magazines or books about the movement was all invested in the group (no taxes were paid): they had a new printing press, a barge, in short, the emergence of an infrastructure. This would have two principal consequences: It contributed to Provo’s fame abroad and led to the growing materialization of the “image” of Provo that, in the end, would also contribute to its decline.¹⁷

Being first an *action group* that went out into the streets, Provo manifested itself in public space. The street was its *agora*. There the Provos manifested their repertoire, including small-scale, theatrical street manifestations known as “happenings,” large-scale demonstrations (against the war in Vietnam and the atom bomb) or techniques such as sit-ins.

From an ethnological point of view, it’s interesting to consider the “charivari” element in Provo’s action repertoire. Some actions contained elements of symbolic inversion. Provos distributed leaflets, and periodicals also contained ironic texts, political cartoons, and pornographic images. In short, it was a repertoire that contained many elements of traditional, nonviolent, satirical techniques. This repertoire also shared unmistakable similarities to techniques such as collage (usually associated with the classic twentieth-century international avant-garde, from the Futurists to the Situationists) or techniques used in Pop Art. Alternative ideas about society were published as “White Plans,” the most famous of which was the “White Bicycle Plan.”

Paradoxically, these kinds of expressive actions went hand in hand with participation in “classic” democratic elections (the Amsterdam Council elections of June 1966). This form of politics was called “Pol Art”—political art, a reference

to Pop Art. The Provos also took part in debates (teach-in, round table) and exhibits, and appeared on radio and television programs in the Netherlands and abroad.

Only at a superficial level did the theatrical extravaganza of Provo appear trivial and ephemeral. When one comes to take a closer look, it provides an index to a whole new cultural style, accompanied by a set of values, assumptions and ways of living, which have been dubbed the “Expressive Revolution” by Talcott Parsons.¹⁸ The political translation of expression, rituals, and symbolism was not an invention of the 1960s’ movement, even though this seemed to be the case, especially in retrospect. Recent studies have focused on the expressive action repertoire of nineteenth-century local or partial movements (the origins of the socialist movement in Amsterdam in the second half of the nineteenth century or the Dutch anti-vivisection movement around 1900). The Provo action repertoire bears similarities to that developed in the nineteenth century.¹⁹ Furthermore, several ethnological and religious studies have stressed the *historical* dimensions in processes involving creation of images, politics, and ritual.²⁰

Due to their bold, expressive, presentation, Provo defied the hegemonic conventions of the dominant social order—the bourgeois culture—in order to stretch the boundaries of it. As a matter of fact, the movement can be regarded as being deeply rooted in a Romantic tradition. Provos rebelled against conventions and taboos at the symbolic level imaginatively and with a pervasive sense of humor. This attempt to explore and question boundaries, structures, and rituals is also true for the counterculture of the 1960s as a whole. As the British sociologist Bernice Martin put it: “The most salient feature of the counter-culture of the 1960s was the symbolism of anti-structure. It was essentially a pitting of freedom and fluidity against form and structure. 1960s’ expressiveness was a long and concerted attack on boundaries, limits, certainties, conventions, taboos, roles, system, style, category, predictability, form, structure and ritual. It was the pursuit of ambiguity and the incarnation of uncertainty.”²¹

Provo stood on one hand for a culture of revolt and new esthetics, which was internationally articulated and manifested itself in opposition to the dominant, hegemonic ideology.²² On the other hand, at the same time, Provo never became completely independent of, or alternative to “the larger culture involving parents, educational institutions, commercial companies, technology, and the mass media.”²³

One of my hypotheses is that the novelty of Provo lies not so much in its ideas or style as in the combination of its intensive media coverage, expressive style, and ideas. There was no blueprint for this media coverage, it occurred more or less spontaneously in an area when the media sphere, political sphere, and public sphere were drastically changing.

Publicity was no longer generated by words in print—press, leaflets, or books alone—but also, and perhaps more significantly, through visuals. For Provo in particular, this meant widespread coverage through a range of broad-

cast programs, from news headlines to talk shows, from background programs to special reports, and even films. On the other hand, media images also became implicated in the movement's self-image. As Todd Gitlin demonstrated for the American student movement SDS, media exposure had a profound impact on the movement and its leaders.²⁴ The same counts for Provo, where some of its leaders were transformed into celebrities whilst others were hesitant about appearing in front of cameras and journalists.

Through the (re)presentation of Provo by the press and the media in general, and by television in particular, the movement added an extra dimension to its appearance. Not only were public spaces (squares, streets) literally "conquered," but public opinion was also confronted in a new way with environmental issues, classic and less classic topics, such as militarism, pacifism, city life, sexuality (including sexual education or gay rights), housing, and education. With Provo, the "personal got political," in both its topics and its style.

International Fame

If we turn now to the process of multiplication, a process in which Provo developed from a local grouping to an internationally well-known phenomenon (image rather than network), three stages can be distinguished.

In the first phase, in 1965, Provo was a local activist group that broke into the news because of its expressive ideas (the "White Bicycle Plan," whose *autor intellectualis*, the engineer Luud Schimmelpenninck, was married and had two children, and in no way corresponded with the image of Provo as a "folk devil"), and because of some spectacular demonstrations (the happenings at Spui Square). Once the crowd, attracted by the happenings, blocked traffic, Amsterdam police tried to stop them. The violent repression and numerous arrests that followed were extensively covered by newspapers, radio, and television. In the second phase, 1966, the movement continued its spectacular actions (smoke bombs during the royal wedding) and unexpected activities (participation in elections), and during the summer, it burst out onto the international stage. In a third and final phase, leading up to May 1967, such action was more and more replaced by mediated reflection.

With regard to the first phase; press and media coverage of Provo grew rapidly from the summer of 1965 onward. This attention paid to Provo can be explained not only by looking at the movement and the spectacular actions it developed, but also by taking a close look at the broader context of Dutch society, which was in the midst of a transformation process: socially, culturally, and economically. The media landscape was also drastically changing: television, introduced in 1951, slowly developed in the fifties and early 1960s, taking off in the mid 1960s: from half a million television sets in 1960 to 1 million in 1965; then jumping to 3 million two years later, and covering three quarters

of all households. In 1964, a second broadcasting channel was introduced that, consequently, led to more broadcasting hours. Dutch television was young, dynamic, and inventive—where a handful of independent broadcasting companies worked alongside state channels.

It was perhaps hardly a coincidence that television and Provo discovered each other. The competition between the press and television appealed to youth culture in several respects: more attention was paid to human interest features, ironic commentaries on the news (including a Dutch version of the British *That Was the Week that Was*) and critical journalism. Journalistic codes developed rapidly. Television favored personal attraction and communicative forms. Provo was covered on Dutch television in a multitude of programs: journalistic features, special reports, talk-shows, broadcasts dedicated to Dutch youth phenomena, and television debates. Although the Dutch evening news (public broadcasting) boycotted Provo as much as it could, in the course of 1966, the group was taken more and more seriously by the other broadcasting companies. They were invited to take part, along with a selection of intellectuals and academics, in discussion panels commenting upon the social disturbances in Holland. The group also appeared in the film *De minder gelukkige terugkeer van Jozef Katus naar het land van Rembrandt* (Wim Verstappen / Pim de la Parra, 1966) that dealt with the tense climate in Amsterdam. The two directors stressed they wanted to realize a film in Provo-style; with grainy editing and odd sound effects.²⁵

Provo exploded in the news, at an international level, in 1966. This corresponds with the second phase in the evolution of the movement. Two major events played a significant role in this process. First, the royal wedding of Princess Beatrix and Claus von Amsberg. The Provos were discontented with the fact that the future Dutch queen was marrying a German nobleman who had fought in World War II. The war, after all, was a sensitive topic in the Netherlands and especially in Amsterdam, traditionally a left-wing city, and one that had lost almost all of its Jewish population.

This wedding was the biggest media event in Dutch history up to that point. In order to be able to accommodate the broadcasting demands, Dutch television had to rely on German and Belgian technical support. The event was broadcast live by Eurovision in several countries, which added considerably to the pressure. Furthermore, this ceremonial event was supposed to celebrate reconciliation between the Dutch monarchy and the people. As such, it was a hegemonic event that legitimated authority, confirmed loyalty and the shared experience of *communitas*.²⁶ So, when the Provos disturbed this event, by throwing smoke bombs at the procession, it was considered an act of pure blasphemy. This event undoubtedly served as a catalyst for the increasingly negative reputation of the movement in international press and television (France's television program *Panorama*, for instance, produced an item on it).

The international image of the Netherlands was further affected several months later, in June 1966, as Amsterdam witnessed a revolt of construction

workers (a clash about holiday fees). Although Provo was not initially involved, the movement rapidly became associated with this revolt, since it had contributed to the climate that had made it possible. International press coverage was immense: for the second time in several months, the Netherlands made international headlines. Special reports and large press articles appeared in the media. Much attention was paid to the fact that Provo had won a seat in the Amsterdam Council at the municipal elections on 1 June 1966. Student Bernhard de Vries became the representative of Provo.

Coverage was quite diverse between the two events in March and June. The French *Panorama* had called Provos “ennemis numéro 1” of society and “jeunes gens d’apparence beatnik”²⁷ in March. But in the summer the program was reported much more positively.²⁸

International press and television coverage peaked during the summer and late summer of 1966: Belgian, French, British, German, and Italian companies sent radio or television crews (or both) to Amsterdam in order to make reports. Filming in Amsterdam was not always without difficulties. The mayor of Amsterdam for instance tried to prevent Bayerischer Rundfunk from broadcasting a report because the crew had filmed at Spui Square. This had been forbidden in fear of nightly riots. On another occasion, a French reporter was arrested.

Moreover, Provo also proved reluctant in its participation and demanded huge amounts of money. This occurred in September 1966, when Granada Television (Manchester) wanted to produce an item on anarchist movements and had chosen Provo, since it was “easily the most important.”²⁹ “I can well understand,” producer Michael Ryan wrote to Bernhard de Vries, “how bored you can get with television companies. However, I see the Provo movement as being very important in expressing the freedom of the individual in modern society.”³⁰ In the end, Granada Television got what it wanted, but had to pay a sum of 3,000 guilders (some 1,400 euros). A contract was drawn up indicating precisely where and who was to be filmed: “The services rendered included one day’s interviewing in various locations around Amsterdam . . . Two separate interviews . . . one in the cellar H.Q. [headquarters] of the group; the other, in various locations in Amsterdam. Facilities for filming in the cellar. One interview . . . on the barge. . . . Facilities for filming the Provo weekly meeting at the Frascati. And the general cooperation of many members of the Provo group in the research, planning, and shooting of the film.”³¹

From an aesthetical point of view, “It’s a happening” presents some colorful images. Provo is presented from several perspectives. The program suggested that the ideas of Provo may be naïve, the white plans were characterized as “a mixture of irresponsibility, fun and a devout idealism,” but its simplicity was at the same time a big part of its appeal. In the Granada report produced by Michael Apted, commentary was not only provided by the Provos themselves, but also by so-called “external specialists.”

Commodification

What were the consequences of this media exposure for Provo? Apart from additional income, an increasing appeal to young people, and a growing infrastructure, the inner circle grew more and more overcharged, and at the end of 1966, had already reached its limits. Inside the movement, competition grew, particularly between Roel van Duyn and Bernhard de Vries.

Van Duyn, from the spring of 1966 onward, devoted much time to writing a book about the movement (*Provo: het witte gevaar*, 1967). Van Duyn was mainly occupied at this point with his image and with making money, and he got into a conflict with the Berlin Oberbaumpresse. The director, Hartmut Sander, was very much interested in Provo and translated several leaflets into German: “Um ein Beispiel zu zeigen, wie es möglich ist und *dass* es möglich ist, die schlechten Autoritäten zu bekämpfen, zum Ziel einer wirklichen, de facto *Demokratisierung* des gesellschaftlichen Lebens.” Van Duyn wanted to determine content, price, and copyright of *Provo. Einleitung ins provozierende Denken*, and Oberbaumpresse replied furiously: “We’ve made several concessions to you. Our interest of Provo didn’t grow by your faultfinding.”³²

De Vries, for his part, became Provo’s glamour boy. He neglected his work as municipal council representative and went abroad, attending meetings and discussions about the Amsterdam movement and the Dutch revolt. To give some examples: De Vries visited London (for the DIAS symposium); Leuven University (a meeting attended by 700 students—who were very disappointed that De Vries was not the beatnik-Provo-type they had expected); Frankfurt (the Voltaire debate center); and the Volkshochschule Ulm (invited by Inge Scholl, for an “international Provo meeting”). Moreover, De Vries literally became a film star. In 1967, he abandoned the Amsterdam council (his seat was taken by Luud Schimmelpenninck) and headed to Italy. The Italian filmmaker Ugo Liberatore cast him in his film after spotting a photo of De Vries in the weekly *L’Europeo*. De Vries played in a handful of Italian films. At least one of them, *Il sesso degli angeli*, dealt with the provocative topic of drug consumption amongst youth.³³ So, in Italy, on screen, De Vries continued his career as a Provo, and Provo contributed, through popular culture, to the spreading of its ethics.

Initially, the fame of the Provos was due to their spectacular actions and media coverage of this repertoire. But more and more, during the course of 1966, such actions vanished and the repertoire reached a point where media exposure and representations of the movement gained the upper hand.

Foreign editors in West Germany and Denmark translated and published several publications by Provos. At the Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB university), one student wrote his masters thesis on Provo, whilst the ULB affiliated Centre d’Études sur la Délinquance Juvénile (CEDJ) published an account on Provo and delinquent behavior. The Italian journalist Paolo Romano Andreoli

published the first foreign journalistic account of the Amsterdam movement in 1967,³⁴ and the well-known Italian editor Giangiacomo Feltrinelli wanted to publish an anthology, but his request remained unanswered.³⁵

In the second half of 1966, Provo had created a “strong image”: one of revolt, bold actions, original thinking, irony, and humor. Moreover, it had penetrated both activist and popular culture. But the more publicity was generated, the less new actions or ideas were developed. This was a paradoxical development, because “the image game” had been part of the repertoire and part of the public relations. Initially, in 1965, there had been a balance between action and representation, but through the course of 1966, this balance had become distorted, and Provo evolved toward a stylized, ready-for-consumption form of rebellion.

In January 1967, the London office of the worldwide advertising agency J. Walter Thompson Company requested Provo to present its ideas and views to them: “We would like a Provo aged around 21 to come and talk to our Creative Department about his views in particular and the views of the Provo organization in general. ... At the lunch at which your man will address us, he should wear ‘typical Provo gear.’”³⁶ In the summer of 1966, an Amsterdam touring company printed a folder *Exclusive tour. Meet the Provos!* Provo only participated once (for financial reasons) and declined further collaboration. The group could only control these commercialization processes up to a certain extent. This became clear in the case of the white bicycles. Originally this was an idealistic and anarchist idea that called for the distribution of free white bikes in Amsterdam—white being a reference to innocence and purity—but it proved to be a powerful symbol and marketing gadget that was picked up by the music industry as well.

In 1967 the Italian singer Caterina Caselli recorded *Le biciclette bianche*: “Una mattina ti alzerai / un mondo un mondo bianco / e un mondo bianco troverai ... / andremo per tutto il mondo poi, su biciclette bianche.” The same year, the psychedelic band Tomorrow (who together with Pink Floyd and the Soft Machine, in the early days of British psychedelia, had been cited as first generation figureheads of the London-based underground sound) recorded the album *My White Bicycle*. According to John Alder of Tomorrow, idea and text were both derived from Provo: “‘My White Bicycle’ was written out of what was actually going on in Amsterdam. One of the owners of *Granny Takes a Trip*, Nigel Weymouth, had gone there and come back with a Provos badge which he gave to me. They were like a kind of a student anarchist group that believed everything should be free. In fact, they had white bicycles in Amsterdam and they used to leave them around the town. And if you were going somewhere and you needed to use a bike, you’d just take the bike and you’d go somewhere and just leave it. Whoever needed the bikes would take them and leave them when they were done. Nigel told me about this and I told Keith West (lead singer) this and a bit later we went to Amsterdam and he wrote a song about it. So ‘My White Bicycle’ comes out of that Provo thing.”³⁷

These white bicycles' songs are good examples of the process of commodification of an originally subversive style element that originated in a counter-culture and that transformed into a consumer product. But Provo was never completely absorbed into "exploitative culture,"³⁸ because the group decided to end its activities in May of 1967.

Provo Inspires

From the USA to Italy and from Sweden to Poland people were simply *inspired* by Provo. In France, the anarchist group of Daniel Cohn-Bendit discussed Provo and met some of its members at an international anarchist conference in Milan (Christmas, 1966). In West Germany, student leader Rudi Dutschke showed interest. As his comrade Dieter Kunzelmann remembered, he and Dutschke went to Amsterdam: "Als zeitgeschichtliches Vorbild dienten uns die aufsehenerregenden Aktionen der Amsterdamer Provos. Rudi und ich hatten die Provos erstmals zu Gesicht bekommen, als wir uns ... eine Woche im Amsterdamer Institut für Sozialgeschichte aufhielten. ... Als Rudi und ich ... in Amsterdam waren, knüpften wir zwar noch keine direkten Kontakte zu den Provos, aber atmosphärisch und in Gesprächen mit Amsterdamer Freunden bekamen wir einiges von ihren Aktionen und Ideen mit. Später ergaben sich persönliche Kontakte, wir lasen die Flugblätter und Texte der Provos, korrespondierten mit ihnen, ihre Sprecher wurden in SDS-Gruppen eingeladen und erläuterten Strategie und Taktik des holländischen Aktionismus. Kurzum, die Provo-Bewegung spielte während der Diskussionen ... eine erhebliche Rolle."³⁹

First, the inspiration of Provo led to its members becoming "role models" for some young people, as in the case of Italian students of Prado. The Italians expressed their admiration in a letter as follows: "We are a group of Italian students and we have read in several newspapers of Provo's demonstrations on the occasion of Princess Beatrix's wedding day ... We want to show you all our solidarity for your cause! We have read many things about Provos and now we know that you are fighting for a great ideal: ... We also admire you because we see in you the incarnation of the spirit of liberty of all the young ones in the world: Young Ones want to be free and we hope we shall be like you, though in Italy we are still far from a real freedom."⁴⁰

Second, there were attempts to *copy* Provo tactics and ideas abroad, and to organize activities based on Provo-like periodicals, especially in Flanders, and to some degree, in West Germany, England, and Italy. There are many accounts of young people who came to Amsterdam, met the Provos, and went back home, wanting to create a Provo group of their own, as in the case of Christy Hudson: "I became really interested on my trip to Amsterdam in June 66. I am a student (studying psychology at home). Myself and some friends wish to set up such an organization in the Republic of Ireland."⁴¹ In Belgium, Provo became a

“label” that united already existing initiatives and culturally or politically marginal groups. Dieter Kunzelmann stressed the importance of Provo tactics as an example to follow to the Kommune 1, an alternative group that organized so-called “spontan-kreativen Demonstrationen” in Berlin—humorous events that were inspired by Provo. Kunzelmann: “Wichtig ... waren die Erfahrungen der Provos aus Amsterdam, die waren in Europa die ersten, die angefangen haben, aus politischem Protest die Strasse zur ‘Agora’ zu machen, zum Artikulationsfeld.”⁴² Even behind the Iron Curtain, Provo was discovered and inspired groups. The English anarchist Guy Gladstone wrote to Provo Amsterdam: “I am sending a copy of my Provo report to an anarchist behind the Iron Curtain, she tells me there are provos in Poland!”⁴³

While Provo inspired, creating many followers, much confusion and intensive debate also resulted. International mass media and militant press alike never really seemed to be able to get a clear understanding of what Provo was about. Ken Friedman, for instance, a young Fluxus artist living in Chicago, wrote: “Help us! What is Provo? All we hear are news-lies.”⁴⁴ To a certain extent, this confusion was part of Provo tactics, according to Roel van Duyn in his book “Provo is a myth.” This confusion also appeared in the press; for some newspapers Provos and Beatniks were the same, whereas others mixed up Provos with Situationists (as did the *Figaro Littéraire*).

In the foreign press, Provo had often become a source of reference, one that stood for youth in revolt. In November 1966, the Italian daily *Il Giorno* compared, in an article about fifty young activists that had demonstrated the day before, the *capelloni* to the Provos: “I capelloni si sono organizzati come I ‘provos’ olandesi. Ieri, 4 novembre 1966, prima manifestazione ufficiale antimilitarista, erotico-pacifista (make love, not war) dei beatniks della Madonnina.”⁴⁵

A comparison between Situationists and Provos was often made. The differences between the two phenomena are more striking than the resemblances. Encounters and meetings illustrated the distance in political, ideological concepts and intellectual sources. In its theoretic, neo-Marxist, conception of society, the Situationist International (SI) was the opposite of the actionist and libertarian Provo. SI also opposed the extremely mediatized open network Provo represented with its sectarianism. Although SI originally showed some interest in Provo, since it seemed to be a revolutionary and radical movement, this enthusiasm soon disappeared. After the Amsterdam riots and a visit of an SI delegation to Amsterdam, in the summer of 1966, SI distanced itself for good and even took a hostile stance.

The same change of attitude goes for some anarchist networks, like for instance *Noir et Rouge*. This Parisian group developed a critique of socialism and, in the best French tradition, longed for “la révolution dure et pure, quasi sacrée.” “Black and Red” talked a lot about Provo when the Dutch movement was in the news. When, during the revolt of the Amsterdam construction workers in June 1966 it became clear that Provo had nothing in common with the workers, their

enthusiasm declined rapidly. As one of the editors admitted, in a rare expression of sincere self-criticism: “On peut bien dire que c’est aux anarchistes de battre leur coulpe car, quelque soit la sympathie que l’on peut avoir pour leur mouvement [Provo—N.P.], il semble que nous les ayons vus un peu vite-présents dans trop de manifestations et que nous leurs avons donné une importance qui satisfaisait notre révolutionnarisme certes, mais que la réalité des faits justifiait moins.”⁴⁶

A critical judgment was also given at an international youth anarchist conference in Milan, at Christmas, 1966. Although Provo was praised for its innovative tactics, the conference reproached it for its lack of ideas, for the absence of an ideologically based program, and also for its participation at municipal council elections.⁴⁷

After 1967, Provo became more and more glamorized, and was put up on a pedestal. With the events of 1968, Provo was recognized as one of the important transnational vectors that had prepared the ground for the students’ revolt. All aspects that singled out the particularity of Provo, the Dutch situation of 1966, were downplayed or simply ignored: Provo became an integral part of “The Protest Movement” of the 1960s. The French anarchist Maurice Joyeux, in 1970, in *L’anarchie et la révolte de la jeunesse*, thought that Provo had presented the students of 1968 a “méthode de lutte.” To him the idea of “provocation” was a “technique révolutionnaire moderne” and a “tactique originale,” which was somewhat of a simplification.⁴⁸

Interestingly, it seems that the ecologist movement in particular embraced Provo in the seventies and eighties, perhaps as a way of (ideological) self-legitimization. To former French ecologist deputy Yves Frémion Provo was nothing less than one of the “soubresauts fondateurs” of May ’68⁴⁹ and the same applied for ecologist deputy Daniel Cohn-Bendit, who in his film *Nous l’avons tant aimée, la révolution* (1986), said: “Je suis convaincu que, sans les Provos et l’exemple qu’ils ont donné aux jeunes des autres pays, l’Europe d’aujourd’hui ne serait pas ce qu’elle est devenue.”⁵⁰

A similar attitude was displayed by underground protagonists like Michel Antoine Burnier (of the famous French seventies periodical *Actuel*): To him, Provo was not only “le coup d’envoi” of May ’68 but also of the underground scene in the United States and Great Britain.⁵¹ In Italy, the same opinion was stated by Matteo Guarnaccia, who himself, to the present day, embodies a culture of protest inspired by Provo.

Conclusion

The “Provo movement” presented a bundle of paradoxes. One of the most interesting was that the movement had strong ties to a particular area, Amsterdam, yet also possessed an element of universality. Its mentality of “provocation” appealed to many people, from Stockholm to Milan, and on either side of the Iron

Curtain. However, it became clear that it was difficult to put the Provo mentality into practice in situations other than the Dutch one. It was not so much the repertoire, the ideas, and the form that Provo took that were unique, but the specific circumstances in Amsterdam (and the Netherlands as a whole), with its own traditions and patterns, that made them possible. While the significance of the action repertoire for political and cultural groups and for individuals within and outside the Netherlands should not be overestimated; Provo's *inspirational function* should not be underestimated either.

Let's turn once again to Brian, Boja, and Bill, who were introduced at the beginning of this chapter and who all reacted to and reflected on Provo.

Imitations of Provo tactics abroad, generally speaking, did not prosper. Charles Radcliffe, editor of *Heatwave*, commented in a letter about Brian and his Notting Hill Provos: "Notting hill provos are not, as far as I know, really worthy of the name ... they have adopted the word Provo simply because it was in the news and some of your ideas excited them. So far they have produced, to my knowledge one very feeble, very badly printed leaflet protesting against the government action against pirate radio stations ... I get occasional letters from them but they show a dullness of spirit which is the very antithesis, as we understand it, of the provo position. ... I think it would be far better if someone wrote from Amsterdam asking them if they were ever going to do anything and if not stop using the name. Expel the bastards!"

Boja Christovová, from Prague, admitted that the Czechoslovakian youth "highly evaluated" the Provo movement, and that if they had been in Holland, they "certainly" would have stood in the Provo "rows": "I must say that very much of our beatniks aren't right provos. They have no aim in their provocations, they want to attract attention only. About anarchism we know much, but it is only a classical anarchism and your anarchism is very different of the original movement. ... You say: provocation. But we can't provoke with our complexion or with our manners. We depend on our society very much. It isn't too difficult to get to prison in our country. And in our country it means more than in yours. ... our youth is very afraid!!!! ... In October [1966—N.P.] there was in Prague the demonstration of Czech provos. They went along the streets with slogans: "Return us hair!" "Away with hairdressers!" etc. ... Police dispersed them and 14 of them have to face the tribunal now. Police cut their long hair. Our journals write about these problems very much."⁵²

The American "West-Coaster" Bill van Petten, desperately wrote again and again to Amsterdam, but apparently never received an answer: "Brother Roel [van Duyn—N.P.], why is there no word from you—especially when we so very desperately need it—a full fledged revolution going on here on the Sunset Strip ... buses burned, young people being beaten senseless in the streets. We need the Provo advice at once; our situation is the same as yours only much more desperate. Please send your manifesto at once so that we can spread it around, also

your symbol; I sent you ours, send anything or anyone you can think of—we're counting on you—oh, so very much."⁵³

On several occasions, commentators stressed that Provo was a typical Dutch phenomenon that simply could not be copied abroad. Radcliffe, in his correspondence with Amsterdam, emphasized that it was the "spirit" of Provo actions that was important but that in London "it would be quite useless to simply produce replicas of provo-actions" because the town was "hugely different from A'dam." Another problem was that the actions he and his comrades thought of, had to express a "universality of rejection" while at the same time emerging from their "own roots."⁵⁴

Matteo Guarnaccia stressed the different attitudes of authorities in Italy to youth and protest movements: "In un paese pietosamente conformista come l'Italia, ossessionato dalle portinaie e dai vicini (chissà cosa diranno i vicini?), a provocare lo stato basta veramente poco. E lo stato italiano, che non è un sistema moderno ed elastico come quello olandese, risponde come ha sempre risposto contro le idee nuove, 'a mazzate.' ... l'Italia naturalmente non è l'Olanda."⁵⁵

These striking letters and comments emphasize the degree to which the social and political situation in England, Italy, the United States, and Czechoslovakia in 1966 differed from that of the Netherlands, and how Provo, toward the end of 1966, no longer reacted to demands, requests, or letters. It had, at this time, become preoccupied with its own image, cutting itself loose from the original social movement located in Amsterdam.

Provo undeniably contributed its share of transnational protest culture in the 1960s. In this exchange, American culture and cultural items dominated: Pop Art, music, and clothing, and events such as happenings, sit-ins or teach-ins. Even if U.S. (counter-, sub-, protest-, youth-) culture dominated in this transnational process, such a model of transnationality needs to be refined, and it has to take into account the European particularities, the inter-European inspiration sources and crossovers, that existed and contributed to this transnational protest culture. The Provo case seems to affirm the idea that transnationalism as a cognitive process—which Wolfgang Kraushaar calls the "*Bewusstsein von der Internationalität*"—prevailed over transnationalism as a global network or movement.⁵⁶

To take these remarks into account, the late Dutch historian Hans Righart provides a useful outline. In his research on the international dimension of the 1960s' revolt, he proposes a two-dimensional model: *Postwar History* (including the economic boom, the baby boom generation, youth culture, and the Vietnam war)—a general history with general features that occurred on a large scale all over the (Western and Eastern) world); and *Postwar Histories*; that is, the specific national patterns or particularities, including the moderate versions of the 1960s in England and the Netherlands, versus the politically oriented American or French, or German and Italian versions of the 1960s.⁵⁷

Notes

1. Letter from Brian McGrath, London, 4 September 1966. Amsterdam, International Institute of Social History (hereafter: IISH). Collection CSD VRZ 002 box 1 map 1 “Kor 1965/1966.”
2. Letter from Boja Christovová, Roznov, 11 and 18 October 1966. IISH CSD VRZ 002 box 1 map 1 “Kor 1965/1966.”
3. Letter from Bill van Petten, 21 October 1966, Malibu. IISH CSD VRZ 002 box 1 map 1 “Kor 1965/1966.”
4. Walter Hollstein, *Die Gegengesellschaft: Alternative Lebensformen* (Bonn: Springer, 1979), 35.
5. Niek Pas, *Imaazje! De verbeelding van Provo (1965–1967)* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2003).
6. After 1967, Provo developed into an international symbol of the 1960s movement in the Netherlands. Lately, also in the Netherlands, “May 68” tends to become the one and only metaphor for 1960s movements.
7. Letter from Peter Suddon, National Youth Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, London, 9 May 1965; Letter from Bruce Samoila, London Secretary Committee of 100, London, 13 March 1965. IISH CSD VRZ 002 box 1 map 4 “Kor 1965/66.”
8. Frank van Ree, *Botsende generaties. Een studie over sociopatie en ambivalentie* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1968), 191.
9. John Street, “The Celebrity Politician,” in: John Corner, Dick Pels (eds.), *Media and the Restyling of Politics: Consumerism, Celebrity, and Cynicism* (London: Sage, 2003).
10. See Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson, *Resistance through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-war Britain* (London: Routledge, 1976).
11. For France, see Niek Pas, “Images d’une révolte ludique. Le mouvement néerlandais Provo en France dans les années soixante,” in: *Revue Historique*, 634, April 2005: 343–373; for Germany, see: Niek Pas, “Die niederländische Provo-Bewegung und die Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1965–1967,” in: *Jahrbuch 15, 2004* (Münster, 2005) 163–78; for Italy, see: Niek Pas, “The incarnation of the spirit of liberty”; “La perception de Provo par la contreculture italienne des années soixante à nos jours,” <http://congress70.library.uu.nl/>, 527–42 (December 2006).
12. Esther Cleven, *Image bedeutet Bild: Eine Geschichte des Bildbegriffs in der Werbetheorie am Beispiel der Niederlande 1917–1967* (PhD diss., University of Utrecht, 1999).
13. Michel Vovelle, *Idéologies et mentalités* (Paris: Folio, 1992), 171–84.
14. Christian Vassart, Aimée Racine, *Provos et provotariae. Un an de recherche participante en milieu provo* (Brussels: CEDJ, 1968).
15. Stanley Cohen, *Folk Devils & Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers* (Oxford: MacGibbon and Kee, 1972), 38–39.
16. Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The meaning of Style* (London: Methuen, 1979), 92–93.
17. Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy, and the United States, c.1958–c.1974* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
18. Bernice Martin, *A Sociology of Contemporary Cultural Change* (Oxford: St. Martin’s Press, 1981).
19. Dennis Bos, *Waarachtige volksvrienden.: De vroege socialistische beweging in Amsterdam 1848–1894* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2001); Amanda Kluvel, *Reis door de*

- hel der onschuldigen: De expressieve politiek van de Nederlandse anti-vivisectionisten, 1890–1940* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000).
20. Gerard Rooijackers, Ton Dekker, and Herman Roodenburg (eds.), *Volkscultuur: Een inleiding in de Nederlandse etnologie* (Nijmegen: SUN, 2000); Gerard C. de Haas, *De onvoorziene generatie: Essays over jeugd, samenleving en cultuur* (Amsterdam: Wetenschappelijke uitgeverij, 1966); Jan Koenot, *Hungry for heaven: Rockmusik, Kultur und Religion* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1997).
 21. Bernice Martin, *A Sociology of Contemporary Cultural Change*, 25.
 22. Robert Lumley, *States of Emergency: Cultures of Revolt in Italy from 1968 to 1978* (London: Verso, 1990).
 23. Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties*, 11.
 24. Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980).
 25. Catharina van Poppel, *De Amsterdamse Provo's uit de jaren 1965–1967* (PhD diss., University of Amsterdam, 1968), 200.
 26. Daniel Dayan and Elihu Katz, *Media Events: The Live Broadcasting of History* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1992).
 27. “Hier à Amsterdam: le mariage de Béatrix de Hollande,” *Panorama*, 11 March 1966. Paris, Institut National de l’Audiovisuel.
 28. “Les provos,” *Cinq colonnes à la une*, 7 October 1966. Paris, Institut National de l’Audiovisuel.
 29. Letter from Michael Ryan, 19 September 1966. IISH CSD VRZ 001 box 13 map 4 ‘Provo kor 6.1 sept ‘66.’
 30. Letter from Michael Ryan, 28 September 1966. IISH CSD VRZ 001 box 13 map 4 ‘Provo kor 6.1 sept ‘66.’
 31. Letter from Michael Ryan, Amsterdam, 15 October 1966. Private Collection Lou van Nimwegen.
 32. Letter from Hartmut Sander, Berlin, 11 October 1966. IISH CSD VRZ 002 box 1 map 2 “Kor 1965/1966”; Letter from Martin Dürschlag, Oberbaumpresse, Berlin, October 18, 1966. IISH CSD VRZ 002 box 1 map 4 “Kor 1965/66.”
 33. De Vries appeared in five films from 1967 to 1972: *Ugo Liberatore, Il sesso degli angeli* (1967); Sergio Bergonzelli, *Le dieci meraviglie dell’amore* (1969); Filippo Maria Ratti, *Erika* (1971); Luigi Petrini, *La ragazza dalle mani di corallo* (1972); and Franco Zeffirelli, *Fratello sole, sorella luna* (1972).
 34. Paolo Romano Andreoli, *Provo* (Rome: Semerano Editore, 1967).
 35. Letter from Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, Milan, 10 February 1967. IISH CSD VRZ 001 box 48 map 2 “Rob Stolk.”
 36. Letter from Andrew Maconie, J. Walter Thompson Company, London, 31 January 1967. IISH CSD VRZ 001 box 14 map 2 “Provo kor 7.2 jan ‘67.”
 37. “My White Bicycle” by Tomorrow (1968), <http://bicycleuniverse.info/stuff/music.html>.
 38. Stanley Cohen, *Folk Devils & Moral Panics*, 140.
 39. Dieter Kunzelmann, *Leisten Sie keinen Widerstand! Bilder aus meinem Leben* (Berlin: Transit Vlg., 1998), 47; U. Enzensberger, *Die Jahre der Kommune 1. Berlin 1967–1969* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2004), 52.
 40. Letter from Alessandro Savorelli, Giancarlo Carboncini, Prato, Italy, 15 March 1966. IISH CSD VRZ 001 box 48 map 2 “Rob Stolk.”

41. Letter from Christy Hudson, Croydon, Surrey, England, 5 January 1967. IISH Collection Hans Metz map 5 "Provo."
42. Wolfgang Dressen, Dieter Kunzelmann, Eckhard Siepmann (eds.), *Nilpferd des hölischen Urwalds: Spuren in eine unbekannte Stadt: Situationisten, Gruppe SPUR, Kommune I* (Giessen: Anabas, 1991), 198.
43. Letter from Guy Gladstone, London, 26 December 1966. IISH Collection Hans Metz map 5 "Provo."
44. Letter from Ken Friedman, San Francisco, March 1967. IISH CSD VRZ 002 box 1 map 1 "Kor 1965/1966."
45. Fernanda Pivano, *C'era una volta un beat: 10 anni di ricerca alternativa* (Rome: Arcana, 1976), 88.
46. Christian Lagant, "De l'attitude religieuse," in: *Noir et Rouge: Cahiers d'études anarchistes-communistes* 36, (December 1966): 2–5, here 3.
47. *Bulletin Europeen de Liaison des Jeunes Anarchistes*, 3, February 1967.
48. Maurice Joyeux, *L'anarchie et la révolte de la jeunesse* (Paris: Casterman, 1970), 120–121.
49. Yves Frémion, "Les Provos, 1965–1967," in: Geneviève Dreyfus-Armand and Laurent Gervereau, *Mai 68. Les mouvements étudiants en France et dans le monde* (Paris: La Découverte, 1988), 48–52. Also: Yves Frémion, *Provo, la tornade blanche* (Brussels: Ministère de la Culture Française, 1982).
50. Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Steven de Winter (eds.), *Nous l'avons tant aimée la révolution* (Paris : Barrault, 1986), 49.
51. Michel Antoine Burnier, *C'est demain la veille* (Paris : Éditions du Seuil, 1973), 73.
52. Letter from Boja Christovová, Roznov, Czechoslovakia, 31 October 1966. IISH CSD VRZ 002 box 1 map 1 "Kor 1965/1966."
53. Letter from Bill van Petten, Malibu, 18 November 1966. IISH CSD VRZ 002 box 1 map 1 "Kor 1965/1966."
54. Letter from Charles Radcliffe, London, 12 October 1966. IISH CSD VRZ 002 box 1 map 1 "Kor 1965/66."
55. Matteo Guarnaccia, *Provos. Gli inizi della controcultura* (Bertiolo: AAA Edizioni, 1997), 144–45.
56. Wolfgang Kraushaar, *1968 als Mythos, Chiffre und Zäsur* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2000), 24 and 53–73.
57. Hans Righart, "Moderate versions of the 'global sixties.' A comparison of Great Britain and the Netherlands," *Journal of Area Studies*, 13 (1998): 82–96.

The Revolution Will Be Televised

The Global 1968 Protests in Norwegian Television News

Rolf Werenskjold

The key role television played has become part of the conventional interpretation of the 1968 revolts and of how the protest phenomena spread transnationally and globally. The protests of 1968 spread worldwide within weeks, therefore, the conclusion that television news reports ignited or at least contributed to a latent unrest in many countries seems likely. But how central were the uprisings on the television news agenda in 1968? Was there any connection between the news coverage and the transmission of televised images of global demonstrations and street fights around the world? Did the television news initiate new demonstrations or protests? Based on the coverage in the Norwegian television evening news, *Dagsrevyen*, this chapter confronts some of these questions.

1968 in Norway

Besides their significance, the 1968 protests were trans-national and global in character. Recent international research has stressed that there was a close link between international events and domestic political issues in each affected country. In contrast to many other countries in the Western world, Norway did not experience any large violent clashes between the police and demonstrators. While there were several events in Norway during the year 1968 which resembled what was happening in the rest of Europe, they were on a different and smaller scale. Much of the radicalization in Norway became part of other trends and was channeled into traditional popular movements, such as the language movement and its increased emphasis on using dialects as a reaction against the two established written standardizations of the Norwegian language. One of the consequences of this movement was that the language became more informal in the public arena. The political radicalization was linked in particular to the growing center-periphery tensions in the concrete debate on Norwegian membership in the European Economical Community (EEC) in the run-up to the referendum in

1972, which made cooperation across the traditional political divisions in Norway possible.¹ Beginning in 1970, the country also saw the emergence of a new environmental movement. Growth in the public sector, as well as relatively low costs for first-time home buyers, were also important factors that contributed to dispel students' uncertainty about future careers and life in general at the beginning of the new decade.

In Norway, any serious domestic effects of the global 1968 revolt were first felt in 1969 and through the early 1970s.² The radicalization of Norwegian politics was particularly obvious among the Left as early as 1958 and was linked at that time to the opposition against NATO within the Labor Party. In student circles, the gradual radicalization of the Left after 1967 was characterized by opposition to the American war in Vietnam, and the growth of an extreme Maoist party which would factionalize the Left. Polarization among students themselves also brought about a right-wing turn, and in 1968, the student unions in Oslo and Bergen elected conservative officials as their leaders. A special feature of the situation in Norway was that the radicalization also took place within the church and religious environments, where social ethics and responsibility for developments in the Third World were important factors.

1968 and the Media

Research on the protests surrounding 1968 has strongly emphasized the key role of the daily press and the media (especially television) in spreading information about the protests both globally and locally.³ The role of the media in covering domestic dissent was, however, ambivalent. In some places, such as in Czechoslovakia, the press became a spokesperson for change, while in others it helped to increase tensions between the activists and the establishment. Particularly in Germany, France, and Italy, the daily press and television became among the most important targets for the student activists. The *Springer* press in Germany, the FIAT-owned *La Stampa* in Italy, and state television in France represented symbols of the establishment to the student activists.⁴ This was also the case in Poland and in Yugoslavia. In the United States the picture was slightly different, both in terms of media reporting and in how the student activists regarded the value of using the media consciously to spread information about their own agenda. Media scholar Todd Gitlin has pointed out that the American media coverage of the revolts in the U.S. had a significant effect on recruitment to the U.S. protest movement in the mid 1960s. In the initial phase, the media contributed to a positive framing of the protesters, which focused on the injustice toward civil rights workers. The media thus made the revolts legitimate to the American public in this phase. As the revolts started to threaten the status quo, the media coverage shifted. Gitlin has claimed that during this second phase, the media made the protests illegitimate and subverted them. Several studies have

pointed out that this change of attitude seems to be a general feature in the relationship between popular protest movements and the media. When the police beat up demonstrators at the Democratic Party's National Convention in 1968 in Chicago, the protestors coined the chant "*the whole world is watching*."⁵

As several scholars have pointed out, the coverage of foreign news events in the mass media reinforced the feeling of belonging to a global movement with common goals among activists in various countries. This feeling of a shared cause across national boundaries seems, however, to be based on a simple almighty media theory, in which the content of television broadcasts directly influences its viewers. Kathrin Fahlenbrach has focused on a more complex picture of the interdependent relationship of the media and protest movement, but her studies of media and changes of cultural identities do not include an analysis of the news in television or in the daily press.⁶

The assumption of an almighty media seems to offer proof that media was powerful as an instrument to mobilize the public.⁷ No proof exists to justify the claim that television in itself led to mass mobilization among broad segments of society. There are several studies of the media news coverage in the press in 1968, but no total analysis of the news agenda in television.⁸ The only existing analysis in of the coverage of demonstrations in national television news programs in 1968 is a case study of the large anti-Vietnam march in London in October 1968.⁹ Even so, there is little doubt that reactions to televised protest events created a strong involvement among certain social groups.¹⁰ Furthermore, there is reason to believe that the television news coverage of demonstrations and protests in their own countries had a stronger effect on the public than reports of events abroad.¹¹ Proximity to local protest events in itself presumably contributed to a greater involvement.¹² Although some leaders of the various protest movements both in Europe and the U.S. had met sporadically during the 1960s, there was, as Mark Kurlansky has pointed out, very little institutionalized contact between them. Most relied solely on the reports of events as they were shown on television. In an interview Daniel Cohn-Bendit stated: "We met through television ... through seeing pictures of each other on television. We were the first television generation. We did not have a relationship with each other, but we had a relationship with what our imagination produced from seeing pictures of each other on television."¹³ One of the few occasions on which student leaders from various countries ever met face to face in public was in a discussion broadcast by the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) on 13 June 1968, during which the activists jointly explained their goals for the first time on television.¹⁴

Dagsrevyen and the Foreign News in 1968

So far, there has been no national or international documentation or analysis of televised news broadcasts during the 1968 revolt.¹⁵ As a result, there is no

overview about which events the news bulletins focused on or which stories were excluded from the final broadcast. Did the protests make good television news? Research has generally taken for granted that television was global in 1968, due to access to satellite transmissions. The fact that instantaneous international communication was technically feasible did not necessarily mean that its use was common in daily news bulletins.

