# 1968 in Europe
## A History of Protest and Activism, 1956–1977

Edited by Martin Klimke and Joachim Scharloth

palgrave
macmillan

# 3
# The International Peace Movement

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Although there has been a tradition of mainly religiously motivated conscientious objectors for many centuries, the origins of an organized peace movement can be traced back to two nineteenth-century ideologies: pacifism and antimilitarism. In this chapter, the *peace movement* is defined as a social movement that aimed to eradicate war as a means of policy and established itself between 1954 and 1963, following ideas originating in the pacifist, antimilitaristic, and socialist ideologies of the nineteenth century.[1]

## Roots

The origins of pacifism can be found in middle-class liberalism. As early as the Napoleonic wars, middle-class liberals in numerous countries founded small clubs supporting human rights and rejecting military action on ethical and religious grounds. In many countries, these clubs finally came together in national *Peace Societies*, whose main objective was the limitation and reduction of national wars and the protection of the population from the effects of war. The Peace Societies worked at establishing an international court of arbitration and setting up an internationally binding code of law. They appealed to the governments and strove to achieve a modification of law—that is, they followed a legalistic course of action.

Antimilitarism, in contrast, was deeply rooted in the labor movement. Because of the labor movement's inner conflicts, however, it is impossible to give an exact definition of the term.[2] The majority of the Second Socialist International was heavily influenced by the German Socialists and believed that changes in society and the Socialists' seizure of political power would automatically stop any future wars, because the power over arms would lie in the hands of the proletariat. In contrast to those beliefs, revolutionary

anarchism completely opposed the military and all forms of violence, including the "dictatorship of the proletariat." Organizations like the *Internationale Antimilitaristische Vereinigung* or the Industrial Workers of the World, founded in 1905 in the United States, were in favor of strategies against war that can be described by using key words like sabotage, objection, strike, and passive resistance. In short, the slogans "weapons to us" versus "weapons down" very pointedly describe the difference between Marxist and anarchist antimilitarism.

When World War I started in 1914, however, neither Peace Societies nor the labor movement was able to prevent the four years of slaughter. Both doctrines' lack of power finally led to the emergence of a new form of pacifism: "active pacifism." It presented a synthesis of "pacifism in favor of legal actions (organizational pacifism) and the revolutionary antimilitarism promoting direct actions"[3] and was trying to link the liberal middle-class pacifism of the peace societies with the antimilitarism of the anarchistic labor movement. One organization that followed the ideals of an "active pacifism" was the *War Resisters' International* (WRI). Founded in 1921 in the Netherlands, the WRI developed an antimilitaristic, political pacifism that saw its function not only in preventing wars through conscientious objections but also in setting further political and social aims. From then on, racial hatred and the removal of social setbacks also belonged to the range of action of the peace movement, because these were considered major reasons for armed conflicts.

The Second World War brought decisive changes in the quality of active pacifism because conscientious objectors (COs) in the United States started to realize these aims by using new methods of protest.[4] Many of them had successfully used nonviolent tactics, hunger strikes, and the mobilization of the public to end racial segregation in the American prison system. Learning from this fundamental victory, activists who left prison after the end of the Second World War started to use their methods of protest in other areas. Gandhi's nonviolent resistance became the leading philosophy in the fight for more civil rights, for disarmament, and against social setbacks; American COs, who now took an active part in the peace movement, were the pioneers of these new methods. However, the swiftly beginning Cold War soon put such a damper on the activities of the peace movement that there barely existed any movement at all at the beginning of the 1950s.

## Cognitive Orientations and Aims

In the mid-1950s, the peace movement started its slow revival. Although the numerous groups of the resurrected peace movement had a clearly defined common goal, namely, the fight against the bomb and the nuclear arms race,

they neither shared a common political agenda nor agreed on ideological questions. Furthermore, there was no consent on the means of how to reach their aims. Nevertheless, despite this heterogeneity there were two general ways of fighting that can be observed: liberal peace activists and radical pacifists.

Liberal peace advocates favored an international test ban and disarmament conferences. They believed that peace required a process of social and economic change, which was best promoted through support of international agencies and multilateral cooperation, through United Nations peacekeeping efforts instead of unilateral American intervention, and through technical and economic aid rather than military assistance. At most, peace liberals hoped for a reformed world order that might constrain national rivalries, temper Soviet–US antagonism, and open the way for orderly disarmament. They opposed continuing escalation of the nuclear arms race. Because of these beliefs, most of the liberal peace advocates were suspicious of ideologies and uninterested in mass movements and were inclined to use the means of persuasion and advocacy within established institutions. Liberal peace advocates were engaged in international peace organizations such as United World Federalists (UWF); Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), an organization that had been set up by women during the First World War from several nations; and the Pugwash Movement, a movement including scientists from countries on either side of the Iron Curtain.

Although liberal peace activists kept criticizing the West's armament policy, many shared the official point of view that the aggressive ideology and foreign policy of the Soviet Union was responsible for the confrontation. The views of radical pacifists differed fundamentally. Radical pacifists believed that both sides of the Iron Curtain presented different manifestations of the same problem: "Whatever differences may exist between Communist and 'free world' regimes, in this decisive respect they are equal threats, two sides of the same threat to the survival of civilization," the American peace activist Abraham Muste wrote in the journal *Liberation*. "The H-bomb is not an instrument of peace in the hands of one and of war in the hands of the other. Nor is it a mere accidental excrescence in either of them but, rather, a logical outgrowth of their basic economic and social orders."[5] Consequently, radical pacifists like Muste supported a strategy of unilateral disarmament to solve the conflict between the two power blocks and suggested an independent worldwide movement against their binary policies. This concept of a "Third Camp" roused great hopes in countries without allegiance to either block:

> There are in Western Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America, peoples who live 'in between' the two atomically armed power blocks. Of necessity,

> their prime objective is to keep from being drawn into either block and engulfed in the wars for which these leviathans are arming. . . . There are in non-committed areas groups seeking to deal with the problems of economics and politics in a broader way and at a deeper ethical level. They seek to build not another Military Force but a Third Camp or Third Way. They are striving not only to avoid war but to build a socio-economic order and culture different from both Communism and capitalism.[6]

This idea of a Third Camp also fundamentally differed with the strategies of liberal peace activists. In places where liberal peace advocates tried to achieve legal changes through reforms, radical pacifists sought to expose shortcomings through symbolic actions. As radical pacifist Ken Calkins wrote in 1958, "I have become convinced that direct action is the only way to reach the minds of men who have been morally benumbed by too many years of propaganda, fear and horror. I hope that my action will stir at least some of those who have so long remained silent to speak up and to act against what they know in their hearts is a hopeless and immoral policy."[7]

## Organizational Structure

According to a rough estimate of the American peace organization SANE (the Committee for a SANE Nuclear Policy), the early 1960s saw approximately 100 nonaligned peace organizations (i.e., organizations without Communist support) in forty-four countries. The International Fellowship of Reconciliation alone counted 41,000 members in twenty-five countries. The WRI listed a similar number of members, and the WILPF had independent international sections in forty-one countries.[8] If all these groups had been internationally united, the peace movement would have had an influential voice in the Cold War. Because of the substantial political and strategic differences between these organizations, however, this was never an option. The greatest obstacle on the way to international cooperation was the attitude toward Communism. Most peace groups gave way to public pressure and presented a strictly anti-Communist ideology so as not to be suspected of Communist subversion. This led to conflicts with those (mainly radical pacifist) organizations that rejected Communism but were in favor of an open-door policy, or a line of policy that allowed for some dialogue with organizations from the Eastern Bloc. Because even these positions were hard to unite, cooperation with the World Peace Council seemed impossible, even though organization with a clearly Communist leadership had many sections all over Europe (in both West and East) and could have offered a good logistical base for international cooperation. However, as a result of these unbridgeable differences, the

early 1960s saw not only a deeply divided nonaligned peace movement but also a competing Communist-led movement.