This chapter therefore gives a quantitative analysis of the global 1968 revolt as it was presented on the main evening news program on Norwegian television—*Dagsrevyen* (*The Main Evening News*). It aims to examine which of the international events news editors chose to focus on and judged as newsworthy. Also, where did the news come from, and via which channels was it presented to Norwegian viewers? Based on an ongoing qualitative analysis of certain central news items, general tendencies in the coverage of the 1968 revolt are presented here in connection with the total foreign news coverage in Norwegian television's main evening news program.

Dagsrevyen was Norwegian television's main evening news program in 1968. The Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK) started test broadcasts in 1954 and presented regular programs beginning in 1960. A nationwide television service was first offered in Norway in 1968; until 1982, NRK enjoyed a monopoly in radio and television broadcasting. The coverage of the 1968 protest was part of the foreign news on *Dagsrevyen*. NRK's own foreign correspondents supplied material to news broadcasts on both radio and television.¹⁶ Apart from special news bulletins, the news on the NRK television in 1968 consisted mainly of *Dagsrevyen* (main evening news) and *Kveldsnytt* (late night news). *Dagsrevyen* went on the air at 8.00 pm for half an hour, reduced to fifteen minutes on Sundays. The main broadcast consisted on average of about twenty to twenty-five planned news items, including a three-minute weather forecast at the end. *Kveldsnytt* lasted about fifteen minutes and consisted of seven to fifteen planned news items, many of which were repeated or followed up in edited versions, and was also concluded by the weather forecast, after which broadcasting was suspended for the night. In addition to these news broadcasts and extra bulletins, a number of foreign news topics were followed up in current affairs programs, such *Vindu mot verden* and *Utenriksmagasinet*.¹⁷ At the end of the 1960s, *Dagsrevyen* was perhaps the most popular television program. A major comparative survey of TV news broadcasts in the Nordic countries carried out early in the 1970s revealed that television news was watched by 50 percent of viewers, while about 30 percent of the population listened to radio news.¹⁸ A survey carried out in 1968 shows that this pattern already existed that year. In Norway, with its lack of nationwide service *until* 1968, those areas of the country that were most densely populated had already had access to television coverage long enough to establish a pattern of viewing in these areas.

When it comes to news material covering the late 1960s and the year 1968 on NRK TV, there are some problems with regard to sources.¹⁹ No complete

taped versions of *Dagsrevyen* or *Kveldsnytt* broadcasts exist from earlier than 1981. Fortunately, the transmission logs for both are today preserved on micro-film at NRK's Central Archive in Marienlyst, Oslo.²⁰ These logs provide detailed information about planned and broadcast news items in terms of their length, the order in which they were broadcast, and whether they were their own productions or had been produced by a foreign news agency. The transmission logs are therefore the closest we can get to the original broadcast, since neither "max manus" from the transmissions still exists in the archives, nor is the physical film material to which the transmission logs refers complete.²¹ The best approach is therefore to reconstruct the original transmissions with the help of a "media-historical archaeology" based on the transmission logs for the news broadcasts on television.²² In this process, the transmission logs, in combination with the original manuscripts of former correspondents, remain the only source that can tell us what was actually aired on *Dagsrevyen* in 1968. It documents the media agenda in the Norwegian television news.²³

In this analysis, I have registered all foreign news items that were transmitted on *Dagsrevyen* in 1968. Thereby, I have been able to generate an approximately complete overview of the number of film items and total airtime of the foreign news stories, which allows for a comparative frame when discussing the media agenda and the prioritizing of the news items covering the 1968 protest. In addition, all news items about demonstrations for the whole period from 1965 to 1970 have been registered for comparative reasons. Where the news items mentioned several countries and regions, the analysis is based on the first country listed in the database. This partly explains why Norway has a comparatively large share of the total number of foreign news items with news related to the rest of the world, but where the origins of these situations are part of the domestic scene, such as a domestic fund-raising campaign for Biafra or an interview with a foreign head of state on a visit to Oslo. In a total registration of all the news material, some of these stories will end up in a mixed category—between Norwegian and foreign news. In the case of other countries, this rule also applies. News stories that for example, involved both the United States and Vietnam are therefore registered in the overview both under USA (North America) and Asia. The peace negotiations between the U.S., Vietnam, and North Vietnam are registered under France, since the talks took place in Paris. In a total overview, therefore, the overall daily picture of news would look somewhat different from how it is presented here when one also includes what is registered as second country, third country, and so on.

Foreign News on NRK *Dagsrevyen* in 1968

NRK *Dagsrevyen* transmitted a total of 2,143 film items containing foreign news in 1968. These items concerned news of varying degrees from a total of seventy-

four different countries. The foreign news items on NRK *Dagsrevyen* represented an average of 179 items when divided over the individual months. The statistics show, however, that the distribution of foreign news items varied for each month. The months of January, February, April, and December had fewer foreign news items than the year's average.²⁴ The months of March, May, July, August, and November had a higher than average number of items. May, July, and August were those months with the most items.²⁵ The statistics also reveal that the number of foreign news items increased steadily from the month of May. It was especially events in France that led to the increase in May and June. In June, the murder of Robert F. Kennedy also contributed to an increase in the number of foreign news stories. In July and August, it was in particular the war in Biafra, the crisis in Czechoslovakia, and the subsequent Soviet invasion that contributed strongly to the high number of foreign news items on *Dagsrevyen*. Because the transmission time was constant (30 minutes), this meant that at the same time there were far fewer domestic news items in the transmission log in the same period. Moreover, there was a tendency to replace domestic news with foreign news over the vacation period, especially in July. The overview of the total airtime of the international news showed a somewhat similar tendency. The average for the year was 298 minutes of international news stories per month. August topped the statistics with its 442 minutes. This lengthy airtime had a direct link with the events in Czechoslovakia.

Diversification of International News

The international news items in *Dagsrevyen* in 1968 had a strong focus on Europe. As many as 1,423 items or 66 percent of the total number of foreign news items were linked to European events. News items from North America, including both the United States and Canada, represented 18 percent. News stories from the United States dominated this group, with only 6 out of a total of 378 items about Canada. Asia was represented in 9 percent of the items. Almost half of the total of 201 news items from Asia were about events in Vietnam (96 items), including both North and South Vietnam. Just 2 percent of the total number of news items on NRK *Dagsrevyen* in 1968 dealt with Central and South America. Australia was barely mentioned in Norwegian news broadcasts with only three news items, representing a mere 0.14 percent of the total number of items transmitted in *Dagsrevyen*.

When dividing the news into political and economic regions as *First*, *Second*, and *Third World*, the picture becomes even clearer.²⁷ In 1968 as many as 1,600 or 75 percent of the total number of news items on NRK *Dagsrevyen* had their origins in the so-called First World, which at this time comprised, in the main, the industrialized nations of the Western world.²⁸ News items from the United States, France, and Britain dominated the picture, together with those

Table 11.1. International News Topics

Topic	No. of items	Percent	Topic	No. of items	Percent
Foreign politics	943	44%	Cold War	70	3%
Demonstrations/strikes and riots	367	17%	Norwegian domestic and foreign policy	68	3%
Eastern Europe	338	16%	Civil rights and freedom of speech	60	3%
Czechoslovakia crisis	251	12%	Emergency aid	59	3%
War in Vietnam	232	11%	Sport	55	3%
Overseas elections	215	10%	Nordic cooperation	50	2%
Economy	176	8%	Space research	36	2%
Storms/natural disasters/accidents	159	7%	Celebrities	36	2%
Underdeveloped countries	113	5%	Youth and education	28	1%
International organizations	110	5%	Korea conflict	22	1%
Church matters and culture	98	5%	Rhodesia conflict	22	1%
War in Biafra	88	4%	Media and communication	13	1%
Decolonization	88	4%	War	10	0%
Peace negotiations and peace efforts	85	4%	Northern Ireland conflict	6	0%
University	82	4%	Cyprus conflict	1	0%
Middle East conflict	78	4%	India-Pakistan conflict	1	0%
International cooperation	71	3%	Unspecified	46	2%
Total number of items=2143 ²⁶					

originating from Norway. News items from the Second World, i.e., communist Europe, comprised 261 items or 12 percent of the total number of news items on NRK *Dagsrevyen* in 1968. In the Second World, it was stories from Czechoslovakia that dominated the news in Norway, with as many as 66 percent of the news coverage on the Second World being devoted to events in that country.²⁹

The Third World was represented in 282 or 13 percent of the total number of foreign news items in *Dagsrevyen* transmissions that year. The share was, however, divided among as many as forty-three countries. Most of them only had a few news items in the Norwegian foreign news broadcasts. With ninety-six items, or 4 percent of the total, the Vietnam items represented as much as 34 percent of all the news items from the Third World. Items from Biafra, Egypt, Mexico, Nigeria, and India made up 31 percent of the total news stories from the region.³⁰ Twenty-two other nations shared 30 percent of the transmissions.³¹ Strangely enough, there were only three news items about China, which at that time found itself at the height of the Cultural Revolution. Fifteen nations were represented by no more than one news item, which amounted to 15 percent of the news material from the region.

Compared with today's news programs, the foreign news items in the *Dagsrevyen* in 1968 were fairly lengthy affairs. The briefest items, lasting thirty seconds or less, amounted to just 10 percent of the total number of items. The items with a duration of up to one minute represented 35 percent. The third longest items lasted up to two minutes and accounted for 23 percent of the total. An almost equally large group was made up of the items lasting up to three minutes, representing 19 percent of all items. As many as 281 items or 14 percent of the total number of items had an airtime of between three and six minutes.

International News Agencies and Distribution Channels

The news in 1968 consisted of the reading of news reports, news items produced by NRK and film material transferred from abroad—either by satellite or via the European Broadcasting Union's (EBU) permanent network and the Northvision TV alliance. In 1968, NRK had a number of agreements with international news agencies on the supply of picture material for news broadcasts. Agreements with United Press International (UPI) dated back to 1959 and were renegotiated several times during the 1960s. Up until 1962, the American UPI had a virtual monopoly as supplier of news film from outside Europe. In 1968, NRK also had access to television news from the British company Visnews (VISN), and via the European network EBU, to news material from other television companies in Europe. Some of the Eastern European companies transmitted items to the Eurovision network via the Austrian company Österreichischer Rundfunk (ORF). The Eurovision collaboration is certainly an important explanation for the fundamental Eurocentrism in the foreign news on *Dagsrevyen* in 1968.

NRK participated in a total of 770 transmissions via the Eurovision and Intervision networks in 1968. A large percentage of these transmissions in 1968 were in connection with the Winter Olympics in Grenoble (in February) and the Summer Olympics in Mexico City (October). However, these sports transmissions had little influence on the news programs, because the *Dagsrevyen* television news in 1968 contained very few sports.³² In 1968, NRK *Dagsrevyen* transmitted a total of 2,143 items of foreign news amounting to 3,576 minutes of airtime. Of these items, 51 percent came via the Eurovision cooperation. VISN supplied 14 percent, UPI 9 percent and United Press International Television News (UPITN) 6 percent. All three big international news agencies supplied their news on film, which was flown daily to the Norwegian capital. Only 5 percent of the foreign news was imported via the Nordic cooperation. In spite of the fact that satellite technology had been available for television transmissions since 1963, the total share of news items transferred via satellite to *Dagsrevyen* remained modest, amounting to less than 4 percent in 1968. In 1968, it was still very common for correspondents to send their reports via telephone. The reason for this rather modest use of satellite communication in news broadcasting was that the costs were still high and that NRK used this modern technology only in the event of very high priority news. In 1968, this included the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy, the primary elections in the United States, space exploration, and the transmissions from the Olympics in Mexico City. As a fairly small television company, NRK depended largely on jointly transmitting material from other large TV companies, thanks to an agreement for the sharing of expenses in the EBU network. When one looks at the total amount of airtime, the same general tendency is apparent. The Eurovision cooperation contributed 35 percent of the total airtime; the figure for UPI, UPITN, and VISN was 25 percent; and satellite transmissions accounted for just 5 percent.

Dagsrevyen and the Global Demonstrations, Strikes, and Riots, 1965–1970

How characteristic was the news coverage on NRK *Dagsrevyen* of the global protest and revolts in 1968? To place the year in a broader context, one must look at the coverage of the phenomena over a longer time period. The first demonstrations against the American involvement in the war in Vietnam occurred in 1965, but by 1970 other topics, including new topics received greater focus. In Norway, as in many other countries, the domestic dissent in the second half of the 1960s was made up of a whole range of different movements and political environments. The environmental movement really stamped its mark on Norwegian public debate; in 1970, the first large-scale environmental protest in connection with the development of hydroelectric power took place—the so-called

“Mardøla-protest.” Together with the early stages of the debate on Norwegian EEC membership, a number of work conflicts in both Norway and Sweden and riots in Northern Ireland attracted greater news attention. There is therefore a sharp distinction in the source material in the transition from 1969 to 1970 with regard to the specific types of demonstrations, strikes, and riots covered, which explains the choice of 1970 as the final deadline for the analysis.

In the period between 1965 and 1970 there was a total of 979 news items in the main TV news about demonstrations in various parts of the world. These items were spread across the individual years as follows: 86 items in 1965, 133 in 1966, 134 in 1967, 301 in 1968, 157 in 1969, and 168 in 1970. As Figure 11.1 shows, the year 1968 thus stood out as a clear peak on the news agenda in *Dagsrevyen’s* coverage of demonstrations as events in the chosen period as a whole.

However, not all parts of the world attracted the same amount of attention in *Dagsrevyen’s* news broadcasts. Of the 979 news items in that period, 717 were about demonstrations in the first world, 55 items about the Second World, and 204 news items about the Third World. Three of the items that were broadcast were unspecified in the transmission logs for the programs. If one splits the figures according to each separate year in the period, in 1965 there were fifty-two items from the First World, one from the Second World, and thirty-one from the Third World. In 1965, there were two unspecified items, which therefore cannot be included in any of the categories. Of all the 133 items in 1966, there were fifty-nine items from the First World, two from the Second World, and seventy-two from the Third World. The only year in the entire period from 1965 to 1970 when the majority of the news items on demonstrations came from the

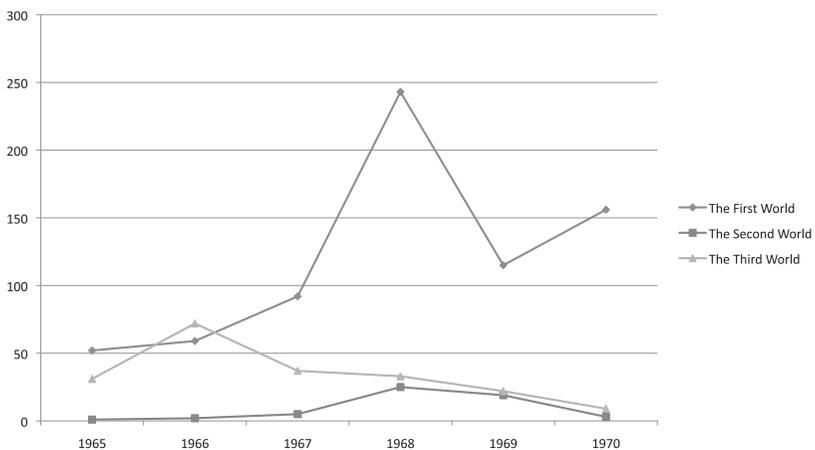


Figure 11.1. Demonstrations by regions 1965–1970—NRK *Dagsrevyen*

Third World was 1966. In 1967, there were ninety-three news items from the First World, five from the Second World, and thirty-six from the Third World. In 1968 news coverage of demonstrations reached its peak as a topic on *Dagsrevyen*, both from the First and Second Worlds. In 1968, there were 243 items from the First World and 25 from the Second World.

The development in the Third World appeared somewhat different. In 1968 there were thirty-three items from the Third World. Even though more news items were transmitted in *Dagsrevyen* from the Third World than from the Second World, these revealed a different trend in developments. In the news items about demonstrations from the Third World, the peak came in 1966 and 1967. Then, in 1969, there were 115 items on demonstrations from the First World, 19 from the Second World, and 22 from the Third World. In 1970, there were 156 items from the First World, 3 from the Second World, and 9 from the Third World. The numbers of news items about demonstrations shown on *Dagsrevyen* document very clearly that it was the events in the northwestern industrialized part of the world that were by and large given priority on Norwegian TV news throughout the whole period.

Dagsrevyen and the Protests in 1968

We now have seen the broad picture of the news coverage of protests in the Norwegian television news in the late 1960s. We will now look into the news coverage in 1968 in more detail. In 1968, demonstrations, strikes, and riots made television news and such events had already become an integrated part of the media agenda.³³ The first two dominated the news in Europe, while the latter category dominated the foreign news from the United States. All of these types of events were parts of the phenomenon known as “the 1968 protest.” In 1968, *Dagsrevyen* transmitted a total of 367 items that covered all three categories, of which coverage on demonstrations was clearly the most dominating.

In the course of 1968, *Dagsrevyen* showed 301 news items about demonstrations from all over the world. These items also included demonstrations in Norway, which represent 14 percent of the total number of news items that form the basis of this analysis. In terms of airtime, the items accounted for 348 minutes or roughly 10 percent of the total airtime during the year on Norwegian TV’s main news broadcast. The news items on demonstrations/strikes and rioting were not evenly spread throughout the year. There were clear peaks in the months of March, April, May, June, August, and October. As Figure 11.2 shows, the peak of news items on this topic was in May, when 79 items represented 26 percent of the total. In terms of airtime, the month of May accounted for 28 percent. Furthermore as Figure 11.3 shows, demonstrations had a relatively high priority in the news when they were put on the agenda.

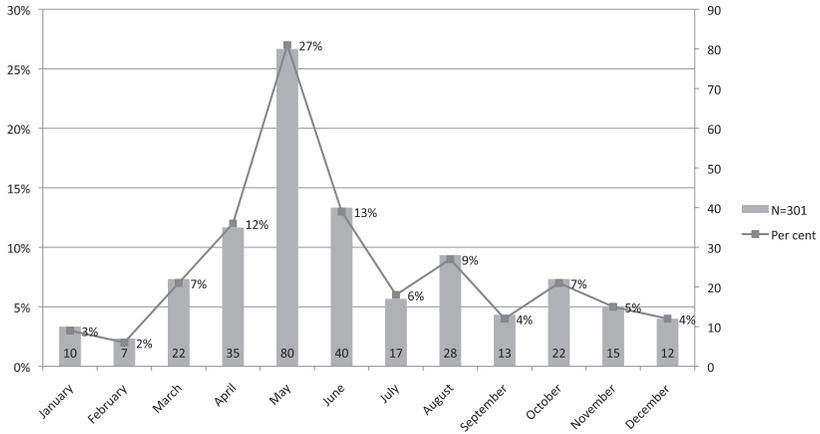


Figure 11.2. The total monthly distribution in percentage of the coverage of demonstrations, strikes, and riots in the Norwegian television news in 1968.

The distribution of the number of news items in each month reflected in general the focus on the major demonstrations in the United States and in Europe in certain months. In April, for example, there were big demonstrations against the murder of Martin Luther King Jr. in the United States and the Easter riots in West Germany. In May and June there was a strong focus on events in France, and in August there were many large demonstrations in protest of the Soviet invasion in Czechoslovakia. In October, it was the demonstrations ahead of the Olympic Games in Mexico which contributed to the high figures. As was

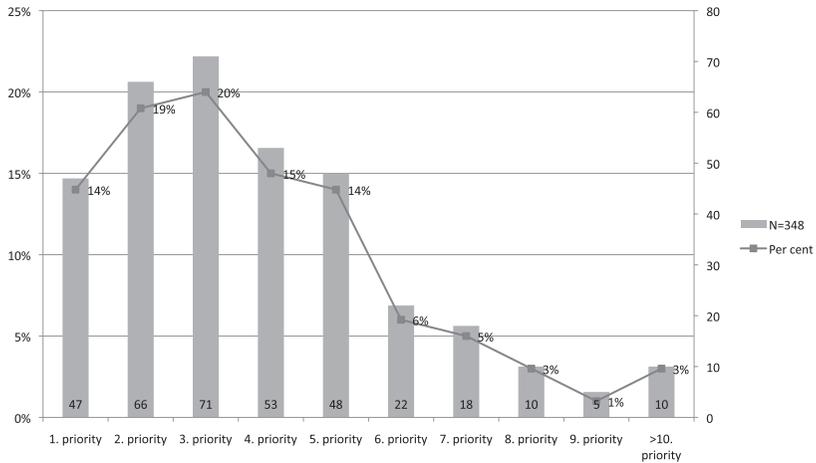


Figure 11.3. Broadcasting priority demonstrations

the case with the general picture of foreign news on *Dagsrevyen*, there was a dominant focus on the events in Europe. As many as 225 of all news items on demonstrations were taken from Europe, accounting for 75 percent of the total. With twenty-two and twenty-one items respectively, the news items from North America and Asia each stood for 7 percent of all items on demonstrations. Seventeen items, or 6 percent, came from Central and South America. There were just three items about demonstrations from Africa. Australia was not represented by any news item on demonstrations in this statistical material.

The regional distribution underlines even further the fact that the main focus is on protests in the First World, and that other regions were presumably under-represented. 242 of the 301 items, or 81 percent, were from the western industrialized part of the world. The Second World, i.e. communist Europe, accounted for 8 percent of the items. The news items from the Third World accounted for 11 percent of the total. With regard to the overall distribution, the picture appears as follows:

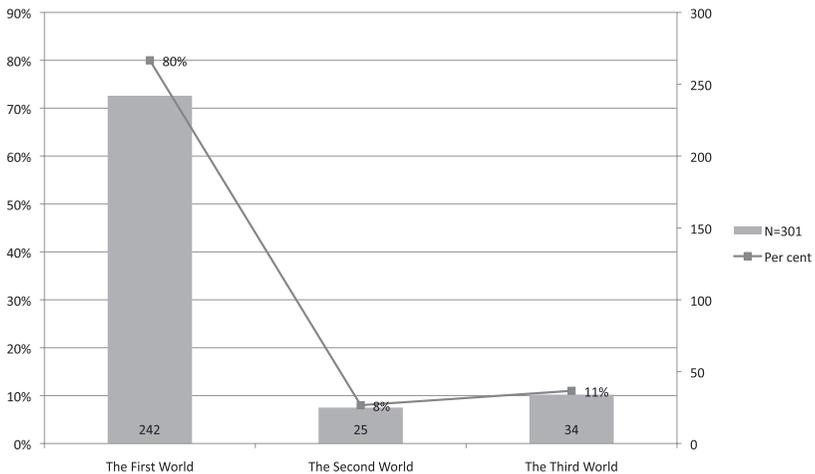


Figure 11.4. Demonstrations in 1968 by regions

In 1968, *Dagsrevyen* presented news items about demonstrations from sixteen of twenty-three different countries in the First World, but the extent of coverage varied considerably between the various nations. The coverage was dominated by the news items from the northwestern “elite” countries, especially France, which accounted for 34 percent, or more than one of every three news item, was from this country.

The French coverage was almost twice the share of that devoted to similar events in West Germany and the United States in the same year. Demonstrations in both Norway and Britain were covered almost equally, followed by events in

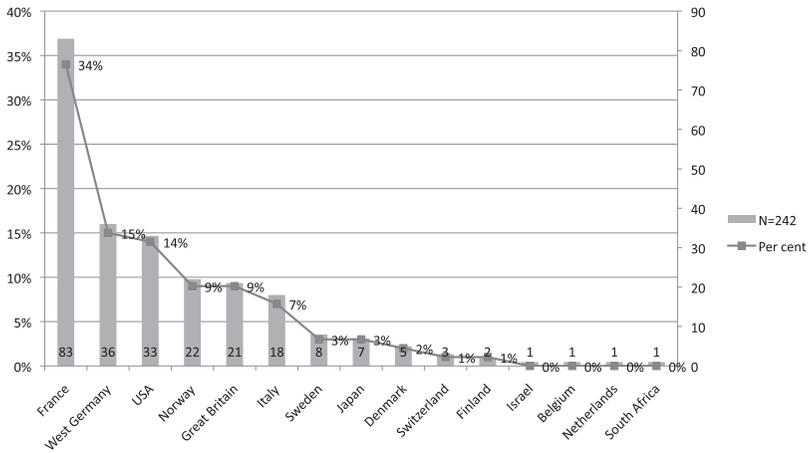


Figure 11.5. Demonstrations in the First World in 1968—*Dagsrevyen*

Italy. There were far fewer items from countries like Sweden, Japan, Denmark, Switzerland, and Finland. Cultural and geographic proximity seems not to have been the most important news criteria in the coverage of Scandinavian news. This was also the case in the coverage in the Norwegian press.³⁴ Demonstrations in nations like Israel, Belgium, Holland, and South Africa were covered in one item each, which is not revealed in the statistics.

The extent of news items about demonstrations in the Second World was quite different from the First World. Twenty-five items from this region were broadcast in *Dagsrevyen* 1968, of which developments in Czechoslovakia dominated the news.

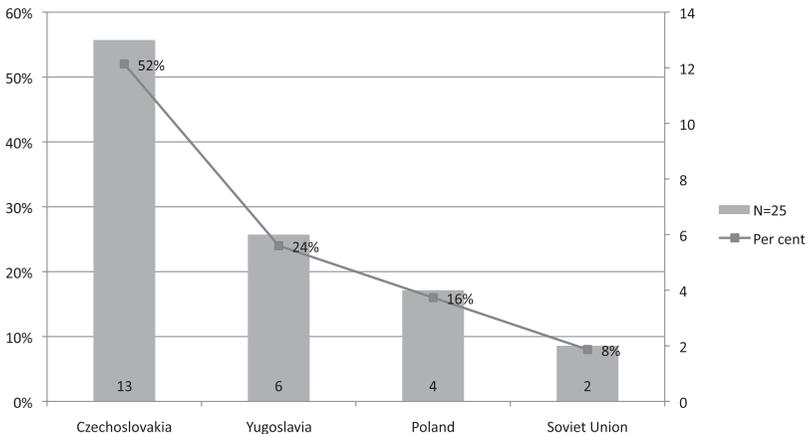


Figure 11.6. Demonstrations in the Second World in 1968—*Dagsrevyen*

In total, *Dagsrevyen* transmitted thirty-four news items on demonstrations in the Third World in 1968, involving items from fifteen of the forty-three countries that the main Norwegian TV news covered during that year. The news items from the Third World were dominated by the events in Mexico, as shown in Figure 11.7.

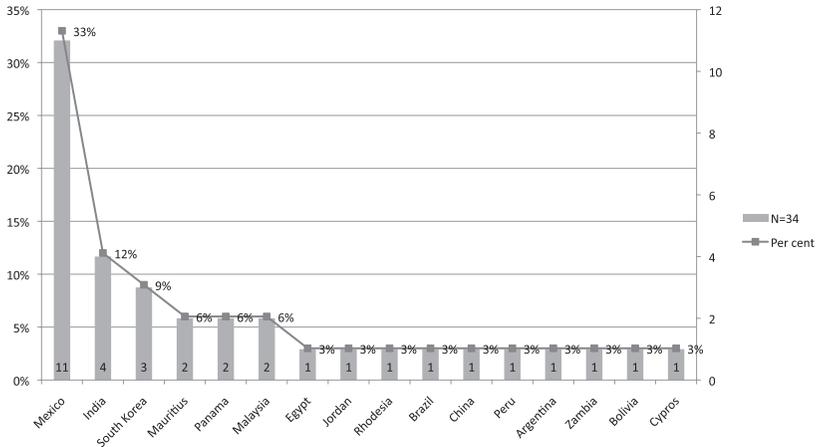


Figure 11.7. Demonstrations in the Third World in 1968—*Dagsrevyen*

International TV News Agencies, Distribution Channels, NRK Productions, and the Norwegian Foreign News System

How can the patterns of the coverage of demonstrations, strikes, and riots in the Norwegian television news in 1968 be explained? The analysis of the news sources revealed an interesting feature. In contrast to the total airtime for general foreign news, the coverage of the demonstrations was far more dependent on companies of British and Western European origin. British companies supplied 28 percent of the total airtime, West European companies 26 percent, American companies 18 percent, Nordic companies 4 percent, and Eastern European companies 3 percent. NRK's own production of items accounted for 21 percent of the total airtime of 438 minutes. From a total of 301 news items that *Dagsrevyen* broadcast in 1968 on demonstrations, as many as 70 percent were imported via the Eurovision cooperation. VISN supplied 14 percent, UPI 11 percent, and UPITN 11 percent. The Northvision alliance contributed just 3 percent of material in this field. A mere 3 percent of the items were received via satellite. Although the new technology was available, it was not widely used because of

high expenses. Timeliness was not that important in 1968, and since the NRK was a rather small broadcasting company, it became cheaper to use programs that were bought by the larger European countries. This means that many of the news items used in the Norwegian television news were also broadcast and seen by the public in larger European countries. The strong dependency on transmitted news items from various countries through the European Eurovision system could also mean that the Norwegian television news was using the original news framing from the same countries. But the framing effects of the news had a less mobilizing effect in Norway than it did in West Germany, Italy, or in France.

Who were the people that interpreted the global protest events to the public through the Norwegian television news? In 1968, there were fifty-five Norwegian journalists who were, either on a permanent or freelance basis, involved in the production of foreign news that was transmitted in or for *Dagsrevyen*. Of the 301 news items *Dagsrevyen* had in 1968 on the topic of demonstrations, only fifty-two were produced by NRK's own journalists or others who supplied news to *Dagsrevyen*, meaning that only 17 percent of all items broadcast on the topic were their own production (119 minutes or 34 percent of the total airtime devoted to foreign news). The Norwegian television news transmitted only edited items about demonstrations. Nothing was broadcast live, as was the case, for example, on the BBC during the huge demonstrations in London in the spring and autumn of 1968.³⁵ The material on demonstrations was produced by fifteen different journalists and included both commentaries from foreign news correspondents or freelancers and other items that were from the ordinary news coverage at home and abroad. Those correspondents who reported most on the demonstrations as a phenomenon were Ottar Odland in Paris, Anton Blom in Bonn, Torstein Sandø in Washington, Richard Herrmann in London, and Jahn-Otto Johansen in Eastern Europe. The location of the foreign correspondents reflected the priorities of the Norwegian foreign policy and the Norwegian foreign news system at this stage of the Cold War.³⁶ There were comparatively few who interpreted the significance of the protest in *Dagsrevyen*, and none of them came from the ranks of the young generation of journalists who flocked to NRK at the end of the 1960s. In addition, female journalists were more or less absent. The news items and comments on the demonstrations abroad in 1968 were thus dominated by men in their forties and fifties, that is, the established elite of Norwegian foreign news journalists at the time.

Summary and Preliminary Conclusions

If the proposition that television had an immediate effect in provoking demonstrations or protest activities in general is upheld, we may anticipate that Norwegian television did not sufficiently cover the main protest events of 1968, in

Europe and globally, given the limited amount of dissent in Norway in 1968, and not enough, in any case, to inspire immediate actions in the streets.

The worldwide protest of this year was presented first and foremost via the *foreign news* in the Norwegian news media. The findings in this chapter show that the global demonstrations, strikes, and riots became a part of the Norwegian news agenda. As a topic for international news in *Dagsrevyen*, the demonstrations in 1968 accounted for 10 percent of the total airtime. The coverage of the 1968 protests and revolts on the Norwegian TV news was almost completely concerned with demonstrations as dramatic events, with little or no interest shown in the causes of the unrest. The different actors and social movements that took part were invisible. The coverage of the demonstrations was also influenced by the strong focus on Europe, and some countries and regions were over-represented in the news items. The extent and the coverage closely matched the overview of foreign news coverage of individual countries in general. In 1968, *Dagsrevyen* had the strongest coverage of the demonstrations in the most industrialized and politically influential countries in the northwestern hemisphere, such as France, West Germany, the United States, and Britain. NRK had its own foreign correspondents located in these countries. The news coverage of demonstrations reflected the general Norwegian foreign news system and the priorities of Norwegian foreign policy at this stage of the Cold War. The news coverage from these countries was extensive, both in airtime and in volume. The absence of similar revolts in Norway can therefore not be explained by lack of news coverage. Demonstrations, strikes, and riots made it to the Norwegian news agenda. But as media scholar Bernhard Cohen has remarked, “the media may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is very successful in telling its readers/viewers what to think about.”³⁷ It is therefore reasonable to expect that the breadth and extent of the news coverage from these large First World countries contributed in forming Norwegian public opinion’s knowledge and understanding of what characterized the global 1968 revolts as a phenomenon. Or to put it another way, the news coverage from these nations could have helped to give the term *the 1968 revolts* its content in Norwegian public consciousness, in the same way that the French revolution in its time represented the notion of *revolution*. The statistics from *Le Monde* indicate that although the demonstrations in 1968 were global phenomena, it was the differences rather than the similarities that characterized the events covered in the news in the different countries.³⁸ It could also indicate that the demonstrations in the Third World were under-represented in the Norwegian television news.

The coverage of the Norwegian demonstrations achieved a reasonably high priority in the news coverage of the topic. There is of course a tendency in all news coverage to give the national news priority. The Norwegian demonstrations in 1968 were, however, very complex in character and content. They consisted of ordinary May Day demonstrations, anti-NATO demonstrations, protests

against the rent increases in student halls of residence, demonstrations against the military junta in Greece, and significantly, protests against the Soviet invasion in Czechoslovakia. In 1968, the protests in Norway against the Soviet invasion in Czechoslovakia were stronger and dominated the news far more than those against the American war in Vietnam—the Soviet invasion was strongly associated with the German invasion of Norway in 1940. The Norwegian media coverage reflected this association, as it did with Hungary in 1956. In contrast the broad news coverage in Norway of the French May, both in television and in the dailies, did not initiate any Norwegian demonstrations in support of the French students and workers.

Although the news coverage in the Norwegian television news was extensive in 1968, it did not lead to any street revolts, despite the clashes between police and demonstrators that rocked the rest of Europe. The hypothesis that the media played a major role in the spreading of the unrest and revolts is in some degree weakened in the Norwegian case, given the volume of coverage. It is still to be determined whether the character of the coverage was framed in a way that was negative to the global 1968 revolts, or whether there are other factors than the media coverage that determine the outbreaks of revolts. A supplementary thesis to the direct effects of television coverage is that television works less efficiently alone. Other more important factors, like distinct class differences, strong hierarchical control, and a restricted public sphere are necessary to ignite immediate actions. The lack of such conditions in Norway could also weaken the impact of the television coverage of the 1968 protest and revolts. Several studies have emphasized that the Scandinavian political system, of which Norway is a part, is characterized by the inclusive relationship between the state and social movements. More open channels to the political establishment and parties than in the continental Europe could partly explain the lack of extensive and violent protest activities in Norway in 1968.³⁹

There is a lot of work still to do in the field of media and protest research. This chapter documents how the global 1968 protests made it to the Norwegian television news agenda and how events in the First World dominated this agenda. Even though the source situation could limit the possibilities, future studies must concentrate upon quantitative studies to document the news agenda and then turn to comparative analysis of existing qualitative data. We still know very little about the general transnational diffusion of the protest phenomenon, its impact and the interrelation between the news media (both the press and the television) and the protest movements in different countries. We need to know more about the media itself, about editorial processes, and about media as both an independent and an interdependent actor, as well as how the news media affected the general public through the framing of news during times of change and protest. The relative impact of the coverage in the press and in the television news is still to be determined, as is the transfer of salience from the media agenda to the public agenda and the media effect upon public opinion.

Notes

1. For theory on political center-periphery structures in Norway and Europe, see Stein Rokkan and Henry Valen, *Regional Contrasts in Norwegian Politics* (Helsinki, 1964); Stein Rokkan, Svennik Høyer, and Universitetet i Oslo. Institutt for statsvitenskap, *Samfunnsvitenskapelige Undersøkelser Omkring Den Kommende Folkeavstemning Om Norges Inntreden i EEC* (Oslo: UiO Institutt for statsvitenskap, 1968) and Stein Rokkan and International Social Science Council, *Centre-Periphery Structures in Europe: An Issc Workbook in Comparative Analysis*, Beiträge Zur Empirischen Sozialforschung (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 1987).
2. The start of the Norwegian student revolt has usually been linked to the philosophy students' protest week at the University of Oslo in January 1969 and protests against the educational reforms presented by the so-called Ottosen committee. See Helge Vold, Per Fredrik Christiansen, og Filosofistudentenes arbeidsutvalg, *Kampen om universitetet: Boken fra filosofistudentenes aksjonsuke* (Oslo: Pax, 1969). On newer studies of the 1968 in Norway, see Tor Egil Førland, Trine Rogg Korsvik, and Knut-Andreas Christophersen, *Ekte Sekstiåttene* (Oslo: Gyldendal akademisk, 2008), Tor Egil Førland, "1968 in Norway: Piecemeal, Peaceful and Postmodern," *Scandinavian Journal of History* 33, no. 4 (2008), Tor Egil Førland and Trine Rogg Korsvik, *1968 Opprør og Motkultur på Norsk* (Oslo: Pax, 2006), Tor Egil Førland, "The Radicalization of the 1960's in Norway," in *1968 i Norden* (Södertörn, Sweden.2000), Tor Egil Førland, "Vietnamkrigen interesserer meg ikke; Jeg vil ha orgasme!," *Tidsskrift for Samfunnsforskning*, no. 2 (1998), Tor Egil Førland, "Ungdomsopprøret—Donger eller Wertewandel?," *Norsk Tidsskrift* 14, no. 1 (1997), Erik Stoveland, "Studentopprøret ut med badevatnet?," *Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift* 14, no. 1 (1997); James Godbolt, "Den norske Vietnambevegelsen 1967-1973" (Universitetet i Oslo, 2008), James Godbolt, Chris Holmsted Larsen, and Søren Hein Rasmussen, "The Vietnam War. The Danish and Norwegian Experience 1964-1975," *Scandinavian Journal of History* 33, no. 4 (2008), Rolf Werenskjöld, "The Dailies in Revolts: The Global 1968 Revolts in Major Norwegian Newspapers," *Scandinavian Journal of History* 33, no. 4 (2008b).
3. Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert, and Detlef Junker, *1968 the World Transformed* (Washington D.C.: German Historical Institute/Cambridge University Press, 1998). 9–13.
4. Stuart J. Hilwig, *Italy and 1968: Youthful Unrest and Democratic Culture*. (Oxford: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), Stuart J. Hilwig, "The Revolt against the Establishment: Students Versus the Press in West Germany and Italy," in *1968 the World Transformed*, ed. Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert, and Detlef Junker (Washington D.C.: German Historical Institute/ Cambridge University Press, 1998); Stuart J. Hilwig, "Democracy on the Barricades: The Power of Words and Images" (Ohio State University, 1994). See also Hans Dieter Müller, *Der Springer-Konzern: Eine Kritische Studie* (München: Piper, 1968); in English translation, see Hans Dieter Müller, *Press Power: A Study of Axel Springer* (London: Macdonald, 1969).
5. See Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making & Unmaking of the New Left* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003). The book was first published in 1980.
6. Kathrin Fahlenbrach, *Protest-Inszenierungen: Visuelle Kommunikation Und Kollektive Identitäten in Protestbewegungen*, 1. Aufl. ed. (Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag,

- 2002), Kathrin Fahlenbrach and Reinhold Viehoff, "Der Aufstieg Des Beat-Club, Sein Niedergang—Und Die Folgen. Protestästhetik Und Jugend Kult Im Fernsehen Der 60er Jahre," *SPIEL*. Siegener Periodicum für Empirische Literaturwissenschaft, no. H2 (1999).
7. See the "almighty media" perspective. The terms "almighty media," "powerless media," and "powerful media" were first used by Denis McQuail, *Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (London, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994).
 8. See Hilwig, *Italy and 1968: Youthful Unrest and Democratic Culture*, Hilwig, "The Revolt against the Establishment: Students Versus the Press in West Germany and Italy," Hilwig, "Democracy on the Barricades: The Power of Words and Images," Dace Dizbite Ose, "Pravda om 1968. En rammeanalyse av det globale 1968-opprøret" (Master in Media Studies, University of Oslo, 2009), Werenskjold, "The Dailies in Revolts: The Global 1968 Revolts in Major Norwegian Newspapers," Rolf Werenskjold, "Opprør På Dagsorden! Effektene av den norske nyhetsdekningen av de globale protestene i 1968," *Tekniikan Waiheita. Finnish Quarterly for the History of Technology*. 2 (2008).
 9. James D. Halloran, Philip Ross Courtney Elliott, and Graham Murdock, *Demonstrations and Communication: A Case Study*. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970).
 10. Todd Gitlin has documented how the American *New Left movement* experienced a considerable upswing in membership as the media coverage of demonstrations and protests increased in the American media in the mid 1960s. See Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making & Unmaking of the New Left*.
 11. For media theories about foreign news in Norway, see Einar Østgaard, "Utenriksnyheter," *Samtiden* 70, no. 9 (1961); Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge, *Presentasjonen av Utenriksnyheter: En Undersøkelse av Nyhetsmeldingene fra Cuba og Kongo juli 1960*, Report / Institutt for Samfunnsforskning, Avdeling for konflikt og fredsforskning; 14:1 (Oslo, 1962) and Øystein Sande, "The Perception of Foreign News," *Journal of Peace Research* 3–4 (1971).
 12. The classical study on news criteria, see Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge, "The Structure of Foreign News," *Journal of Peace Research* 2, no. 1 (1965). The study is not based on television news, but on an analysis of news coverage in selected Norwegian dailies. See more about news criteria and Galtung's analysis in Werenskjold, "The Dailies in Revolts: The Global 1968 Revolts in Major Norwegian Newspapers," 425–27.
 13. See the interview with Daniel Cohn-Bendit in Mark Kurlansky, *1968: The Year That Rocked the World*, large ed. (Waterville, ME: Thorndike Press, 2004), 224.
 14. See *Student in revolt*, BBC 13.06.1968. British Film Institute, London. Those who took part in the program were Lewis Cole (U.S.); Daniel Cohn-Bendit and Alain Geismar (France); Karl Dietrich Wolff and Dr. Ekkehart Krippendorff (West Germany); Jan Kavan (Czechoslovakia); Luca Meldolesi (Italy); Dragana Stavijel (Yugoslavia); Alberto Martin De Hijas (Spain); Leo Nauweds (Belgium); Yasuo Ishii (Japan); and Tariq Ali (Britain).
 15. Separate surveys have been carried out on how television covered demonstrations. See in particular the coverage of the huge anti-Vietnam War demonstration in London on 27 October 1968: James D. Halloran, Philip Ross Courtney Elliott, and Graham Murdock, *Demonstrations and Communication: A Case Study* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970).

16. In 1968, NRK had foreign correspondents in Washington, London, Paris, and Bonn. From autumn 1968, a post as correspondent in Moscow was also established.
17. These last were omitted in the following statistics.
18. Marit Bakke, "Nyheter er mer enn fakta," *Tidsskrift for Samfunnsforskning*. Bind 14, (1973), 256. See also Kaarle Nordenstreng and Tapio Varis, *Television Traffic—a One-Way Street? A Survey and Analysis of the International Flow of Television Programme Material*, Reports and Papers on Mass Communication, No. 70 (Paris: Unesco, 1974) and Tapio Varis and Renny Jokelin, *Television News in Europe: A Survey of the News-Film Flow in Europe*, Reports / Institute of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Tampere, 32/1976 (Tampere: University of Tampere, 1976).
19. For a discussion on the difficulties of the source material see Henrik Grue Bastiansen, *Fra referat til reportasje: Dagsrevyen 1960–1969*, Kults Skriftserie, Nr 52 (Oslo: Norges forskningsråd, 1996).
20. The head, Tormod Brekke, and staff of the central archive in Oslo very kindly placed the microfilm transmission logs at the author's disposal.
21. "*Max manus*" is the complete manuscript for the broadcasts, which also contains the introductions and the news items that were read between the film items. The transmission logs for *Dagsrevyen* are more or less complete, while there are a considerable number of *Kveldsnytt* transmissions for which no log is found in the existing archive series. There are very few gaps in the transmission logs for *Dagsrevyen*, so that the missing information will be of little consequence for the total statistical analysis. As a result, it is currently rather difficult to access the physical material, although some of the tapes containing collections of film material will shortly become available electronically as a result of a major digitalization project at NRK. The digitalization project involves material from both NRK radio and television, and is embedded in the Archives and Research Department under the leadership of Bjarne Grevsgaard.
22. The term "*media-historical archaeology*" was coined by Henrik Bastiansen to characterize the source material situation in NRK Television in the 1960s. See Henrik Grue Bastiansen, *Fra referat til reportasje: Dagsrevyen 1960–1969*, Kults Skriftserie, Nr 52 (Oslo: Norges forskningsråd, 1996); Hans Fredrik Dahl and Henrik Grue Bastiansen, *Over til Oslo: NRK som monopol 1945–1981*, NRKs Historie; 3 (Oslo: Cappelen, 1999).
23. These materials were placed at the author's disposal by former correspondents, including the original manuscripts of Ottar Odland, NRK's Paris correspondent in 1968.
24. January had 159 items, February 152 items, April 145 items, and December 160 items. Each of the months accounted for 7 percent of the total foreign news in 1968.
25. *Dagsrevyen* transmitted 214 (10 percent) international news items in May, 220 (10 percent) in July, and 201 (9 percent) in August. Also November had a high number, with a total of 191 (9 percent) foreign news stories.
26. Because one item may be registered in several categories, the sum total of items and percentages in each category in this table is not 100.
27. Arif Dirlik, "The Third World," in *1968 the World Transformed.*, ed. Carole Fink, P. Gassert, and Detlef Junker (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998). 295. None of these terms is unproblematic to use. A number of countries are

- difficult to place in one or the other “*world*.” This applies, for example, to countries like Yugoslavia, Cyprus and Israel.
28. The countries in the First World had the following number of items: United States—372, Canada—6, Australia—3, Japan—13, Israel—30, South Africa—14, Belgium—22, Denmark—57, Finland—16, France—233, Greece—24, Iceland—7, Italy—64, Cyprus—2, Netherlands—15, Norway—327, Portugal—2, Spain—7, Great Britain—142, Switzerland—17, Sweden—95, West Germany—118, and Austria—14.
 29. The news items from the Second World were distributed as follows: Soviet Union—41 items, Poland 12—items, Czechoslovakia—173 items, Hungary—3 items, Romania—6 items, Bulgaria—3 items, and East Germany—2 items. From Yugoslavia there were 21 international news items.
 30. The news items from these countries were distributed as follows: Biafra, Egypt, Mexico, and Nigeria—19 items each; India—11 items.
 31. The news items from these countries were distributed as follows: Jordan and Rhodesia—9 items each, North Korea and South Korea—7 items each, Lebanon—5 items; Algeria, Brazil, Ethiopia, Iran, and Mauritius—4 items each; China, Panama, and Peru—3 items each; and Argentina, Iraq, Cambodia, Congo, Malaysia, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia—2 items each.
 32. For general statistics for television in 1968, see NRK, *Årbok for NRK, 1968*. (Oslo: NRK, 1969).
 33. For the term *media event*, see Daniel Dayan and Elihu Katz, *Media Events: The Live Broadcasting of History* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992).
 34. Werenskjold, “The Dailies in Revolts: The Global 1968 Revolts in Major Norwegian Newspapers,” 425. The article disputes Galtung and Ruge’s classical hypothesis about geographical and cultural proximity as one of the most important news criteria. See Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge, “The Structure of Foreign News,” *Journal of Peace Research* 2, no. 1 (1965).
 35. Halloran, Elliott, and Murdock, *Demonstrations and Communication: A Case Study*. ITN did not broadcast live.
 36. Werenskjold, “The Dailies in Revolts: The Global 1968 Revolts in Major Norwegian Newspapers,” 426. For the structure of the location of foreign correspondents in NRK, see also Maria Nakken, *Å bringe verden hjem: En studie av NRKs utenrikskorrespondentnett 1964–2004*. (Oslo, 2007).
 37. Bernhard Cohen, *The Press, the Public, and Foreign Policy* (Princeton, 1963), 13. This general statement has, however, been contested by the Agenda Setting theory and by the Framing theory. See Maxwell E. McCombs, *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion*. (Cambridge: Polity, 2004) and Robert M. Entman, *Projections of Power: Framing News, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy*, Studies in Communication, Media, and Public Opinion (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).
 38. J. Jousselein, *Les Révoltes Des Jeunes* (Paris: Les Éditions Ouvrières, 1968), 13–15.
 39. Godbolt, “Den Norske Vietnambevegelsen 1967–1973,” 213.

Performing Disapproval toward the Soviets

Nicolae Ceaușescu's Speech on 21 August 1968
in the Romanian Media

Corina L. Petrescu

Within hours of the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia on 21 August 1968, Nicolae Ceaușescu, Secretary General of the Romanian Communist Party, openly condemned the action; Europe and the United States held their breath. The Eastern bloc fearfully awaited the Soviet Union's reaction, while in Western Europe and the U.S. alike, Ceaușescu's audacity was interpreted and cheered as the birth of a maverick.¹ In Romania, the gesture won popular support and enthused many who believed that the country would strengthen its line of liberalization and rapprochement with the West. People, who until then had kept their distance from the party, now joined it and embraced the conviction that righteous Socialism was not a chimera. Romanian society discovered Ceaușescu as its hero, a man who stood his ground vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and showed genuine commitment to national values. Thus, the Romanian protest of 1968 did not denote domestic disapproval vis-à-vis the country's existing establishment but its acceptance as a sign of condemnation of the Soviet Union's international interventionism. While similarly to their Western counterparts, protesters demanded freedom, justice, and self-determination—principles identified as the core of the global 1968 movement²—, they did so *within* the political paradigm of their government.³

Throughout the first twenty years of its existence in post-World War II Romania, the Communist Party—first called *Romanian Workers' Party* (RWP) and renamed *Romanian Communist Party* (RCP) in 1965—struggled for legitimacy. Consciously aware of the party's indebtedness to the Soviet Union for its rise to power, Ceaușescu—as his predecessor Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej had done—set out to counteract the perception that the party was but an extension of the Soviet Union. To this end, he confronted the only power entitled to call his claims into question and rescind them: the Soviet Union. He followed two courses: (1) he cloaked the RCP in a veiled anti-Sovietism that appealed to the Romanian populace, and (2) he promoted the crafting of an alternative history for the

party, which viewed the country's entire history through a Marxist-Leninist lens by establishing protochronism as its main line.⁴

However, Ceaușescu was never a Marxist—he remained a hardcore Stalinist until his removal from power in December 1989—and his policy choices followed political rather than ideological rationales.⁵ Yet he understood how to use Marxism to reach his goals both internally and internationally in order to establish an uncontested and uncontestable history for his party and legitimize his own leadership. In the late 1960s and early 1970s he camouflaged his true intentions under a liberalized scheme, which was so successful that, at a national level, disagreeing with him meant espousing the Soviet Union. While his gesture in the summer of 1968 opened the way for his becoming his country's hero, he misused it to the extent that twenty-one years later the site of his “finest hour”⁶ became the stage of his downfall.

This analysis focuses on the manner in which Ceaușescu's gesture in August 1968 was depicted in the Romanian media, specifically in *Scinteia tineretului* (*The Youth's Spark*)—the newspaper of the party's youth organization—and *România liberă* (*Free Romania*)—the least ideological daily of the time. The coverage in these dailies mirrored the Romanians' enthusiasm for Ceaușescu's act and underscored the fact that in 1968, the Romanian establishment skillfully moved to co-opt society for its own benefits. Relying on the powerful anti-Soviet sentiments of the Romanian public, the government openly defied Moscow in order to attain legitimacy and solidarity with its subjects. This chapter (1) offers a historical background of the Romanian context; (2) outlines the main points of Ceaușescu's declarations; and (3) presents and interprets the depictions of the events in the two aforementioned newspapers.

* * *

The history of the RCP goes back to the 1920s, when there were three different political bodies adhering to leftist ideals. While they shared one ideology (which was in itself insufficiently systematized), each of these bodies had its own leadership, membership, press organ, and platform. All of them were under surveillance both by the Romanian and the Soviet intelligence services, but none of them constituted a real threat to the Romanian political system as it existed then.⁷ Official party historiography during the Communist era claimed 8 May 1921, as the founding day of the party, yet in the summer of 1921, while the *Third Congress of the Communist International* took place in Moscow from 22 June till 12 July 1921, the fourteen delegates supposedly representing Romanian interests resided mostly in Moscow and Harkov. A party of the Romanian Communists did not exist as such and one report in particular—that of Karl Radek—addressed this issue and deplored the fact that Romanian Communists had not officially joined the Comintern at that moment.⁸

Regardless of their names, all pro-Socialist factions formulated one discourse, which in the years to come constituted the essence of the party's (hi)story

in need of reconsideration. Romania was seen as “a county” of the Balkans, depending on this region economically, politically, and socially. Romania’s revolutionary problem could thus not be solved outside the Balkan problem.⁹ Probably the most important problem facing Romania after World War I—the national question—was also addressed by the Communists in terms that did little to win them sympathy among the general Romanian public. The Comintern viewed Romania as a multinational imperialist aggressor who at the end of the first world conflagration had unjustly incorporated foreign territories—Bukovina, Bessarabia, Transylvania, and Southern Dobruja—into its borders. By adopting this view and circulating this discourse, Romanian Communists isolated themselves and proved their dependence upon Moscow’s decisions. At the beginning of the 1920s, the Great Unification represented for the majority of the population a national dream come true. It was also a source of enormous patriotism and satisfied national ego. Romania had entered World War I in order to achieve this unification and had paid dearly for it in the trenches. The Communists’ condemnation of this achievement and the statements of the *Sixth Conference of the Balkan Communist Federation* (Berlin, December 1923) that Romania was “a typical imperialist state formed of several nations and several provinces entitled to fight for their independence” alienated the population.¹⁰ Furthermore, such statements made it possible for the liberal government in office at the time to outlaw any Communist activities in Great Romania (*Mârzescu Law*, December 1924) as anti-state agitation.¹¹

The situation changed only on 23 August 1944, when King Mihai I had Marshal Ion Antonescu arrested. He had conspired to do so not only with the leaders of the historical parties (*National Liberal* and *National Peasants’ Party*), but also with members or sympathizers of the still illegal Communist party.¹² The *coup* against Antonescu re-established a democratic order which also meant a re-legalization of Communist activities. Supported by the Red Army advancing on Romanian soil, the Communists were projected on the historical stage far beyond their own potential and number of members.¹³ As in the 1920s, there was no unified party, but splinter groups fighting for domination under the tutelage of the Soviet “liberator.” There were those who had spent the war years in prison (like Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and his entourage), in hiding (like Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu), or in exile in Moscow (its uncontested effigy being Ana Pauker). This configuration allowed for the creation in later years of the legend that there had been decent Communists (the “autochthonous” ones) and ruthless ones (the “outlanders” like Ana Pauker, who like many other adherents or sympathizers during those times was Jewish,¹⁴ or Alexandru Moghioroș, who was of Hungarian descent), the latter being responsible for “selling Romania to the Soviets.”¹⁵

Essentially, they were all people who came to power as agents of a foreign hegemon, but some succeeded in revamping themselves into champions of autonomy from and challengers of that center. In this sense, Ken Jowitt talks about

the “pariah genealogy” of the Romanian Communists, which would haunt the party’s leadership until 1989.¹⁶ The severest consequence of this state of affairs was the “paranoid style” of the Romanian Communist experiment pertinently described by Vladimir Tismăneanu: “[It] was rooted in an underdog mentality, problematic national credentials, long subservience to Moscow as the mecca of proletarian internationalism, and deep distrust of anything smacking of democratization or liberalization.”¹⁷

From September 1944 until her demise in 1952, Ana Pauker was the poster face of Romanian communism. Famous since the pre-war years for her engagement with communism and enjoying both Joseph V. Stalin’s and Lavrentiy P. Beria’s respect, she was a walking legend.¹⁸ More important, she symbolized Romanian communism during the first ten years after the war: trained in Moscow under Stalin and executing Moscow’s orders. When Dej began his active pursuit of power, as opposed to being merely the façade behind which Ana Pauker pulled the strings, he used precisely these two elements against her. I agree with Andrei Cioroianu who sees Pauker as the first “luxury victim” of national communism “at a time when Stalin’s encouraging silence allowed the national elements of the Romanian Workers’ Party to conceive of taking control of the party—that is to say to dispossess of their power those agents, who had as their main advantage privileged ties to Moscow.”¹⁹ From then on and until her death, Pauker became not only Dej’s scapegoat blamed for any and every error of the party, but also the central figure of Dej’s discourse thematizing the (supposed) break with the party’s history (and methodology) prior to his patronage.

As much as Dej defined his regime against that of Pauker, after ascending to power, Ceaușescu repeated history and demonized Dej and his epoch. Following an old Stalinist tradition, he removed the old party guard, replaced it with his own people, and accused Dej of abuses that depicted him as an untrue Communist. He refused to acknowledge his predecessor’s successes and appropriated detachment from Moscow as his game and his alone. Yet, Romania had set itself apart from the other countries in the Eastern bloc even before Ceaușescu assumed the country’s leadership. It had begun in 1961–62 with the refusal to abide by the *Valev Plan*—the Soviet-developed supranational planning scheme that assigned each country a specific economic function within the bloc. This was followed by Romania’s neutral position at the onset of the Sino-Soviet conflict in 1962–63, and the release of the *Declaration of the Romanian Workers’ Party Concerning Problems of the International Communist and Working Class Movement* in April 1964, which was not only the country’s declaration of autonomy within the Socialist camp, but more so the final act of Romania’s failed de-Stalinisation process.²⁰ Despite the economic shortcomings and the political terror of the Dej-regime, the determination to loosen Moscow’s grip on the country and to go against it in international affairs, had not pass unnoticed among Romanians, especially as it was coupled with a rediscovery of national concerns.

Under Dej, Romanian society had embarked on an extensive de-Russification process whose objective was “the removal of all vestiges of Soviet [C]ommunist proselytizing of the early 1950s.”²¹ Russian as a foreign language had lost its standing in society and education: the Maxim Gorky Institute and the Russian publishing house had been closed down; the publication *Timpuri Noi* (*New Times*), emulating a title of the same name in Moscow, had been discontinued and then replaced with *Lumea* (*The World*), a magazine modeled on Western journals. Other foreign languages had found their place in school curricula; Slavic tendencies in orthography imposed by the reform of 1952 had been reversed through a re-Latinization of the Romanian language; Russian names of cultural institutions, streets, and places had been removed throughout the country; cultural figures blacklisted after the Communist takeover had been rehabilitated; and Romanian classics had been reprinted.²² All of this fostered an increased pride in national heritage and culture. Additionally, the Red Army's role in 1944 had been relegated to that of helper rather than liberator. Another important change had been the modification of the party statute to allow those who in earlier times had been labeled as bourgeois or kulaks (Ro.: *chiabur*; *-i*) to join the party. As the regime needed all the expertise it could get if it were to be successful in breaking with Moscow, emphasis was placed more on professional qualifications and less on ideological pedigree.

If Ceaușescu was to succeed in his endeavor to stage himself not as Dej's heir but as Romania's first legitimate leader, he had to destroy Dej's emblematic status as a challenger of the Soviet Union by out-achieving him. The course was set anew, and this time it required more than mere self-criticism and distance from the party's own past. What was needed was an alternative history for the party to make up for a “chronic deficit of legitimacy.”²³ Consequently, Ceaușescu deepened the nationalistic course. His renaming of the party in 1965 was not merely a cosmetic touch. One of the political formations of the Left in the 1920s had borne this name and Ceaușescu intended to reach as far back into the past as possible and to claim as much autochthonous spirit as possible for the party he was to lead. Changing the country's name from *People's Republic of Romania* to *Socialist Republic of Romania* signaled not only the new leadership's heightened self-confidence; it also heralded the progress on the road to communism achieved through a national effort. Ceaușescu also intensified Dej's autonomous line by not breaking ties with Israel even after the Six Day War (1967) and establishing diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic of Germany that same year. Moscow disapproved of both these acts, yet did not take any action against Bucharest. Tackling the question of why the Soviet leadership did not react repressively, one can posit three reasons:

(1) Ideologically, none of the Romanian leaders posed a threat to the Socialist model and this, combined with Romania's lack of geographical importance (see (2) below), served to reinforce Stalinism. In this sense, Viktor Suvorov's

remarks are telling. Suvorov was stationed on the Soviet-Romanian border in the summer of 1968 and later defected to the West, where he published works on the Soviet Army. His book, *Inside the Soviet Army*, opens with a chapter entitled “Why did the Soviet Tanks Not Threaten Romania?” and Suvorov provides the following answer:

To the Soviet Union Romania is an opponent. An enemy. An obstinate and unruly neighbour. To all intents and purposes an ally of China and of Israel. Yet not a single Soviet subject dreams of escaping to Romania or aspires to exchange Soviet life for the Romanian version. Therefore Romania is not a dangerous enemy. Her existence does not threaten the foundations of Soviet Communism, and this is why drastic measures have never been taken against her.²⁴

(2) Romania did not enjoy geo-strategic importance that could have constituted a threat to the Eastern bloc. Hence, its actions were perceived as limited in scope and not directly confrontational to the Soviet Union.

(3) As the Vietnam War escalated, Bucharest prudently supported the Soviet Union in condemning the United States for its involvement in it. Even with respect to China, during the gravest conflicts, the country’s leadership continued to follow Moscow’s line, while seeking to act as peacemaker and mediator.

* * *

Between 15 August and 17 August 1968, Ceaușescu led a delegation of party and state officials visiting Czechoslovakia. Ceaușescu sympathized with Alexander Dubček because of his—although covert—anti-Soviet attitude, not because of the latter’s reformist ideas. The main reformist writings of the *Prague Spring* were never published in the Romanian media, although Czechoslovakia was a major topic of interest for Romanian newspapers from every other perspective. Historian Tom Gallagher endorses journalist Dumitru Dumitru’s 1998 claim that it was not only the press that did not have access to these writings; they were not even reproduced in the confidential bulletins prepared exclusively for party officials.²⁵ While Ceaușescu continued his anti-Sovietism bravado but did little to truly reform Romania’s system, Dubček kept a low anti-Soviet profile but contested Moscow ideologically.

On 16 August 1968, Romania and Czechoslovakia signed a twenty-year *Treaty of Friendship, Collaboration, and Mutual Assistance*. In his speech following the signing ceremony, Ceaușescu expressed his sympathy with and confidence in the course initiated by the Czechoslovak leadership.²⁶ During the subsequent press conference, he admitted that while some actions occurring in Czechoslovakia might have an anti-Socialist character, he viewed them as marginal and unrepresentative for the country’s general politics. He also emphasized that the Warsaw Pact was created to defend Socialist countries from a possible attack by

an imperialist adversary and not to fight one another.²⁷ Thus, although informal, during this visit Ceaușescu pledged his alliance with the Czechoslovak republic and indirectly defended his own anti-Soviet position.

At around 2:00 A.M. on 21 August 1968, the Romanian journalist Eugen Ionescu²⁸ reported the invasion from Prague. Ceaușescu, who was at his residence in Bucharest, was immediately informed and called an extraordinary meeting of the party's Permanent Presidium for 4:30 A.M. at the Headquarters of the Central Committee. Because no one doubted the fact that an affront to the Warsaw Pact needed popular support, it was decided that the country's leadership should address the population. At 6:30 A.M. the party's Executive Committee began its meeting to address the Czechoslovak situation.

The radio worked zealously to spread the news about the upcoming address and thousands of people flocked to the square of the former Royal Palace (at that time, Palace of the Republic) awaiting firsthand information. At around 9:00 A.M. Ceaușescu appeared briefly to thank the crowd for its support. Finally, at 1:10 P.M., Ceaușescu stepped on the balcony of the Headquarters of the Central Committee and delivered the most successful speech of his life. Behind him, aligned in full solidarity, was the entire party and state leadership.²⁹

Ceaușescu expressed his confidence in the Romanians' decision to peacefully build Socialism in the homeland and went on to call the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, "a grave error and great danger for peace in Europe [and] worldwide Socialism." He deemed the invasion to be inconceivable in a world where people were fighting for national independence and equal rights; he neither found justification nor any reason for the invasion. Instead, he firmly proclaimed a Socialist country's internal affairs to be the concern of that country's own leadership and not that of other states, even if they were also Socialist. Ceaușescu underlined the fact that during the Romanian delegation's visit to Czechoslovakia, the country had displayed no troubling signs and the population had appeared fully supportive of its leadership. He emphasized his conviction that individual countries through their people, party, and state leadership could decide on the path to follow in building Socialism, and that no other state could appropriate the role of "advisor" in reaching this goal. He judged such attempts as incongruous with true Marxist-Leninist principles and demanded their discontinuation "once and for all." In the event of Romania being taken by surprise by an invasion of its own territories, Ceaușescu proclaimed the constitution of armed patriotic guards composed of workers, peasants, and intellectuals to defend the country's independence. He reiterated the undisputable unity of all inhabitants regardless of nationality and emphasized that the leadership's highest responsibility was toward this unified people and toward the working class. He also concluded with a strong warning: Czechoslovakia had been accused of counter-revolutionary tendencies; should the same allegations be made against Romania, the Romanian people would not allow for their homeland to be "overrun."

On behalf of the Communists and anti-Fascists who had suffered in prisons and had faced death without rescinding in earlier decades, Ceaușescu pledged never to betray Romania and its people. He called the invasion a “shameful moment in the history of the revolutionary movement” and expressed his certainty that no Communist anywhere in the world approved of the military action. He expected that true Communists would raise their voices to endorse liberty for the Czechoslovak people and all other people, who true to Marxist-Leninist principles, had the right to build the Socialist society they desired. Furthermore, he gave assurances that the Romanian leadership was determined to act decisively and responsibly to find ways to resolve the crisis created by the invasion and to allow the Czechoslovak people to return to their peaceful activities. He stressed his government’s willingness to collaborate with any Communist and workers’ parties to eliminate divergences and strengthen unity among Socialist countries and Communist parties as the only means to serve the interest of the people and of worldwide Socialism. Finally, he asked Romanians to have full confidence in their leadership, to show unwavering unity, and to act with calm and determination. He called on each and every citizen to work tenfold to achieve the country’s economic development and to be ready to defend Romania at every moment. He concluded by thanking his audience in the square and asking it to return to work.

* * *

Both *Scînteia tineretului* and *România liberă* reported on the meeting in the square at great length and printed Ceaușescu’s incendiary speech in full. The Thursday 22 August 1968 edition of *Scînteia tineretului* printed, to the right of the header, the announcement of the extraordinary decree by which the General Assembly was called to convene as a result of the latest events. Below the header there was a communiqué by the party’s Central Committee, the State Council, and the government repeating in a less detailed manner, the ideas present in Ceaușescu’s speech. Underneath, in bold print, ran the headline “The Entire Romanian People Expresses Brotherly Solidarity with the Czechoslovak People” followed by the subtitle: “Yesterday’s Impressive Meeting in the Palace Square.” Below and to the right was Ceaușescu’s speech (which continued on the third page) and, to the left, in a small caption box, a description of the meeting and of Ceaușescu’s early-morning address asking the masses to stay calm and allow party and state officials to decide a course of action. This article continued on the second page. A medium-sized picture angled from behind the balcony toward the square provided the view of the speaker (Ceaușescu), his entourage, and his audience.

The striking element of the depiction of events was that while this was the youth organization’s newspaper, there was no reference and no direct address or appeal to the country’s youth. It was only on 23 August 1968, that a joint statement by the youth and students’ organizations was released and printed under

the title *Declaration of the Central Committee of the Union of the Communist Youth and the Council of the Union of Students' Associations*. It expressed profound indignation at the invasion and solidarity with the Czechoslovak people, youth, and student body. It qualified the act as unprecedented among Socialist countries and a breach of the elementary norms of international law. The article expressed the youth's adherence to the decisions of the party and its measures welcoming the re-installation of the patriotic guards seen in a tradition of (unnamed) liberation struggles. Furthermore, it put the youth at the disposal of the party.³⁰

România liberă also printed the announcement of the extraordinary decree by which the General Assembly was called to convene to the right of the header. The main headline read: "Our Entire People Expresses Its Full Solidarity with the Czechoslovak Brethren." It appeared in capitalized and underlined print, occupying the center front part of the page. Right underneath it on the left side of the page was the common communiqué of the Central Committee, the State Council, and the government. Ceaușescu's speech ran on the righthand column and continued on the third page. A large picture of the Palace Square at the time of Ceaușescu's address occupied the bottom of the page. It was taken from the side, opposing the balcony with Ceaușescu and the rest of the leadership (to the right) with the masses gathered in the square (to the left). Under the title: "Impressive Gathering of the Working People in Bucharest," another article was printed on the first page and continued on the third.

The coverage in the two newspapers barely differed. The dailies reprinted statements, but did not give their own account of the events and their significance. The lack of interpretation, critical discussions or both make apparent the lack of media freedom, and thus how Ceaușescu's "liberalization" differed from that of Dubček.³¹ However, more than merely a sign of a censored press, the "dry" style also hints at the fact that the Communists themselves did not know exactly what was happening and what was to come. They did not want to provoke the Soviet Union to the point of it taking action against Romania, so they tested the limit of Moscow's patience with their boldness and rebelliousness. The "balcony scene" was to prove to the outside world, but specifically to the Soviet Union, that the Romanian populace was in solidarity with its leadership. Yet the Communists were also wary of encouraging too much national sentiment among the people, in case they were unable to control them. Ceaușescu's success in maneuvering between East and West relied precisely on his refined sense of when to stop short of intolerable provocation. Hence, the Romanian media within the country displayed a conformist attitude and a rather prudent and neutral tone, and it was only Romanian journalists abroad that acted as spokespeople for a free press, supplying the international media with details favorable to Romania's new image. The meeting in the square was simultaneously an exhibition of national solidarity for the international world and an inquiry into people's loyalty toward the party twenty years after its questionable ascent to power. The last thing the party wanted was to incite more nationalism than it

could handle or help radicalize segments of the population it could not control. Consequently, Ceaușescu's main arguments ran along the line of legitimacy. He condemned the invasion, because he saw it as unlawful even from the point of view of the Warsaw Pact.

His key words were *independence* and *sovereignty* and he seemed to be appalled by the idea of one Socialist state invading another under the pretext of it not following the other's directives. While the names of the invading countries were not given and no direct reference was made to the Soviet Union, the target, both in a general (Warsaw Pact) and a restricted (USSR) sense, was clear. Phrases such as "... in accordance with true Marxist-Leninist principles the interference into other countries [and] other parties must stop once and for all," referred back to a not too distant past when Moscow had delegated the leadership of the countries under its tutelage following World War II. His most daring and provocative statement was that no Communist anywhere would endorse the actions of the invaders as it implied that the actual reactionaries (the accusation brought against Dubček and his entourage) were to be found elsewhere, notably in the Soviet Union as the invasion's initiator. His continuous appeal to patriotic sentiments and references to the homeland (*patrie*)—*versus* country (*țară*)—supplied his intervention with an emotional emphasis audible from the onset of the speech: "Dear comrades, *citizens of the Romanian country*."³² The latter part was a new turn of phrase. For the first time, through the voice of their primary leader, the Communists addressed the entire Romanian people and not just the social strata they claimed to represent, that is, the working class and the peasantry. The speech marked a shift in rhetoric and a transition in principles as national solidarity gradually replaced class struggle as the party's tenet. It was also tailored to the prevailing anti-Soviet sentiments among Romanians, and thus allowed Ceaușescu to stand before his own people as a righteous fighter for national freedom. He emphasized fraternal sentiments toward the Czechoslovak people and gave assurances of Romania's loyalty vis-à-vis its allies with similar convictions. He insisted on the right of every Socialist nation to self-determination of its Socialist policies. Yet by 25 August, only ninety-six hours after his speech, the official discourse returned to underlining the friendly relations between Romania and the Soviet Union, in spite of differences with respect to "a number of problems including the Czechoslovak one."³³

* * *

Today, with hindsight, one can confidently claim that in August 1968, Ceaușescu played his best card both domestically and internationally. His condemnation of the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia opened the way for his becoming Romania's champion. Yet, he misused this trust to such an extent that twenty-one years later, the same balcony that had sanctioned him became the stage of his fatal downfall. Without any doubt that the deeply rooted anti-Soviet sentiments would win support for his cause among Romanians and that

the potential threat of a Soviet invasion would keep society from questioning his actions,³⁴ he resorted to fear-mongering as the means of permanent state control. However, Ceaușescu was the flag bearer of a particular political system and as such his deceitful and corrupted approach to power reflected the corrosive nature of the ideology he embodied.

Notes

1. See, for example, John Lee, "Rumania Warns Soviets," in: *The New York Times*, 22 August 1968: 1 and 18; "La Roumanie condamne vigoureusement l'intervention de ses 'alliés,'" in: *Le Figaro*, 22 August 1968: [pg. unknown]; "Pas d'intervention dans les affaires intérieures des autres' déclare Ceausescu," in: *L'Humanité*, 22 August 1968: [pg. unknown]; "Romania fordømmer og SKJERPER beredskaben" ("Romania condemns and intensifies preparedness"), in: *Arbeiderbladet*, 22 August 1968: 12f; "Rumänien: Aggression der Sowjetunion," in: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 22 August 1968: [pg. unknown]; "Rumania forms an armed militia," in: *The Times*, 22 August 1968: 5.
2. Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert, and Detlef Junker, "Introduction" in *1968—A World Transformed*, ed., Fink, Gassert, Junke (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute and Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1–27.
3. In its adherence to Socialist principles, the Romanian protest shares some similarities with the Yugoslav one. See Boris Kanzleiter's contribution to this volume.
4. Dennis Deletant, *Romania under Communist Rule* (Bucharest: Civic Academy Foundation, 1998), 141–164; Dennis Deletant, *Communist Terror in Romania: Gheorghiu-Dej and the Police State, 1948–1965* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999); Mihai Retegan, *1968 din primăvară pînă în toamnă* (București: RAO, 1998), 17–54; Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons. A Political History of Romanian Communism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 136–187; Adrian Cioroianu, *Pe umerii lui Marx. O introducere în istoria comunismului românesc* (București: Curtea Veche, 2005), 392–416.
5. For a detailed analysis of this differentiation see Cioroianu 392–416.
6. J.F. Brown, *Surge to Freedom: The End of Communist Rule in Eastern Europe* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 1991) 199.
7. An analysis of the supposedly founding meeting of the Communist Party on 8 May 1921, can be found in Cioroianu 20–31. Consult also Stelian Tănase, *Clienții lui tanti Varvara. Istorii clandestine* (București: Humanitas, 2005).
8. M.C. Stănescu, *Mișcarea muncitorească din România în anii 1921–1924* (București: Ed., Politică, 1971) 59–60.
9. Ibid. 155–56.
10. Statement quoted in Cioroianu 35.
11. Cioroianu 36.
12. Mircea Ciobanu, *Convorbiri cu Mihai I al României* (București: Humanitas, 1997) 18–36.
13. Vladimir Tismăneanu estimates that there were eighty Communists at large in Bucharest and less than 1,000 throughout the country at the time of the *coup* in August 1944. Tismăneanu, *Stalinism* 87.

14. For a detailed analysis of the ethnic configuration of Communist groups since the 1920s and of the party after 1944 see Liviu Rotman, *Evreii din România în perioada comunistă 1944–1965* (București: Polirom, 2004).
15. See the *Commu*-nostalgic discourse in Romania since 1990.
16. Ken Jowitt, *New World Order: The Leninist Extinction* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1992) 121–219.
17. Tismăneanu, *Stalinism* 25.
18. See Robert Levy, *Ana Pauker: The Rise and Fall of a Jewish Communist* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).
19. Cioroianu 184.
20. See also Vladimir Tismăneanu, “Gheorghiu-Dej and the Romanian Workers’ Party: From De-Sovietization to the Emergence of National Communism,” *Cold War International Project Working Papers* No. 37 (Washington, DC, May 2002), 1–53, here 46.
21. William Feeny Foster, *A Comparison of Soviet Reaction to Change in Rumania and Czechoslovakia in the 1960’s* (Ph.D. Thesis, American University, Washington, DC, 1974), 158.
22. Foster 158–60 and Bogdan Barbu, *Vin americanii! Prezența simbolică a Statelor Unite în România Războiului Rece* (București: Humanitas, 2006), 152–66.
23. Tismăneanu, *Stalinism* 142.
24. Viktor Suvorov, *Inside the Soviet Army* (New York: Berkley Books, 1984) 3–13, here 11.
25. Dumitru Dumitru, “August 1968—marea păcăleală,” *Adevărul*, 21 August 1998, in: Tom Gallagher, *Theft of a Nation: Romania Since Communism* (London: Hurts and Company, 2005) 58.
26. Nicolae Ceaușescu “Cuvîntarea la solemnitatea semnării Tratatului de prietenie, colaborare și asistență mutuală, 16 august 1968,” *România pe drumul desăvîrșirii construcției socialiste*, vol. 3, (București: Editura Politică, 1970) 391–95, here 394–95.
27. *Ibid.*, “Conferința de presă organizată la Praga” 397–99.
28. The journalist Eugen Ionescu has nothing in common with the Romanian-born French playwright Eugen Ionescu/ Eugène Ionesco. The identical names are a mere coincidence.
29. The description relies on Retegan 189–227.
30. “Declarația Comitetului Central al Uniunii Tineretului Comunist și Consiliului Uniunii Asociațiilor Studenților din România,” *Scînteia tineretului*, 23 August 1968: 1, 7.
31. Contrast for example Dubček’s *Action Program* with practices in the Romanian media.
32. My emphasis (CLP).
33. Ceaușescu cited in Retegan 224.
34. There are other elements that prevented the rise of a civil society undermining Ceaușescu’s regime, but they do not constitute the focus of this chapter. See Irina Culic, “The Strategies of Intellectuals: Romania under Communist Rule in Comparative Perspective,” in: *Intellectuals and Politics in Central Europe*, ed., Andras Bozoki (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1999), 43–71; and Andrei Pleșu, “Sünden und Unschuld der Intellektuellen,” *Freiburger Universitätsblätter* 154 (2001): 167–74.

Part IV

**Discourses of Liberation
and Violence**

Guerrillas and Grassroots

Danish Solidarity with the Third World in the 1960s and 1970s

Karen Steller Bjerregaard

In the late summer of 1968, six young people met in central Copenhagen to organize the establishment of a Danish-Cuban Association. They were artists, students, and writers, some politically involved in the left wing, and others just returned from Cuba, where they had been traveling together. The explicit purpose of the association was to “work for the spread of knowledge of, and Danish solidarity with, the Cuban Revolution.”¹

Invitations for a statutory general meeting were sent out, and in October 1968, seventy people arrived at Rømersgade no. 22 in Copenhagen, a historical location being the oldest meeting house of the labor movement, built in 1879. After the gathering, the Danish-Cuban Association could be added to the list of contemporary solidarity associations and committees, such as the Danish Anti-Apartheid Committee, the Vietnam Committees, and the campaigns against Franco’s Spain.

The overall aim of this chapter is to explore the ways in which solidarity with the Third World became an important part of the left-wing protest cultures in Denmark in the 1960s and 1970s. The analytical perspective is an inside perspective, initially more concerned with the question of *how*, rather than a more structural *why*. By trying to understand and analyze the practices and the motivations of the actors—in this particular case, the people who were involved in the solidarity efforts for Cuba—the concrete aim is to shed light on and contextualize the signification of the Third World and the solidarity practices within specific left-wing protest cultures and how these developed throughout the 1960s and 1970s in Denmark.

The Third World and the Left-Wing Protest Cultures in Denmark

Scholars have often pointed out that the Third World, and especially Vietnam, was crucial to the forming of both new ways of doing politics and new critical

views on western societies within a New Left during what has been named “the long sixties.”² In his acclaimed book, *Political Pilgrims—Travels of Western Intellectuals to the Soviet Union, China and Cuba*, Paul Hollander characterizes the left’s fascination and solidarity with Cuba as “the rejection of western society.”³

According to Hollander, the criticism of the Western capitalist societies “gave rise to a new set of favorable predispositions toward countries which became the new, if again transient, symbols of social justice and political rectitude.”⁴

Addressing that which Hollander interprets as a rejection of the values of a Western democratic political culture, Eric Hobsbawm has a different, but no less positioned view, arguing that:

The Third World now became the central pillar of hope and faith for those who still put their faith in social revolution. ... The entire left, including humanitarian liberals and moderate social democrats, needed something more than social security legislation and rising real wages. The Third World could preserve its ideals. ...⁵

Thus the relation between the liberation wars and decolonization processes of the Third World on the one hand, and the left-wing protest cultures on the other, have been widely recognized, but have been interpreted very differently. Despite different conclusions, the authors point at the same important element: that fascination and solidarity with the Third World was not just shaped by events in the geographical distance, but also by the political and cultural development in Western societies, and not least, how this was interpreted by the actors. The relations between “out there” and “at home” were interpreted quite differently in the various solidarity groups, some emphasizing the one (“out there”) more than the other (“at home”) as the main object for action. While some groups found that the best way of showing solidarity was by “... changing our society with the means relevant here,”⁶ others saw the Third World as the place to carry out revolution. Only by supporting armed struggle there it would be possible to create more fundamental changes in their own society. The so-called Blekingegadebande (the Blekinge Street Gang), who financed their support to the PFLP by very violent bank and post office robberies, one of which resulted in the killing of a policeman in Copenhagen, was the most radical example of this philosophy.⁷ As the two citations above also indicate, solidarity with the Third World was not necessarily solely a question of protest against (or rejection of) something, it could also contain a wish for a new society on all levels, it could contain a utopian perspective.

In the Danish context, discussions on solidarity with the Third World as part of the left-wing protest cultures have not been given much attention from historians or other scholars. The only published study with an explicit focus on solidarity with the Third World, the Danish Vietnam Movement, is more concerned with political and organizational matters, and less with a broader

cultural contextualization of the solidarity efforts.⁸ The very few scientific publications on the Danish New Left generally offer rather vague analytical perspectives concerning the relationship between solidarity with the Third World, and the left-wing protest cultures. In one of the recent scholarly publications *1968—dengang og nu (1968—then and now)* the New Left is thus described as bearers of “a strong indignation against a number of international and national political circumstances like the nuclear arms race, decolonization, the Vietnam War, and rigid, authoritarian and materialistic structures of the society.”⁹ Here, dramatic events in the Third World are mentioned alongside other factors as an integral part of the dynamics of the New Left in the 1960s and 1970s, but it is striking that none of the articles addresses solidarity, or for that matter, the Third World.

Although these examples by no means provide a comprehensive historiographical overview,¹⁰ they illustrate that an investigation of solidarity with the Third World as a part of the left-wing protest cultures inevitably must confront what the phenomenon “left-wing protest cultures,” as well as “solidarity with the Third World” are made up of. What kind of phenomenon are we talking about and who were the actors? As for the first point, the existing literature is not always clear on these matters, and it could cover youth rebellion, student revolt, the New Left, the hippies, the radicalized Marxists, and the drop-outs. The most common distinction to be found throughout the literature is however that between what we, using Arthur Koestler’s words, could call the “yogi” and the “commissar.”¹¹ As ideal types the “yogi” and the “commissar” represent two positions where the first wanted to change the world through spiritual and individual efforts, and the latter wanted to organize a political party as the means of revolution. This type of distinction was to some extent also used by the actors themselves. Furthermore, the distinction between the “yogi” and the “commissar” contains an implicit periodization, indicating that the new cultural practices of the 1960s and visions by the end of the 1960s and certainly throughout the 1970s, were subject to disillusion and were abandoned in favor of more theoretical and dogmatic Marxism, leaving very little space for anti-authoritarian thinking and practice. According to this periodization, which is widely recognized throughout the literature, the “yogi” disappeared and the “commissar” took over.¹² As we shall see, the example of the Danish-Cuban Association confronts the clear-cut distinction between the ideal types as well as the periodization mentioned.

Internationalism and solidarity were not new issues on the left in the 1960s and 1970s; they were important elements in the left-wing tradition and heritage. It has been suggested that one should distinguish between the concept of internationalism within the communist international community with its long traditions and institutions on the one hand, and the Third World internationalism of the New Left during the 1960s and 1970s on the other. As for the latter, Thomas Ekman Jørgensen has described it as mainly consisting of “one sided

proclamations of solidarity” from a movement that functioned “almost entirely on a symbolic level.”¹³ The distinction is interesting in the sense that the actors themselves were very engrossed in discussions about what kind of actions would best serve the purpose of solidarity, “best” often meaning something that made a difference “out there.” There is no doubt that some of the actors overestimated the significance of their own actions and capacities. But as the aim here not is to evaluate the impact in the Third World, but to understand the cultural meaning of Third World internationalism within the left-wing protest cultures, a distinction between a “real” and a “symbolic” solidarity level does not provide us with many answers. Some of the solidarity efforts were in fact symbolic, but one has to remember that symbolic practices do indeed respond to a social reality as people react upon them. Here, the question is neither whether it “worked” or was noticed in the Third World. Instead, the question is, how the activists practiced solidarity with the Third World, and how that was related to their understanding of the Third World as well as their own endeavors as subversive.

The literature on Third World solidarity has mostly understood the subject as part of the political side of the left-wing protest cultures, closely linked to the New Left and the Marxist part of the student revolt—an interpretation that was also shared by many of the actors throughout the period. But the fact that solidarity has been understood as a political phenomenon does not mean that we cannot also investigate it as a cultural phenomenon, using concepts from the field of cultural studies. In this case I am particularly inspired by the concept of signifying practices as it is formulated by Stuart Hall.¹⁴ Hall points out that practice should not be understood as something that is purely an effect of something else (i.e., ideology), but as something that produces meaning. In this sense of the word, practice is the way that people act and express themselves, and in doing so produce meaning. Where Hall emphasizes language as a central practice, I include actions as well as language. Thus solidarity can be studied not only by looking at ideology, organization, and ends and means, but also as a phenomenon in the making. Solidarity with the Third World gained its cultural meanings both from political formulations and by the ways it was (repeatedly) done, by practice. An investigation of solidarity with the Third World can thus provide us with new insight on the left-wing protest cultures as such, and maybe qualify the periodization and understanding of the phenomenon we claim to study.

Cold War and Shifting Paradigms

Looking at Third World solidarity at the end of the 1960s, Cuba is rather an odd case. The Cuban Revolution—the military part of it at least—was over in 1959. After that, one could argue, that Cuba was a part of the world of “real socialism,” and no longer a poor and misgoverned country fighting for its independence. Within the emerging left-wing protest cultures of the early 1960s in Denmark,

Cuba was not the most important case on the agenda. In spite of Frantz Fanon's famous book *The Wretched of the Earth* (that was not translated into Danish until 1966¹⁵), the Third World as a concept had not yet entered the vocabulary of the Danish left-wing protest cultures. Consequently, it was rather concepts such as decolonization and liberation wars that were used to describe the efforts, mostly pointing in the direction of the European colonial past, for example, the brutal war in Algeria (1954–1962). But South Africa also gained considerable attention after the Sharpeville massacre in 1960. The Danish peace movement and its representative, the Campaign against Nuclear Arms (KmA), dominated the scene, and it was through this movement that several of the solidarity groups arose—some of them searching for a position in international politics less neutral than the one that KmA advocated.¹⁶

The overthrow of the Batista regime in Cuba had taken place in 1959, but it was not until the invasion of the Bay of Pigs in 1961 that Cuba emerged as an issue within Danish left-wing protest cultures. During the Cuba missile crisis in 1962, it became clear that a neutral position was difficult to maintain. On United Nations Day in October 1962, the KmA organized a demonstration against the danger of global nuclear destruction that the Cuba crisis had provoked. It took place at the City Square in Copenhagen with banners proclaiming “For the UN, against nuclear arms.” However, a group of young people from the DKU (Danish Communist Youth Organization) with the newly founded Cuba Committee, which apart from the KmA also consisted of members of the SUF (Socialist Youth Forum), the AMK (Never Again War), *Radikal Ungdom* (youth organization of the liberal/intellectual party *Det radikale Venstre*), and young people from a number of associations of apprentices abandoned the demonstration and continued with approximately 2,000 people to the U.S. Embassy with “Cuba Sí—Yankee No”¹⁷ banners. The leaders of KmA were furious about this break-off from the main demonstration. From its very beginning in 1960, KmA had continuously been accused of being a communist cover organization. This was never the case, but it was extremely negative publicity for an organization explicitly working for nuclear disarmament on both sides of the Iron Curtain.¹⁸ It is therefore interesting that the leader of the SUF phrased the purpose of their actions in his speech at the “Cuba Sí—Yankee No” demonstration as follows:

We are not demonstrating for Fidel Castro's rule in Cuba—we are demonstrating for Cuba's right to be left in peace and for our own right to live in peace. We are demonstrating against the superpowers—against the USA—who under the cover of shiny promises of freedom, democracy and peace, is ready to destroy the world to serve their own political interests of power.¹⁹

In spite of explicit accusations of the United States as the aggressor, the formulation was remarkably neutral, considering the tense Cold War situation. One of

the reasons for this is that *Socialistisk Folkeparti* (SF—Danish Socialist Peoples Party), founded in 1959, together with the youth organization SUF, made some of the first attempts to formulate a socialist position left of the social democrats that was not linked to the Soviet Union. They pursued a so-called third way, and one way of doing this was through solidarity with the non aligned new decolonized states “refusing to adapt to the blocks of the two giants”²⁰

Furthermore, young people in the early 1960s grew up in the aftermath of World War II. Within a Danish context, it is therefore not surprising that the demonstrators wanted to portray the image of a small country squeezed between superpowers and fighting for “its right to be left in peace.” This image appealed to many Danes, both for historical reasons and in the context of the nuclear arms race, where Denmark, despite being an ally of the U.S., felt caught in the middle between the two superpowers.