Despite these unfavorable preconditions, limited networks started to unite some of the groups of the nonaligned movement in the late 1950s. The initial step was taken by smaller groups who found common aspects in their programs or activities. One example is the cooperation of the nonviolent peace activists of the British Direct Action Committee with the American Committee for Non-Violent Action (CNVA). Similarly, the *Sozialistische Deutsche Studentenbund* corresponded with like-minded students of the U.S. Student Peace Union and the Japanese *Zengakuren*. Although limited by geographical distance, their cooperation still resulted in simultaneous demonstrations of all three student organizations against atmospheric nuclear testing on April 27, 1962. Inspired by these efforts, larger organizations also began creating transnational networks. One of the first was the Pugwash Movement, launched during a July 1957 conference that united famous scientists from both hemispheres. In 1959, the European Federation Against Nuclear Arms established yet another, albeit very selective, international organization. It was limited to Western Europe and specifically excluded pacifist groups and organizations using direct action. But when forty peace groups from eighteen countries met in Oxford in 1963 to found the International Confederation for Disarmament and Peace (ICDP), an organization open to all nonaligned peace groups was finally created. By 1967, fifty-six nonaligned peace groups had become members of the ICDP, including not only the three pacifist internationals but also direct action, unilateralist, multilateralist, student, and women's groups.[9] Despite the common trend toward networking and cooperation between the nonaligned groups, the numerous differences among the single groups still prevented an effective, unified policy. The bigger the organization, as in the case of the ICDP, the harder it was to define common aims that could be supported by the various national groups. In addition, as the different interests often prevailed, the peace movement can hardly be called transnational.

Transnationalism can be found within the two pacifist Internationals, the WRI and the International Fellowship of Reconciliation. Both Internationals understood themselves as being transnational networks, as seen within the organizational structure of the WRI. Contrary to international organizations like the ICDP, which tried to unite the positions of numerous national umbrella organizations by discussion, the WRI saw itself as a movement of individual members without a central administration or rigid hierarchy. Membership was obtained simply by agreeing to a common declaration of principles. This way, it was possible to accept groups or individuals with differing ideologies and even support their ideas, as long as the basic principles

remained untouched. In that respect, the WRI rather resembled a pluralistic debate club than an organization, because it was not so much an instrument to execute common political aims as a turntable for new ideas, which were presented during its international conferences or published in WRI publications.[10] The WRI thus became an "international transmission belt which helped to spread regionally limited discussions of theory and action into different countries."[11]

Members such as Bayard Rustin were mainly responsible for spreading nonviolent action in numerous movements and countries during the 1950s and 1960s. As a member of the American section of the WRI, the War Resisters League, and the American Fellowship of Reconciliation, Rustin came across Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolent resistance in the 1940s and successfully practiced it as a war resister in World War II and as a protestor against racial segregation in American prisons.[12] During the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955 and the first spectacular success of the modern Civil Rights Movement through the means of nonviolent action, Rustin was one of the most important advisors of Martin Luther King Jr. By 1963, when Rustin organized the March on Washington, he had taken part in organizing countless international peace projects.[13] His experiences became as much a part of the network of the WRI as the experiences of activists of other countries. Peace activists such as the American Abraham Muste, April Carter and Michael Randle from Great Britain, or the German Hans-Konrad Tempel, who initiated the German Easter March, were thus responsible for two important preconditions: On the one hand, they helped spread new ideas such as Gandhi's ideas of nonviolence and the concept of a Third Camp or the Easter March as a new form of protest against the nuclear armament to other countries. On the other hand, they created the transnational network of the WRI, which was mainly based on personal contacts (the Fellowship of Reconciliation was organized along similar lines). This transnationalism was lacking in other international peace organizations but left a deep impression on people who took part in activities such as the Easter March movement.

## Key Activities

Because the threatening effects of the atmospheric nuclear tests had prepared the breeding ground for a new awareness, the peace movement started to grow considerably in the late 1950s. At the same time, increasing numbers of people were attracted by the broad activities of numerous peace groups that had seized public attention through their innovative forms of protest. Probably the most important innovation of the late 1950s was made by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) in Great Britain in 1958 in the

march from Aldermaston to London, and subsequently the whole Easter March movement.[14] At first, it was the special status of Great Britain as an atomic power that helped spur the movement: The British H-bomb tests scheduled for May 1957 on the Christmas Islands prompted such massive opposition that the National Council for the Abolition of Nuclear War Tests was founded. Because public opinion in Great Britain gradually turned against nuclear weapons and the policy of both blocks, the National Council for the Abolition of Nuclear War Tests changed its name to the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament on January 27, 1958. Because of the prominent support of the movement, 270 local groups were founded by the end of 1958 with the aim of unilateral disarmament of Great Britain.