However, it should not be overlooked that the demonstration in October 1962 specifically targeted the U.S. embassy. The rather neutral speech was undoubtedly sincere coming from the chairman of SUF, but as for the Danish Communist Youth organization DKU, the demonstration should be interpreted rather as a front action, covering the real communist agenda. On the front page of the October edition of the monthly journal of the Danish Communist Youth, *Fremad* (*Forward*), one could read interviews with participants from the “Cuba, sí—Yankee, no” demonstration, explaining why they had joined. One of them said: “The whole world was on the edge of war because of Cuba. Why couldn’t the Campaign (against Nuclear Disarmament) hold a demonstration in front of the American Embassy? Because the Campaign is not able to take a stand in anything. It usually only demonstrates against the impact of the political game, the nuclear bomb—but never against the cause of it.”²¹

Within an explicit communist context, this was not of course a surprising statement. Cuba was seen as the small, threatened country, and it was the U.S. alone that was held responsible for jeopardizing world peace. On one hand, Cuba was seen in the context of the nuclear threat of the Cold War. On the other, this perspective was changing. The word imperialism was used several times in *Fremad* to describe the American actions toward Cuba, and the first communist leader in Cuba, Blas Roca, actually visited Denmark in 1962 to participate in a “solidarity meeting,” where he was invited to speak about “socialism in Cuba and the American aggressions.”²² In the small Trotskyite periodical *Algier Frit* (*Free Algeria*), translations of the American sociologist C. Wright Mills essay “Listen Yankee!” appeared which pointed out the moral obligation to understand the Cuban Revolution as fight for economic, social, and cultural independence.²³

All of this illustrates that the image of Cuba was interpreted differently in different environments, variously emphasizing a David-Goliath symbolism, the Cold War, the nuclear arms race, revolution, or imperialism. But it also indicates that another comprehension (and with it a new vocabulary) of the world order was entering the scene, giving new meanings to the image of Cuba. Whereas

activists in the early 1960s saw Cuba primarily in the context of the Cold War and the nuclear arms race, this context had changed radically by the end of the 1960s. What had earlier been understood as decolonization processes concerning nation states were now widened, including these processes in an understanding of the Third World as a subject with a common cause. Cuba was now a question of anti-imperialistic solidarity.

1968—Che Guevara, Anti-Imperialism, and Beat Music

To “work for the spread of knowledge of, and Danish solidarity with, the Cuban revolution” was the purpose of the Danish-Cuban Association on its founding in October 1968, exactly one year after the death of Che Guevara, which was commemorated by many of the left-wing protest cultures.²⁴ The purpose of the association was clearly stated, but accounts of the meetings do not reveal explicit discussions on the precise meaning of solidarity or revolution. Several of the people involved in the establishment of the association had just returned from Cuba, and their common experiences were likely to have formed a common understanding of, and a common language with which to grasp, the Cuban Revolution, so that recording the discussions in the association’s minutes was less necessary. Furthermore, the association did not seem to stand in opposition to similar existing organizations. The crumbling Cuba Committee, which had been founded in the early 1960s, was invited to join and consequently disbanded, encouraging its members to join the new association. Clarifying ideological discussions were obviously not necessary at this particular time. But it is striking that the association undertook what had long since become the Cuban revolutionary mythology as the structuring principle for a number of annual activities; On 1 January 1959 the Revolution and the overthrow of Batista were celebrated; 26 July 1953, marked the day of the Moncada attack, that was initially a defeat for the guerillos but led to the formation of the Sierra Maestra Movement; on 8 October, the death of Che Guevara was commemorated, and so on. Celebrating these events every year, the association continuously replayed the Cuban revolutionary myth, which consequently was kept alive more or less unquestioned.

Taking into consideration that the Tet Offensive in Vietnam had taken place in January of the same year and that the Danish Vietnam movement was at its strongest at this time, the founding of the association is rather remarkable.²⁵ Why bother with Cuba, when Vietnam was on the front pages?

The American historian Van Gosse and the American scholar of English and African Diaspora Studies, Cynthia A. Young have shown how the Cuban Revolution from its very beginning in the 1950s had enormous appeal as a place of social and cultural progressive and liberal fortune, which contrasted with the cultural conformity of Cold War America at the time.²⁶ Castro’s combining of the victory of the guerrillas with a massive support of culture and new cultural

institutions, new Cuban film, and so on, attracted parts of the intellectual communities in the United States. In addition to C. Wright Mills, several persons of the beat community, as well as Afro-American writers, traveled in and wrote about Cuba.

Gosse points out that a set of new ideas that came to form the core values of the growing New Left in the United States developed from the aspects of Cuba that attracted intellectuals: political, social, and cultural liberation; the wish for a democracy free of the bipolarity of the Cold War; socialistic utopian ideas without affiliations with the Soviet Union; and an anti-imperialism where the U.S., and not just the old European powers, was recognized as the aggressor. As for Young, the title of her book *Soul Power. Culture, Radicalism and the Making of a U.S. Third World Left* indicates a similar perspective, using Cuba as the most pregnant example. Young emphasizes that we must recognize the existence of a certain Third World Left, that included Afro-American activists and other people of color (Young's expression), and the question of race and liberation was obviously a core element here. In our case, it is thus interesting that apart from the question of race, this cultural political attraction containing new cultural institutions, experimental film centers, literature, music, posters, and other kinds of modern art, all played a vital role as points of attraction to Cuba within the Danish protest cultures. Thus the ambitious international cultural congress held in Havana in December 1967–January 1968, that several Danish intellectuals participated in, including one of the initiators of the association, was covered in *Politisk Revy* (Political Review) with enthusiastic articles emphasizing the progressive cultural potentials of the revolution.²⁷ And within the association, it was pointed out that it would be vital to send material support to Cuba, such as scientific journals and film rolls. Mentioning these particular items, and not for example, instant milk powder, indicates that these intellectuals did not see Cuba as a developing country. Their concrete solidarity efforts at this initial stage pointed toward people of “their own kind”—journalists, writers, researchers—the cultural progressive elite they could identify with.²⁸

But the Danish “discovery” of Cuba as political and cultural attractive was ten years “delayed” compared with the U.S. This “delay” cannot be understood as merely the expected inertness in the transfer of cultural inspiration, as has been the case with a range of phenomenon. Instead it must be interpreted as a question of context. In early 1960s Denmark, Cuba was perceived as a chess piece in the Cold War's nuclear arms race, but at the end of the decade the youth rebellion, the student revolts, and not least the Vietnam War had arrived in Denmark. This facilitated a new conception of Cuba as a rebel, even if the actual development in Cuba had already taken momentous steps in other directions.

Furthermore it must be emphasized that the fascination with Cuba was not solely a cultural matter, but was closely connected to the anti-imperialistic and indeed international orientation that dominated parts of the Danish protest cultures. On a more structural level, Latin America had, at the Tricontinental

Conference in Havana in January 1966, officially been included in the OSPAA (Organization for Solidarity for the People of Africa and Asia), which from then on was called OSPAAAL (Organization for Solidarity for the People of Africa, Asia, and Latin America). In 1965, this anti-imperialistic organization had defined its objectives as “total liberation,” which included supporting national liberation movements and intensifying armed, as well as peaceful struggles on all three continents. In 1968, one of the initiators of the Danish-Cuban association, who also functioned as the association’s “foreign secretary,” reported on its establishment to OSPAAAL as well as ICAP (the Cuban Institute for Friendship between Peoples). The association’s board therefore included the Cuban Revolution as an integral part of a worldwide anti-imperialistic struggle.

Thus the establishment of the association must be interpreted as an indication of a more general shift in the view of the conflicts and revolutions in the Third World, the latter now having entered the vocabulary of the protest cultures. The focus on Vietnam as the major hot spot—both as the most important conflict in international politics, and as perhaps the most urgent issue for the left wing—was now widened, which can be illustrated by the Che Guevara philosophy of “one, two, many Vietnams.”²⁹ From 1966 the left-wing magazine *Politisk Revy* (Political Review) frequently printed articles about Cuba’s role as a driving force in Third World revolutionary endeavors, obviously thrilled by the prospect of the Third World making common cause. Engaging oneself in organizing solidarity with Cuba could very well be seen as yet another way of supporting the struggle in Vietnam as well as in other places. The Cuban government supported FNL in Vietnam and also supported several other liberation movements in the Third World; having fulfilled the military part of their own revolution, Cuba could now symbolize hope. At the same time, some of the people engaged in the Third World had grown somewhat exhausted from involvement in the Vietnam issue. As a former member of the association’s board describes: “What had happened in Cuba was a real revolution, you know, with the guerrillas driving into Havana with flags and guns. They had won and now they were building a new society. It gave hope and enthusiasm. In Vietnam they were just fighting and fighting.”³⁰

Initially agreeing on a rather implicit comprehension of the Cuban Revolution, the concerns of the board of the Danish-Cuban association were what to do next.³¹ There was a general consensus that the association should distinguish itself from the long tradition of associations in Denmark and instead work as a “center of activity.”³² The activities were supposed to include study and work groups, experimental theater, exhibitions, political meetings, and film arrangements. Some board members wanted to create communes of experimental artists, while others saw the first priority as organizing a Christmas trip to Cuba, preferably with other Nordic-Cuban associations.³³ It is striking that some of these suggestions seemed to interfere quite demandingly in people’s social lives, some being more traditional political activities, others rather alternative, but

all significantly related to the existing protest cultures of activism. However, the board's planning of a "Cuba Week" at the beginning of 1969 would show that "solidarity with the Cuban Revolution" at the same time caused significant conflicts to develop.

In November 1968, preparations began for Cuba Week during the first week of January to celebrate the ten year anniversary of the Cuban Revolution. Drawing upon the experiences from the Danish Vietnam movement, a board meeting on 5 November planned film arrangements and exhibitions, as well as teach-ins for the event. The board agreed to give a public "revolution party" as the festive culmination of the Cuba Week. Members were encouraged to bring revolutionary posters for decoration and to provide their music for the party. Live music was to be delivered by a beat band, preferably the famous Burnin' Red Ivanhoe, which had played during the student's occupation of the University of Copenhagen earlier that year. The entertainment was designed to be "happening-like," which indicated inspiration from the Provos as well as from other activist groups of the 1960s. By mid-December, several well known artists, primarily writers and poets, had promised to come, including Klaus Rifbjerg, Jesper Jensen, Erik Knudsen, Ivan Malinowski, Charlotte Strandgård, and Hans Jørgen Nielsen—all were associated with anti-authoritarianism, as well as with the cultural elite in Denmark at this time.³⁴

The decision about the party's location, however, brought conflicts. The Hit House, which hosted concerts and happenings of the youth rebellion protest cultures, although expensive, was mentioned as a possibility, as well as Rømersgade 22, which had been used for meetings before. The disagreements escalated when one of the board members suggested renting the assembly hall of the Danish communist daily *Land & Folk* (Land & People), stressing that the association ought to use the proper settings for a "socialist party" instead of renting places from either "private capitalists" or "social democrats."³⁵ Other board members objected strongly, stating that some invited entertainers may not want to perform when the location was *Land & Folk's* assembly hall.³⁶ After a long discussion the board took it to vote, and the assembly hall of *Land & Folk* was rejected in favor of Rømersgade.

Considering the activities of the Danish-Cuban association and the way they were discussed, it becomes clear that the association understood itself as part of the Danish protest cultures of the youth rebellion and student revolts, the first having culminated in 1966–67, the last in the spring of 1968 in Copenhagen.³⁷ Nobody questioned a party with beat music and happenings; this kind of celebration of the Cuban Revolution was not seen as contradictory to the political content of the festivities. Since the summer of 1968, the famous image of Che Guevara and articles on guerrilla war had found their way to both the explicit political environments and the Copenhagen underground. The beat music magazine *Superlove* printed images of revolutionary heroes and Marxist icons side by side with Janis Joplin and the Doors, even suggesting that one

of the central squares of Copenhagen should be named after Che Guevara.³⁸ The speeches of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara's letters, diaries, and speeches were translated and published by several Danish publishing houses in 1968, and *Superlove* recommended them as subversive literature. The fascination with the Cuban Revolution had been absorbed by broader youth cultures, but here the reasons for expressing this (by, for example, buying posters featuring Che Guevara) were linked to anti-authoritarianism (and heroism) in a broader sense, and not necessarily to more organized political groups.

The suggestion of the assembly hall of *Land & Folk* and the disagreements it caused can be seen as an ideological dissent on how to interpret the Cuban Revolution and the extent to which Castro was dependent on (and loyal to) the Soviet Union. One of the board members has now, almost forty years later, recalled that it had come as a shock when, during his stay in Cuba in 1968, he heard Castro support the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia in August of that year. Castro's support simply did not fit in with some activists' image of Cuba as a rebel in opposition to both the United States and the Soviet Union.³⁹ These internal disagreements must be interpreted as conflicts about what role the Cuban Revolution should play within the left-wing protest cultures as such. Some board members expressed a wish to *distinguish* the association's activities both from the consumer culture, that in their eyes had absorbed the anti-authoritarian cultures, and from the reformist part of the left wing, and place it in what they saw as an explicit socialist context. They considered Rømersgade which (formally) represented the social democrats, to be a setting too reformist for the association. From their point of view the solidarity efforts had to be seen as part of a greater socialist struggle, and the spatial setting had to reflect that. The major part of the board were, however, very critical about the DKP (the Danish Communist Party). For predictable political and historical reasons, but also because of the party's hostile attitude toward several of its members who had joined the radical wing of the Danish Vietnam movement,⁴⁰ and because the cultural attractions of Cuba did not correspond very well with the cultural conservatism of DKP.

Considering the association's affiliation with OSPAAAL, the choice of Rømersgade as the place for the party did in fact seem to have been a very moderate one. But it must be emphasized that Rømersgade, as well as many other so-called "Peoples Houses" of the labor movement, was used for many arrangements by many left-wing groups at this time, and it cannot in itself be seen as a conscious reformist setting of the event, merely a practical one, *as of course* an act of political and cultural distinction.

Although not comparable to the mobilization caused by the war in Vietnam, Cuba in many ways constituted a broad point of attraction—culturally, intellectually and politically, and with regard to the theory and practice of guerrilla war—within the Danish left-wing protest cultures by the end of the 1960s. Cuba was never the object of demonstrations or violent confrontations with the

Danish police, as was the case with Vietnam, but the intellectual fascination with the guerrilla war should not be underestimated as a point of attraction. Cuba was seen as a rebel, and therefore as a leading force in the revolutions of the Third World, challenging the East-West perspective and showing a third path that could be taken. The revolutionary images were widely used, and at the same time, Cuba could attract individuals or groups who fought for a socialist world revolution and saw the Third World as the battering ram in this struggle, with Cuba being a promising social revolution, a manifest utopia. Solidarity efforts for Cuba pointed in several directions and were open to negotiations. The identifications with and reasons given for the practices of solidarity were several.

Dogmatism and New Solidarity Practices in the 1970s

The context of the various solidarity efforts had however changed by the middle of the 1970s. The protests against Denmark's affiliation to the EEC in 1972 absorbed a lot of those still concerned with international solidarity. And as the defeat of the United States in Vietnam caused a kind of anti-climax of mobilization, two different patterns of the solidarity protest cultures appeared. On the one hand, several broader anti-imperialistic organizations were established to provide a framework for solidarity with a wide range of Third World countries. On the other hand, numerous solidarity committees saw the light of day, offering very specialized engagements—some of them as part of political and theoretical clarification processes. Whether the broader initiatives were merely hopeful attempts to go against the fragmentation is not clear, but there is no doubt that the solidarity engagements of the 1970s were objects of more intense struggles of political analyses. As a broader mark of identity within the left-wing protest cultures, solidarity with the Third World could now be found in various settings, in communes or in the organization Tvind, founded in 1970, which through high school courses and primitive bus journeys through Latin America, Asia, and Africa, insisted on the importance of experiencing the Third World in person.

As for Cuba this new context of Third World solidarity as a mark of political identification revealed itself during the first half of the 1970s. In 1970, Cuba experienced an almost total breakdown of the economy due to Castro's disastrous sugar harvest project that undermined almost all other sectors of the society and consequently led to several bilateral agreements with the Soviet Union. In *Cuba Bladet*, the periodical of the Danish-Cuban Association, this was described retrospectively in 1975 as a positive way of maintaining Cuba's independence.⁴¹ The Cuban affiliation with the communist world movement in general and the Soviet Union in particular became, however, indisputable, as was also the case with the Danish-Cuban Association. At the beginning of the 1970s, the association entered into close cooperation with the DKU and DKP and discussions on whether the *Land & Folk* assembly hall should or should not be used for meet-

ings and parties became redundant.⁴² Several of the initiators of the association left the board in the autumn of 1971, and for at least some of them the departure was due to what they experienced as dogmatic political unification and lack of critique of the Cuban government.⁴³ The more disciplined political line became more manifest in 1973 where a new political codex was formulated:

The Danish-Cuban Association's solidarity with Cuba is unconditional, the association makes common cause with the initiatives of the Cuban government in domestic as well as in foreign affairs. ... In all of the association's activities, the members of the board are under obligation to express this solidarity, which forms the basis of all the dispositions of the association. Partly because we are the only organization in Denmark that carry this aim, and partly because it is important—in times where the Cuban revolution is victim of much slander—to advocate a consequent attitude of solidarity based on knowledge of the Cuban revolution and its preconditions.⁴⁴

The so-called “slander” that the association hereby tried to refute had been formulated by several intellectuals, some of whom had traveled, and still did travel, to Cuba. However, the development in Cuba urged them to criticize the political control, the economy, and most of all, the poor living standards of the Cuban population.⁴⁵ The disputes between these critical voices and the association were harsh and uncompromising, the critics being called “anti-Cuban” and bearers of “false conceptions,”⁴⁶ and they illustrated a new distinction in the landscape of solidarity with Cuba. Whereas the (the board of) the association advocated unconditional solidarity with the Cuban system, the critics formulated a kind of solidarity with the Cuban people in opposition to the system.

Indicating a far more institutionalized organization, both in administrative and financial terms, the Danish-Cuban Association started publishing its periodical *Cuba Bladet* in 1975; its December edition celebrated the First Congress of the Communist party of Cuba, the PCC.⁴⁷ The Cuban Embassy in Denmark supported the association with materials for exhibitions and festivals, and at some point it also financed the rent of an office in Copenhagen. The Danish-Cuban Association was, in other words, politically much more structured and positioned by the mid 1970s. Since its founding in 1968 and the inclusion of the Cuba Committee, there had been no other attempts to organize solidarity groups or organizations for Cuba, and the association's view and activities were not institutionally contested, albeit they frequently met with critique from other parts of Danish left-wing protest cultures. By the mid 1970s, The Danish-Cuban Association thus offered its members a clear political position, especially when compared with the more open ideological landscape of 1968–69.

But side by side with the ideological dogmatization of the solidarity efforts toward Cuba, a wide range of concrete cultural activity grew to be an important

part of practicing solidarity. In 1972, the association had adopted a kindergarten in Havana, the *Hans Christian Andersen Kindergarten*, and money, clothes, and toys were collected and brought to Cuba by the members during travels to Cuba.⁴⁸ Several working groups were established within the association and women came to be much more visible, both as participants and as subjects of solidarity. And the solidarity party where the participants could go to and fro between different scenes with music, theater, political speeches, slideshows, and films had become a significant way of practicing solidarity. Most significant, however, were the travels to Cuba with the so-called Nordic Brigades. The Nordic Brigades were organized solidarity trips to Cuba; the participants did three weeks of manual labor—for example, building schools or harvesting sugar—and one week of sightseeing and vacation. They were probably inspired by similar the Venceremos Brigades that were organized from the U.S., via these brigades hundreds of mostly young Americans visited Cuba to work and join the communities of travelers.⁴⁹

The Nordic Brigades obviously had political purposes, they were seen as “moral and political acts of solidarity.”⁵⁰ And with reference to the political codex of 1973, they also proved to be acts of loyalty. ICAP was the formal organizer and coordinator of the trips in Cuba, and as a representative of the government that was given full loyalty, the association followed the guidelines given here. When ICAP in 1973 asked for lists of all registered members, they received it, and when in 1975 they made it clear that they, “due to efforts of counteracting political splits ... *not wanted* a growing number of extremists with anti-Soviet opinions,” this was noted.⁵¹ Paul Hollander has suggested that the sense of community on the brigade trips entailed a lack of critical reflection on what the brigadiers saw in Cuba, and that this was embraced as a welcome opportunity to leave the existing bitter fights of the left wing aside for a while.⁵² This does not seem to have been the case within the Nordic Brigades, at least not in the beginning, as both ICAP and the association put some effort into avoiding splits and establishing such a unity. Thus, the criteria for joining the Nordic Brigade were gradually tightened, initially a vaguely formulated attitude of solidarity was demanded, but from 1975 on, at least six months of active membership of the association was necessary.⁵³ As part of this process the board discussed the importance of more Danish workers, rather than students only, joining the brigade, which shows that views on who could enjoy the status of the revolutionary subject had changed – although the actual participants had not.⁵⁴

The Nordic Brigades consequently served as a fence against critique. Only people of acceptable political observance could participate, and furthermore, it was expected, that the trips, if reported in public media, be described with unconditional solidarity. At the beginning of 1974 two members of the association were thus excluded, after criticizing the brigade trip they had joined in the summer of 1973, for being too bourgeois and lacking both revolutionary theory and practical potential.⁵⁵ This political view was a rare sight within the

association. Even if the two members clearly strived for revolution and saw the trip to Cuba as a part of this effort, their critique could only be interpreted as one of the enemy's. The association's total loyalty to the Cuban government and the established communist community left no room (or interest) for any sort of political clarification or new revolutionary insights. When Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan in 1979, it was not mentioned in *Cuba Bladet*, and if Cuba during the first half of the 1960s had enjoyed the status of a united Third World spearhead, this was certainly not the case now.

But as a practice of solidarity, the travels also facilitated personal experiences and embedded the major part of the brigadiers in a symbolic and manifest community of solidarity. Some participants reported their experiences in the periodical *Cuba Bladet*, for example, a young girl who had joined the Nordic Brigade to Cuba in 1974, wrote: "The work makes sense. The most beautiful sight in the world is a well treated guayba tree with a clean red circle of dirt around it. I like the field ... my feet are sore, but that is from dancing the rumba all night."⁵⁶

Apart from the romantic imagery, it is striking that the description is very concrete, referring to the physical surroundings, the colors, and the materiality of the working (and dancing) body—impressionist characteristics that we find in several of the travel reports. They were not accustomed to publishing theoretical analyses or more thorough documentaries, and it is noteworthy that the major part of their pieces gives the reader the impression of exploring adventures. The point here is not that this approach cannot be interpreted as political propaganda, but that it tells us that solidarity toward Cuba in the 1970s was largely characterized by concrete encounters in social communities. The politically controlled trips to Cuba undoubtedly contained challenging impressions, even for convinced solidarity activists. But the concrete encounters, the common work, the hospitality, and not least, the new friendships were difficult to convert into a more coherent political critique, let alone a rejection of the Cuban Revolution as such.

Trips to Cuba had different meanings depending on the circumstances under which they were carried out. The first trips in 1967–68 both marked a certain position in the political landscape of youth rebellion and student revolt and served as eye openers toward the Third World as a revolutionary force with Cuba at the stem. Alongside the more strictly organized Nordic Brigades, the travels increasingly served as a reassuring bulwark. This did not, however, make the travel reports less exotic, emphasizing the sensual experience of Cuba. The indisputable lack of material goods and other criticized elements were explained with reference to the economic blockade or other external circumstances. Even if the Soviet influence from time to time found its way into the descriptions, the continuation of the brigades, and with them "Cuba as experience" as a core practice of solidarity, the travels can be interpreted as a signifying practice, maintaining a conception of Cuba as exotic, culturally attractive, and even rebellious.

Where there had been several more or less explicit reasons given for practicing solidarity with Cuba in the late 1960s, the 1970s contained a more well-

defined defense of a small socialist country under pressure from the United States. At the same time, the ways of practicing solidarity had, if not changed, then at least widened. The more expressive activism of the 1960s was now joined by the practice of social community. Solidarity could be practiced in the way people worked and danced together. In this sense, although activism had moved to smaller social units, it covered greater geographical distances. The widening of practices went alongside with the maintenance of the Cuban revolutionary history and icons as important parts of the ideological framework. The guerillas of the Sierra Maestra Mountains were still celebrated as heroes, and Cuba was still involved in armed struggle in the Third World, even if Brezhnev had entered the scene. Thus, solidarity with Cuba in the 1970s was constituted by signifying practices that kept a celebrated revolutionary history alive, maintained a conception of Cuba as the cultural attractive rebel, and located the participants in what they saw as a manifest utopia.

Conclusion

By focusing on the practice of solidarity with Cuba, it has been the aim of this chapter to investigate how different contexts formed the phenomenon “solidarity with the Third World.” The Danish efforts for Cuba show that solidarity could at the same time consist of protest (against) and support (for) something, as it could relate to a revolutionary struggle as such or to a certain sociality and way of life. The elements simultaneously coexisted, but they also indicate a development from the former to the latter.

The political and cultural situation in Cuba obviously changed throughout the period in question, but more important for the development of the practices of solidarity was the changes of the Danish context. Whereas Cuba in the early 1960s was seen in the context of the Cold War, this perception gradually changed with the entrance of the anti-imperialist paradigm and the “discovering of the Third World.” In 1968, the question of Cuba no longer concerned the nuclear arms race, and the symbolism of the small country between superpowers had other connotations. Alberto Korda’s Che Guevara image became an icon, both of the Third World’s armed struggle against imperialism and of the anti-authoritarian protest cultures. Cuba was a rebel and the intellectual guerillos in uniforms were easy to identify with. Whereas solidarity with Cuba in the late 1960s had been open to negotiation and different interpretations, it offered a much more exclusive political position in the middle of the 1970s, but the range of activities and the possibilities of practicing solidarity were widened. In the 1970s solidarity with Cuba offered a manifest utopia containing both cultural attractions and political anti-Americanism as well as the defense of a small socialist country.

Following the inside perspective and the development of the practices of solidarity for Cuba, we can begin to question the widespread notion of “the long sixties” as a development from the “yogi” to the “commissar.” To some extent, the Danish–Cuban Association is a concise illustration of the popular narrative of the 1960–70s, which Thomas Ekman Jørgensen has described as follows:

The keepers of the Comintern tradition now set the agenda, be it in form of custodian Maoism, revived Leninism, or unconditional allegiance to the Soviet Union. . . . The long haired hippies of the late 1960s were reborn as pure revolutionaries who exchanged individual fulfillment for self-sacrifice for the great cause, the tribal community for the vanguard party, and ultimately chose dogma over creativity.⁵⁷

It is however necessary to question, whether the many new forms of political and cultural activity that had played such an important role in the left-wing protest cultures of the 1960s simply vanished overnight and merely became a tool for dogmatic purposes. On the basis of the case of Cuba shown in this chapter, I would argue in favor of an interpretation of this transition as an integration of these elements in the cultural and political practices on the left wing of the 1970s. The travels, the solidarity parties, and the social communities of solidarity practices were more than instrumental scenery; they were people practicing certain political cultures as part of their social lives. The bitter processes of political segregation were part of this, and show that solidarity with the Third World had become a mark of distinction within the left-wing cultures.

Notes

1. Board meeting account, 22 September 1968, Protocols of the Danish-Cuban Association. All translations by Karen Steller Bjerregaard.
2. Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties. Cultural revolution in Britain, France, Italy and the United States, c. 1958-c.1974* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
3. Paul Hollander, *Political Pilgrims: Travels of Western Intellectuals to the Soviet Union, China and Cuba*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1983), 177.
4. Paul Hollander, *Political Pilgrims. Travels of Western Intellectuals to The Soviet Union, China and Cuba*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1983), 222.
5. Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes. The Short Twentieth Century 1914–1991* (London: Abacus, 1996), 436–37.
6. Peter Duelund, *På vej mod et nyt samfund* (Copenhagen: Høst og Søns Forlag, 1971), 10–11.
7. Peter Øvig Knudsen, *Blekingegadebanden I & I* (Copenhagen, Gyldendal, 2007).
8. Søren Hein Rasmussen and Johannes Nordentoft, *Kampagnen mod Atomvåben og Vietnambevægelsen 1960–1972* (Odense: Odense University Studies in History and Social Sciences vol. 136, 1991).

9. Morten Bendix Andersen and Niklas Olsen, "Arven fra 68," in *1968, dengang og nu*, eds Morten Bendix Andersen and Niklas Olsen (Copenhagen: MTF, 2004), 16.
10. For such an overview, please see Anette Warring, *Around 1968—Danish Historiography*, In: *Scandinavian Journal of History* (Volume 33, Issue 4, 2008) 353–65.
11. The reference to Arthur Koestler's terminology is taken from Henrik Jensen, "Forandringens vinde: 1960'erne" in Lennart Bertsson, Gudmundur Hálfdanarson, and Henrik Jensen, *Europa 1800–2000* (Frederiksberg: Roskilde Universitetsforlag, 2003) 369–70.
12. Anette Warring, *Around 1968—Danish Historiography*, In: *Scandinavian Journal of History* (Volume 33, Issue 4, 2008) 353–65.
13. Thomas Ekman Jørgensen, "National Ways to Socialism? The Left and the Nation in Denmark and Sweden 1960—1980," unpublished paper presented at the 3rd Conference of The Interdisciplinary Research Forum Protest Movements (IFK), Between the Prague Spring and the French May": Transnational Exchange and National Re-contextualization of Protest Cultures in 1960/70s Europe, 25–27 August 2006, Heidelberg, Germany. The paper is based on Thomas Ekman Jørgensen's Ph.D. dissertation *Transformation and Crises: The Left and the Nation in Denmark and Sweden, 1956–1980* (Berghahn Books, Oxford/New York, 2008).
14. Stuart Hall (ed.), *Representation, cultural representations and signifying practices* (Sage, London, 2000).
15. Franz Fanon, *Fordømte her på jorde*, (København, Rhodos, 1966).
16. See Søren Hein Rasmussen and Johannes Nordentoft, *Kampagnen mod Atomvåben og Vietnambevægelsen 1960–1972* (Odense: Odense University Studies in History and Social Sciences, vol. 136, 1991) and Søren Hein Rasmussen, *Sære alliancer. Politiske bevægelser i efterkrigstidens Danmark* (Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag, 1997).
17. Knud Holt Nielsen, "Giv mig de rene og ranke ... Danmarks Kommunistiske Ungdom 1960–1990" (Ph.D. dissertation, Institut for nordiske studier og sprogvidenskab, University of Copenhagen, 2007), 22–23.
18. Søren Hein Rasmussen, *Sære alliancer: Politiske bevægelser i efterkrigstidens Danmark* (Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag, 1997), 51–52.
19. Speech held at the "Cuba, sí—Yankee, no" demonstration by the chairman of SUF. Here quoted from the web site Leksikon for det 21. århundrede (Encyclopaedia of the 21st Century): <http://www.leksikon.org/art.php?n=2483>.
20. SF, 6/1 1961, 9, here quoted from Thomas Ekman Jørgensen, "Vejen væk fra Moskva SF's vej fra kommunisme til et nyt venstre," In: *Opbrud i 1960'erne* (Den jyske historiker, nr. 101, 2003) 13–33.
21. Fremad, nr. 10, 1962, see also Knud Holt Nielsen, "Giv mig de rene og ranke ... Danmarks Kommunistiske Ungdom 1960–1990" (Ph.D. dissertation, Institut for nordiske studier og sprogvidenskab, University of Copenhagen, 2007), 22.
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23. Algier Frit, September 1961.
24. Board meeting account, 22 September 1968, Protocols of the Danish-Cuban Association.
25. Søren Hein Rasmussen and Johannes Nordentoft, *Kampagnen mod Atomvåben og Vietnambevægelsen 1960–1972* (Odense: Odense University Studies in History and Social Sciences, vol. 136, 1991), 74–75.

26. Van Gosse, *Where the Boys are. Cuba, Cold War America and the Making of a New Left* (London/New York, Verso, 1993); and Cynthia A. Young, *Soul Power. Culture, Radicalism and the Making of a U.S. Third World Left* (Durham/London, Duke University Press, 2006).
27. Politisk Revy, Nr. 95 & 96, February 1968.
28. Accounts of meetings held on 22 and 28 September, and 15 October 1968. Protocols of the Danish-Cuban Association.
29. Kim Salomon, *Rebeller i takt med tiden. FNL-rörelsen och 60-talets politiska ritualer* (Stockholm: Rabén Prisma, 1996), 162.
30. Interview with former member of the board of the Danish-Cuban Association, January 2007.
31. The examples are taken from accounts of meetings held on 22 and 28 September, and 15 October 1968.
32. Forming associations was and is a very common and widespread way of organizing people with common interests in Danish political culture.
33. The examples are taken from accounts of meetings held on 22 and 28 September, and 15 October 1968.
34. Board meeting account, 13 December 1968, Protocols of the Danish-Cuban Association.
35. Board meeting account, 26 November 1968, Protocols of the Danish-Cuban Association.
36. Board meeting account, 13 December 1968, Protocols of the Danish-Cuban Association.
37. See Steven L. Bjerregaard Jensen and Thomas Ekman Jørgensen, "Studenteroprøret i Danmark 1968: Forudsætninger og konsekvenser," University of Copenhagen, 1999; and S.L.B. Jensen, "Unge leger samfund og nogle laver kup," in *1968, dengang og nu*, eds. Morten Bendix Andersen and Niklas Olsen (Copenhagen: MTF, 2004).
38. The square in question was "Israel's Square," Superlove, October 1968.
39. Interview with former member of the board in the Danish-Cuban Association, August 2006.
40. Knud Holt Nielsen, "Giv mig de rene og ranke ... Danmarks Kommunistiske Ungdom 1960–1990" (Ph.D. dissertation, Institut for nordiske studier og sprogvidenskab, University of Copenhagen, 2007) 37–40.
41. Cuba Bladet, nr. 1, 1975.
42. Board meeting account 2 and 9 August 1972, Protocols of the Danish-Cuban Association.
43. Interview with former member of the board in the Danish-Cuban Association, January 2008. Some of the accounts however report on the "lack of revolutionary engagement." See Assembly meeting account 5 May 1971, board meeting account 11 November 1971, and assembly meeting account 24 November 1972.
44. Political codex for the Danish-Cuban Association 9 January 1973, Protocols of the Danish-Cuban Association.
45. One of the prominent critics was the journalist and writer Jan Stage, who had spent almost ten years traveling in Cuba and other Latin American countries since the early 1960s. Among many other things he wrote a series of critical articles in the Danish newspaper Information August 1971.
46. Account of discussion of the political codex 9 January 1973; Lars Krogh Møller,

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47. Cuba Bladet, nr. 3–4, 1975.
 48. Cuba Bladet, nr. 2, 1975.
 49. Paul Hollander, *Political Pilgrims: Travels of Western Intellectuals to the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba* (Harper Colophon Books, 1983) 227.
 50. Assembly meeting account 27 September 1972, Protocols of the Danish-Cuban Association.
 51. Board meeting account 4 June 1973 & account of evaluating meeting after the Nordic Brigade in 1975, Protocols of the Danish-Cuban Association.
 52. Paul Hollander, *Political Pilgrims. Travels of Western Intellectuals to the Soviet Union, China and Cuba* (Harper Colophon Books, 1983) 227–28.
 53. Account of board meeting, 5 March 1975 Protocols of the Danish-Cuban Association.
 54. Assembly meeting account 27 September 1972 Protocols of the Danish-Cuban Association.
 55. Thomas Blach and Mikael Witte Jensen, *Radikale og andre turister*, Information 7 September 1973.
 56. Cuba Bladet, nr. 2, 1975.
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Sympathizing Subcultures?

The Milieus of West German Terrorism

Sebastian Gehrig

Introduction

It is evident that the first terror groups in West Berlin in 1969 were deeply rooted in a radical left-wing milieu, which had been evolving in the city since the decline of the student movement.¹ The specific structure of this left-wing subculture and the beliefs of its ideological factions had a crucial impact on the ideology and organizational structure of the two major West German terror groups founded in West Berlin in 1970 and 1972. Whereas the *Rote Armee Fraktion* (Red Army Faction/RAF) modified ideas in the leading circle of the West Berlin section of the *Sozialistische Deutsche Studentenbund* (Socialist German Student Union/SDS) to legitimize an armed struggle, the *Bewegung 2. Juni* (Movement 2 June) developed from “anarchistic parts of the revolt” (“hash rebels”) which were only loosely connected with the SDS.² During their foundation phase, they were able to gain open support in parts of the West Berlin milieu.

A very different radical left-wing milieu developed in Frankfurt am Main after the decline of the student movement. Within this milieu, the *Revolutionären Zellen* (Revolutionary Cells/RZ) evolved as a third major terror organization with a very different organizational structure than the West Berlin terror groups.³ A group within the Frankfurt milieu that supported the RAF's bombing campaign of May 1972 founded the RZ. The radical milieu in Frankfurt did not openly support the RZ at any time because of the increasing police pressure since 1972. Therefore, the RZ was organized in independent “cells” in which members tried to live a “legal life” for as long as possible in order to cover up their terrorist activities. This kind of organization differed fundamentally from the “illegal and clandestine organization,” as advocated by the RAF and the *Bewegung 2. Juni*.

Friedhelm Neidhardt has pointed out that the “political future” of terror groups is closely connected with the attitude of potential supporters toward actions of armed groups.⁴ Therefore, this chapter will investigate the discussion with and on terror groups within their origin milieus, West Berlin and Frank-

furt, from the decline of the student movement up to the “German Autumn” in 1977.⁵ It will show the close connection of milieus and militant groups during their formation, the long-lasting separation process of the radical milieus from terror groups, and the ultimate rejection of a terrorist strategy by the milieus and their split from the terrorists in 1977.

The Transformation of the Student Protest Movement to Local Radical Left-wing Milieus

After the death of Benno Ohnesorg on 2 June 1967, confrontations with the police became increasingly violent as student protests escalated rapidly. Simultaneously, the West Berlin milieu held a controversial discussion on whether there was a difference between “violence against people” and “violence against objects.” This debate showed that the West Berlin milieu was the forerunner of a radicalization of student protests in the whole of the Federal Republic.⁶ Radical left-wingers did not only participate in spontaneous outbreaks of violence during demonstrations, but also consciously started to preach and practice fighting as part of a “revolutionary strategy.”

On 2 April 1968, Andreas Baader and Gudrun Ensslin, two West Berlin activists who would later be founding members of the RAF, led a group of activists to carry out an arson attack on two department stores in Frankfurt. During the trial that followed the attack the Frankfurt milieu showed its solidarity with their “comrades.”⁷ Nevertheless, there was abundant criticism of the attack itself. Within the Frankfurt milieu, in terms of organization, the idea of cadre groups prevailed.⁸ The group *Revolutionärer Kampf* (Revolutionary Struggle/RK), founded by radical SDS members to agitate in factories near Frankfurt, was organized in this spirit.⁹ In late 1968, the Frankfurt milieu declared the decline of the student movement a national phenomenon. The “autonomy of local groups” came to replace a national coalition of local groups within the SDS.¹⁰ Thus, the decline of the student movement was the origin of local radical left-wing milieus.¹¹

From 1969, the radical milieu in West Berlin discussed the formation of its own *Basisgruppen* (action groups), which were to agitate directly in factories.¹² Simultaneously, activists propagated a separation from “false friends,” which included, among others, left-wing intellectuals such as Jürgen Habermas, as well as orthodox communist organizations (K-Groups).¹³ After Willy Brandt’s 1969 election campaign for the democratization of society, an increasing number of milieu members returned to their normal bourgeois life. As a result, some left-wingers concluded that violent actions by small groups were the only way to effectively uphold the fight against the state.¹⁴ The inner circle of violent groups around the magazine *Agit 883* formulated the goal of establishing “free territories” in Berlin.¹⁵ “It is the duty of an avant-garde to make conflict situations

visible, to initiate them if necessary, and to build a melting pot for individuals to teach them how to start the revolution ... *ALL POWER COMES OUT OF THE BARREL OF A GUN!* [Mao],” *Agit 883* proclaimed.¹⁶

At this stage, the radical left-wingers finally dismissed the idea of achieving a “mass basis.” The concept of an “urban guerrilla” and the “primacy of practice” entered the debate in the context of the “hash rebels” and *Tupamaros Westberlin*, founded in 1969.¹⁷ Violent actions were meant to stir up the masses, while an illegal avant-garde was to uncover the terrorist character of the state by provoking repressive actions against these small illegal groups. After the first group of West Berlin students trained by Palestinian terrorists returned to West Berlin, the atmosphere within the milieu was significantly radicalized.¹⁸ After the *Tupamaros* carried out a bomb attack on the West Berlin Jewish community center, they were criticized harshly by the milieu,¹⁹ but discussions on the organization of an “armed struggle” continued. The concept of an “armed avant-garde,” developed in 1969–70, was now discussed, as was the idea of combining a legal apparatus with an armed illegal wing.²⁰

In contrast, no terrorist activities developed in Frankfurt in 1969. Therefore, the milieu was irritated when Rainer Langhans, former member of the *Kommune I*, visited the Frankfurt comrades and presented the idea of a terrorist organization that was en vogue in West Berlin at that time. The Frankfurt radicals did not consider terrorism an alternative to class struggle in the prevailing situation. Thus, they rejected terrorism at this particular time, but not in principle. The Frankfurt milieu judged the radicalization in West Berlin to be a spontaneous outbreak, not a further development of any strategy.²¹

With the emerging isolation and decrease of the radical milieu in West Berlin, doubts about its further development were voiced. In facing a “fascist state,” however, as left-wingers claimed, they believed that further radicalization was justified.²² The assumption that they were facing a “fascist state” still dominated by Third Reich elites remained the driving force behind militant actions in the 1970s. Left-wing activists across the milieus frequently legitimized political actions of any kind—and their radicalization—as they assumed prevailing fascist structures in society. This radicalization followed only a couple of days later. On 14 May 1970, Andreas Baader was liberated from prison; during this action one person was seriously injured.²³ In a short declaration, the newly founded RAF argued that Baader’s liberation had been necessary because he was indispensable for the “struggle.”²⁴ In another pamphlet, the RAF addressed the question of the “armed struggle” and responded to criticism. The text was in part a general appeal to the “Comrades of 883” and others in the radical milieu to follow the example of the RAF and it also dealt with the specific situation of the “class struggle” in the city, such as the confiscation of editions of *Agit 883* and the protection of the milieu against “traitors.”²⁵ The “liberation” made the members of the RAF immediately popular in the radical West Berlin milieu, which until then had been dominated by the *Tupamaros*.²⁶ For a short period, strong supporters

of “armed action,” among them the later terrorist Holger Meins, took over the editorial office of *Agit 883*.²⁷

With Baader’s liberation, public and political pressure on the radical milieu increased significantly. Because of this, the most important question—whether and to what extent “militants” should be supported—was already raised within the milieu in May 1970. The danger that “armed actions” could spell the end for all radical left-wing activities, due to the massive police and legislative counteractions they provoked, was immediately recognized.²⁸ As bomb attacks in West Berlin increased, criticism was voiced once again. In particular, the absence of a clear strategy on the part of the armed groups was stressed.²⁹ In contrast to this radicalization in West Berlin, the Frankfurt milieu remained skeptical of a terrorist strategy, even after the liberation of Baader.³⁰ Articles in *Agit 883* that celebrated this “true heroic deed” were criticized. The critics held that the liberators had given the police and state authorities an excuse to arm their “protection squads.”³¹

Dealing with Terror Groups 1970–1976

In the summer of 1970, leading figures of the RAF traveled to Jordan for “terrorist instruction.”³² During this period, the radicalization of the milieu in West Berlin stagnated. After many left-wingers demanded a return to traditional methods of the workers’ movement (such as strikes),³³ the RAF published *Das Konzept Stadtguerilla* in response in May 1971.³⁴ At this time, the RAF changed its center of action from West Berlin to Frankfurt.³⁵ It immediately made concerted efforts to recruit new members. The milieu officially rejected this offer, but only for strategic reasons, not because of a general rejection of terrorism.³⁶ Simultaneously, however, new terror groups evolved in both milieus. In Frankfurt, the RZ was developing from a circle of hidden RAF supporters. In West Berlin, the *Bewegung 2. Juni* was founded after the death of Georg von Rauch in a shooting with the police. Its main “area of action” remained West Berlin, as the group argued that this was the only place in which a proper “supporting scene” existed.³⁷

The First Major Wave of Terrorist Attacks

During the *Mai-Offensive* in 1972, the RAF attacked symbolic targets of “imperialism,” the “fascist German state,” and the Springer press as its “accomplice.” The West Berlin milieu now strengthened its criticism of the RAF after police and state authorities again increased repression to a point that it now had to struggle to uphold its infrastructure. Copies of *Agit 883* were confiscated and the editorial office was closed down.³⁸ In late 1973, first attempts were started to

reunite a small milieu base.³⁹ One result of these attempts was the foundation of a successor paper to *Agit 883*, the *Info Berliner Undogmatische Gruppen* (Berlin Undogmatic Groups' Info/Info BUG). In terms of methods, the radical milieu began to distance itself from terrorists. Violence, however, could still be part of the political struggle. "If we discuss violence, this has to concentrate on concrete issues not separated from the specific situation."⁴⁰ This marked the rejection of a general approval of violence as had been expressed by terrorists.⁴¹

The Murder of Ulrich Schmücker

On 4 June 1974, the student Ulrich Schmücker was assassinated by a group of people who had stayed in contact with the *Bewegung 2. Juni*. Many radical left-wingers now began to realize that terrorists were a threat not only to the "ruling class" or the "repressive system," but to everybody. Schmücker, a former supporter of the *Bewegung 2. Juni*, was shot by his own "comrades" in Berlin-Grunewald.⁴² In the declaration justifying the murder, Schmücker's assassins argued that he had deserved the death penalty because he had informed to the police about his "comrades." He had been an "agent," a "traitor" and "counter-revolutionist."⁴³ The majority of the West Berlin milieu was shocked. Papers, like the *Berliner Extra-Dienst* and *Langer Marsch*, which focused mainly on students, refused to print the declaration of the *Bewegung 2. Juni* justifying the killing. "The comrades don't understand this action and feel disgust about it. ... This action does not save anybody from becoming a traitor."⁴⁴

In contrast, members of more radical circles defended the murder of Schmücker, as well as terrorist activities in general. They alleged that the majority of the West Berlin milieu had forgotten the real effect of the "armed struggle."⁴⁵ Whatever one might think of the proper way to organize the "armed struggle," the RAF had clearly demonstrated that violence could be a means for personal defense, as well as a means for the practice of "offensive resistance."⁴⁶ The defenders of Schmücker's assassination posed the question of why the critics had only pointed to the social circumstances that had caused his treason. Why had these critics not concluded that these circumstances *and* Schmücker had to be removed? "Certainly, not everybody who cheated against comrades can be killed. But if someone is not only betraying but also systematically selling information ... does it then matter why he did all this?"⁴⁷ This shows the degree of inhumanity which parts of the milieu had already created. The peer pressure had become so enormous that withdrawal from the milieu was very dangerous if "comrades" had the impression that the police would show an interest in the knowledge of the former milieu member.⁴⁸

Now, a debate broke out between the *Bewegung 2. Juni* and members of the milieu in *Info BUG*. Individuals from the circle of West Berlin terrorists criticized the "division of labor" of many radicals in Berlin: mornings at univer-

sity, in afternoons a little work at the “base” and in between, sometimes a bit of militant action.⁴⁹ They wrote that there may be mistakes in the strategy of terrorists but that this also applied to legal groups. However, the discussion within *Info BUG*, regarding whether terrorist actions, including killing “ex-comrades,” were justified, remained unresolved during the autumn of 1974. The common consensus expressed support for “political violence” although it admitted that many mistakes had been made. As the majority of radicals who gathered around the papers *Berliner Extra-Dienst* and *Langer Marsch* had rejected the killing, another split in the milieu began. In these more moderate groups the murder was believed to prove how much “moral decline and inhumanity” had managed to take possession of the radical milieu.⁵⁰ In Frankfurt, the critical responses voiced by the West Berlin milieu were immediately reprinted; the milieu was shocked by the outbreak of deadly violence against “comrades.”⁵¹

The “Isolation Torture” Campaign

After the first hunger strikes in support of the RAF’s demand that prisoners be held in the same prison, the RAF called for solidarity and militant actions from the milieus.⁵² With its campaign against isolation torture in German prisons, the RAF achieved its only real propaganda success in mobilizing its milieus.⁵³ This campaign restored support among the radical left-wing milieus which had been destroyed by the killing of Schmücker. “Torture committees” and *Rote Hilfe* (Red Assistance) action committees became an important recruiting pool for the so-called “second generation” of the RAF.⁵⁴ The RAF accused the state of keeping “political prisoners” in completely sound-proofed cells in which the light was never switched off. Terrorists argued that the lack of any sound and the loss of all sense of time constituted an attempt to break the psychological strength of the prisoners. The “fascist face” of the state seemed visible for the first time in the imprisonment conditions of radical left-wingers and terrorists.

Although terrorist activities did not dominate the Frankfurt debates in 1974 (because the *Häuserkampf* captivated the scene⁵⁵), the milieu adopted the major claims, promoted by terrorists, that the state was torturing prisoners with newly developed methods, like the “isolation torture” described above.⁵⁶ The *Rote Hilfe* in Frankfurt demanded resistance to the first trials against minor RAF figures.⁵⁷ Several founding members of the RZ met in this group.⁵⁸ At the same time, articles which claimed to scientifically describe the effects of isolation torture in German prisons were published.⁵⁹ In the RAF campaign against the “isolation torture,” terrorists criticized the limp reporting in Frankfurt milieu papers and demanded the dismissal of the reporter covering the trial in Stammheim.⁶⁰ This showed the feeling of superiority which terrorists had developed regarding their milieu and their claim to command it.

After the death of Holger Meins during the third prison hunger strike of the RAF on 9 November 1974,⁶¹ the lack of solidarity with political prisoners was criticized within the milieus. At the same time, however, this was explained by the rejection of the RAF strategy. This was something that had to be changed within the milieus. The support for the prisoners being tortured had to be increased. In the eyes of left-wingers, the death of Meins had proven the state's violent character. In this case it became obvious that inside the milieu, solidarity with the RAF was mainly based on the image of the "evil state," not on support for the RAF itself.⁶² In Number 37 of *Info BUG*, the relationship between the RAF and "anarchists" was evaluated. The common tone of these articles was that RAF members were still seen as "comrades" and members of the radical milieu, although their methods were now rejected.⁶³ This highlights the success of the RAF's propaganda strategy in gaining publicity and support for its "prison campaign." After 1975, legislative actions taken by the government started to have an effect.⁶⁴ The feeling of living in a ghetto increased.⁶⁵ In this declining closed circle, myths began to develop. In what became a national campaign after the deaths of the RAF leaders in 1977, the state was seen as a crowd of willing murderers who shot or killed radical left-wingers on any occasion.⁶⁶ Some radicals tried to debunk these myths but they remained a minority.⁶⁷

The Second Wave of Terrorist Attacks

On 10 November 1974, the president of the *Kammergericht* (Supreme Court) West Berlin, Günter von Drenkmann, was killed by the *Bewegung 2. Juni* as a reaction to the death of Meins.⁶⁸ Since the winter of 1974, the *Bewegung 2. Juni* and the RAF increased their activities and thereby ended the phase of reconstruction which followed the wave of arrests of leading terrorists in the summer of 1972. On 27 February 1975, Peter Lorenz, mayoral candidate of the CDU for the next general election in West Berlin, was kidnapped. The *Bewegung 2. Juni* demanded the release of five imprisoned comrades. The government in West Berlin finally agreed and five terrorists were released.⁶⁹

In contrast to the delighted comments of terrorists on this "successful action," the radical left-wing milieu reacted less enthusiastically: it realized that the terrorist attacks had enormously weakened it. After the Lorenz kidnapping, articles in *Langer Marsch* opposed the euphoric reactions that had partly been expressed in *Info BUG*. The kidnapping gave the state the perfect excuse to strengthen the criminal law.⁷⁰ With the end of the Lorenz kidnapping and the increased activity of the West Berlin police, most of the *Bewegung 2. Juni's* leading figures were arrested. The few remaining members later joined the RAF.⁷¹

After the marginalization of the *Bewegung 2. Juni*⁷² and rejection of the RAF's strategy as too dogmatic, *Info BUG* concentrated on the RZ, which had

been conducting attacks in West Berlin since 1974.⁷³ Very quickly, the same problems evolved between the RZ and the milieu as had already occurred in confrontations with the RAF/*Bewegung 2. Juni*. Terrorists criticized the “wait and see” attitude of radicals. In reply, the radical milieu criticized the “non-existing relationship” between terrorists and milieus. Radicals criticized the constant blames voiced by the terrorists against the “legally working comrades” and the terrorists’ accusations that these comrades were “weaklings,” despite the terrorists using them widely for support.⁷⁴

On 24 April 1975, RAF terrorists occupied the West German embassy in Stockholm and killed two staff members. The action ended in the explosion of a bomb, detonated (probably accidentally) by terrorists, of whom one was killed instantly and another died sometime later.⁷⁵ In response to this, radical left-wingers argued that such actions only supported the “enemy.”⁷⁶ In this context, it is important to consider the case of Siegfried Hausner, a terrorist who was wounded during the occupation of the embassy. He died soon after being transported from Sweden to West Germany. Immediately, the radical milieu in West Berlin suspected a planned killing.⁷⁷ This indicates that although the milieu had rejected terrorist strategies, it continued to show solidarity with terrorist groups, who were being “mistreated” by the “fascist state.” As it was no longer possible to ignore the fact that the left-wing movement had failed in its attempt to start a “revolution,” anonymous despairing appeals for new terrorist actions occasionally appeared in the milieu press.⁷⁸ However, the vast majority of articles firmly rejected such calls. Following Hausner’s death, a series of myths increasingly took possession of the radical milieus. The suicide of Ulrike Meinhof on 9 May 1976, increased the popularity of the myth of a “consciously killing state.” It was strongly assumed that the security services had killed her in a state-led move.⁷⁹ Eventually, Meinhof’s death was seen as further proof of the state’s “evil character,” and thus it supported the argument to continue the struggle against the state.

In late 1976, a controversy between the RZ and the RAF evolved in *Info BUG*. The RZ attacked the arrogant attitude of the RAF against its own milieu. The concept of being the avant-garde of the whole movement without explaining or discussing actions with the milieu was seen as unacceptable. No strategic paper had been released since 1971–72, although the strategy had significantly changed from bomb attacks on symbolic targets to attacks on representatives of the state to liberate imprisoned RAF members. The RZ demanded an explanation of this shift in strategy and a discussion of further actions.⁸⁰ The milieu’s reaction showed the total loss of connection between the armed groups and the milieu. One letter to the editor assumed that the RZ had published this pamphlet with the sole purpose of having an excuse not to support the fourth hunger strike of RAF prisoners. The RZ announced they had not written this public letter to the RAF and denounced it as a provocation by the security services with the aim of producing a split among the rest of the radical milieu. As the editorial

office supported this statement, another letter to the editor asked how they could be sure that the RZ's denial was genuine while the pamphlet was not.⁸¹ This highlighted the complete distrust that had developed within the milieu.

The Klein Controversy

In December 1975, the international terrorist "Carlos" led a team in an assault on the meeting of the OPEC leaders in Vienna that resulted in a number of killings and in over sixty people being taken hostage.⁸² One of "Carlos's" team, Hans-Joachim Klein, was an activist from the radical milieu in Frankfurt.⁸³ After Klein had renounced his activities within the RZ, he wrote a public letter to the milieu in which he expressed his fear that former comrades were trying to kill him as he was now perceived as a "security risk." The milieu called the "urban guerrilla" a "dirty pack of killers" for trying to murder Klein. In the eyes of the radicals, this was indeed likely after the killing of Schmücker.⁸⁴ The milieu threatened terrorists with the uncovering of the up-to-then unknown persons in the circle around the RZ, if Klein was murdered.⁸⁵ Although the concept of an "armed struggle" was rejected, different opinions were expressed as to how to label terrorists. Were they still comrades and part of the milieu? Some articles emphasized the necessity of total separation from terrorists in order to stop the killings of terrorists, as well as of innocent victims.⁸⁶ In response to this debate, terrorists blamed Klein as a person, declaring that he had never had the strength to be a real terrorist. No killing was planned.⁸⁷ Klein survived and found refuge in France.⁸⁸ The last members of the *Bewegung 2. Juni* threatened the milieu implicitly. "Betrayal is a crime against the revolutionary forces and will be treated as such."⁸⁹ The milieu rejected the methods of terrorists, who were now clearly seen as a physical danger to their own milieu.

The "German Autumn": The Public Separation from Terror Groups

On 7 April 1977, Federal Prosecutor Siegfried Buback and two companions, his chauffeur and another employee of the federal prosecutor's office, were killed by the RAF.⁹⁰ As a reaction to the murder, the notorious "Buback Obituary" was published. Its author, a certain "Mescalero of Göttingen" expressed "feelings of clandestine joy" after the murder of Buback, but then questioned these feelings one-by-one.⁹¹ The article caused a massive debate on the radical left-wing milieus in the media.⁹² In Frankfurt, feelings like those expressed by "Mescalero" were articulated even before the "Buback Obituary" was published. The reaction of feeling a kind of pleasure was described as understandable, but violent attacks were condemned as the wrong strategy. Many within the milieu, however,

derived satisfaction from attacks on governmental officials.⁹³ At the same time, the milieu still expressed solidarity with imprisoned terrorists. Articles stressed that the attempt of state institutions to get rid of “political prisoners” posed an enormous danger for their safety.⁹⁴

In West Berlin, the radical milieu separated itself from terrorists after the killing of Buback. The action had shown that the RAF fought its own “private war” only against its own personal enemies. At the same time, the milieu described feelings, later notoriously expressed in the “Buback Obituary.” “Super! One pig less! ... I’m delighted that they’ve got him. But I’m also feeling very uneasy about this reaction. ... Are these left-wingers who are doing something like this? ... We’re talking about Weimar and meaning today, or we’re talking about a colony and meaning the Federal Republic.”⁹⁵ This statement highlights a belief that the radical left-wing had been wrongly evaluating the “objective situation” in the Federal Republic for nearly a decade. “If we had fascism here, something like the *Info BUG* would not exist.”⁹⁶ An article on the tenth anniversary of the 2 June 1967, reputed the retreat of the radical milieu from revolutionary theory and emphasized that a change of society could only be conducted by people changing their own lifestyle within the regulations of the state. “We have learned that the revolution will be brought about not if one has a concept for a new society in mind or on paper but when one starts to change one’s life.”⁹⁷

On 5 September 1977, Hanns-Martin Schleyer, president of the Employers’ Association of the Federal Republic and of the Federation of German Industry, was kidnapped by the RAF. Three policemen and Schleyer’s chauffeur were killed. On 13 October 1977, Arabian terrorists hijacked a Lufthansa airplane. This marked the peak of the terrorist crisis of the 1970s. On 17 October 1977, all hostages were freed. As a reaction to the liberation of the hostages, the leading RAF members Baader, Ensslin, and Jan-Carl Raspe committed suicide in prison. The next day, Schleyer was found dead by the police. The state had overcome the decisive confrontation with international as well as domestic terrorism.⁹⁸

The “German Autumn” marked the final separation of the radical milieus from terrorists.⁹⁹ Imprisoned terrorists were now officially excluded from the radical left-wing milieus, which had previously seen them as comrades, albeit misguided ones. Within the Frankfurt milieu, the decisive action was the hijacking of the Lufthansa airplane. Now, it had become obvious that anybody could be the next victim of the terrorists, who seemed to have stopped caring about innocent victims a long time ago. “Some people could not understand them anymore after Stockholm, others after Buback, Ponto, or Cologne. With the hijacking of the plane, everybody finally reached this limit. ... Now, titles of *BILD* and *Stern* have become reality: “Anybody could be the next one,” a fact we [the milieu members/S.G.] and the guerrilla have rejected ... for a long time.”¹⁰⁰ Despite the exclusion of terrorists from the milieu, the myth of a planned murder of the RAF prisoners in Stammheim developed quickly in the Frankfurt scene.¹⁰¹

This happened due to the enormous distrust that still existed toward the state and its institutions.

The radical milieu in West Berlin showed the same reaction as radicals in Frankfurt.¹⁰² “Solidarity with the RAF must be put to a stop for the future.”¹⁰³ This would also prevent a “third generation of people growing-up desperate.”¹⁰⁴ Until then, terrorists were seen as “misguided comrades” and although their actions were seldom approved, solidarity with them was demanded, especially after the most infamous terrorists were imprisoned. Now, fear of terrorists was articulated within the milieu. “If the left has not found a clear speech against terrorists this is not due to a lack of other possibilities but also because everybody feared the vengeance of the RAF; or have we forgotten that often, the RAF forced left-wing accommodation with the use of weapons, and frightened and lonely comrades were forced into further ‘actions?’”¹⁰⁵

As the radical milieu had finally become the focus of the media reporting due to the press hysteria around the “Buback Obituary,” the media combined the threat of a supportive base of terrorists at West German universities with blaming left-wing intellectuals of being the “spiritual fathers” of terrorism.¹⁰⁶ In the dispersal process of the radical left-wing milieus, this led to a renewed solidarity with left-wing intellectuals, who had been seen as too liberal in the years before.¹⁰⁷ The focus on the liberation of their imprisoned “comrades,” revealed in the eyes of the milieus the “private war” terrorists were now fighting against their “personal enemies.” In the opinion of the radicals, the RAF had turned into a “prisoner liberation organization.” The international strategy of a united “armed struggle” against the “worldwide capitalism and imperialism” had become nothing more than a façade.

Conclusion

The West Berlin and Frankfurt milieus evolved very differently after the student movement years. The decline of student movement protests caused a “retreat into the regions”¹⁰⁸ after the enactment of emergency laws in 1968. Protesters focused much more on their specific local situation, although they still argued from an international perspective. In West Berlin and Frankfurt, a subculture evolved that consisted of many left-wing bars, bookshops, cinemas, and well-known communes. The failure in creating a national movement forced the student movement members to search for different kinds of organizations.

In West Berlin, the milieu was strongly orientated toward ideas created by the group *Subversive Aktion* (Subversive Action). Rudi Dutschke and Dieter Kunzelmann established the element of planned provocation in student protests.¹⁰⁹ In the decline of student protests, many left-wingers feared losing everything they had achieved in the years 1967–68. Some of them concluded that only a

significant radicalization toward “armed action” could answer this problem.¹¹⁰ During the formation phase of the terror groups, they gained significant support within the milieu. Moreover, the “island situation” of the city accelerated conflicts with the police. For this reason, West Berlin appeared as the origin of West German left-wing terrorism.

In contrast, the Frankfurt milieu was dominated by the ideas developed around the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research. Marxist-Leninist and later Maoist ideas of organization dominated debates over the question of how to organize the milieu. Therefore, it was the K-Groups, and above all the *Revolutionärer Kampf*, that influenced the milieu most significantly. The radicalization of protests focused on *Häuserkampf* because of the very special rent situation in Frankfurt.¹¹¹ The terrorists’ strategy, however, was evaluated as a serious political option at this time.¹¹² Thus, the RZ developed secretly within the milieu from a circle of RAF supporters.

When major terror groups started their actions in 1971–72, terrorism was rejected by milieus. This, however, was a refusal which had only tactical or strategic reasons.¹¹³ Violence in general was not rejected. Left-wingers saw terrorists as “misguided comrades.” In the RAF’s campaign against “isolation torture,” solidarity with terrorists within the milieus was strengthened.¹¹⁴ The death of Holger Meins was a planned killing in the eyes of radical left-wingers. This highlights the fact that support for terror groups was always based on the assumption of fighting against a “fascist state” and not on the approval of terrorism itself.¹¹⁵ Moreover, the RAF achieved a success in mobilization of a number of people to further armed action. Simultaneously, criticism increased in context of the Schmücker murder and growing internal peer pressure. Only after terror groups had changed their strategy to planned killings to liberate their imprisoned comrades, did the debate on them change fundamentally. Now, terrorists were expelled from the milieus. At the same time, the radical left-wing milieus dissolved into many different groups.¹¹⁶ Finally, the controversy on the “Buback Obituary” forced the whole left to distance itself publicly from terrorism.¹¹⁷ After the end of the “German autumn” this public separation from terrorists also calmed down the general public atmosphere.

Notes

1. Wolfgang Kraushaar, *Die Bombe im jüdischen Gemeindehaus* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2005); Wolfgang Kraushaar, “Die Tupamaros West Berlin,” in *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*, ed., Wolfgang Kraushaar, 2 vols (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2006), vol. 1, 512–30; Tobias Wunschik, “Die Bewegung 2. Juni,” in *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*, vol. 1, 531–61; Wolfgang Kraushaar, “Berliner Subkultur. Blues, Haschrebellen, Tupamaros und Bewegung 2. Juni,” in *Handbuch 1968: Zur Kultur- und Mediengeschichte der Studentenbewegung*, eds., Martin Klimke and Joachim Scharloth (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2007), 261–75.
2. Sebastian Scheerer, “Deutschland: Die ausgebürgerte Linke,” in *Angriff auf das Herz*

- des Staates*, ed., Henner Hess, 2 vols (Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1988), vol. 1, 193–429, here 292–94; Sebastian Gehrig, “Zwischen uns und dem Feind einen klaren Trennungsstrich ziehen. Linksterroristische Gruppen und maoistische Ideologies in der Bundesrepublik der 1960er und 1970er Jahre,” in *Kulturrevolution als Vorbild? Maoismen im deutschsprachigen Raum*, eds., Sebastian Gehrig, Barbara Mittler, Felix Wemheuer (Frankfurt/M.: Peter Lang, 2008), 153–77.
3. Wolfgang Kraushaar, “Im Schatten der RAF. Zur Entstehungsgeschichte der Revolutionären Zellen,” in *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*, vol. 1, 583–601.
 4. Friedhelm Neidhardt, “Akteure und Interaktionen: Zur Soziologie des Terrorismus,” in *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*, vol. 1, 123–37, here 131.
 5. This chapter will focus on militant subcultural groups. Orthodox-communist groups (K-Groups) already rejected “terrorist violence” for strategic reasons in their formation phase but remained sympathetic to terrorist actions. Cf. Andreas Kühn, *Stalins Enkel, Maos Söhne: Die Lebenswelt der K-Gruppen in der Bundesrepublik der 70er Jahre* (Frankfurt/M.: Campus, 2005), 161–74; Jens Benicke, “Von Heidelberg nach Mogadischu, ein Weg von der revolutionären bis zur konterrevolutionären Aktion: Das Verhältnis der bundesdeutschen K-Gruppen zur RAF, am Beispiel der KPD/ML,” in *Kulturrevolution als Vorbild?*, 133–52.
 6. The confrontation with the *Springer-Verlag* particularly accelerated violent protests. Cf. Wolfgang Kraushaar, “Kleinkrieg gegen einen Großverleger. Von der Anti-Springer-Kampagne der APO zu den Brand- und Bombenanschlägen der RAF,” in *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*, vol. 2, 1075–1116.
 7. Sara Hakemi and Thomas Hecken, “Die Warenhausbrandstifter,” in *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*, vol. 1, 316–31, here 329.
 8. “Von der Revolte gegen die bürgerliche Universität zur Revolte gegen die kapitalistische Gesellschaft,” *was tun?* (July 1968), 8; “Organisierung der Unorganisierten!” *was tun?*, I, 3 (September 1968), 8–9; “Organisierung der Unorganisierten! Teil 2,” *was tun?*, I, 4 (October 1968), 8–9; “Notstand und was tun?,” *was tun?* (July 1968), 2–3.
 9. Cf. Wolfgang Kraushaar, “Die Frankfurter Sponti-Szene: Eine Subkultur als politische Versuchsanordnung,” in *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, 44 (2004), 105–21; Anne Siemens, *Durch die Institutionen oder in den Terrorismus: Die Wege von Joschka Fischer, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Hans-Joachim Klein und Johannes Weirich* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Munich, 2006), 188–215.
 10. “Organisation im Klassenkampf: Zur 23. ordentlichen Delegiertenkonferenz des SDS in Frankfurt,” *Diskus*, XVIII, 6 (October 1968), 7–13.
 11. Dieter Classens and Karin de Ahna, “Das Milieu der Westberliner ‘scene’ und die Bewegung 2. Juni,” in *Gruppenprozesse: Analysen zum Terrorismus 3*, eds Wanda von Baeyer-Katte et al. (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1982), 20–181; for the Frankfurt milieu see: Wolfgang Kraushaar, *Fischer in Frankfurt: Karriere eines Außenseiters* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2001).
 12. “Das falsche Konzept der Basisgruppen,” *Agit 883*, 15 (20 May 1969), 2; Werner Olles, “Zur Strategiediskussion,” *Agit 883*, 14 (15 May 1969), 5.
 13. *Ibid.*; for the controversy on Habermas and the attitude of militants against intellectuals see: Albrecht von Lucke, *68 oder neues Biedermeier: Der Kampf um die Deutungsmacht* (Berlin: Wagenbach, 2008), 19–28; The so-called K-Groups were communist cadre groups, which were orientated by the example of classical ortho-

- dox Marxist cadre parties (with strong Maoist influences); cf. Kühn, *Stalins Enkel, Maos Söhne*.
14. "Die Roten Miesen: Der Putschismus und die Matratze," *Agit 883*, 41 (20 November 1969), 6.
 15. In "Polizeiterror," *Agit 883*, 21 (3 July 1969), 7; "Sept. 69 und die Aufgaben der APO," *Agit 883*, 15 (20 May 1969), 2.
 16. "Kritik an den Leuten, die mit den Worten Mao's Mao bekämpfen," *Agit 883*, 35 (9 October 1969), 2.
 17. Hanno Balz, "Militanz, Blues und Stadtguerilla: Konzepte politischer Gegengewalt," in *Agit 883. Bewegung, Revolte, Underground in Westberlin 1969–1972*, ed., Rotaprint 25 (Berlin: Assoziation A, 2006), 127–39, here 133; Kraushaar, "Tupamaros," 512–30.
 18. Karin König, "Zwei Ikonen des bewaffneten Kampfes: Leben und Tod Georg von Rauchs und Thomas Weisbeckers," in *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*, vol. 1, 430–71, here 445; Kraushaar, *Bombe*, 142–61.
 19. Classens, de Ahna, "Milieu," 114–17; Kraushaar, *Bombe*; Knud Andresen, "Das 'äußerst komplizierte Palestinaproblem.' Anzisionismus und Antisemitismus in der Agit 883," in *Agit 883. Bewegung, Revolte, Underground*, 157–69.
 20. "883 und das Krisengespenst," *Agit 883*, 54 (26 March 1970), 7–8, here 8.
 21. "Wo steht die Studentenbewegung," *was tun?*, II, 6 (1969), 6–9, here 8.
 22. "Kommentar: Das Janusgesicht des Tages der Befreiung," *Berliner Extra-Dienst*, IV, 35–6 (9 May 1970), 2–3, here 3.
 23. Stefan Aust, *Der Baader-Meinhof-Komplex* (München: Goldmann, 1998), 20–24.
 24. "Die Rote Armee aufbauen!," *Agit 883*, 61 (22 May 1970), 2.
 25. "Die Rote Armee aufbauen!," *Agit 883*, 62 (5 June 1970), 6.
 26. Cf. Wunschik, "Bewegung," 545.
 27. Cf. Knud Andresen, Markus Mohr, and Hartmut Rübner, "Unruhe in der Öffentlichkeit: Agit 883 zwischen Politik, Subkultur und Staat," in *Agit 883. Bewegung, Revolte, Underground*, 17–44, here 33.
 28. "Nehmen sie ihren Hut, Herr Neubauer!" *Agit 883*, 81 (29 May 1970), 3.
 29. "Die Befreiung der Arbeiter kann nur das Werk der Arbeiter selbst sein!," *Agit 883*, 74 (15 January 1971), 6–7, here 6.
 30. "Baader-Meinhof-Jagd und Repressionswelle. RAF—Bewaffneter Kampf und Klassenkampf," *was tun?*, 6 (1972), 3–6; "Gegengewalt?" *Diskus*, XXII, 3–4 (30 June 1972), 1, 16–18, 24–32; "Rote-Armee-Fraktion und Baader-Meinhof-Gruppe," *Links*, 29 (January 1972), 9–11.
 31. "Westberlin und die Eskalation der Gewalt," *Links*, 13 (July–August 1970), 3–4.
 32. Butz Peters, *Tödlicher Irrtum: Die Geschichte der RAF* (Berlin: Argon, 2004), 198–204.
 33. "Rote Armee Fraktion: Leninisten mit Knarren," *Agit 883*, 86 (6 December 1971), 8–9.
 34. "Konzept Stadtguerilla," *Agit 883*, 80 (11 May 1971), 6–15.
 35. Scheerer, "Deutschland," 328; The bombs used in the *Offensive 72* were built in Frankfurt; cf. Peters, *Irrtum*, 279.
 36. Siemens, *Institutionen*, 265–72.
 37. "Bommi" Baumann, *Wie alles anfing* (München: Trikont, 1975), 99.
 38. Andresen, Mohr, Rübner, "Unruhe in der Öffentlichkeit," 42.

39. "... dass die Umstände von den Menschen verändert—und der Erzieher selbst erzogen werden kann: Thesen zur Studentenbewegung," *Langer Marsch*, (6 October 1973), 15–17, here 17.
40. "Häuserkampf in Frankfurt und Berlin—Neue Stufe der Klassenkämpfe?," *Info BUG*, 4 (24 March 1974), 16–20, here 16.
41. Betriebsgruppe Revolutionärer Kampf, "Gewalt. RAF-Kritik," diskus 3–4 (30 June 1972), reprinted in *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbewegung: Von der Flaschenpost zum Molotowcocktail*, ed., Wolfgang Kraushaar, 3 vols (Hamburg: Rogner & Bernhard, 1998), vol. 2, 761–64.
42. Stefan Aust, *Der Lockvogel. Die tödliche Geschichte eines V-Mannes zwischen Verfassungsschutz und Terrorismus* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2002), 12–18.
43. In *Berliner Extra-Dienst*, 40 (1974), The pamphlet and reactions to it are reprinted in *Der Blues: Gesammelte Texte der Bewegung 2. Juni*, ed. Antiquariat "Schwarzer Stern," 2 vols, (Dortmund: Antiquariat "Schwarzer Stern," 2001), vol. 1, 268–78.
44. "An die Bewegung 2. Juni," *Langer Marsch*, 11 (June–July 1974), 24.
45. "RAF—ohne Holger?" *Info BUG*, 15 (16 June 1974), 13–14, here 13.
46. *Ibid.*, 14.
47. "Zum Tod Ulrich Schmückers und dem Verhältnis der Genossen zum 2. Juni," *Info BUG*, 20 (21 July 1974), 8–9, here 9.
48. "Bommi" Baumann was derided after he had quit terrorist actions, see "2. Juni zur Bommi B" in Antiquariat "Schwarzer Stern," *Der Blues*, vol. 1, 251.
49. "Diskussion: 2.6.," *Info BUG*, 19 (15 July 1974), 13–14, here 14.
50. "Der 'Schwarze Juni' macht keinen Roten Sommer," *Langer Marsch*, (12 September 1974), 6–9, here 9.
51. Reprint of a critical article published in *Info BUG*; "An die Bewegung 2. Juni," *Informationsdienst*, 40 (23 June 1974), 9–10.
52. "Andreas Baader im Hungerstreik," *Diskus*, XXIII, 2–3 (June 1973), 27; "RAF-Gefangene im Hungerstreik," *was tun?*, VII, 60 (25 September 1974), 2; "Tod von Holger Meins: Schluss mit der Isolationshaft," *was tun?*, VII, 64 (20 November 1974), 1.
53. Gerd Koenen, "Camera Silens: Das Phantasma der Vernichtungshaft," in *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*, vol. 2, 994–1010; Politladen Verlagsgesellschaft (ed.), "Holger, der Kampf geht weiter!" *Dokumente und Diskussionsbeiträge zum Konzept Stadtguerilla* (Gaiganz: Politladen, 1975).
54. Tobias Wunschik, "Aufstieg und Zerfall. Die Zweite Generation der RAF," in *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*, vol. 1, 472–88, here 472–75.
55. Häuserrat Frankfurt, *Wohnungskampf in Frankfurt* (München: Trikont, 1974).
56. "Isolationsfolter in der BRD," *Diskus*, XXIV, 1 (February 1974), 26–31.
57. "RAF-Prozesse in Sindelfingen," *Diskus*, XXIII, 5 (1973), 1, 13–14.
58. See Kraushaar, "Schatten," 588.
59. Cf. Jacco Pekelder, "The RAF solidarity movement from a European Perspective," published in this volume.
60. "Weil es um die objektive Funktion geht: Vermittlung von Informationen," *Informationsdienst*, 93 (16 August 1975), 1.
61. Peters, *Irrtum*, 319–23.
62. "Zwischen allen Stühlen: Der Terror der Linken und der Terror des Staates sind die beiden Backen derselben Idiotenfalle," *Langer Marsch*, 14 (December 1974), 2–4.

63. See *Info BUG*, 37 (16 December 1974), 12–19; also in “Protokoll 18.12.,” *Info BUG*, 38 (30 December 1974), 2–4, here 3.
64. Laws passed in the period 1971–75: in Hermann Vinke, Gabriele Witt (eds.), *Die Anti-Terror-Debatten im Parlament* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1978), 13–14.
65. “Befindet sich die Linke im Ghetto?,” *Langer Marsch*, (February 1975), 24.
66. “Neuer Justizmord geplant,” *Info BUG*, III, 103 (26 April 1976), 12.
67. “Richtigstellung. Geschichte und Bewusstsein, Anmerkungen wider die Hohlköpfigkeit und Augenwischerei,” *Info BUG*, 43 (3 February 1975), 14–15.
68. Gabriele Rollnik, Daniel Dubbe, *Keine Angst vor niemand* (Hamburg: Nautilus, 2004), 28.
69. Peters, *Irrtum*, 363–64.
70. “Die Entführung aus unserer Sicht,” *Langer Marsch*, (16 April 1975), 4–7, here 4.
71. Wunschik, “Bewegung,” 552–55.
72. The kidnapping of the Austrian entrepreneur Palmers was the only bigger action of the *Bewegung 2. Juni* after 1975, cf. *Ibid.*, 553.
73. Kraushaar, “Schatten,” 597.
74. “An die Rev. Zelle,” *Info BUG*, 65 (7 July 1975), 13.
75. Aust, *Baader-Meinhof-Komplex*, 329–36.
76. “An die Rev. Zelle,” *Info BUG*, 65 (7 July 1975), 13.
77. “Dokumentation: Siegfried Hausner vom Staatsschutz ermordet,” *Info BUG*, 65 (7 July 1975), 14–15, here 14.
78. “Ein Artikel aus dem Infozensur-Kasten: geklaut,” *Info BUG*, 101 (5 April 1976), 13.
79. “Gedanken zum Tode von Ulrike,” *Info BUG*, 109 (14 June 1976), 15; “Die internationale Untersuchungskommission zur Aufklärung des Todes v. U. und die Reaktion der Unterdrückungsorgane in der BRD,” *Info BUG*, 121 (6 September 1976), 12–13.
80. “RZ: Dieser Brief wendet sich an alle Genossen aus der RAF,” *Info BUG*, 136 (13 December 1976), 11–13.
81. “RAF/RZ Diskussion,” *Info BUG*, 139 (17 January 1977), 20–21.
82. John Follain, *Jackal: The Secret Wars of Carlos the Jackal*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1998), 77–98.
83. Klein was heavily involved in street fights during the *Häuserkampf*. Later, he actively supported the RAF. Cf. Hans-Joachim Klein, *Rückkehr in die Menschlichkeit. Appell eines ausgestiegenen Terroristen* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1979), 141–42.
84. “Nur Tote schweigen,” *Pflasterstrand*, 10 (18 May 1977– 31 May 1977), 22; reprinted in *Informationsdienst*, 178 (21 May 1977), 3–4.
85. *Ibid.*, 4; The anonymous so-called *JEMANDE* supported Klein’s retreat from terrorism in this article. It is now known that it included Daniel Cohn-Bendit and Matthias Beltz, see Siemens, *Institutionen*, 356.
86. Widerstand heißt Zuckerrüben anbauen!” *Pflasterstrand*, 10 (18 May 1977–31 May 1977), 27–29; “Was hat das mit Revolution zu tun?” *Pflasterstrand*, 10 (18 May 1977–31 May 1977), 30; “Solidarität,” *Pflasterstrand*, 10 (18 May 1977–31 May 1977), 31–33; “Diskussion mit der Stadtguerilla,” *Pflasterstrand*, 11 (2 June 1977–15 June 1977), 28–29, here 29; “Römerbergrede,” in *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbewegung*, vol. 1, 552–54.

87. "Revolutionäre Zellen zum Brief von Hans Joachim Klein: "Die Hunde bellen und die Karawane zieht weiter," *Informationsdienst*, 179 (28 May 1977), 6–7; reprinted in *Pflasterstrand*, 11 (2 June 1977–15 June 1977), 26–27.
88. Cf. "Ein deutscher Terrorist. Die Geschichte des Hans-Joachim Klein," broadcast on 15 August 2006 on ARD (4.30 PM).
89. "Bewegung 2. Juni zu H.J. Klein," *Informationsdienst*, 184 (2 July 1977), 15–16, 15.
90. Peters, *Irrtum*, 380–83.
91. "Buback—ein Nachruf," *Göttinger Nachrichten*, (25 April 1977), 10–12.
92. Stefan Spiller, "Der Sympathisant als Staatsfeind. Die Mescalero-Affäre," in *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*, vol. 2, 1227–59.
93. "Trügerische Bombenstimmung," *Pflasterstrand*, 7 (6 April 1977–20 April 1977), 12–15, here 12; the "Buback Obituary" was published in Frankfurt in May, cf. "Buback—ein Nachruf," *Informationsdienst*, 178 (21 May 1977), 2–3.
94. "Hungerstreik," *Pflasterstrand*, 8 (20 April 1977–3 May 1977), 14–18, here 18.
95. "Der Fall Buback," *Info BUG*, Nr. 152 (18 April 1977), 7.
96. "Kommentar, Polemik, Meinung zu 2 Artikeln von der RZ," *Info BUG*, 157 (23 May 1977), 17.
97. "Wir sind alle vom 2. Juni," *Info BUG*, 159 (6 June 1977), 6–10, here 6.
98. Aust, *Baader-Meinhof-Komplex*, 483–636.
99. "Die Menschen sollen um des Staates Willen da sein," *Pflasterstrand*, 16 (5 October 1977–19 October 1977), 20; "Das Sponti-Plenum. Zwei Stellungnahmen," *Pflasterstrand*, 18 (3 November 1977–16 November 1977), 20–25; "Stadtguerilla in der BRD," *was tun?*, X, 175 (15 September 1977), 10–12; "Sozialismus und Terrorismus," *express*, 9 (19 September 1977), 12.
100. "Fragmente aus unseren Köpfen," *Pflasterstrand*, 17 (20 October 1977–2 November 1977), 27–31.
101. "Ich hab es nicht gelesen, ich habe es nicht gesehen, aber ich habe es gehört!" *Pflasterstrand*, 19 (17 November 1977–30 November 1977), 14–15; "Gespräch mit Irmgard Möller," *Informationsdienst*, 206 (3 November 1977), 8; "Der Beginn der Endlösung," *Informationsdienst*, 204 (18 November 1977), 8–15; "Eindeutig Selbstmord festgestellt. Mehr Fragen als zuvor," *Pflasterstrand*, 18 (3 November 1977–16 November 1977), 14; "Wir glauben nicht an Selbstmord," *Pflasterstrand*, 18 (3 November 1977–16 November 1977), 16; "Starb Ulrike Meinhof vor dem Selbstmord?" *Informationsdienst*, 209–210 (23 December 1977), 28–30; "Wir werden alles erklären," *was tun?*, X, 183 (10 November 1977), 4.
102. "Nihilistischer Terror, links etikettiert und die Sprachlosigkeit der Linken," *Langer Marsch*, (October 1977), 3.
103. "was nun?" *Langer Marsch*, (October 1977), 8.
104. "Nihilistischer Terror, links etikettiert und die Sprachlosigkeit der Linken," *Langer Marsch*, (October 1977), 3.
105. "Doppelstrategie," *Langer Marsch*, (November 1977), 8.
106. Spiller, "Sympathisant."
107. "Solidarität mit Heinrich Böll," *Informationsdienst*, 200 (22 October 1977), 6–7.
108. Daniel Cohn-Bendit labeled this process *Rückzug "aufs Regionale"* (retreat into the region), see Siemens, *Institutionen*, 169.

109. Scheerer, "Deutschland," 232–75.
110. "For us 'movement people' there are only two possibilities. Either we press on to become fighters in the global revolution or we slink back into our bourgeois holes and become anticommunist pigs" in "Blow up Amerika, blow up Berlin," *Agit* 883, 59 (7 May 1970), 10–11, here 10.
111. Häuserrat Frankfurt, *Wohnungskampf*.
112. Scheerer, "Deutschland," 322, 401.
113. Siemens, *Institutionen* 271; Interview with Tilman Schulz in "Ein deutscher Terrorist. Die Geschichte des Hans-Joachim Klein," broadcast on 15 August 2006 on ARD (4.30 PM).
114. Cf. Kraushaar, "Mythos RAF: Im Spannungsfeld von terroristischer Herausforderung und populistischer Bedrohungsphantasie," in *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*, vol 2, 1186–1210.
115. Daniel Cohn-Bendit concluded that the conflict on the RAF and "Stammheim" was driven by the image of the "state in our heads." The decisive question was "whether our aversion against this state had a justification." see Siemens, *Institutionen*, 271.
116. Kraushaar evaluated this development and de-escalation as the replacement of the *Kampfbegriff* by *Befriedung*. Cf. Wolfgang Kraushaar, "Thesen zum Verhältnis von Alternativ- und Fluchtbewegung," in *Autonomie oder Ghetto? Kontroversen über die Alternativbewegung* (Frankfurt/M.: Verlag Neue Kritik, 1978), 8–67, here 30. The volume shows the diversity of the milieu at that time.
117. Hanno Balz, "Der "Sympathisanten"-Diskurs im Deutschen Herbst" in *Terrorismus in der Bundesrepublik. Medien Staat und Subkulturen in den 1970er Jahren*, eds Klaus Weinhauer, Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, Jörg Requate (Frankfurt: Campus, 2006), 320–50.