Despite this large number of participants, the CND's goal was not a membership drive but a moral mission, which became especially obvious during the Aldermaston march. Scheduled for Easter 1958 and originally organized by the Direct Action Committee, the march secured CND's support and participation. The artist Gerald Holtom convinced the organizers to adopt a new symbol: a circle encompassing a broken cross. The cross contained, as the artist explained, the semaphore signals for the *n* and *d* of "nuclear disarmament." In April of that year, almost 5800 marchers gathered for a rally in Trafalgar Square and began the fifty-two mile walk to the nuclear weapons facility at Aldermaston. During this four-day march, large numbers of serious and well-dressed citizens carried the new disarmament symbol in chilling rain and astounded the British public with a powerful demonstration to halt the nuclear arms race. The march was so impressive that CND immediately adopted the new symbol and continued these demonstrations. In 1960, an estimated 100,000 peace advocates gathered in London under the nuclear disarmament banners—a number that rose to 150,000 at the culminating rally in 1962. This development was paralleled by constant growth of the CND. By 1961, the organization could point to more than 800 chapters. *Sanity*, CND's monthly newspaper, soon had 45,000 subscribers, and in Great Britain the CND symbol became as recognizable as the Union Jack.

Other countries adopted the British model. Within a few years, similar organizations were founded in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland.[15] Other Easter Marches could be found in Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, and Greece, where people marched from Marathon to Athens. The CND also proved to be a successful model outside Europe: Activists in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand followed the group's lead and sometimes even adopted the name for their own organizations. Similar movements in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia (especially in Japan, with its recent memories of Hiroshima and Nagasaki) made the CND activities a global success story. The CND symbol crossed the globe as a symbol of peace and was adopted by

many of the newly founded peace organizations. At times it seemed as if during the Easter holidays, a worldwide movement was on the march. As a result of these growing numbers and rising public attention, the objective of the Easter Marches—to ban the bomb—was slowly becoming a politically accepted demand.

Although far less influential in terms of public opinion and number of supporters, the movement of radical pacifism and its enrichment, since 1957, of the protest repertoire of the peace movement turned out to be equally decisive for the protest cultures of the 1960s. The American pacifists who had founded the CNVA in May 1957 (until 1959 it was known as Non-Violent Action Against Nuclear Weapons) were pioneers of this development.[16] Contrary to most other peace organizations, CNVA was not a card-carrying membership organization, but like the WRI, it, rather, was a network originating from other peace groups. It included members of the American Friends Service Committee (a Quaker organization); activists from the anarchist War Resisters League, the American branch of the WRI; and the Christian pacifists of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Hence, the CNVA was not a mass movement but a small disciplined vanguard of sixty to seventy radical pacifists who championed Gandhi-like techniques of direct action and civil disobedience.

This became obvious in 1958–1959, during the highly dramatic CNVA actions against the testing and deployment of intercontinental ballistic missiles. The most widely covered action occurred in 1958 when activists tried to sail their ships *Golden Rule* and the *Phoenix of Hiroshima* into the Pacific Ocean bomb-testing area. Although both crews were arrested, CNVA did not stop protesting and received broad news coverage in the American media. Another protest action at the construction site of a strategic missile base in 1958 in Cheyenne, Wyoming, went a step further to more confrontational tactics and acts of obstruction. Participants aimed to block base construction by sitting in front of trucks carrying construction material. The only way to remove the protestors was to drag or carry them off—or run them over. Similar activities took place in New York, when activists of CNVA tried to board Polaris submarines (the first nuclear-powered ballistic missile–launching submarines the U.S. Navy acquired) when they were about to leave the harbor. Although the activists could not stop the submarines from leaving, they still managed to make it to the front page of the *New York Times*.

Almost all actions of the CNVA ended similarly, with the activists' arrests. Imprisonment and physical injuries (such as in Cheyenne) were part of the plan. These drastic methods were designed to raise awareness about nuclear overkill and to demonstrate a new, morally justified unwillingness to compromise with which the pacifists pursued their ideals. Pacifist networks like

the WRI or the Fellowship of Reconciliation therefore contributed to the spread of Gandhi-like techniques of direct action and civil disobedience of protest.[17] Although these protest techniques mostly met with ignorance in the early 1960s, a young generation of protesters would avidly accept and act on these very impulses of radical pacifists only a few years later.

## Consequences and Narratives

Although the Atmospheric Test Ban Treaty of August 5, 1963, banned tests of nuclear weapons in the atmosphere, in outer space, and underwater, it at the same time marked a substantial lessening of the activities of the nuclear disarmament movement. Although the treaty did not lead to peace, disarmament, or an end of the Cold War, nearly all campaigns for nuclear disarmament saw a reduction in both members and enthusiasm. In particular, the liberal elements of the movement, which were content with the moderate aims of controlled disarmament and détente, almost completely stopped their activities. Some organizations even collapsed, such as American Student Peace Union in 1964, or were absorbed by other movements.