The RAF Solidarity Movement from a European Perspective

Jacco Pekelder

Introduction

It is generally accepted that the “Rote Armee Fraktion” (Red Army Faction, RAF) had a significant impact on West German society in the 1970s. However, the shock waves caused by the actions of the RAF and the political and social response it provoked did not stop at Germany’s borders. From the very beginning, the Baader-Meinhof group attracted international media and public attention and appealed to the hearts and minds of particular audiences that were themselves challenging the established order in their parts of the globe. Despite a multitude of studies about the RAF and related topics produced by scholars, the transnational implications of West German left-wing terrorism have not yet been substantially explored.¹ Although academics by no means neglected the international cooperation among terrorist groups in the 1970s, a lot of questions still remain unanswered.² Various non-German activists participated in the RAF solidarity movement that developed after the June 1972 wave of arrests that put most members of the organization in prison. These foreign contributions to the solidarity movement or even to the RAF itself are hardly acknowledged let alone analyzed. This chapter studies the RAF solidarity movement from a European perspective. It argues that this movement was in fact to a certain degree a transnational affair and cannot be understood properly without taking into account the interplay and transfer (of ideas and action repertoires) between German and foreign activists. It starts with a close examination of one remarkable example of early Dutch involvement in the 1970s’ RAF solidarity movement, before broadening the analysis to other examples of the international RAF solidarity movement, which is based on new archival material.

Focusing on the RAF solidarity movement and studying it from a European perspective will widen our understanding of 1970s’ left-wing German “terrorism.”³ Previous studies have concentrated on the ideological, social, and psychological root causes of political violence, whereas recent publications have put a stronger emphasis on what happened from the moment violence began. How did the terrorist groups develop, how did their social environment react, how did

West German society perceive the terrorist threat, and what social and political reactions did it provoke or promote? This chapter is part of this different form of contextualization of RAF's political violence, which strongly illuminates the complex triangular relationship between the terrorists, their societal surround and society at large.⁴

Sensory Deprivation and Resistance: Sjef Teuns and the BWA

In 1972 the RAF lived through its greatest triumphs with its deadly bombing campaign in May, while also experiencing an almost complete downfall with the subsequent arrests that put all leading underground activists behind bars. After this the organization was practically non-existent, but it succeeded in rebuilding itself under the guidance of those in prison. A powerful instrument for the mobilization of sympathizers outside of the prisons was the accusation that the state was torturing prisoners, especially through "Isolationsfolter" (isolation torture). To direct public attention toward this accusation, RAF prisoners organized several collective hunger strikes. By way of an intricate message service, called *info*, several RAF lawyers facilitated the prisoners' communication among each other and with the outside world. Most solidarity committees that were established in several university cities were operating with their help or under their coordination.⁵

Central to the RAF solidarity movement was the idea that imprisoned RAF members were "annihilated" ("vernichtet") by the (West) German state with clever torture techniques like "isolation torture." From the network of solidarity committees this idea was transported to the broader scene of the radical left. Its members often granted the RAF a certain status of martyrdom out of a feeling of personal shortcomings and guilt.⁶ In essence, this idea of RAF victimhood was largely a myth, but for some years it enjoyed a remarkable credibility because it was connected to three powerful notions about German/Western society and the state that had gained broad popularity among the extra-parliamentary protest movement of the second half of the 1960s and the multitude of organizations, parties, and so on, that followed it. First, it played on the persistent idea—not entirely untrue—that the radical left had always been persecuted in German history. Second, it connected to a discourse informed by the Frankfurt School of political and social thought that de-legitimized Western democracy as being authoritarian, inherently fascist, and—at the same time—immensely sophisticated in the methods it uses to subdue its citizens.⁷ Last, the idea arose that the authorities, in Western democracies in general and in Germany with its Nazi past especially, waged a kind of vigorous "preemptive counterrevolution" against all those who fundamentally opposed the established political and economic order.⁸ Seen in this light, many among the radical left considered the RAF's

violence understandable (though most thought it unwise) and its claim to victimhood credible.

On 11 May 1973, against the background of the second collective hunger strike of the imprisoned RAF members, the Frankfurt *Komitee zur Aufklärung über Gefängnisse/Initiative gegen Folter* (Committee to Inform about Prisons/Initiatives against Torture) organized a national teach-in of all West German solidarity committees. A number of foreign RAF sympathizers were also present at the event, one of them Dutch psychiatrist Sjeff Teuns. In a speech, Teuns argued that solitary confinement amounted to a deprivation of the senses of inmates and that it could eventually lead to their deaths. This idea of “sensory deprivation” would have a lasting effect on the discourse about the imprisonment of RAF members and continued to influence the perception of the RAF in left-wing circles in West Germany and elsewhere for years to come. As late as 1994, Dutch artist Rob Moonen and his German associate Olaf Arndt presented a replica of a soundproof prison cell, called *camera silens*, in a belated attempt to re-create the sensory deprivation RAF members were supposed to have suffered from.⁹

A few months after the teach-in, Teuns’s text was published in issue 32 of *Kursbuch*, the most important monthly for West Germany’s radical left at that time. This issue was dedicated to “torture” in the Federal Republic and appeared in August 1973. In his contribution in the issue Teuns argued that sensory deprivation deformed the personalities of patients and prisoners and could result in mental and physical destruction. Because acoustic communication is of vital importance for human beings, sensory deprivation is—more than starving, shooting, or gassing that can kill both human and animal life—“a method of destroying the substance of life that was especially directed against the human organism.” Apart from that, it is also “the most human and at the same time the most inhumane method of slowly extinguishing life,” because sensory deprivation is caused by a system that involves a number of people. Teuns: “Practiced for months and years, it is the proverbial ‘perfect murder,’ for which *no one*—or *everyone* except the victims—is responsible.”¹⁰ The Dutch psychiatrist considered it his responsibility not only to blame those who, like the prison guards and doctors, routinely operate the switches of this violent apparatus that produces sensory deprivation, but also to accuse those scientists whose experiments permitted the fine tuning of the isolation of patients and prisoners. For Teuns, the responsible researchers who had performed psychological experiments with a scientific installation named “Camera Silens” were located at the psychiatric hospital in Hamburg-Eppendorf. Since 1971 this center was led by Czech scientist Jan Gross. In an experiment under his direction people were put in a soundproof room for up to two hours in order to measure the effects on the motor nerves and other reactions that this extreme kind of social isolation and the almost complete sensory deprivation would cause.¹¹

The reason for Teuns’s attack on the psychiatric hospital and its director lay in his connections to university politics in Hamburg, where he was a visiting teacher

in the early 1970s.¹² In addition, his criticism also sprang from his Dutch background. At the Frankfurt teach-in Teuns had been the spokesperson of a left-wing organization of Dutch academics and scientists, the “Bond voor Wetenschappelijke Arbeiders” (Union for Scientific Workers, BWA), which strove to let science be of direct service to society and to progressive politics.¹³ As the BWA solidarity committee underlined in an explanatory introduction in the *Kursbuch* 32 issue, Teuns’s article was meant to inform about the connection between the situation of the “exploited—deprived—and suppressed—isolated and atomized—individuals outside of the prisons and madhouses and the situation of political prisoners and patients.” Because of the gradual debilitating of the masses in capitalist society (the BWA committee suggested this was also a kind of sensory deprivation) that upheld the existing power structure, many were not yet able to see “Isolationsfolter,” as practiced on political prisoners in the Federal Republic, “as the possible mass murder Auschwitz style ... it is.” In consequence, the committee supported the RAF prisoners not as a charitable action but out of self-interest, while it was still possible to fight for their rights, “before we are prisoners ourselves.”¹⁴

To fully understand this statement we have to go back to BWA’s beginnings. At the end of 1969, a group of former student activists, afraid of losing the ideals of the 1960s once they were involved in professional and family life, decided to establish a union of academic “workers,” a context to retain their radicalism. BWA discussions dealt mainly with questions such as evolution versus revolution as well as gradual change versus direct, violent action. The initiators of BWA were very successful in attracting “workers” from universities, research institutes, and professions of medical and social care. With an initial membership of about 600 people, it took on a prominent role in university politics in cities with a strong radical left like Amsterdam, Nijmegen, and Tilburg.¹⁵

BWA saw itself as a service organization to a number of action committees. It included working groups specializing in specific themes such as pharmaceuticals, social and health care, town and country planning, distribution of income, and military defense.¹⁶ The interest in the RAF developed within the working group about social and health care (“Welzijnszorg”), in which Sjef Teuns played a prominent part. Teuns was one of the activists of this group, a member of BWA’s board at least until the fall of 1973, and a regular contributor to the information bulletin sent to all members. Most of his articles dealt with the role of the medical profession in societal power structures and the development of a critical attitude toward it. Teuns’s mission was to reveal the abuse of “institutional” psychiatry and prisons by those in power as a means of controlling the masses and stifling dissent. In 1969, Teuns himself had been sacked as a director of a mental health clinic in Leyden, partly over a conflict about the university’s child psychiatry study program, and partly over differences concerning the treatment of children with mental problems. In several Western countries “anti-psychiatry” or “critical psychiatry,” a reform movement within clinical psychiatry blaming the “illnesses” of mentally ill patients on structural flaws of Western society, was

en vogue. Teuns belonged to its more politically motivated strain, which argued that mental diseases could eventually only be cured by an overthrow of the bourgeois, capitalist system.¹⁷

Against this background Teuns and other BWA members became interested in the “Sozialistischer Patientenkollektiv” (Socialist Patients’ Collective, SPK), a group of anti-psychiatry activists around Heidelberg psychiatrist Wolfgang Huber founded in 1970 at the local university mental health clinic that had quickly radicalized to the point of taking up arms against the state.¹⁸ In July 1971 Heidelberg police raided SPK houses and arrested the inner circle of twelve members who were suspected of building a criminal organization. Weapons and other materials for underground urban guerrilla activities that were found in the searches seemed to confirm this accusation. In a dramatic trial at the end of 1972 Huber and his wife were given prison sentences of four and a half and four years respectively. Before this, a Dutch solidarity committee (“Solidariteitscomité SPK”) had already been founded on their behalf. Teuns was a very active member of this committee. He wrote about the SPK in the BWA bulletin, took part in solidarity actions, and helped with the collection of money to support the legal defense of SPK members. Teuns was impressed by the hunger strikes with which Huber and other imprisoned SPK members were offering “resistance.” For him, “[t]his shows ... that even in prison SPK still purposely defends the anti repression, and still fights against the repression caused by, among other things, psychiatric methods.”¹⁹ During the Huber trial in November 1972, twenty BWA activists participated in a large SPK teach-in in Heidelberg with about 1,300 participants.

It is striking to see how the memory of the Holocaust was one of the driving motives behind the actions of the BWA activists and their solidarity with the West German SPK. Their writings and speeches are abundant in semantic references to Nazi terror, while their own political actions are described as “resistance,” a term that strongly links them to actions against German occupation forces during World War II. A group of psychiatric nurses, for example, wrote about mental patients being outlawed in 1973: “Are we going to do something now, or will we too say later on: ‘Wir haben es nicht gewußt?’” The last part of this question that literally means “We did not know,” was deliberately phrased in German, because it referred to an attitude that was supposed to have been typical of postwar Germans who claimed not to have had any knowledge of war time atrocities of Nazi Germany. In the 1970s this cultural reference was familiar to all Dutch and amounted to an appeal to all citizens not to look away when others are oppressed.²⁰ In a certain sense this was similar to the reference within the American student movement of the 1960s to the “Good German” (i.e. a German that adapted to Nazi rule during the Third Reich), a negative icon that motivated some in their “resistance” against war and perceived oppression.²¹

For others, SPK seems more to have been just a particularly inspiring example of critical psychiatry. Among people drawn to “alternative medical and

social assistance” in the Netherlands, like “release” projects for drug addicts or centers for runaway youth, SPK was equally popular. In these circles solidarity with the needy was considered crucial; social work as such was thought to be too directed toward conforming those who asked for help to the pressing demands of society.²²

After the SPK trial that led to sentences that according to Teuns were “fascist,”²³ the attention for developments in West Germany actually intensified. In 1973, BWA members founded an action group “patients and detainees.” This new committee was triggered by the announcement by the city of Amsterdam that a large and very modern penitentiary complex, including a psychiatric ward, was to be built in the southern outskirts of town (the so-called “Bijlmerbajes,” a complex of six fourteen-floor towers). Teuns was again a central figure in this group. He and others speaking at BWA meetings suggested that this new prison might be used as a concentration camp in the future, when those in power felt the need to suppress the radical left. The group considered the Amsterdam prison project to be part of a larger transformation in the structure of the “West European penitentiary system,” which in their view state authorities were turning into a system of political control.²⁴ This new BWA committee seems to have cooperated quite energetically with West German “Komitees gegen Folter an Politischen Gefangenen” (Committees against Torture of Political Prisoners). It not only participated in the aforementioned 1973 Frankfurt teach-in, where Teuns delivered his notorious speech on “sensory deprivation,” but it also brought the plight of German “political prisoners” to the attention of Amnesty International. Apart from this, the BWA committee cultivated contacts with like-minded activists from Italy, Switzerland, and Belgium, thereby gradually establishing a European solidarity network.²⁵

International Solidarity: Jean-Paul Sartre, Pieter Herman Bakker Schut, and Beyond

After the publication of issue 32 of *Kursbuch* in August 1973 the conflict over prison conditions escalated, especially when RAF’s Holger Meins died of starvation during the third hunger strike of RAF prisoners in the fall/winter of 1974. All the while the solidarity movement spread further across Germany’s borders. In part this was a case of various people outside of Germany becoming genuinely angered by the ongoing reports of mistreatment of RAF prisoners, but the German lawyers of the RAF also played their part. They developed a strategy of igniting foreign indignation as a way to create pressure from abroad that would force the federal government in Bonn to change its policy. Thus it is no surprise that solidarity committees outside Germany were often run by lawyers, too. A central figure in this international campaign was Jean Asselmeyer, who is mentioned in the founding declaration of the Brussels’ “Comité de Défense des Pri-

sonniers Politiques en la RFA” (Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners in the Federal Republic of Germany). According to the document, the Stuttgart office of RAF lawyer Klaus Croissant in 1974 entrusted Asselmeyer, who had already established a “Comité de Soutien aux Prisonniers de la RAF” (Support Committee for the Prisoners of the RAF) in Paris, with the coordination of all non-German activities concerning RAF prisoners.²⁶

Asselmeyer was born in 1944 in Mulhouse in Alsace, and had been oscillating between France and the Federal Republic since 1967, when he became an active member of the West Berlin SDS. He later was involved in the “Rote Hilfe” (Red Assistance) and in the left-wing publisher *Trikont*. Asselmeyer seems to have been the driving force behind a dossier about the RAF prisoners in the March 1974 issue of the French intellectual magazine *Les Temps Modernes*, whose chief editor was Jean-Paul Sartre. This set of articles and documents entitled *Les prisonniers politiques Ouest-Allemands accusent* (The West German political prisoners accuse) began with an opening article by Asselmeyer, who under the pseudonym of “Viktor Kleinkrieg” (a playful reference to victory and guerrilla), sketched the situation of the “anti-imperialist combatants.” It was followed by, among other contributions, a French translation of Sjef Teuns’s *Kursbuch* article.²⁷

In the fall of 1974, international solidarity activities for the RAF reached a climax when coordinated actions in Hamburg, Amsterdam, and London took place simultaneously on 27 September 1974, indicating a high degree of transnational cooperation. In Hamburg, family members of RAF prisoners visited the city senate and demanded more liberal prison conditions, while at the same time different left-wing radical groups temporarily occupied the Amsterdam office of West German airline company Lufthansa and picketed the embassy of the FRG in London. The most widely covered event, however, was the visit of Jean-Paul Sartre to Andreas Baader in Stammheim on 4 December 1974. The aging philosopher had accepted an invitation written by Meinhof and Baader and delivered to Paris by their lawyer Klaus Croissant. Sartre and Baader conferred for an hour in a visitor’s cell, accompanied by an interpreter and a prison guard. In the subsequent press conference organized by some of the lawyers of the RAF prisoners Sartre stated that Baader showed the face of a tortured individual. For him, this was not the same kind of torture the Nazis had practiced, with mainly physical effects, but one that rather caused mental disturbances. Although these statements were not based on actual prison conditions in Stammheim, they were widely published and therefore formed the greatest success of the international solidarity campaign up to that point.²⁸

Shortly after Sartre’s visit on 14 December 1974, the “Comité International de Défense des Prisonniers Politiques en Europe” (International Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners in Europe) was established in Utrecht. The committee consisted mainly of lawyers and medical doctors from the Netherlands, Belgium, France, and Italy. In its press communiqué, the committee expressed its “concern about the development of new forms of repression in

Western Europe, especially in the Federal Republic of Germany, where prisoners of the Red Army Faction [were] submitted to murderous prison conditions by sensory deprivation.” According to the committee, “the repression of militant anti-fascist and anti-imperialist movements in Europe [was being] converted ... in unacceptable means of coercion that aimed to destroy their personal identities.” Its first task was therefore to ensure the legal defense of the German “political prisoners”; a burden that lawyers from France, Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, and North America had to shoulder. Medical doctors could help by ascertaining the physical condition of the prisoners. As the legal foundation for its work the committee referred to the European Convention on Human Rights, article 3, which stated that “[n]o one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”²⁹ On 20 January 1975, the International Committee that came to be known under its German name “Internationales Verteidigungskomitee” (International Defense Committee, IVK) reconvened and formulated its program at a meeting in Paris.³⁰ In the years afterward, several other international bodies were formed (some of them ad hoc committees, others of a more permanent nature) and continued to publish international solidarity declarations, such as after Ulrike Meinhof’s suicide in 1976 or the triple suicides in Stammheim in 1977.

It was no coincidence, however, that the International Committee had been established in the Netherlands. In the fall of 1974, Dutch public awareness of the RAF’s prison struggle was heightened by the case of Ronald Augustin, a Dutch citizen suspected of RAF membership, who had been arrested on 24 July 1973, on a train that had just passed the border into Germany. Augustin was subsequently transferred to Hanover, where he was held in solitary confinement after 2 May 1974. There he participated in the third RAF hunger strike and was force-fed by prison authorities in October 1974.³¹ Augustin’s mother and sister organized a number of protests in the Netherlands and in Germany against the assumed mistreatment.³² In addition, the Augustin family commissioned Dutch lawyer Pieter Herman Bakker Schut to trigger a publicity campaign aimed at winning the support of the Dutch press and forcing the Dutch government to address the authorities in West Germany about the case. Bakker Schut, who had been born in 1941, had become a well-known advocate of left-wing causes in the early 1970s. He had defended a handful of left-wing activists and at least one drug dealer (his own supplier), while also lecturing at the Willem Pompe Institute for Penal Law of Utrecht University and hosting a television show about the law. Because of this prominence in the Netherlands, the imprisoned Ronald Augustin had prompted his family to approach Bakker Schut, and he consequently became one of Augustin’s representatives during the trial in 1975 in Bückeburg, West Germany.³³

On the eve of the Augustin trial, Bakker Schut published an article in the most prominent Dutch legal journal about what he called the “political justice in the Federal Republic.” He criticized the changes in German penal law that

limited the rights of legal defense, limitations that were generally regarded as measures of the state to safeguard the upcoming trial against Andreas Baader, Ulrike Meinhof and other leaders of the RAF in Stuttgart-Stammheim (the legislation was therefore called the “Lex Baader Meinhof”). In his article, Bakker Schut explained that in December 1974 a majority of the Utrecht Law Faculty had passed a motion of protest against the way RAF prisoners and their lawyers were treated in West Germany and called on other Dutch lawyers and university bodies to follow this example, as the Council of Groningen University had already done. Furthermore, Bakker Schut asked his fellow-lawyers to declare their solidarity with the International Committee.³⁴

After the trial that ended in Augustin being sentenced to six years imprisonment, Bakker Schut stayed involved in several of the legal battles concerning the RAF. At the time of the International Committee’s foundation at the end of 1974, the Dutch lawyer was a main force in the creation of transnational networks within the RAF solidarity movement. In Stammheim, he functioned as a legal adviser for the defense team. Some people still consider the book he wrote about the trial in Stammheim, which was accepted as his dissertation at Utrecht University in 1986, to be an authoritative legal history of the RAF.³⁵

A month before the Stammheim trial started, Bakker Schut and other lawyers and medical doctors (among them Sjef Teuns) founded the Dutch “Medisch-Juridisch Comité voor Politieke Gevangenen” (Medical-Legal Committee for Political Prisoners, MJC) in Utrecht on 19 April 1975. This was the Dutch affiliate of the International Committee established in December 1974. Its members were in part activists from the already mentioned BWA initiative “patients and detainees” and from the “Medisch Comité Nederland-Vietnam” (Medical Committee Netherlands-Vietnam), a well-known activist group dating back to the 1960s.

In its press communiqué the MJC declared that “the most important reason” for its activities was “the treatment of political prisoners and their lawyers being threatened with exclusion trials in the Federal Republic,” the latter referring to efforts of the prosecutor’s office to exclude Klaus Croissant from the case. However, considering the international dimension of the problem with respect to Ireland, Italy, and Spain, the committee “also wanted to support political prisoners, their doctors and lawyers in other countries that developed in the same direction.” At the committee’s press conference, Klaus Croissant specifically attacked the poisoned public atmosphere in West Germany.³⁶ In accordance with this statement, MJC also explained the need for the establishment of such a committee outside of Germany: “The situation in West Germany is aggravating day by day, while the so called ‘liberal public opinion’ is practically non-existent.” Therefore, “permanent pressure from abroad [was] getting more and more necessary.”³⁷

The Stammheim trial generated a variety of activities by MJC and other solidarity committees outside Germany. These committees and new organiza-

tions that began to emerge produced a plethora of written materials, ranging from pamphlets and correspondence between the terrorists and their lawyers to biographical texts about them, which were published in German and in many non-German languages well into the 1990s.³⁸

In 1977–78, Bakker Schut was also the pivotal figure in a group of Dutch lawyers and medical doctors that defended and supported three RAF members who were imprisoned in the Netherlands. They had been arrested after violent shoot-outs with the police in September and November 1977. One of them, Knut Folkerts, had murdered a policeman in Utrecht, and was sentenced to twenty years imprisonment in December 1977. The other two, Christof Wackernagel and Gert Schneider, were not tried in the Netherlands, although they had injured Dutch police officers. The West German government requested the extradition of all three in order to prosecute them for crimes relating to RAF actions in the “German Autumn” of 1977. The Dutch lawyers attempted to prevent the extradition by pleading political asylum for their clients based on concerns about the treatment of “political prisoners” in West Germany. Exactly as had been the case in Germany, soon after their arrests the RAF prisoners in the Netherlands began protesting against prison conditions that in their eyes amounted to almost total isolation. In February 1978, they started a hunger strike and shortly thereafter their lawyers contacted a number of medical examiners, to maintain their clients’ health and to give publicity to their prison struggle. Together with these “doctors of confidence” (“Vertrouwensartsen”), the lawyers succeeded in partially improving the situation for their clients, but could not prevent the Dutch authorities from ultimately granting the West German extradition requests. The affair ended abruptly when in October 1978 the prisoners started a second hunger strike. The Dutch state secretary of justice instantly ordered the immediate extradition of all three prisoners to West Germany. Dutch involvement in solidarity activities somewhat diminished after that, although some lawyers participated in the trial against Wackernagel and Schneider in Düsseldorf in 1980, and a handful of Dutch action committees continued supporting RAF prisoners and sometimes even RAF actions.³⁹

Conclusion: Fear of “Modell Deutschland”

Although the international RAF solidarity movement has not been fully explored and thus remains *terra incognita* to a certain degree, there are several characteristics which can be discerned at this point. In terms of action repertoires, the differences between the committees in West Germany and their counterparts abroad were almost insignificant. Both organized press conferences, picketing, and occupations, and published information leaflets, brochures, and books to inform the public in a “neutral” way distinct from the mass media about the RAF’s struggle inside and outside of prison. These activities correspond extremely well

to protest techniques used during the previous decade. This raises the question to what extent the transnational RAF solidarity movement must be seen as in continuance of (radical) left-wing activity of the late 1960s or even as a typical example of it. In consequence, it is debatable to what extent it is still justified to study RAF solidarity isolated from other actions or campaigns, not only in terms of action techniques but also of themes. It is clear from the BWA example that the socio-political context in each participating country might well have exercised a considerable influence on the development and activities of solidarity committees outside Germany. These internal dynamics, which were not generated as such by the actual events in West Germany, have not been recognized up to now. This is not to say that the support groups abroad were fully independent of the RAF solidarity movement in Germany. Like those in West Germany these support groups were often established at the initiative of the Stuttgart lawyers' collective, but there seem to have been differences in the degree of independence and local initiative. The French and Belgian committees, for example, operated under more direct instructions through Asselmeyer than the Dutch committee.

In terms of motives for foreign solidarity efforts on behalf of the RAF, anti-German references were particularly striking in the Dutch case. The semantics of many Dutch solidarity statements were frequently inspired by memories of National Socialism and German occupation. The question is to what extent RAF solidarity in neighboring countries could have been simply a continuation of resentment against the former occupier and an expression of unease with its newfound wealth and power. There are clear indications that it was more than just this. It is striking that already in 1973, the Rode Hulp (Red Assistance) in Eindhoven wrote about a widespread attack on left-wing activists "by the power apparatus of capitalist society" in relation to the sentencing of RAF member Horst Mahler to more than ten years imprisonment. Rode Hulp declared that this attack had an "international orientation, because the Netherlands were no separate small country in this world, but an integrated part of imperialist society." Therefore, "one must fear, that circumstances abroad will before long influence the Netherlands, which in fact means left-wing activists will be outlawed."⁴⁰ Furthermore, it was more than just a play with words which enticed the Dutch MJC to give its bulletins titles such as "Herfst in Holland" (Dutch autumn, after the "German Autumn" of 1977), and "Nederland naar Duits model" (The Netherlands after a German model), the latter being a reference to chancellor Helmut Schmidt's "Modell Deutschland" election campaign of 1976.⁴¹ All of this illustrates a pervasive concern or self-fulfilling rhetorical strategy to interpret the developments in West Germany as potentially applicable in one's own country.

The explanation of the Dutch BWA committee's action against what they perceived as torture, are telling in this case. Especially their attempt to stop these practices from spreading over the continent, "before we ourselves become prisoners," reveal the key motivation of many foreign RAF solidarity activists: a fear of totalitarian rule, based on advanced science and technology that also moti-

vated the struggle against institutionalized psychiatry and the prison system. This was not a specific Dutch concern, nor was it strictly related to the plight of the RAF, or to German relations with its neighboring countries. Instead it was in a way typical of parts of 1970s' protest all over the Western world. The BWA case strongly suggests that non-German involvement with the RAF could well have been a case of former 1960s' "revolutionaries" and their sympathizers and followers fearing a conservative backlash which, in their nightmares, might well be a first step to a return to fascism. Some dreaded West Germany, with its harsh counter-terrorist policies, as a dystopian European future prognosis. The imprisoned members of the RAF were very successful in tapping in on this sentiment that provided a basis for a transnational solidarity movement with affiliates all over Western Europe.

Notes

1. Klaus Weinhauer and Jörg Requate, "Einleitung: Die Herausforderung des 'Linksterrorismus,'" in: Klaus Weinhauer, Jörg Requate, and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, eds., *Terrorismus in der Bundesrepublik: Medien, Staat und Subkulturen in den 1970er Jahren* (Frankfurt/New York: Campus Verlag, 2006) 9–32; Wolfgang Kraushaar, "Einleitung. Zur Topologie des Terrorismus," in: Wolfgang Kraushaar, ed., *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2006) 13–61; Jacco Pekelder, "Historisering van de RAF. Geschiedschrijving over dertig jaar links Duits terrorisme, 1968–1998," *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, Vol. 119 (2006) No. 2, 196–217.
2. For exceptions with respect to East German support, as well as the cooperation with Palestinian and French terrorist groups see, for instance, in Kraushaar's edited volume about the Red Army Faction, *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*, the following articles: Wolfgang Kraushaar, "Antizionismus als Trojanisches Pferd: Zur antisemitischen Dimension in den Kooperationen von Tupemaros West-Berlin, RAF und RZ mit den Palästinensern," 676–95; Martin Jander, "Differenzen im antiimperialistischen Kampf: Zu den Verbindungen des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit mit der RAF und dem bundesdeutschen Linksterrorismus," 696–713; Thomas Skelton Robinson, "Im Netz verheddert: Die Beziehungen des bundesdeutschen Linksterrorismus zur Volksfront für die Befreiung Palästinas" (1969–1980), 828–904; Christopher Daase, "Die RAF und der internationale Terrorismus: Zur transnationalen Kooperation klandestiner Organisationen," 905–29.
3. I use the words "terrorism" and "terrorists" in full awareness of the controversies surrounding them. For a closer analysis of the burden carried by these terms see: Rudolf Walther, "Terror, Terrorismus," in: Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, and Reinhard Koselleck, eds., *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland. Studienausgabe* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2004) Band 6, 323–444.
4. See Trutz von Trotha, ed., *Soziologie der Gewalt: Sonderheft 37/1997, Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* (Opladen/Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1997); Klaus Weinhauer, "Terrorismus in der Bundesrepublik der Siebziger Jahre: Aspekte einer Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte der inneren Sicherheit," *Archiv für*

- Sozialgeschichte*, 44 (2004) 219–42; Jacco Pekelder, “Die radikale Linke in Deutschland und die RAF,” in: Hanco Jürgens, Jacco Pekelder, Falk Brettschneider and Klaus Bachmann, eds., *Eine Welt zu gewinnen! Formen und Folgen der 68er Bewegung in Ost- und Westeuropa* (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2009) 100–17; Louise Richardson, *What Terrorists Want: Understanding the Enemy. Containing the Threat* (New York: Random House, 2006) 69.
5. About the role of the lawyers see Hellmut Brunn and Thomas Kirn, *Rechtsanwälte, Linksanwälte: 1971 bis 1981—das rote Jahrzehnt vor Gericht* (Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn, 2004); Stefan Reinecke, “Die linke Anwälte. Eine Typologie,” in: Kraushaar, ed., *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*, 948–56.
 6. See Wolfgang Kraushaar, “Phantomschmerz RAF,” in: Idem, *1968 als Mythos, Chiffre und Zäsur* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2000) 163–71 (originally published in *die tageszeitung*, 18 November 1997); Jeremy Varon, *Bringing the war home: The Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004) 196–253; Sebastian Scheerer, “‘Folter ist kein revolutionärer Kampfbegriff’: Zur Geschichte des Foltervorwurfs in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland,” in: Jan Philipp Reemtsma, ed., *Folter: Zur Analyse eines Herrschaftsmittels* (Hamburg: Junius Verlag, 1991) 209–37; Martin Jander, “Isolation. Zu den Haftbedingungen der RAF-Gefangenen,” in: Kraushaar, ed., *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*, 973–93; Jacco Pekelder, “Links slachtoferschap: De RAF als afrekening met de Duitse schuld,” in: Patrick Dassen, Ton Nijhuis and Krijn Thijs, eds., *Duitsers als slachtoffers: Het einde van een taboe?* (Amsterdam: Mets & Schilt, 2007) 305–35.
 7. In Germany this line of thinking was made widely popular by German sociologist Johannes Agnoli who wrote an immensely influential essay, “Die Transformation der Demokratie,” published in mid 1967.
 8. Peter Brückner, “Politisch-psychologische Anmerkungen zur Roten-Armee-Fraktion,” in: Peter Brückner, *Über die Gewalt: Sechs Aufsätze zur Rolle der Gewalt in der Entstehung und Zerstörung sozialer Systeme* (Berlin (West): Klaus Wagenbach Verlag, 1979) 28–53 (originally printed in 1973).
 9. See Rob Moonen and Olaf Arndt, *camera silens* (Hamburg: Edition Nautilus, 1995); Klaus Biesenbach, ed., *Zur Vorstellung des Terrors: Die RAF-Ausstellung* 2 Bände (Göttingen/Berlin: Steidl/KW, 2005) Band 2, 103. More about Teuns in: Jacco Pekelder, “‘Bevor wir selbst Gefangene sind’—Ursprünge niederländischer Sympathie für die Rote Armee Fraktion in den siebziger Jahren,” in: Zentrum für Niederlande-Studien, ed., *Jahrbuch 18, 2007* (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2008) 103–15.
 10. Sjef Teuns, “Isolation/Sensorische Deprivation: die programmierte Folter,” *Kursbuch*, No. 32, August 1973, 118–26: 118, 122–23 (italics in the original text).
 11. Gerd Koenen, “Camera Silens: Das Phantasma der ‘Vernichtungshaft,’” in: Kraushaar, ed., *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*, 994–1010.
 12. Interview with Sjef Teuns in Amsterdam, January 3 and February 23, 2007.
 13. There is no separate monograph dealing with BWA history, but there is one about a similar organization that fused with BWA in 1980: Leo Molenaar, “*Wij kunnen het niet langer aan de politici overlaten. De geschiedenis van het Verbond van Wetenschappelijke Onderzoekers, 1946–1980* (Delft: Elmar, 1994). (See also: <http://www.leomolenaar.nl/WaarblijftnieuweBWA.pdf>).
 14. Teuns, “Isolation/Sensorische Deprivation,” 118–19.

15. *Ibid.*, 240–43; BWA Archive, IISH, Amsterdam, Folder 4, “1ste congres jan. 1970” (First congress, January 1970), letters of Peter Cohen and Wouter Smeulders, undated; Martin Ruyter, “Ooit chemici bij Shell zien staken? Bond voor Wetenschappelijke Arbeiders opgericht,” *de Volkskrant*, 25 November 1969. All Dutch quotes have been translated into English by the author.
16. BWA Archive, IISH, Amsterdam, Folder 3, “Ledenlijsten,” “Lijst van contactmensen per werkgroep,” and Folder 17, “Documentatie. [etc.],” BWA information leaflet.
17. Gemma Blok, *Baas in eigen brein: Antipsychiatrie in Nederland, 1965–1985* (Amsterdam: Nieuwezijds Uitgeverij, 2004) 9–16, 234; A.J. Heerma van Voss, “De geschiedenis van de gekkenbeweging: Belangenbehartiging voor en door psychiatrische patiënten (1965–1978),” *Maandblad Geestelijke Volksgezondheid*, Vol. 33 (1978) 398–428; Joost Vijselaar, “Zonder Curium: het Medisch Opvoedkundig Bureau als spil van de Leidse kinderpsychiatrie en kinderpsychotherapie,” in: J. Broers etc., *Curium 1955–1995, NcGv-reeks 95-18* (Utrecht: NcGv, 1995) 101–25.
18. See Franz-Werner Kersting, “Juvenile Left-Wing Radicalism, Fringe Groups, and Anti-Psychiatry in West Germany,” in: Axel Schildt and Detlef Siegfried, eds., *Between Marx and Coca-Cola: Youth Cultures in Changing European Societies* (New York/Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2006) 353–75.
19. Gemma Blok, *Baas in eigen brein*, 20–21; *SPK–Aus der Krankheit eine Waffe machen! Eine Agitationsschrift des Sozialistischen Patientenkollektivs an der Universität Heidelberg. Mit einem Vorwort von Jean-Paul Sartre* (München: Trikont Verlag, 1972); Sjef Teuns, “Staatsgeweld en repressie,” *BWA-ledenbrief*, Vol. 4 (1972), No. 5, 22–24 (in this article Teuns also criticized Soviet psychiatry, because it was being abused against political dissidents, but he argued that it was better to fight the system of psychiatric institutions in general than to protest against the mistreatment of a few prominent Soviet critics).
20. Blok, *Baas in eigen brein*, 30.
21. Jeremy Varon, *Bringing the war home: The Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies* (Berkeley etc.: University of California Press, 2004) 98–99.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Sjef Teuns, “S.P.K.: een fascistisch vonnis,” *BWA-ledenbrief*, Vol. 5 (1973), no. 5.
24. Sjef Teuns, “Gevangenisaktie,” *BWA-ledenbrief*, Vol. 5 (1973), no. 8, 22–24.
25. *Ibid.*
26. Document “comment c’est constitué le cdppfra,” IISH, Ronald Augustin Collection, 16. O.a. Belgen. Later on in the early 1980s Asselmeyer would help link the RAF’s “third generation” to the French Action Directe (<http://www.dissidences.net/documents/ActionDirecte.pdf>).
27. *Les Temps Modernes*, Vol. 29, March 1974, No. 332. Asselmeyer’s pseudonym was revealed in “Antidotes,” *Notes & Etudes de l’Institut de Criminologie* 1988 of the Centre de Recherche sur les Menaces Criminelles Contemporaines in Paris and later on a website: http://www.theyliwedie.org/ressources/biblio/ft/Anonyme_-_Revolution_et_lutte_armee_en_france.html (consulted on 25 January 2011). This article also offers a short biography revealing that in 1984, Asselmeyer was arrested in France and later convicted there for membership of a criminal organization, because of his connections to Action Directe.

28. Butz Peters, *Tödlicher Irrtum: Die Geschichte der RAF* (Berlin: Argon Verlag, 2004) 329–30; Stefan Aust, *Der Baader Meinhof Komplex: Erweiterte und aktualisierte Ausgabe* (München: Goldmann, 1998) 317–18.
29. IISH, Ronald Augustin Collection, 14. Niederlande, Persbericht (Press Communiqué), 14 December 1974.
30. The International Committee reconvened under a slightly different name: *Comité International de Défense des Prisonniers Politique en Europe-occidentale*. There had been no mention of “occidentale” (Western) in the earlier statement—it might be suspected that some members had succeeded in excluding Eastern Europe from the International Committee’s activities (P.H. Bakker Schut, “Politieke justitie in de Bondsrepubliek Duitsland,” *Nederlands Juristenblad*, February 15, 1975, 203–12). Subsequently, the activities of the committee are difficult to ascertain. Quite possibly, it exclusively functioned as a coordination point for the separate national committees in support of the RAF prisoners and lawyers. See also: Alfred Klaus, *Aktivitäten und Verhalten inhaftierter Terroristen* (Bonn: Bundesministerium des Innern, 1985) 89–94. Klaus regards the second meeting of the IVK as the moment of its actual establishment, but Dutch records suggest it was founded a month earlier.
31. Hans Hoffmann, “Ronald en het recht: Een hand uiteenlopende meningen,” *Het Vrije Volk*, 15 February 1975.
32. IISH, Collectie Willem de Haan, 3. Knipsels en persberichten betreffende het proces tegen de Amsterdammer Ronald Augustin, 1975–1976, I and II, Several documents, and IISH, Ronald Augustin Collection, 14. Niederlande, Correspondence between J. Augustin-Bas and the Dutch minister of Foreign Affairs, Max van der Stoep, and other related documents, including parliamentary records.
33. Annemieke Hendriks, “Dan ben ik maar een idioot.” [Interview with Bakker Schut],” *De Groene Amsterdammer*, 19 October 2002, 25–27, and interview with Ronald Augustin in Amsterdam, July 3, 2006.
34. P.H. Bakker Schut, “Politieke justitie in de Bondsrepubliek Duitsland,” *Nederlands Juristenblad*, 15 February 1975, 203–12.
35. Pieter H. Bakker Schut, *Stammheim: Der Prozeß gegen die Rote Armee Fraktion* (Kiel: Neuer Malik Verlag, 1986). As a supplement Bakker Schut also published: *Das info. Briefe der Gefangenen aus der RAF 1973–1977* (Kiel: Neuer Malik Verlag, 1987).
36. IISH, Collectie Willem de Haan, 3, *Knipsels en persberichten betreffende het proces tegen de Amsterdammer Ronald Augustin, 1975–1976*, Deel II, 8/3/75-28/4/75, ANP-Persbericht, 19 April 1975. Dutch press reactions varied. Some were positive, one commentator in a conservative-liberal newspaper was aggressively negative and accused the committee of “promoting the RAF and thereby stimulating extreme leftists to strengthen the terror of the prisoners” (Sytze van der Zee, “Hoe in Nederland terreur wordt aangemoedigd,” *NRC Handelsblad*, 26 April 1975).
37. IISH, Ronald Augustin Collection, 14. Niederlande, Invitation to the first meeting, Utrecht, 9 March 1975, from Bakker Schut, Teuns, and others.
38. In the latter case this material was printed abroad to avoid a West German ban on texts that might promote or excuse political violence; for instance the well-known documentation of letters by imprisoned RAF members: *texte: der raf*, that was edited in 1977 by Verlag Bo Cavefors, and printed in Malmö, Sweden, while copyright

was claimed by RAF/BRD, c/o Internationales Komitee zur Verteidigung politischer Gefangene in Westeuropa—Sektion BRD, Stuttgart.

39. This case is documented in Jacco Pekelder, *Sympathie voor de RAF: De Rote Armee Fraktion in Nederland, 1970–1980* (Amsterdam: Mets & Schilt, 2007) and in Frank van Ree, *Vrijheidsstrijd, verzet, terrorisme: Verslag van een vertrouwensarts* (Lisse: Swets & Zeitlinger, 2000). A German summary is offered in: Jacco Pekelder, “Dynamiken des Terrorismus in Deutschland und den Niederlanden,” in: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, Vol. 35 (2009) No. 3, 402–28.
40. IISH, BWA Archive, Map correspondentie 1970–1973 (niet alfabet.), undated letter of Rode Hulp, Eindhoven, to BWA.
41. Medisch-Juridisch Comité Politieke Gevangenen, *Herfst in Holland. Informatie-Bulletin*, No. 13 (1978), about the treatment of the three RAF prisoners in the Netherlands in 1977–1978, and *Nederland naar Duits model. Informatie-Bulletin*, No. 12 (1978).

Part V

Epilogue

The European 1960–70s and the World

The Case of Régis Debray

Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey

The case surrounding Régis Debray is intricate. Despite publishing a 1,514 page autobiography in three volumes, which can be counted among the best autobiographic descriptions written by representatives of the '68 generation, many questions are left open and many situations remain unclear.¹ Régis Debray granted me time for a couple of interviews to search for answers to unresolved questions. But since then I have often regretted that his question at our first encounter in a taxi in Paris: “Do you want to say, that you are able to explain my life to me?” was spontaneously countered by me with the answer: “With my third hypothesis, yes!”²

This chapter will sketch the profile of the Régis Debray case in nine scenes.³ It will trace the path of a young European intellectual on his way to Cuba; the challenge that faces him there, the role he adopts as messenger, and his lifelong struggle with this part of his life.

First Scene

Paris—January 1966: It is cold in Paris as the passenger plane takes off from the runway in Orly. It is New Year's Day and the last phase of the presidential campaign in France has begun. All symptoms indicate that the incumbent, General Charles de Gaulle, will be able to defend his post as head of state against his challenger from the left, François Mitterrand. While in Paris, the tendency is toward the maintenance of the political status quo, in Cuba, representatives of Latin America, Africa, and Asia prepare for a conference designed to initiate a break with the established political order in Latin America and to reshape the relationship between the First and the Third world. One of the passengers on board the plane booked his seat at the last minute. A telegram with a personal invitation from the political leader of Cuba has caused him to leave Nancy, where he is teaching philosophy, in the middle of the school year in order to fly to Havana, where the Tricontinental Conference is to start on 6 January 1966.

It is not his first flight to Latin America, but he plans to make it his shortest visit to the continent yet. He plans to “fly off for six days.”⁴ But the philosophy teacher will not return to Nancy for a long time. He will become a “militant,” an activist for another world order and a model for the young intelligentsia in Europe: Régis Debray.

The Tricontinental Conference, Debray’s destination in 1966, has been organized to found a Latin American solidarity organization: the OLAS (*Organización Latinoamericana de Solidaridad*). This foundation plays a major role in the interconnected plans of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. With the help of the OLAS, Castro aims to stop Cuba’s dwindling influence on the Latin American continent (which has been in decline since 1964), boost the Cuban form of socialism with regard to the transformation strategy of the Moscow-oriented, Latin American communist parties, and steer the Latin American liberation movements toward taking up the armed fight against their suppressors. Guevara plans—in anticipation of a positive decision of the OLAS—to establish a guerrilla focus in Bolivia, which is designed to become a model for the Latin American liberation movements and at the same time, the bridgehead of a new fight for independence on the continent. According to his maxim: “Action before negotiation,” Guevara tries to influence the decision of the OLAS through exemplary action. These two plans are flanked by a third project: Before the inaugurating session of the OLAS, which is planned for August 1967, and parallel to Guevara’s guerrilla activities in Bolivia, a book is to be published, which unfolds and explains the guidelines of the armed struggle. It is principally addressed at the Latin American reader but, simultaneously, supplies the worldwide public with arguments and reasons to understand the means and objectives of the liberation movements in Latin America. Castro’s choice of author for the book is the young French philosopher, who only wanted to stay for six days: Debray accepts.

Three questions result from this first scene: First, why did Castro choose a European and not a Cuban writer? Second, why did he choose Debray? And finally, why did Debray accept the offer? One research hypothesis claims that Castro expected that the founding of the OLAS would mean a trial of strength with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. An expert opinion uttered by an extern could have been advantageous for him, since this move would give him the possibility to detach himself from the book or select only certain sections of it for his purposes.⁵ Why he chose Debray and why Debray accepted to write this book, is the theme of the following scenes.

Second Scene

Havana: It is surprising to a foreign observer in the middle of the 1960s that the Cuban leader does not appear to have an official office nor a known permanent

address nor even a calendar for his appointments.⁶ Spontaneously he decides when and with whom he wants to talk. “One doesn’t come to Castro; Castro comes to one” is a longstanding proverb in Havana. Debray does not have to wait too long. Castro pays him a visit in his hotel to inquire about de Gaulle, Maurice Thorez, the deceased former leader of the Communist Party of France, and the dissident intellectuals in the Quartier Latin, but also to ask whether Debray feels comfortable in his hotel, and whether he likes the Cuban coffee. Castro’s attentiveness to even the smallest details as well as his vigor and passion in indulging in all-night discussions, which are suddenly interrupted in the early morning by the demand to play a round of basketball, deeply impress the scholar of the *École Normale Supérieure*. Soon Debray cannot tell the difference between the private and the official Castro. Everything about this man seems to be subordinated to one idea: the revolution. Debray is undoubtedly fascinated by Castro. But what caused Castro to select Debray for the project devised by him and Guevara?

Debray had already written an article about Cuba and Latin America entitled *The Castrism: The Long March of Latin America*. This article was published in 1965 in the French magazine *Les Temps Modernes*. Oswaldo Barreto, who had studied Law and Sociology at the Sorbonne, before becoming a professor of philosophy at the University of Caracas, had alerted Guevara to the author. Guevara, who was predominantly interested in the passages about the rural guerrilla, as they were in conformity with his own ideas,⁷ then informed Castro, who immediately ordered the article to be translated into Spanish and invited Debray to participate in the Tricontinental Conference. In other words: Debray was not unknown to Castro. As he had read what Debray had written, he must have been informed that Debray was a scholar of the French philosopher Louis Althusser, a theorist and member of the Communist Party of France, but was searching simultaneously for transformation strategies and situational definitions, which go beyond those of the established Moscow-oriented communist parties. Most probably, he also knows that Debray has direct knowledge about the liberation movements of Latin America, which he had gathered on his journeys through Venezuela and Bolivia. Through intensive geographical, social, economical, and political studies of Latin America, he fortified his travel experiences and gained acknowledgement as an expert on Latin America in France. This was crowned by the above-mentioned article in the renowned *Les Temps Modernes*. In 1966 therefore, Castro could rely on the fact that Debray’s opinion was respected in France and the European countries, which regarded *Les Temps Modernes* as a leading organ for European intellectuals. One can therefore infer that entrusting Debray with writing the book, *Revolution within the Revolution*, was not just chance, but a conscious selection along the lines of criteria that predestined Debray to become a mediator between Europe and the Third World. But as for Debray himself, why did he let himself in for this undertaking?

Third Scene

Ex audito fides: With reference to this Latin proverb, in the year 2000, Debray explains what fascinated him about Cuba in the first months of 1966. It is Castro's speech, his oratorical talent, and the authenticity of his words, which stand in complete contrast to the "cold medium" of the European scientific socialism, the last book religion, solidified in a wooden written language and transformed into paper monsters.⁸ "El Comandante" says what he thinks, and when he talks, he does not only speak for himself, but for the Cubans, for the Latin Americans, and for the whole Third World, the new Third Estate, which vindicates the continuation of the process of revolution. Castro's speeches can, as his public appearances prove, last for six hours and more, but a conversation with him can go far beyond this. His knowledge seems to be as inexhaustible as his energy. Both attract Debray, who soon becomes one of Castro's favorite and most trusted discussion partners. Castro orders him to be appointed as professor of philosophy at the University of Havana,⁹ which enables Debray to waive his post in Nancy, from which he had received leave for just ten days.¹⁰ However, Debray is spared from all teaching obligations. The French philosophy professor is not supposed to teach, but to write the book, inspired by countless hours of discussion with Castro. In this way, his work *Revolution within the Revolution* comes into being during the year 1966. It is a book which finds immediate worldwide proliferation after being published. In Cuba alone, more than 200,000 copies are sold. In the eyes of Debray Castro was a "charismatic leader," a term used for the first time in the third volume of his autobiography.¹¹

Charisma, according to Max Weber, is defined as a "a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them, the individual concerned is treated as a 'leader.'"¹² "Charismatic power" is a social relation, which includes others acknowledging the extraordinary claim of the charismatic person and their personal dedication to their mission. These "followers" place themselves under the command of the charismatic leader through vocation and successful service.¹³ The question remains: What was Castro's mission? According to Debray, it was short and clear: "The revolution, that's me!," or in other words: "Cuba is Castro. Castro is Cuba and Cuba is the Revolution within the Revolution." Still, it remains to be explained why and how a young Frenchman, brought up in the bourgeois milieu of Paris, and shaped by the French elite school Janson de Saily before being admitted to the *École Normale Supérieure* as "cacique"—top of his class—became a "disciple" of Castro? If one follows one of the hypotheses of the research on charisma, the willingness to join the ranks of a charismatic leader is culturally formulated beforehand.

Fourth Scene

There is no direct way from the Rue de Lübeck in the wealthy and quiet 16th arrondissement of Paris to Cuba—even in the eventful '60s. According to Debray, “roaming around” and “meeting certain people” are responsible for influencing his thinking and changing his course of life.¹⁴ He firmly rejects the assumption that his biography was steered by preset goals, which in turn were caused by ideas implanted in him through the process of socialization. One of his first actions is, as he emphasizes in his autobiography, the flight from his family—or at least the attempt at flight. He tries to escape from his origin, from his class, from his country. The inner conflict surfaces in 1956, when he obsessively collects all news items referring to the French war against Algeria, and recognizes that “in Algeria torture is applied.” He accuses his mother, who is a lawyer and, since 1947, a deputy to the city council, of supporting the French troops and their behavior in Algeria. He breaks with his father, also an active lawyer at the Court of Cassation in Paris: “*Tu défends ta classe, elle n'en a plus pour longtemps.*” In 1967, his uncle, Jean-Robert Debray, a member of the *Académie des sciences morales et politiques*, declares to the press, that Régis Debray was so deeply moved by the Algerian War “that he sometimes slept on the floor, to manifest his protest against a luxurious life, while others suffered.”¹⁵

At the beginning of the '60s, the *Zeitgeist* is formed not only by Althusser and his circle of young structuralist Marxists, but also by circles known as “tiers-mondiste”¹⁶ at the beginning of the '70s. They align in two groups around the publisher François Maspero: one, the magazine *Partisans* and the other, the readers' club *La joie de lire*. Debray becomes a member. While the Algerian War sharpened their attention to the problems of the Third World, the invasion of the Bay of Pigs in 1961 becomes the decisive event which ignited their willingness to actively support the attacked party, to take sides with David against Goliath and with Castro and the Cuban experiment. Together with his friend Bernard Kouchner, Régis Debray enters the Cuban embassy in Paris and applies as a volunteer to help defend Cuba. Images of the *International Brigades* in the Spanish Civil War, as well as the model of André Malraux, who participated in the war as a pilot, trigger his imagination. The Cuban embassy thankfully declines their offer. Nevertheless, Debray does not give up his plan. In December 1961, he travels to Cuba for the first time and participates in an alphabetization program. He perceives Cuba, as he states in the movie, as a permanent festival. He falls in love with a Cuban woman. His family is only able to effect his return to France by applying pressure. He finally gives in and returns, but everybody notices that he has changed. The former “dandy” in suit and tie now wears worn-out slippers and a leather jacket, and talks constantly about morale and politics, stating that “the Cubans are the only ones, who....”¹⁷ That is, at least, how his co-students see him. Temporarily, he even becomes a member of the Communist Party and of the communist student organization, UEC.

These examples clearly show that there was a prelude to Debray's encounter with Castro. By 1966, after gaining symbolic capital in France, and after he had formed a social network in Latin America, the situation has changed. He is drafted, if one can use this expression, to serve as a writer and is nominated as the writer of a charismatic leader, as Castro's scripter. Selected by Castro, Debray consents to the contract proposed by him. Why? In France, his path to a chair in philosophy at the Sorbonne would have been wide open after he had served his term as a teacher in the province, the obligation of any graduate of the ENS. Why does he stay in Havana? In France, he did not serve in the army. Why does he put on the battle dress as soon as he starts to write his book? Why does he start military training? How does a young French intellectual, formed in the tradition of Enlightenment, establish himself in the role of a disciple?

Fifth Scene

In a taxi 2002: He had not been an intellectual in 1966-67, Debray replies to the question of the historian, as the taxi continues along the Champs-Élysées. She dissents. He insists and then falls silent. She erupts: "But I have already written thirty pages about this." An absurd argument, as she immediately notices, but it does the trick. Debray would like to read the manuscript. Can he read German, the historian wants to know? He would read Kant and Hegel in German, Debray counters, his eyes stiffly fixed on the street. That should suffice, muses the historian aloud, causing the first common laughter since they have met. Why should she want to write about *him*, he desires to know, and not about others, or about May '68 in Paris? She informs him that she has already written a book about this. Is she really a historian and a genuine professor? She gives him the name of her university and feels, as the word *Bielefeld* slips from her mouth that the roles change. Now it is the contemporary witness and protagonist who is interrogating the historian. Like Debray before, it is she who now stiffly stares at the road ahead. She looks at the passing Metro stations and answers his questions, sensing that the next one could already be the last. And so it is. Having reached the *Mutualité*, the taxi stops following a short call from behind: "*Madame sort.*" Her French friends burst out into loud laughter on hearing the historian's report. That was the language of the bourgeoisie of the turn of the century; it was almost like a scene from Marcel Proust, they claim. However, in the concrete situation, the historian is unable to laugh. She thinks that she has reached the end of the path with Debray and is taken completely by surprise when Debray asks whether she has a slip of paper. Mechanically, she pulls a piece of paper out of her handbag and he writes down his address, the code to his building, the floor his flat is on, and which of the three doors she should knock on when she has advanced that far. He hands her the slip of paper and remarks: "Now you have everything of me." He makes her promise not to tell anybody his address and

not to bring a cassette recorder. The taxi disappears. The historian returns to her books, to piles of newspapers in the reading hall of the *Sciences Po*, and to the archive of Althusser.

Sixth Scene

Althusser's marching orders? If one follows the judgment of the eight years younger *Normalien* Bernard-Henri Lévy, it is clear what caused Régis Debray to leave Europe and go to Cuba: Debray obeyed a marching order of Althusser, as he was one of the most important of his soldiers. Lévy writes:

Lecourt was at the university front, Debray in Bolivia, Armogathe or Brague in the Catholic Church. ... We were a big army in motion, he was our imaginary general and the “philosophical war” our common fate.¹⁸

Could it have really been like this? Did Althusser, as Lévy writes, in moments of utmost euphoria, call Debray and others to take part in an assault against the “ideological apparatus of the state”?¹⁹ Did Althusser send Debray to Cuba and did Debray execute what Althusser had planned?

Althusser developed his theory of the “ideological apparatuses” of the state only after 1966–67. Is it possible to still explain the commitment of Debray in reference to this concept? What is an “ideological state apparatus”? Under “ideology,” Althusser understands knowledge of the world, which permits the individual to recognize itself within this world. This perception always implies, as he sees it, a misconception, because the perception according to the ideology is only an illusion of the world.²⁰ Ideologies are produced by the dominating classes as well as by the dominated classes, but the ideologies of the dominated classes are subordinate to those of the dominating classes, because the protest against the dominating ideologies is incorporated in the terms of the dominating ideology. The “ideological state apparatus” (churches, educational institutions, trade unions, political parties, families, mass media) supports the “repressive state apparatus” (government, army, police, bureaucracy, court system, prisons) in reproducing production and power relations. But Althusser claims that ideological competition in a certain society can result in a shift of the perceptions of the world and “living conditions” toward the conditions existing in reality. Ideologies therefore, can have effects which change the social practices and the relationship between the different strata of the society.

Therefore, it follows: Far from looking at the ideology as a preformed superstructure, Althusser assigns it an active role in the process of the development of societies. He acknowledges and propagates the “ideological class struggle” for which the thinker, the theorist, the philosopher, seems to be predestined. He

educates and forms young philosophers throughout his life. Debray is one of them. In his autobiography, Althusser calls Debray one of his closest scholars, but stresses that Debray left the Communist Party without his consent, and that he made his own way outside of the party.²¹ Can he still be regarded, as Levy insinuates, as a soldier of Althusser? Althusser's struggle focuses on the theoretical revision of Marxism and on the ideological opposition within the Communist Party. Debray's party membership remains an important episode. He denies himself the capability to revise Marxism, when he confesses that in 1967 he had not perused the works of Marx and Lenin. He offers his services to Castro, who in 1966–67 is still rebelling against the communist parties, and who is determined to bring about a revision of the Marxist-Leninist strategy to conquer the power and to transform the society in Latin America. Therefore, he does not follow Althusser on that point and one cannot speak of the execution of marching orders. But the premises and theses of Althusser that Debray took with him from Paris to Havana, might have influenced him and led him in the execution of his obligations as Castro's scribe: As one of the premises says, ideologies have effects.

Seventh Scene

Revolution within the Revolution: The book is based on the idea that a political-social struggle in Latin America is about to commence, in which "the American imperialism will play its last, decisive game, the one which will determine its downfall."²² The work offers strategic thoughts and rules, which can be derived from the Cuban revolution in order to structure the struggle. The main message of the text is the development of groups of guerrillas (*foci*) as the bodies responsible for the armed struggle of an avant-garde movement, from which a new political organization should evolve. From a military focus to a political strategy is the maxim, which is designed to prevent the subordination of the guerrilla to a political party as well as vice versa. It is directed against the communist parties, which seem to be petrified, and which try to block the guerrilla fight, as well as against a flock of newly founded parties of Marxist-Leninist origin, which have led to the breaking up of the political leadership of the liberation movements in Latin America. But, it is predominantly designed to accompany the project of Guevara, which is just about to start.²³

Guevara's project is aimed at the proliferation and the multiplication of guerrilla groups, which come into being through action, beyond the boundaries of Bolivia.²⁴ It is a project which tries to incorporate the future into the present,²⁵ by ascribing a revolutionary minority with the capability to successively liberate a continent of 300 million inhabitants by a process of growth through cell division.²⁶ Debray's arguments in *Revolution within the Revolution* do not refer to the concrete Bolivian project. But what Debray supplies are theoretical arguments for a political action: the "grand parallel action" of Castro and Guevara. He did

not intend, as he writes, to enrich the windows of the bookshops surrounding the Sorbonne with just another paperback, but wanted to effectively advance the liberation movements, to coordinate theory and practice. Formally, he does not appear as author of the book, but as one who has written down what his Latin American comrades had told him. In reality, it is the content of his discussions with Castro which flowed into this book.

The book had hardly been printed when Debray accepted another mandate. Guevara had embarked to Bolivia in November 1966. Debray followed him at the end of February 1967. He took up the role of the middleman between Castro and Guevara, which had been necessitated by the breakdown of the radio telephony in January.²⁷ The exact content of the message, which he was supposed to convey to Guevara, remains unclear up to this day. As Debray starts his mission, “the revolution has the age of reason minus one year” and marks the age where “anything goes.”²⁸

Debray reaches the camp of Guevara, but does not succeed in coming close to him. According to Debray, Guevara was characterized by loneliness and uncommunicativeness. Even though he offers to stay in the camp and join the fight of the guerrilleros, Guevara sends him back. On his way back, he is captured by Bolivian soldiers. Looking back, Debray draws this surprising conclusion in the film *Génération* from Hamon/Rotman in 1987:

La conclusion que j'ai tirée de tout ça était qu'il fallait rester chez soi. Oh, je résume, mais en gros, que l'idée des volontaires l'idée des révolutionnaires professionnels qui vont d'un pays à un autre, façon 1920–1930 pour le Komintern, mettait entre parenthèse la question nationale, c'est-à-dire ce que les gens ressentent. Plus encore dans le Tiers Monde qu'en Europe développée, industrielle, ce que les gens ressentent, c'est [le sentiment] d'être chez soi. Et on ne peut pas à la fois venir prêcher la lutte contre l'impérialisme étranger et ne pas être du pays même. Je veux dire ... c'est contradictoire.”²⁹

Can this be all? Is the only essence, which he draws from his experiences in Cuba and Bolivia that it is better to stay at home? This is the message conveyed by the film, which combines passages from interviews with Debray, but which does not take notice of his notes, taken while imprisoned; his study on *Criticism of the Weapons*; and the first volume of his autobiography, which had already been published. It is obvious that the historian cannot regard the film as a reliable historical source, despite its interesting pictures and statements. The question remains: What was Debray searching for in Cuba and Bolivia? His own definition of himself was, according to interviews given in Camiri, the place of his trial and imprisonment, as a “revolutionary intellectual.”³⁰ What does this mean? What is the mandate of the revolutionary intellectual? How does he differ from the general intellectual, as represented by Voltaire, Zola and Sartre? How can he be differentiated from the Marxist intellectual in the tradition of Kautsky and Lenin?

Eighth Scene

Only Kafka as witness: When he was young, Debray had four friends. Two of them I manage to trace down and visit. Both are professors in Paris: one is a sociologist, the other a philosopher. I start with the sociologist, who has a chair at the *École Normale Supérieure*. He immediately addresses me as if we are on familiar terms with each other, because this is the custom at the *École Normale Supérieure*. I have difficulties following him in this manner so quickly and therefore try to word my questions in a neutral manner, which, at times, is not easy. My phrases are a little twisted and clumsy, but finally I ask my questions. To my surprise, I hear him answer: “How would you like to answer this question, my dear?” Not knowing that this is the usual game amongst *Normaliens*, I fall for it. I answer my question myself, just to achieve at the end a hearty: “Yes, my dear. You can write it down like that.” Learning from this experience, I remain reserved when meeting the philosopher. I do not ask questions, I just circle around them. But more is not needed. The philosopher immediately seizes the initiative and offers me a never-ending answer. He narrates, remembers and unfolds the glorious 1960s in front of me. He talks about almost everything, except that he does not once mention Régis Debray. Instead he talks of Althusser, the Spinoza group, Che, and so on. He seems to be in a trance state, insists on meeting me again and promises to bring along some documents. We continue our conversation at a reception some days later, when suddenly a third person addresses the philosopher with the question: “You here—together with Debray’s biographer?” The philosopher looks at me inquisitorially. Is this true, he wants to know? The historian answers: “No, not a biography.” That was it. I had blown my chances. The philosopher gathers his documents and leaves. As long as she writes about Debray, he declares, he would not utter a word to her. Only his half-empty glass of champagne remains.

Now the historian has no other choice. She has to pass through the carefully described third door. Debray leads her into the salon. She sinks into a sofa, which is much too soft. She spreads out her papers on the table in front of her. Debray likewise sinks into the sofa opposite her, obviously as spineless as her own. Behind him, a voluminous oil painting hangs on the wall. The historian recognizes Franz Kafka. Yes, it had been painted by a friend of his, he declares. After a short conversation about the painting, they go on to the questions. They come fluently, since they are the result of continuous reflection. He answers with a question: Why would all of this be of interest to her? All this dates back a thousand years. He would not recollect anything anymore. This had been another life, and this chapter had been closed. The historian makes another attempt, but in vain. She notices that his glance had taken up the same gloomy expression bearing down on her from Kafka’s eyes. Two motionless figures stare at her. Her back starts to ache in the swamp-like sofa. She straightens up, clenches her fists,

closes her eyes, and starts to speak. She has read thousands of pages of Debray and now they burst out of her. She avoids the subjunctive, not only because this is a source of mistakes, but because she just wants it that way. She sketches theses and hypotheses in black and white, dramatizes, formulates the answers that she had actually expected from him. She hears him say “Yes, but [...]” and “No, no,” but does not pay attention to him. She continues to talk until he grips her wrists, and by gently applying pressure, slowly unfolds her hands which are still clenched into fists, as she observes. “It is enough,” he says. She could stop now. His memory had come back. He leans back and starts to talk, softly and slowly. After a while he interrupts himself and asks whether she had brought a cassette recorder. The historian answers in the negative, with the reminder that he had forbidden her to bring one. He counters reproachfully: “You could have ignored that.” It is too late to fetch a cassette recorder now. And that is why Kafka remains the only witness of this conversation.

Ninth Scene

The dilemma of the revolutionary intellectual: The historian and the protagonist agree at the end of their discussion about the typology of the intellectual, which clearly distinguishes between the “revolutionary,” the “general,” and the “Marxist” intellectual. They agree upon the cognitive orientation of the revolutionary intellectual of the New Left—the *Nouvelle Gauche* movement was not in the circle of Althusser, but in the group around Maspero and the magazine *Partisan*, while he claims to have taken notice of the English New Left as well as of C. Wright Mills’ *Letter to the New Left*. Sequences of the Bervé Hamon and Patrick Rotman film show Debray debating with Edgar Morin of the magazine *Arguments*. It is not possible to unfold the typology of the intellectual in this limited space.³¹ Therefore, I will just sketch the revolutionary intellectual in four points. First: The revolutionary intellectual does not vindicate the theoretical right to leadership and does not derive any right to organizational leadership from his theoretical competence. Second: In contrast to the general intellectual, he or she does not try to prosecute injustice with reference to abstract values. Third: He or she exerts his influence as master of words and speech and as communicator of collective structures of sense of social groups or movements toward the public. Fourth: He or she aligns himself with social groups and movements, ready to support them not only with words, but also with deeds. The revolutionary intellectual becomes a militant, an activist, and a co-fighter. The renunciation of the classical mandates of the intellectual has many consequences and traps. The biggest problem lies in the primacy of practice: in the intervention into real battles as a militant. In Camiri, Régis Debray referred to “the Che” as “a saint” after his death³² and stated before the military tribunal that he deplores

not to have been able to die for him.³³ He had believed in the victory of Guevara, and felt obliged to continue truly serving him and his cause, the cause for which he had fought.

Debray was found guilty of being a member of a criminal association, a crime that one can be legally prosecuted for without proof of participation in any concrete criminal activities. His friends in Paris and his defense counsels believe that he did not take part in any battle action, but that he was condemned and sentenced as the author of *Revolution within the Revolution*, a book which was, as the tribunal proves, read in the camp of Guevara. What really happened was revealed by Debray twenty years later. He was smarter than Günter Grass in regard to the revelation of Grass's membership in a SS battalion. He did not grant an interview to *Le Monde*, which could have been titled: "I did shoot." Instead, Debray made it part of the first volume of his biography, somewhere after page 100, to which point none of the critics advanced.³⁴ As the historian discovers fourteen years later, those to whom she reveals her discovery shrug their shoulders composedly: "Oh yes, the Régis, the Debray" followed by the metaphors: "son of a bourgeoisie," "arrogant," "pompous ass," "media-intellectual." He always acted with a safety net and a false bottom; he never fell deep, he always fell soft—which I could confirm, thinking of his sofa. His confession did not ignite a public discussion in France. As a matter of fact, Charles de Gaulle and the Pope had come to his support in 1967. His mother had arranged all this. When he was released from prison after almost three years of incarceration—on the occasion of an overthrow of the Bolivian government—he did not return to his family; he flew instead to Chile, where Salvador Allende, the co-founder of the OLAS, had, in the meantime, come to power. He stayed with Allende until his death and only then returned to France. He received the *Prix Goncourt* for his novel *La neige brûle*.³⁵ He became Mitterrand's advisor on Latin America at the age of 56, his habilitation was accepted by the *Sorbonne*.³⁶ His research interest focused on the study of *Mediology*, the study of procedures by which messages are communicated, circulate, and find recipients.³⁷ Since 2002, he has been the president of the *Institut Européen en sciences des religions*. He writes about God. He has his own magazine and radio program on *France-Culture*. There is only one thing he does not have, as I was able to find out on my visit to Cuba this year. The museum of the Cuban Revolution in Havana does not show a single trace of him in any of the three floors of the museum. *Revolution within the Revolution* cannot be spotted in any of the showcases. Debray's activities do not even seem to merit a footnote within the frame of the history of the revolution as seen by the Cubans. Only completely hidden, in a room separated from the core of the show rooms, do I find a photograph of him. It shows him in a standing conference with Guevara and three other protagonists. Unfortunately, only his back is displayed.

Notes

1. The autobiography *Le temps d'apprendre à vivre* consists of three volumes: I. *Les masques: Éducation amoureuse* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987) ; II. *Loués soient nos seigneurs: Une éducation politique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996) ; and III. *Par amour de l'art: Une éducation intellectuelle* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000). Autobiographical value can also be attributed to Debray's notes, written during his imprisonment in Camiri: Régis Debray, *Journal d'un petit bourgeois entre deux feux et quatre murs* (Paris: Seuil, 1976).
2. Paris, March 2002.
3. For further information, compare Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, "Das Dilemma des revolutionären Intellektuellen," in: *Eingreifendes Denken: Die Wirkungschancen von Intellektuellen* (Weilerswist: Velbrück, 2007), 262–305.
4. Debray, *Les masques*, 52.
5. Wolfgang Berner, *Der Evangelist des Castroismus-Guevarismus. Régis Debray und seine Guerilla-Doktrin; wieso "Revolution in der Revolution"?* (Köln: Institut für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien, 1968), 73. See also Donald Reid, Régis Debray's Quest: From France to Bolivia and Back, in: *History of European Ideas*, vol. 14, no. 6 (London: Pergamon Press, 1992), 839–62.
6. Debray, *Les masques*, 53.
7. Debray, *Les masques*, 51 f.
8. Debray, *Les masques*, 187.
9. Debray, *Loués soient nos seigneurs*, 180.
10. Debray in a letter to Althusser, undated (Jan. 1966), Althusser archive (IMEC Caen).
11. Debray, *Loués soient nos seigneurs*, 179.
12. Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), vol. 1, 241.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Debray, *Par amour de l'art*, 81.
15. The quotations are taken from the article by Olivier Todd, "Fusilleront-ils Régis Debray?" in the *Nouvel Observateur* (24 May 1967), 16–18, here 16.
16. Petit Robert, *Dictionnaire de la langue française*, ed. Alain Rey et J. Rey-Debove (Paris: Dictionnaires Le Robert, 1994).
17. Quotation from Todd, 17.
18. Bernard-Henri Levy, *Sartre. Der Philosoph des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: Hanser, 2000), 236–37.
19. *Ibid.*
20. Luke A. Ferretter, *Louis Althusser* (London: Routledge, 2006), 80.
21. Louis Althusser, *Die Zukunft hat Zeit. Die Tatsachen. Zwei autobiographische Texte* (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1993), 264.
22. Régis Debray, *Revolution in der Revolution* (Munich: Trikont, 1968), 9.
23. Régis Debray, *Kritik der Waffen* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1975), 136.
24. Régis Debray, *La guérilla du Che* (Paris: Seuil, 1974), 83–88.
25. Debray, *Kritik der Waffen*, 136.
26. *Ibid.*, 135, as well as Debray, *La guérilla du Che*, 88.
27. The U.S.-made walkie-talkies, with which the guerilleros were equipped, were old and needed a generator to run them. One of the instruments was defunct because

- of humidity, the other had a defective tube. See Jorge G. Castaneda, *Che Guevara: Biographie* (Frankfurt: Insel, 1999), 455.
28. Debray, *Les masques*, 56.
 29. Debray in “La Fête Cubaine,” 5th sequence of the film “Génération” of Hervé Hamon, Patrick Rotman, Daniel Edinger (Paris: Vision Seuil 1988).
 30. Régis Debray: “Che Guevara, c’est un saint,” interview with Régis Debray, conducted by a reporter of Radio Luxemburg, printed in: *Combat* vom 22. August 1967, 6.
 31. See Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, *Eingreifendes Denken: Die Wirkungschancen von Intellektuellen* (Weilerswist: Velbrück, 2007).
 32. Régis Debray, Lettre à ses juges, in : Régis Debray, *Le procès de Régis Debray* (Paris: Cahiers libres no. 108, Maspero, 1968), 29–32, here 31f.
 33. Régis Debray, Déclaration devant le conseil de guerre, in: le procès de régis debray, 33–77, here 77.
 34. Debray, *Les masques*, 120.
 35. Régis Debray, *La neige brûle* (Paris: Edition Grasset 1977).
 36. The *Soutenance* took place at 8. January 1995. The opinions of the experts and parts of the statements of Debray are printed in: *Le débat* (May–August) 1995, 3–62.
 37. Régis Debray, *Introduction à la médiologie* (Paris : PUF, 2000), 181 ; also *Cours de médiologie générale* (Paris: Gallimard, 2001). See Keith Reader, *Regis Debray. A Critical Introduction* (London: Pluto Press, 1995) who analyzing in chapter 4 “Towards Mediology: The work of the 1990s” (pp. 55–74) Debray’s mediological theses is “convinced of the importance of his work” (p. 75). The book starts with the “Latin American Years” of Debray, but concentrates on his scientific work and political engagement after his return to France in 1973: his criticism of the media’s sway over intellectual and cultural life in France, his relation to François Mitterrand, and his defense of state and republican values.

Chronology of Events of Protest in Europe 1968

Rolf Werenskjold

1968

January

Date	Country	Events
January 1968	Great Britain	Students arrange sit-ins at Aston University, Birmingham.
1/4/1968– 1/5/1968	Sweden	Demonstration in Stockholm against the American war in Vietnam. Extensive demonstration during the OECD meeting in Stockholm.
1/10/1968– 3/1/1968	Spain	The Government closes the Faculty of Social Science and Economy at the University of Madrid, which is followed by violent demonstrations and clashes between students and police. Students go on indefinite strike.
1/11/1968	Italy	Police remove students from Palazzo Campana at the university in Turin. In Padua police halt a student's assembly.
1/15/1968	Spain	A permanent police force is deployed on the campus of the University of Madrid. The faculties at the University of Madrid are practically closed until March 1. Students strike at the universities in Oviedo, Granada, and Valencia.
1/15/1968	France	Clashes between police and students at universities in Caen and Nanterre. Daniel Cohn-Bendit confronts the minister of Education at a meeting at the University of Nanterre.
1/15/1968– 1/27/1968	Belgium	Flemish students clash with police during their "January revolt 1968" in protest against the French section of the Catholic University of Leuven. Hundreds of protesters are arrested. Throughout Flanders secondary school students and their teachers organize strikes and demonstrations.
1/17/1968	Portugal	The first anti-Vietnam war demonstration in Portugal with 100–200 students at the University of Oporto.
1/22/1968	Denmark	Demonstration outside the U.S. embassy after an American B-52 carrying hydrogen bombs crashed off Greenland the previous day.

1/22/1968	Italy	Occupation of the University of Lecce. Students and professors strike in Pisa.
1/24/1968	Czechoslovakia	The Czechoslovakian Authors Union work out a compromise between moderate authors sensitive to the new Communist Party leadership and the more critical members who desire regime change.
1/25/1968	Italy	Occupation of faculties in Florence and Siena.
1/25/1968	Spain	The Faculty of Natural Science at the University of Madrid closes for twenty-four hours.
1/26/1968	Spain	Police storm the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Madrid. The Polytechnical school in Madrid closes. Fights break out between students and police in Barcelona.
1/26/1968	France	Violent strike demonstration at the Saviem construction in Caen. Clashes at Fougrés and at the University of Nanterre.
1/26/1968	Great Britain	Demonstration in Sheffield against the American war in Vietnam during a visit by Prime Minister Harold Wilson.
1/28/1968	Spain	Teachers at Faculty of Law refuse to give lectures with special police agents on campus.
1/30/1968	Poland	Demonstration against the ban of <i>Dziady</i> ("The Forefathers") at the National Theatre in Warsaw. Clashes between police and demonstrators.
1/31/1968	West Germany	Mass meeting of students at the Romanic Institute at the Free University in West Berlin. The SDS students disrupt teachers' meetings and violently remove students trying to stop them.

February

2/1/1968	West Germany	Student demonstrations in four West German cities in protest against higher fares on public transportation. Springer Tribunal in West Berlin.
2/1/1968– 2/7/1968	West Germany	A nationwide series of violent demonstrations in protest against the American war in Vietnam.
2/2/1968	Spain	Spanish riot police attack hundreds of medical students outside the hospital on the university campus in Madrid.
2/3/1968	Spain	137 students are expelled from the University of Barcelona after participating in a sit-in.
2/6/1968– 2/7/1968	Belgium	Demonstrations all over Flanders in favor of a split of the University of Leuven and transfer of the French-speaking branch. The Belgian government is forced to resign.
2/7/1968	France	Counterdemonstration against a meeting in support of the American War in Vietnam. Violent clashes with police. Demonstration in Paris in support of FNL.

2/13/1968	France	Demonstrations in Paris protesting the war in Vietnam.
2/14/1968	France	Clashes between police and students at universities across France.
2/15/1968	Spain	Riots at the university in Madrid lead to arrest of 40 students from three departments.
15/2/1968	Italy	A neo-fascist group throws a rudimentary bomb at the Faculty of Law at the university in Turin. The newspaper <i>La Stampa</i> in Turin begins to attack the student activists.
2/16/1968	Poland	Student protest letter signed by more than 3,000 people in protest of the government ban of <i>Dziady</i> .
2/16/1968	Great Britain	Coal miners demonstrate against Prime Minister Harold Wilson during his visit to Wales. Clashes between students and police in Cardiff.
2/17/1968– 2/18/1968	West Germany	The International Vietnam Congress is held in West Berlin. Ten thousand students demonstrate in West Berlin against the American War in Vietnam.
2/21/1968	West Germany	150,000 people participate in a counter-demonstration in support of the United States organized by the Berlin Senate.
2/21/1968	Sweden	Minister of Education Olof Palme demonstrates together with a North Vietnamese ambassador in Stockholm against the war in Vietnam.
2/22/1968	Spain	Sixteen students are arrested by police during a raid at the Faculty of Law at the University of Madrid.
2/22/1968	Portugal	Five hundred demonstrators in Lisbon protest the war in Vietnam and clash with police.
2/25/1968	Great Britain	Thousands of immigrants demonstrate in London against a proposed immigration law.
2/25/1968	Italy	In Rome, students occupy three faculties (literature, physics, and political sciences). The next day sees occupations in Padua and Trieste.
2/28/1968	Spain	Students resume normal lecture activity at the University of Madrid for the first time in five months.
2/28/1968	Czechoslovakia	Czechoslovak journalists demand abolishment of censorship.
2/29/1968	Poland	The Warsaw branch of the Writer's Association passes a declaration demanding a lifting of the ban on <i>Dziady</i> , the end of censorship, and the participation of writers in the development of cultural policy.
2/29/1968	Italy	Neofascist storm troops clash with radical students at the university in Rome, following police removal of occupying students.

March

3/1/1968	Czechoslovakia	The Communist Party steering committee lifts censorship.
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3/1/1968	Italy	Student protest in the streets of Rome and outside the Faculty of Architecture at Valle Giulia that result in clashes with the police.
3/1/1968– 3/12/1968	Italy	The university in Rome closes because of student occupations from March 1. The same day there are widespread student riots in the streets of Rome in protest against the events of February 29. Students attack police barriers outside the Architecture Faculty at Valle Giulia. The students demand that the Parliament pass a new university reform plan, and that the Dean at the university in Rome be replaced.
3/2/1968	Belgium	About 10,000 people demonstrators against the war in Vietnam outside the U.S. embassy in Brussels. Clashes between demonstrators and police lead to several injuries and ten arrests.
3/3/1968	Italy	A bomb explodes outside the American Consulate in Turin.
3/3/1968	Great Britain	A bomb explodes outside the Spanish embassy and a U.S. officers' club in London.
3/3/1968	Netherlands	Bombs explode outside the Spanish, Greek, and Portuguese embassy in The Hague. Demonstration against the war in Vietnam the same day.
3/4/1968	Poland	2 students are expelled from the University of Warsaw for their participation in the January 30 demonstrations.
3/5/1968	Spain	Student demonstrations at universities in Seville, Saragossa, and Pamplona. The next day, police use water cannons to attack 700 students outside the Faculty of Law at the University of Madrid.
3/7/1968	Italy	Student demonstrations in Turin. The headquarters of the Fiat-owned newspaper <i>La Stampa</i> is attacked. Violent clashes between students and police. Fiat workers strike.
3/8/1968	Poland	Warsaw student demonstration in support of their expelled colleagues. Clash between demonstrators and police, which spread to the Polytechnical University the next day.
3/9/1968	Great Britain	1,000 students protest the government's defense policy in a demonstration at Cambridge University.
3/10/1968	Czechoslovakia	Mass meetings in Prague and across Czechoslovakia in support of First Secretary Alexander Dubcek. President Antonin Novotny is pressed to resign.
3/10/1968	Spain	The University of Seville closes after student protests against the arrest of student leaders. Demonstrations of support in Madrid. Riots spread to Zaragoza, the private Catholic university of Opus Dei in Navara, and the University of Bilbao.

3/11/1968	Poland	Newspapers in Warsaw mention the student unrest for the first time. Student meetings at the university and Polytechnical University in Warsaw. Clashes between students and police in Warsaw. Students at the University of Krakow ratify declarations of support. Ten thousand demonstrators clash with the paramilitary workers' militia in the streets of Warsaw. Polish authorities blames Jews for the riots.
3/12/1968	Poland	Protest meetings at factories against the student demonstrations. Polish officials with children participating in the demonstrations are removed from their jobs.
3/12/1968	Spain	Bomb blast outside the U.S. embassy in Madrid. One thousand students dislodged from a three-day sit-in at the University of Santiago de Compostela. The students declare a strike.
3/12/1968	Great Britain	British Jews in silent demonstration outside the Polish embassy in London to protest the anti-Semitic campaign in Poland.
3/13/1968	Poland	Students at the Polytechnic University in Warsaw ratify a petition to the authorities. Demonstrations outside the dean's office at Poznan University. Police begin making arrests.
3/13/1968– 3/16/1968	Poland	All Polish universities on strike for three days. Clashes between students and police on campus of Warsaw University which spread to the rest of the city. The conflicts spread to Jagiellonian University in Krakow and the University in Poznan.
3/15/1968	Spain	Clashes between students and police after a protest meeting in Madrid against the American war in Vietnam.
3/16/1968	Poland	Police in Katowice use water cannons and batons against demonstrating students.
3/16/1968	Italy	Extensive clashes between students and police in Rome. Police block the path of 5,000 students marching to the U.S. embassy in protest against the war in Vietnam. Neo-fascists from northern Italy and Rome take over the occupation of the Faculty of Law at the university in Rome.
3/16/1968	Spain	A fascist "University Defense Group" physically attacks a student delegate at the Faculty of Law at the University of Madrid. Fights between different student groups on the campus. Later clashes between students and police.
3/16/1968	Netherlands	Large demonstrations, both against and supportive of the American involvement in Vietnam, in Amsterdam and The Hague.

3/17/1968	Italy	Four thousand students gather at Piazza di Spagna in Rome and march to the Faculty of Architecture. The police are waiting and they attack the students. The police brutality in the streets is profound and shocks independent observers.
3/17/1968	Great Britain	Extensive demonstrations in London in protest against the war in Vietnam, including a gathering at Grosvenor Square.
3/18/1968	Poland	Steel workers in Nowa Huta go on strike in solidarity with striking students in Krakow.
3/19/1968	Poland	While giving what seems to be a conciliatory speech in the Cultural Palace in Warsaw, First Secretary Wladyslaw Gomulka identifies the student leaders as Jews and condemns revisionist professors. The speech fails to stop the unrest.
3/20/1968	Poland	Five thousand students at the Polytechnical University in Warsaw begin a twenty-four hour sit-in.
3/20/1968– 3/27/1968	Norway	The Vietnam movement arranges a Vietnam week in Bergen.
3/21/1968	Poland	Students at the Polytechnical University hold a strike meeting and pass resolutions. Faculty members join the strike.
3/21/1968	Denmark	Several student demonstrations in Copenhagen, signaling the beginning of the 1968 student revolt in Denmark.
3/22/1968	Czechoslovakia	Memorial ceremonies for the twentieth anniversary of former Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk's death. Students organize "teach-in" in Prague in support of political reforms.
3/22/1968	France	Clashes between police and students at the University of Nanterre. The students occupy the administration building. The "March 22 movement" is established under leadership of Daniel Cohn-Bendit.
3/23/1968	Poland	The student strike at Warsaw University comes to an end. Students give up the occupation of the Polytechnical University the following day.
3/24/1968	Spain	About 1,000 workers hold a rally to protest government measures against the students, the war in Vietnam, and U.S. Army bases in Spain. Police arrest 100 workers including several leaders of the illegal labor movement.
3/25/1968	Italy	Widespread student strikes in Italy. Extensive clashes between students and police in Milan. Student sit-in in front of the the Catholic university in Milan (La Cattolica).
3/25/1968	Poland	Six prominent professors, some of them Jewish, are fired from the Faculty of Humanities at Warsaw University.

3/26/1968	Czechoslovakia	Strikes in Czechoslovakia for the first time since 1948.
28/03/1968	Poland	Two thousand students participate in a demonstration at the University of Warsaw. Eight institutes are closed and students are forced to re-apply for admission.
3/28/1968	Spain	The Franco Government closes the university in Madrid indefinitely. Universities in Sevilla and Valencia close.
3/28/1968	France	The Faculty of Humanities at the University of Nanterre is closed.
3/28/1968	Denmark	Seventy-five people participate in a demonstration in Copenhagen against the American war in Vietnam.
3/28/1968– 3/30/1968	Spain	Students join workers' protests. Student protests at five Spanish universities, including Madrid.
3/30/1968	Poland	Authorities close several departments of Warsaw University. New anti-Semitic attacks in the Polish press.
3/30/1968	West Germany	Andreas Bader, Gudrun Ensslin, Horst Söhnlein, and Thorwald Proll set fire to two shopping centers in Frankfurt.

April

April 1968	Finland	Demonstrations in support of the German student movement in Helsinki. It is the first demonstration inspired by German student movement.
April 1968	Denmark	Eastern march in Copenhagen in protest of nuclear weapons.
4/1/1968	Spain	Newspapers in Madrid attack Franco for police brutality during the university demonstrations. Eighty-six leaders in the illegal Workers' Commission are arrested.
4/2/1968	Spain	Riot in Spanish court during a trial against leading figures in the illegal Workers' Commission. One thousand workers participate in a demonstration outside the court.
4/2/1968– 4/9/1968	Norway	Nationwide Vietnam week.
4/3/1968	West Germany	Demonstration in West Berlin in protest of the American War in Vietnam.
4/4/1968	Italy	Student strike in Pisa against the repression of the movement. In Naples, student occupies the Institute for Oriental Studies.
4/8/1968	Poland	Punitive actions against protesters: Students directly involved in the March revolt are drafted to military service.
4/9/1968	Norway	Between 150 and 300 people participate in a peaceful torchlight procession outside the U.S. embassy in Oslo

		in protest of the American war in Vietnam. Thirty counterdemonstrators shout pro-American slogans.
4/11/1968	Italy	Fiat workers strike in Turin. Police halt an assembly of students and workers in Palazzo Campana.
4/11/1968	West Germany	Assassination attempt on West Berlin student leader Rudi Dutschke.
4/12/1968	Poland	Anti-semitic purges in the administration, the mass media, and among the cultural and academic elite. Jews are removed from their positions.
4/12/1968	West Germany	Three hundred thousand people demonstrate in solidarity with Rudi Dutschke and against the Springer Press for feeding anti-student sentiment. The next day, anti-Springer demonstrations also take place in Hamburg, Cologne, Esslingen, Frankfurt, and Munich.
4/14/1968	Belgium	One hundred students participate in a solidarity demonstration with Rudi Dutschke and students in West Berlin.
4/14/1968	Spain	Riot police prevent Basques from neighboring provinces from attending an ETA-organized celebration of Aberri Eguna, the National Day of Basque separatists, in San Sebastian.
4/14/1968– 4/16/1968	West Germany	“Easter riots”: Nationwide clashes of demonstrators with the police. In Munich, a demonstration outside the editorial office of the Springer Press owned newspaper <i>Bild</i> . One thousand police officers surround the building and prevent the demonstrators from storming the building. Press photographer Klaus Frings and student Rüdiger Schreck are killed during violent clashes between demonstrators and the police.
4/15/1968	Great Britain	The Aldermaston march arrives at Trafalgar Square. Demonstration in London in protest against the attempted murder of Rudi Dutschke result in several injuries among police and protesters.
4/19/1968	Italy	In the North Italian Valdarno, workers at the Marzotto textile industry continue a months-long protest blocking production. Students from Trento and Padua participate in the protest.
4/19/1968	France	Solidarity demonstration for “Red Rudi” (Rudi Dutschke) in Paris.
4/19/1968	Norway	Fifty participate in a peaceful, but illegal, student demonstration outside the editorial office of the newspaper <i>Adresseavisa</i> in Trondheim protesting the news coverage of the student revolt in West Germany.
4/19/1968– 4/26/1968	Denmark	Students at the Faculty of Psychology at the university in Copenhagen occupy the Faculty laboratory at “ <i>Studiegården</i> ”.

4/20/1968	Great Britain	The conservative politician Enoch Powell gives his controversial “Rivers of Blood”-speech in Birmingham about immigration.
4/20/1968	Sweden	Two thousand people demonstrate in Stockholm against the war in Vietnam.
4/20/1968	Denmark	Fifty psychology students barricade classrooms and teachers’ offices at the University of Copenhagen and demand a greater representation in university decision making.
4/21/1968	France	Clashes between left-wing and right-wing students during general assembly of the French student union (UNEF).
4/22/1968	West Germany	Students of journalism at the Free University in West Berlin organize a lecture strike in protest of university resistance to reforms and greater student representation.
4/23/1968	Norway	About forty people—many of them young women—participate in an illegal demonstration outside several institutions in Oslo—among them the government, the court, and the editorial office of the largest Norwegian newspaper <i>Aftenposten</i> . They distribute leaflets and demand the release of those arrested during the demonstration on 6 April. The police stop the demonstration and several of the protestors are arrested.
4/23/1968	Denmark	Five thousand students participate in a demonstration in Copenhagen.
4/23/1968– 4/27/1968	Great Britain	More than 2,000 dock workers on strike. March in London in support of Enoch Powell’s position on the immigration policy.
4/24/1968	Italy	A neo-fascist group attacks the occupied university in Parma. Police drive occupants out of the university. The local trade unions declare a general strike in solidarity with the students.
4/26/1968	Great Britain	Dock workers go on strike in London in protest against the government’s immigration policy. Almost 4,000 workers march in support of the conservative politician Enoch Powell.
4/26/1968– 5/1/1968	Spain	Four days of riots in Madrid in the aftermath of an economic slump and in protest against the wage freeze. Boycott of public transportation in Madrid. Students and columns of workers organized by the illegal Workers Commission in fights with the Guardia Civil. Clashes between workers, students, and police in several Spanish cities.
4/27/1968	Switzerland	Rally in Zurich against the war in Vietnam.

4/27/1968	Denmark	In what is the largest anti-war rally in Denmark up to that point, about 25,000 people participate in a demonstration in Copenhagen against the war in Vietnam.
4/27/1968	Italy	Clashes between police and students in the aftermath of a student demonstration at Piazza Cavour in Rome.
4/27/1968	Italy	Student riots continue in Turin, Milan, Venice, Bologna, and Bari. Students try to block the distribution of newspapers in Venice.
<i>May</i>		
May 1968	Czechoslovakia	Demonstration by Czechoslovak students outside the Polish embassy in protest of Polish anti-Semitism and political oppression.
May 1968	Norway	Protest rally by the Socialist Student Association at the University in Oslo.
May 1968	East Germany	Protests against the planned demolition of the University church in Leipzig.
5/1/1968	Czechoslovakia	Declarations of support for Dubček and Svoboda during the First of May demonstration in Prague. For the first time since 1948, participation in the demonstration is voluntary.
5/1/1968	France	The French Communist Party and the supportive labor union (CGT) organize a peaceful demonstration.
5/1/1968	Poland	Students disturb the May Day ceremony at the University in Wrocław. Harsh assaults against Polish Jews by Gomułka.
5/1/1968	Great Britain	Racial demonstrations and unrest dominate May Day in London. Fights outside the Parliament between supporters and opponents of Enoch Powell and his stand on the immigration law issue.
5/1/1968	Spain	Several demonstrations are arranged by workers in Madrid and in other Spanish cities. It is the first May Day protest by the Spanish workers against Franco since the Spanish Civil War. Clashes between demonstrators and police.
5/1/1968	Norway	Disturbance during the May Day demonstration in Trondheim. Several hundred participants in an illegal demonstration outside the county jail in Oslo in support of imprisoned demonstrators. Vietnam demonstration in Stavanger.
5/1/1968	Finland	Two thousand students participate in a march against war, capitalism, and “bourgeois” values in the university city of Jyväskylä. Student actions in university cities nationwide.
5/2/1968	France	Students at the University of Nanterre organize a “Day of Anti-imperialism.”

5/3/1968	Czechoslovakia	Student demonstration in Prague in support of rapid reforms.
5/3/1968	Sweden	One thousand anti-Rhodesian demonstrators force officials to call off the first-round of the tennis Davis Cup matches between Rhodesia and Sweden. Police use batons to restore order.
5/3/1968	France	Police clear demonstrating students from the Sorbonne. Violent clashes between police and students in the Latin quarter. The Sorbonne University is closed.
5/3/1968	France	Classes are suspended at the Sorbonne.
5/5/1968	France	Demonstrations in the Latin quarter in Paris. French students and professors go on nationwide strike.
5/6/1968	France	Closing of university campus of the Sorbonne brings 49,000 students on to the streets of Paris. Barricades are put up in the streets in the Latin quarter. Violent clashes between demonstrators and police.
5/7/1968	France	Thirty thousand students join a long demonstration march through Paris. Students in Paris in new fights with police.
5/7/1968	Norway	Demonstration against the Israeli foreign minister Abba Eban during his visit in Oslo.
5/7/1968	Great Britain	Student action at the university in Essex. The action includes the disruption of lectures.
5/8/1968	Norway	Nationwide demonstration in several Norwegian cities against the American war in Vietnam.
5/8/1968	Great Britain	Actions against a scientist lecturing about chemical warfare at the university in Essex. Clashes between students and police.
5/8/1968	France	The French Parliament discusses the situation in the French universities. Twenty-five thousand students in a peaceful demonstration in Paris.
5/9/1968	France	Riots in Strasbourg, Nantes, Rennes, and Toulouse. In Lyon workers join the students in the demonstrations.
5/9/1968	Norway	Five hundred participate in a student demonstration in Oslo in protest of means test on student loans.
5/10/1968	France	"The Night of the Barricades": Sixty barricades are erected by the demonstrators in the streets of Paris. The French riot police (CRS) attack the barricades at <i>Rue Gay-Lussac</i> with tear gas grenades. During the night 720 persons are slightly injured; 367 are seriously injured; 468 persons are arrested. More than eighty vehicles are damaged by fire during the riot.
5/10/1968	Great Britain	Three students regarded as responsible for demonstrations at the university in Essex are expelled from the university.
5/11/1968	France	The French labor unions announce a general strike beginning May 14 in support of the students.

5/11/1968	West Germany	Forty thousand participate in a demonstration in Bonn in protest of proposed emergency laws.
5/11/1968	Yugoslavia	Hundreds of students in Belgrade protest the proposed emergency laws in West Germany.
5/12/1968	France	Prime Minister Georges Pompidou returns from Afghanistan and orders the reopening of the Sorbonne. He promises that all convicted students will have their cases tried again.
5/12/1968	West Germany	On their return to West Berlin, 800 students hold a sit-in in an East German railway station to debate how to support the revolts in Paris.
5/13/1968	Sweden	Demonstrations against the Israeli Foreign minister Abba Eban during his visit to Sweden.
5/13/1968	France	Eight hundred thousand demonstrators march in Paris from Place de la République to Place Denfert-Rochereau. ¹ The general strike attracts widespread and massive support. The airport in Paris and the EDF (the state electricity provider) are on strike. Soon thereafter, the whole of France is paralyzed by a twenty-four-hour strike across the country. The Sorbonne is occupied by students.
5/13/1968– 5/22/1968	Belgium	Students at the <i>Université Libre de Bruxelles</i> begin their “ <i>contestation</i> ” They meet with student leaders from Paris, Rome, Turino, Berlin, and Amsterdam, and start an “ <i>assemblée libre</i> ” It is the beginning of the “ <i>Mouvement du 13 mai</i> .” Regular “ <i>Assemblées libres</i> ” are set up by both students and staff members.
5/15/1968	France	2,500 students occupy the Odéon theatre in Paris.
5/15/1968	Italy	Students occupy the University of Milan.
5/15/1968	West Germany	Nationwide student strike and demonstrations against the proposed emergency laws in several German cities.
5/16/1968	West Germany	Students occupy the administration building at the University of Frankfurt.
5/16/1968	France	Workers at the Renault factory go on strike. The unrest spreads to the transportation system in Paris and to the French railways.
5/17/1968	France	One of the major French trade unions (CGT) refuses the students’ offer to join forces. Prime Minister George Pompidou gives a speech on national television where he appeals for law and order.
5/17/1968	France	Workers occupy the Renault factory.
5/17/1968– 5/20/1968	Spain	Four days of uninterrupted riots in Madrid. The red flag waves at the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Madrid. The students use Molotov cocktails against the police. The police use batons, water cannons, and horses against the students.

5/18/1968	Italy	Clashes between students and police in Rome.
5/18/1968	France	The students march through the Latin quarter during the night. Mass meeting at the Renault factory.
5/19/1968	France	General de Gaulle declares his “yes” to reforms and “no” to chaos. The film festival in Cannes is cancelled.
5/20/1968	France	The transport workers’ union in Paris demands impartial news coverage of the events on national television.
5/22/1968	France	The French Government offers amnesty to all students for illegal acts committed during the demonstrations. Daniel Cohn-Bendit is expelled as unwanted in France.
5/22/1968	Spain	More than 1,000 students build barricades at the Faculty of Philosophy. Police use water cannons against the students. In some cases the students are drafted to military service after participating in demonstrations. The Spanish government announces reforms and police withdrawal from university campuses.
5/22/1968	Belgium	About 500 students demanding university reforms occupy the rector’s office, the main hall, and faculty buildings at the Free University of Brussels.
5/23/1968	Netherlands	Students occupy buildings at the University of Amsterdam.
5/23/1968	Sweden	Students from the universities in Lund and Uppsala go on hunger strike in Stockholm. They demand increases in the Swedish development aid to the Third World.
5/23/1968	France	French writers occupy the Société des Gens de Lettres in Paris. Student demonstrations in the Latin quarter. Police use tear gas and water cannons.
5/24/1968	France	Riots in Lyon result in the death of a police officer. President de Gaulle gives a speech on national television and announces a popular election on workers’ participation in June. Violent clashes outside the railway station Gare de Lyon in Paris. Attempted arson at Paris Stock Exchange. Three police stations are attacked. Police storm the barricades in the Latin quarter.
5/24/1968	Italy	Student demonstration in Rome to allow opposite sex visitors in students’ rooms.
5/24/1968– 5/27/1968	Sweden	Student meeting in the students’ Community Center in Holländargatan, Stockholm. On the agenda is a discussion of the Government’s new proposals for a new university reform, UKAS. Between two hundred and three-hundred students occupy their own community center (<i>Kårhusokkupationen</i>) in protest against the proposed reforms.

5/25/1968	Netherlands	Fifteen thousand to twenty thousand workers and students from all over the Netherlands participate in a demonstration in Utrecht against the government's wage and price policy.
5/25/1968	Sweden	Clashes between 3,000 demonstrators and police in the streets of Stockholm. Clashes between left- and right-wing radicals. The students accuse major media of bias and dishonesty to the public.
5/25/1968	France	Employees at the government-owned broadcasting company ORTF join the strike. Twenty thousand demonstrators in confrontation with police in the streets of Paris.
5/27/1968	Sweden	The students give up the occupation of the Student Community Center in Stockholm.
5/27/1968	Switzerland	Students participate in a Torchlight procession in Zurich.
5/27/1968	France	Agreements between the Employers' Association and the labor unions groups about minimum wages, reduction in working hours and a lower pension age. The workers' participation in the company boards is turned down on principle after a vote among the members of the labor unions. Ten million workers are on strike. In Paris bicycles have replaced cars in the traffic due to petrol shortage.
5/27/1968– 5/31/1968	West Germany	Students at the Free University in West Berlin occupy buildings at the university in protest of the Emergency Laws.
5/28/1968	Great Britain	Student demonstration against British scientists developing new chemical weapons for the U.S. Army.
5/29/1968	Italy	The University of Milan reopens under police protection. Two hundred students occupy the Catholic university, La Cattolica. Students from Rome, Genoa, Venice, and Trento join the occupants. Demonstrators attack the editorial office of the newspaper <i>Corriere della Sera</i> . Five thousand workers and students join forces in demonstrations in Trento.
5/29/1968	Great Britain	Seven hundred students occupy the administration building at Hornsey College of Arts, North London. Occupation of the administration building at the University of Hull.
5/29/1968	Spain	One thousand students build barricades at the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Madrid. Clashes between students and police.
5/29/1968	France	Several thousand participate in demonstrations organized by the labor union CGT in Paris.
5/29/1968	West Germany	Students occupy the University of Frankfurt.

5/30/1968	West Germany	The German parliament in Bonn passes the Emergency Laws. All German universities go on strike.
5/30/1968	France	Mass demonstration at the University of Frankfurt. President de Gaulle disperses the Parliament and announces a general election in June. One million Paris inhabitants march <i>in support</i> of general de Gaulle.
5/31/1968	France	Georges Pompidou establishes a transitional government. Petrol has become available again. Gaullist demonstrations all over France. Tanks and paratroopers of the French army surround Paris.
5/31/1968	Spain	About 150 students occupy the Faculty of Social Science at the university in Madrid in protest against police brutality.
5/31/1968	Switzerland	A concert by Jimi Hendrix in Zurich followed by riots.
5/31/1968	Italy	Violent clashes between left radical students and police close to the French embassy in Rome. Students occupy the universities in Rome and Milan.

June

6/1/1968	Italy	Demonstrators attack the newspaper <i>La Stampa's</i> headquarters in Turin. Violent clashes between students and police in Turin. The waves of demonstrations slowly diminish as the semester ends.
6/2/1968	Spain	Police storm the student union's office in search of radical literature and close the Faculty of Philosophy.
6/2/1968	Yugoslavia	Student riots outside a concert hall in the suburbs of New Belgrade. The students are not allowed to enter a concert for members of a communist youth organization. After fistfights between students and security personnel, police intervene and violence escalates. Police open fire on unarmed students. Many students are injured; rumors about dead students spread quickly.
6/2/1968– 6/3/1968	Denmark	More than 1,000 participate in a two-day long demonstration march from Hillerød to the U.S. embassy in Copenhagen, against the war in Vietnam.
6/3/1968	Yugoslavia	A student action committee calls for a demonstration against police violence. Several thousands students take part in the demonstration which is again brutally attacked by police. Students occupy all faculties of Belgrade University, proclaiming a strike.
6/3/1968	Italy	Three hundred right-wing students attack the left-radical students occupying the university in Rome. Police take over the campus area. In Genoa, 1,000 workers and students march together in a demonstration in support of their French peers and colleagues. At the end of the semester, ten Italian universities remain occupied.

6/4/1968	Yugoslavia	Striking students and professors stay inside the occupied faculties surrounded by police units. The protests spread to Zagreb, Ljubljana, and Sarajevo where students and some professors support the demands of Belgrade students. In Sarajevo a demonstration with 2,000 participants is attacked by police who again use firearms.
6/4/1968	Great Britain	Three hundred students participate in a sit-in at Oxford University to protest the ban of distribution of political leaflets on campus.
6/5/1968	France	General de Gaulle replaces the director of French radio and television ORTF. The strike in the transportation system and postal service slowly comes to an end.
6/5/1968– 6/8/1968	Yugoslavia	Protests in Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana continue. Students and professors in Belgrade adopt a Political Action Program.
6/6/1968	France	Employees in the public sector and in many private companies return to work. Workers in the car and aero industries remain on strike.
6/6/1968	Belgium	Students occupy the Academy of Fine Arts in Brussels, demanding greater student participation in decision-making processes.
6/7/1968	Belgium	Violent clashes between extreme right-wing activists, armed and masked, and left-wing activists at the occupied buildings of the Free University of Brussels.
6/7/1968	France	During a press conference, De Gaulle calls for a third “ <i>revolution</i> ,” attacks both communism and capitalism, and proposes company reforms. Several thousand workers at the Renault factory remain on strike and clash with the police.
6/9/1968	Yugoslavia	Tito gives his support to the social demands of the students’ action program on national television. He announces that he will resign if he cannot create a solution to the students’ demands. The majority of the students go back to their studies. Students at the faculties of Sociology and Philosophy continue their protests.
6/10/1968	France	Clashes between workers and police at the Renault factory outside Paris. One high school student drowns during the tumult alongside the river Seine. University employees join the strike. One million French workers remain on strike. Fights between workers on strike and scabs at the Citroen car factory. The car industry gradually returns to normality.
6/11/1968	France	Several thousand students are surrounded by police at the Sorbonne. Seventy-two barricades are erected

		in the streets. Clashes between demonstrators and police. One demonstrator is killed by bullets outside the Peugeot factory in Montbéliard.
6/11/1968	Great Britain	Twelve hundred students at Oxford University protest a petition against left-wing activists among their colleagues.
6/12/1968	France	The French Government bans demonstration nationwide.
6/13/1968	Great Britain	“Students in Revolt” debate program on BBC brings student leaders from all over the world together for the first time on television.
6/13/1968	Norway	Thirty youths participate in a demonstration against NATO at the public gallery of the Norwegian Parliament in the aftermath of an anti-NATO rally at the nearby Market Square (Stortorget). About 200 participate in the rally.
6/14/1968	France	Police evacuate the student-occupied Odéon Theatre in Paris.
6/14/1968	Great Britain	Several hundred British students gather at London School of Economics (LSE) to establish the Revolutionary Socialist Students Federation.
6/16/1968	France	Police remove the remaining 2,000 students engaged in the occupation from the Sorbonne.
6/18/1968	France	More than 100,000 metal workers, among them workers at the Renault factory, return to work.
6/18/1968	Italy	Riots during the Venice Biennale. Students fight with police. Demonstrations threaten the presentation of the Biennale.
6/20/1968	Northern Ireland	Austin Currie, a local MP, occupies a house at Caledon in protest against an eviction from a Council house.
6/23/1968	France	First round in the general election to Parliament gives the Gaullists the greatest victory in their history.
6/26/1968	Switzerland	Youth rally in front of the <i>Globe-Provisorium</i> .
6/27/1968	Czechoslovakia	The manifesto <i>The Two Thousand Words</i> surfaces in Prague with demands for a democratic socialism.
6/30/1968	France	The second round of the Parliament election gives the governing coalition 358 of 485 seats in Parliament.
6/30/1968	Switzerland	<i>Globus</i> -Riots in Zurich.

July

July 1968	Finland	Frequent demonstrations against the American war in Vietnam in Helsinki and other university cities during the summer months.
7/1/1968	Switzerland	Demonstration ban in Zurich.
7/3/1968	West Germany	Demonstration in protest against the American war in Vietnam at the Free University in West Berlin.

7/5/1968	Czechoslovakia	The article <i>The One Thousand Words</i> counters claims suggesting that the democratization process has come to an end.
7/5/1968	Switzerland	Hunger strike for Biafra in Zurich. Rally against the demonstration ban in Zurich.
7/7/1968	Sweden	" <i>The Poor People's March</i> " from Stockholm to Uppsala.
7/11/1968	Spain	168 journalists in Madrid sign letter to the government protesting the growing series of fines and restriction on the press.
7/13/1968	Italy	A forty-eight-hour strike at the chemical plants of Porto Marghera in Venice.
7/16/1968	Switzerland	"Teach-in for Everybody" at Zurich University.
7/19/1968	Sweden	Youths occupy the cathedral in Uppsala. Protestors arrange a "pray-in" for their revolutionary manifest after a jazz concert in the church.
7/21/1968	Great Britain	Ten thousand people participate in a demonstration against the war in Vietnam. Police prevent a group of 3,000 demonstrators from approaching the U.S. embassy.
7/31/1968	France	De Gaulle further intensifies the censorship in radio and television. Sharp protests against the discharge of journalists in ORTF.

August

8/1/1968	Italy	Strike at the Montedison plant of Porto Marghera. Massive participation of students.
8/1/1968	Switzerland	Counter-event to the official August 1 celebrations in Zurich (Swiss National Holiday).
8/5/1968	Spain	The Basque are active in the three northern provinces of Guipuzca, Alava and Vizcaya. Franco declares state of emergency in the province of Guipuzca after one officer in the secret police is killed by ETA. Franco gives the Basque his ultimatum.
8/6/1968	Spain	Police crack down on the Basque movement and arrest fifty in the Guipuzcoa province.
8/7/1968	Czechoslovakia	Dubček urges the Czechoslovak Press to exercise caution.
8/13/1968	Greece	Assassination attempt on Prime Minister George Papadopoulos's life. The accused, Alexandros Panagoulis, and more than twenty others, are arrested for involvement in the plot.
8/16/1968	Spain	Basque nationalists try to blow up a television relay station outside San Sebastian in the province of Guipuzca.
8/19/1968	Great Britain	Unrest among British Catholics. Pray-ins against the Pope's ban on birth control pills.

- 8/20/1968–
8/21/1968 **Czechoslovakia** The Warsaw Pact invades Czechoslovakia. During the invasion about 92 Czechoslovaks are killed and more than 300 are injured. Dubcek and his men are arrested and taken as prisoners to Moscow. The Soviets fail to establish a new government, but enact the secret Moscow agreements that put an end to the liberalization.
- 8/21/1968 **France, Finland,**
Norway Demonstrations against the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in Paris, Helsinki, and across Norway.
- 8/22/1968 **Czechoslovakia** The Czechoslovakian Parliament and the secretly summoned Special Party Congress of the Communist Party condemn the occupation as illegal. A curfew is declared in Prague.
- 8/22/1968 **West Germany,**
Italy,
The Netherlands,
Sweden Widespread demonstration in protest of the Soviet invasion in Czechoslovakia in Munich, West Berlin, Rome, Amsterdam, The Hague, and Stockholm.
- 8/22/1968–
8/30/1968 **Czechoslovakia** Czech people engage in various forms of protest actions against the Soviet invasion including posters, passive resistance, and removing road signs.
- 8/23/1968 **Great Britain** Demonstration in London against the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.
- 8/23/1968 **East Germany** Hundreds of East German workers refuse to sign proclamations in support of the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Fliers criticizing the invasion of Czechoslovakia are distributed in East Berlin. More than 100 young people are arrested in the following days for their criticism of the invasion, many of them children of prominent members of the communist party.
- 8/23/1968–
8/26/1968 **Czechoslovakia** President Svoboda and Dubček participate in “negotiations” with Soviet leaders. Dubček is allowed to return to Czechoslovakia to administer the “Prague Autumn.” General strike in Prague.
- 8/24/1968 **East Germany** Youth demonstration against the invasion of Czechoslovakia outside hotel Berolina at Karl Marx-Allé, East Berlin.
- 8/24/1968 **Northern Ireland** Civil Rights march from Coalisland to Dungan-
non, Northern Ireland, arranged by the Northern
Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA). It is
the first large-scale demonstration mounted by the
association.
- 8/25/1968 **Czechoslovakia** The Czechoslovakian leaders are forced to sign a
secret protocol similar to a political dictate before
leaving Moscow. In Prague there are street demon-
strations and the Czechoslovakian labor union calls
for a boycott. Prague citizens take part in demon-
strations. In spite of strict Soviet measures to stop

		broadcasting, the illegal press and radio continue to operate.
8/26/1968	East Germany	Wolf Biermann and Robert Havemann are arrested by the regime after they declare their support of Czechoslovakia in a West German newspaper.
8/27/1968	Czechoslovakia	Dubček gives a television speech and informs the Czechoslovakian people about the situation.
8/28/1968	Czechoslovakia	President Ludvik Svoboda appeals to discipline and trust.
8/29/1968	Czechoslovakia	The Czechoslovakian Parliament unanimously condemns the Soviet invasion and demands the troops withdrawn.

September

9/1/1968	Czechoslovakia	Censorship is “temporarily” reimposed in Czechoslovakian press, radio, and television.
9/2/1968– 9/7/1968	Italy	National meeting of the student movement in Venice at the University of Ca’ Foscari.
9/21/1968– 9/22/1968	West Germany	Several hundred students take part in a SDS demonstration against the president of Senegal, Léopold Senghor, at the Frankfurt Book Fair. Police use tear gas against the demonstrators. Police in Frankfurt arrest Daniel Cohn-Bendit in connection with the demonstration.
9/29/1968	Great Britain	Demonstration in London in support of Biafra and in protest against the British Government’s support for the Government in Nigeria.
9/29/1968	Norway	Demonstration at University Square in Oslo in protest against the Junta in Greece. The demonstration is a protest against the Greek referendum on the changes in the Constitution. The demonstration is arranged by the Norwegian Committee for Greek democracy, the Students’ Association, and by the Greek committee against dictatorship.

October

10/2/1968	Switzerland	Rally organized by the “Zurich Manifest” on “Repression in Democracies.”
10/3/1968– 10/4/1968	France	Demonstration in Paris in support of the students in Mexico. Clashes between police and students.
10/5/1968	Portugal	The democratic opposition rallies 600 participants for a traditional ceremony on the Graves of the Heroes in Prague. Clashes between demonstrators and police.
10/5/1968– 10/8/1968	Northern Ireland	Approximately 400–600 participate in a Civil Rights march in Londonderry arranged by Derry Hous-

		ing Action Committee (DHAC) with support from NICRA. Riots and violent clashes between police and demonstrators.
10/8/1968	France	The French Minister of Education presents proposals for reforms of the French education system.
10/9/1968	Northern Ireland	Three thousand people participate in a student demonstration in Belfast in protest against earlier police brutality in Londonderry.
10/10/1968	Belgium	Two thousand students participate in a protest meeting in Liège against the decision of the academic authorities to introduce a selection system before accepting students at the university.
10/16/1968– 10/29/1968	Italy	Protests of high school students throughout the country. At the Mamiani Gymnasium in Rome the students protest against authoritarianism. They receive the solidarity of university students.
10/19/1968	Northern Ireland	Sit-in in Londonderry arranged by Derry Citizen's Action Committee (DCAC) draws 4,000–5,000 participants.
10/21/1968	East Germany	A series of trials start against students and intellectuals that participated in protests against the invasion of Czechoslovakia.
10/24/1968	Belgium	Five hundred students at Liège University occupy the promotion room for several hours and discuss topics such as “the critical university” and freedom of speech. They demand that police should not be allowed to enter university buildings. Six hundred Flemish students in Leuven participate in a demonstration in support of workers on strike at the Ford factory in Genk. Demonstrations are repeated regularly until the end of the strike on November 21.
10/25/1968	Great Britain	Students occupy the LSE.
10/25/1968– 10/28/1968	Norway	A nationwide all-party “Flag for Freedom” action in support of Czechoslovakia.
10/26/1968	Italy	Police in Messina drive out occupants in four faculties at the university of Messina.
10/27/1968	Great Britain	Fifty thousand participate in a demonstration in London against the war in Vietnam. Four thousand protestors march to the U.S. embassy at Grosvenor Square, where clashes between demonstrators and police ensue.
10/28/1968	Czechoslovakia	Fiftieth anniversary of Czechoslovakian independence: Thousands of workers and students demonstrate against the Soviet occupation.
10/28/1968	Norway	Nationwide Demonstrations against the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

10/30/1968	West Germany	Several hundred students at the Free University in West Berlin arrange a “go-in” during the sessions of the university’s Academic Senate.
<i>November</i>		
November, 1968	Finland	A “Third World Week” is organized in Helsinki.
11/2/1968	Northern Ireland	A march arranged by the Derry Citizen’s Action Committee (DCAC) draws 3,000–4,000 participants.
11/3/1968	Greece	Clashes between demonstrators and police in Athens during the funeral of former Prime Minister George Papandreou.
11/4/1968	West Germany	Violent clashes between police and demonstrators in West Berlin in the “Battle at Tegeler Weg.” The demonstrators strike back at the police with cobblestones.
11/4/1968	Belgium	Students at the State University of Liège go on strike for greater student participation in the decision process at the university.
11/5/1968	Italy	General strike of high school students in Palermo with 10,000 students participating in a demonstration against authoritarianism and repression at school.
11/6/1968– 11/7/1968	Czechoslovakia	Several thousands participate in demonstrations in Prague to protest the Soviet occupation. Students call for a strike.
11/7/1968	West Germany	Demonstrations against the American war in Vietnam.
11/7/1968	Italy	Demonstrations of high school students in Bari, Palermo, Bologna, and Prato.
11/8/1968	Italy	In Naples, there is a general strike against the wage-system based on the differentiated regional division
11/8/1968	France	A new wave of widespread student demonstrations in France.
11/9/1968	West Germany	Demonstration in West Berlin against the American War in Vietnam.
11/10/1968	Portugal	Three hundred Roman Catholics occupy the foyer of the Lisbon Patriarchate
11/11/1968	Czechoslovakia	Tightening measures against the Czechoslovakian Press.
11/13/1968	Northern Ireland	The Unionist Government imposes one-month ban on marches inside Londonderry.
11/14/1968	Italy	Twelve million workers and students participate in a twenty-four-hour general strike and demand reforms.
11/14/1968– 11/18/1968	Czechoslovakia	Students go on strike for three days in support of national liberty. The student strike spreads from Prague to the universities nationwide.

11/16/1968	Northern Ireland	Fifteen thousands participate in a demonstration in Londonderry arranged by the DCAC, ignoring the government's ban on demonstrations.
11/19/1968	Italy	General strike of workers in public sector. Eight thousand students demonstrate in Turin.
11/20/1968	Czechoslovakia	The students in Prague arrange "sit-ins" and prolong their strike.
11/21/1968	Denmark	Student disturbance during the annual celebration at the University of Copenhagen. The guests are the Danish establishment, with the King and Queen, and the Successor in front.
11/25/1968	Portugal	About 5,000 students at University of Coimbra demand university reforms. Clash with police.
11/25/1968– 11/27/1968	Finland	Students occupy the Old Student House in Helsinki.
11/27/1968	Denmark	Anti-Greek demonstration in Copenhagen.
11/30/1968	Belgium	Student protest in Liège against the movie "the Green Berets."
11/30/1968	Northern Ireland	Civil Rights demonstration in Armagh results in clashes with loyalist counterdemonstration.

December

12/1/1968	Sweden	Five hundred people participate in a demonstration in Stockholm.
12/2/1968	France	Renault workers on protest strike.
12/3/1968	Italy	General strike in Sicily as reaction to the events of Avola. Strikes in solidarity with the Sicilian workers nationwide. High school students demonstrate in Rome.
12/4/1968	Northern Ireland	Violent clashes between Civil Rights demonstrators and loyalists in Dungannon.
12/5/1968	Great Britain	Eight hundred students participate in a sit-in at the university in Birmingham.
12/5/1968	France	Parliament passes new union laws. Workers at the Renault factories are on strike.
12/7/1968	Czechoslovakia	Mounting pressure against the Czechoslovakian mass media.
12/8/1968	Portugal	The government closes Lisbon University's Higher Technical Institute.
12/9/1968	Northern Ireland	The Unionist Prime Minister appealing for moderation. Both DCAC and NICRA suspend protest for one month in response. Minister of Home Affairs is fired.
12/10/1968	Italy	Students and workers in Genua demonstrate together following violent repression of a demonstration of high school students on December 7.

12/10/1968	Norway	Demonstration outside the U.S. embassy in support of the American war in Vietnam. Clashes between demonstrators and FNL supporters.
12/11/1968	Portugal	300 students at the University of Lisbon boycott lectures in protest against the closing of the Technical Institute.
12/12/1968	France	French students are protesting against the presence of police on university campuses.
12/13/1968– 12/15/1968	Sweden	“Vietnam week”—conference in Stockholm.
12/16/1968	France	Clashes between students and police at the University of Nanterre. New control regulations at French universities.

Notes

This chronology gives an overview of major protest events in nineteen different European countries in 1968. Aside from other published chronologies, it is based on the *New York Times*, *The Times*, *Aftenposten*, *Arbeiderbladet*, and *Dagbladet*. From the Norwegian television news, *NRK Dagsrevyen*, the transmission logs for 1968 have been drawn upon.² Moreover, it is also based on a plethora of other Nordic yearbooks such as the Norwegian *Hvem Hva Hvor* published by the Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten*; *Hvem Hva Hvor* published by the Danish newspaper *Politikken*; *När, Var Hur* published in Sweden; and *Anno* published by *Svenska Dagbladet*. Also included is the yearbook *Anno*, which has its own sections for foreign events and Swedish domestic events. Collectively, these yearbooks offer a survey of the most important events in each of the Nordic countries, as well as information on major international developments. Further data could be obtained from *Daily Mail's Year Book*, which has been particularly useful to get an overview of events in Great Britain, and Northern Ireland. For media comments on protest events, the Keesing's Record of World Events (formerly Keesing's Contemporary Archives) has been an important source.³

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1. The exact number of demonstrators is uncertain. The cited numbers are given by the labor unions. Police estimate the numbers of demonstrators at about 171 000, kfr.

- E. J. Hobsbawm, Marc Weitzmann, and Magnum Photos, *1968: Magnum Throughout the World* (Paris: Hazan, 1998) 268.
2. See Tariq Ali and Susan Watkins, *1968—Marching in the Streets* (New York: Free Press, 1998); David Caute, *The Year of the Barricades* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988) xiv, 514; E.J. Hobsbawm, Marc Weitzmann, and Magnum Photos, *1968: Magnum Throughout the World* (Paris: Hazan, 1998) 268; Yngvar Ustvedt, NRK Aktivum, and Norsk Rikskringkasting, *Historiske øyeblikk store begivenheter hjemme og ute—slik NRK så dem* (Oslo: Damm, 2005) 255.
 3. See Keesing's Record of World Events: <http://www.keesings.com/>. For more comprehensive details on sources and a broader account of events in various European countries in 1968, see Rolf Werenskjold, *A Chronology of the Global 1968 Protest. Report Series No. 13, Volda University College and Møreforskning*. (Volda, 2010).
 4. See also the online teaching and research guide on <http://www.1968ineurope.com>. The website will be updated regularly.
 5. Nick Thomas, *Protest Movements in 1960s West Germany: A Social History of Dissent and Democracy* (Oxford ; New York: Berg, 2003); Martin Klimke and Joachim Scharloth, *1968 in Europe: A History of Protest and Activism, 1956–77* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert, and Detlef Junker, *1968, the World Transformed* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998) xi, 490.

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Contributors

Karen Steller Bjerregaard teaches History and Social Science at Avedøre Gymnasium in Denmark. Her dissertation is entitled “*A suppressed people is always right*” - *Danish Solidarity with the Third World, 1960-79*. As a PhD student she was part of the research group “*It’s moving as we walk: Social Criticism and Utopia in Denmark in the 1960s and 1970s*” at the Department of Culture and Identity at Roskilde University.

Maud Anne Bracke is a lecturer in modern European history at the University of Glasgow. She is the author of *Which Socialism, Whose Détente? West European Communism and the 1968 Czechoslovak Crisis* (Budapest/New York, 2007). Her research interests are the European left in the 20th century, the cultural and social history of the Cold War and comparative politics.

Timothy Brown is associate professor of history at Northeastern University. A two-time Fulbright recipient, his work has appeared in the *American Historical Review*, the *German Studies Review*, and *Contemporary European History*. He is the author of *Weimar Radicals: Nazis and Communists between Authenticity and Performance* (Oxford/New York, 2009), and is currently working on a monograph entitled *1968: West Germany in the World*.

Sebastian Gehrig is currently assistant professor at the history department of Heidelberg University. He is co-editor of *Kulturrevolution als Vorbild? Maoismen im deutschsprachigen Raum* (Frankfurt a.M., 2008) and *Linksalternative Milieus und Neue Soziale Bewegungen in den 1970er Jahren* (Heidelberg, 2011). He is working on his dissertation entitled “Coping with the Present: Identity-Political Debates in the Federal Republic of Germany”.

Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, professor of contemporary history at the University of Bielefeld, is an associate member of the Centre de sociologie européenne (MSH-Paris), and was visiting professor at St Antony’s College Oxford in 2008/9. Her main publications include „*Die Phantasie an die Macht*“. *Mai 68 in Frankreich, Frankfurt* (Frankfurt a.M., 2001); *Die 68er Bewegung. Deutschland - Westeuropa, USA* (München, 2008); *Eingreifendes Denken. Die Wirkungschancen von Intellektuellen* (Velbbrück, 2007); *1968 - Vom Ereignis zum Mythos* (Frankfurt a.M., 2008); and *1968 - Eine Zeitreise* (Frankfurt a.M., 2008).

Sebastian Haumann is a postdoc fellow at the Graduate School Topology of Technology at the Technical University Darmstadt. His research interests include urban history and the history of youth-, sub-, and countercultures. His 2009 dissertation focussed on *The Interdependence of Protest and Urban Renewal 1965-1985*.

Thomas Ekman Jørgensen is a Danish historian specializing in comparative European history whose first book *Transformations and Crises: The Left and the Nation in Denmark and Sweden, 1956-1980* (Oxford/New York, 2008). He has published extensively on 1968 in Scandinavia and now works as Head of Unit at the European University Association.

Boris Kanzleiter is a historian specialized in former Yugoslavia. He is currently head of office of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation in Belgrade. He is the co-editor of *1968 in Jugoslawien: Studentenproteste und kulturelle Avantgarde zwischen 1960 und 1975. Gespräche und Dokumente* (Bonn, 2008) and published the monography *Die „Rote Universität“. Studentenbewegung und Linksopposition in Belgrad 1964 – 1975* (Hamburg 2011).

Martin Klimke is a research fellow at the German Historical Institute, Washington, DC and the Heidelberg Center for American Studies (HCA) at Heidelberg University, Germany. He is the author of *The Other Alliance: Student Protest in West Germany and the United States in the Global Sixties* (Princeton, 2010) and *A Breath of Freedom: The Civil Rights Struggle, African American GIs, and Germany* (together with Maria Höhn, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). He also co-edited *1968. Handbuch zur Kultur- und Mediengeschichte der Studentenbewegung* (Stuttgart, 2007), *1968 in Europe. A History of Protest and Activism, 1956-77* (New York, 2008), and *Changing the World, Changing the Self: Political Protest and Collective Identities in 1960/70s West German and United States* (Oxford/New York, 2010).

Holger Nehring is a senior lecturer in contemporary European history at the University of Sheffield, where he co-founded the Centre for Peace History. His main research interests lie in the social, political and cultural history of post-World War II Western Europe, with a special emphasis on the social history of the Cold War in Britain and Germany since 1945, and in historical peace research. He is the author of *The Politics of Security. West European Protests against Nuclear Weapons and the Cold War* (Oxford, 2011) and co-editor of *Frieden und Friedensbewegungen in Deutschland, 1892-1992. Ein Lesebuch* (Essen, 2010).

Zdeněk Nebřenský works at the National Agency for European Education Programs (CZ) in transfer of innovations and finishes at the Charles University Prague his PhD dissertation about *Everyday life of higher education students in*

Central Europe 1956-1968. His research interests are modern historiography, comparative, social and cultural history of Central Europe. He is the author of *Weltoffenheit der tschechoslowakischen und polnischen Jugend 1956-1968. Kulturtransfer aus Ostmitteleuropa als Herausforderung für die Zeitgeschichte Europas* (edited by A.Arndt, J. Häberlen, C. Reinecke, Göttingen 2011)

Rimko van der Maar is a historian at the Research Institute for History and Culture (OGC) at the University of Utrecht. He wrote his dissertation on the Netherlands and the Vietnam War (*Welterusten mijnheer de president. Nederland en de Vietnamoorlog, 1965-1973*, published in 2007) and is currently writing a biography of Herman van Roijen (1905–1991), a Dutch topdiplomat.

Niek Pas is an assistant professor for contemporary history at the University of Amsterdam. His current research and teaching interests include decolonization in transnational perspective as well as French political culture after 1945. He is the author of a study of the perception of the Algerian war in the Netherlands (*Aan de wieg van het nieuwe Nederland. Nederland en de Algerijnse oorlog (1954-1962)* (Amsterdam, 2008)) and a PhD on the history and perception of Provo (*Imaazje! De verbeelding van Provo (1965-1967)* (Amsterdam, Wereldbibliotheek, 2003)).

Corina L. Petrescu is an assistant professor of German at The University of Mississippi, USA. Her research interests include National Socialist Germany, protest movements and representations of 1968 in the German and Romanian imaginary, transnational and transcultural literature, as well as Yiddish theater and German-Jewish relations from the 18th century to the present. She is the author of *Against All Odds: Subversive Spaces in National Socialist Germany* (Oxford, 2010).

Jacco Pekelder studied history at Utrecht University, where in 1998 he finished a dissertation on the Netherlands' relations with the German Democratic Republic (published in German: "Die Niederlande und die DDR: Bildformung und Beziehungen, 1949-1989," 2002). From 2002 to 2007 he was research coordinator of the Germany Institute at Amsterdam University (DIA). Since late 2007 he is lecturer at the History Department of Utrecht University. His research centers on the societal impact of leftwing political violence in Germany in the 1970s.

Andreas Rothenhöfer is a lecturer in German Linguistics at the University of Bremen. His research interests are linguistic text and discourse analysis, cognitive linguistics, language and emotion, lexicology, conceptual history, cultural memory studies, and interdisciplinary and comparative linguistics. He is the author of *Struktur und Funktion im einsprachigen Lernerwörterbuch: Das de Gruyter*

Wörterbuch Deutsch als Fremdsprache und Langenscheidts Großwörterbuch Deutsch als Fremdsprache im Vergleich (Hildesheim, 2004) and *Identität und Umbruch. Die sprachliche Konstruktion des Kriegsendes nach 1945* (Frankfurt, 2011).

Joachim Scharloth, professor at Dokkyo University, Tokyo, Japan, is a linguist and his research concentrates on the history of language, socio-linguistics, social movements, as well as discourse semantics. He is the author of *Sprachnormen und Mentalitäten. Sprachbewusstseinsgeschichte in Deutschland im Zeitraum von 1766 und 1785* (Tübingen, 2005) and co-editor of *1968. Handbuch zur Kultur- und Mediengeschichte der Studentenbewegung* (Stuttgart, 2007), as well as *1968 in Europe. A History of Protest and Activism, 1956-77* (New York, 2008). His most recent book is *1968. Eine Kommunikationsgeschichte* (Paderborn, 2010).

Rolf Werenskjold is associate professor at the Faculty of Media and Journalism, Volda University College, Norway. He is teaching Media Studies and Media History. He is a historian with a dissertation on the protests and the media in 1968 (published in Norwegian: "That's the Way it is? Protestene og mediene i 1968.") He has published several studies on the media and 1968, modern American history and about Norwegian Foreign News Journalism during the Cold War.

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