However, fewer activities did not mean the end of the international peace movement. The organizational cores stayed alive even after the Test Ban Treaty. More important, the escalation of the Vietnam War both rejuvenated and transformed the movement. As a result of the influence of a youthful New Left, the peace movement experienced further politicization and radicalization. Former radical pacifists began to include anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism in their rhetoric and started to identify with Third World revolutionaries. In the late 1960s, many peace activists followed the arguments of the New Left, thus changing the peace movement into an antiwar movement.[18] The end of the Vietnam War in 1974 brought a spell of rest for the peace movement after long years of massive protests, but the organizations continued to exist. When in 1977 the development of the neutron bomb caused as severe worldwide protests as the NATO Double-Track Decision did, the cores of the peace movement, which still existed, passed on their knowledge to a new generation of protesters.[19] Thus, protest forms developed in the late 1950s experienced a resurrection. Marches under the CND symbol took place, as well as nonviolent actions like sit-down strikes or the so-called "Die-Ins," where demonstrators lay down on a signal as if they were dead.

## Influence on the 1968 Protest Movement

Historical research has hardly noticed the role and effect of the international peace movement on the New Left and the protest movements of 1968. This gap

seems to be unjustified, especially when considering the plethora of personal and intellectual links between the two movements. The tremendous influence of the peace movement can be summarized in three points.

First, as early as the 1950s, the peace movement developed and anticipated many of the central ideas and protest methods later to be considered typical of the protesters of 1968. Even if innovations such as decentralized organizations, transnationality, solidarity with Third World countries, and nonviolent resistance are credited to protagonists of the 1968 movement, these elements had already been developed and used by the peace movement in the 1950s. Groups like CND and CNVA, the "shock troops" of the movement, managed to break the ice in the political culture of the Cold War with ideas like the Third Camp and new protest methods. They acted as a loose network that spread their ideas internationally and laid the foundation for later protest movements.

Second, the peace movement was present in the late 1950s when a young generation of protesters started to form a New Left. Activists of the peace movement played a crucial role in creating student-led New Left organizations. They were able to offer organizational help and cognitive orientations. Whether lecturing on the war in Algeria, conveying a Third Camp perspective, or teaching nonviolent tactics, activists of the peace movement almost always provided substantial impulses to New Left thinking. The American Student Peace Union, the Students for a Democratic Society, or the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee would hardly have been as successful without the help of the experienced protesters of the War Resisters League.

More important than these direct political and strategic influences, however, were the personal experiences the young generation made in the peace movement. Casual manners and unorthodox role models observed during the Easter Marches influenced the lifestyle of the young generation as well as the action-based ideology exhibited in direct actions. "Putting your body on the line" to display personal commitment to the cause, even if it involved physical dangers, was the way the older peace activists behaved, and they were subsequently imitated by the rising New Left.

Third, in the heyday of the 1960s, the peace movement was not only striding side by side with the student movement but played an important role in the protest movements of 1968. Although student protestors often dominated media coverage, studies analyzing protests against the Vietnam War show that the antiwar movement was mainly made of loosely connected liberal and radical organizations, with student groups playing only a minor role.[20] Therefore, it seems appropriate to interpret the protest movement of 1968 as a "movement of movements" in which, apart from the student movement, the peace movement played an essential part.[21]

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5. Abraham J. Muste, "Tract for the Times," *Liberation* 1, no. 1 (1956):6.
6. Ibid.

7. Ken Calkins, "An Appeal to the Conscience of Cheyenne," August 1958, Swarthmore College Peace Collection, CNVA Records, Box 11.
8. For statistical reference see Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, vol. 2, 291.
9. Ibid., 303ff.
10. See Beyer, *Widerstand gegen den Krieg*, 35.
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12. See Tracy, *Direct Action*, 1–11.
13. On Bayard Rustin, cf. Daniel Levine, *Bayard Rustin and the Civil Rights Movement* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000).
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15. Cf. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, vol. 2, 210ff.
16. On the following see Maurice Isserman, *If I Had A Hammer. The Death of the Old Left and the Birth of the New Left* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), 125–69.
17. Beyer, *Widerstand gegen den Krieg*, 33ff.
18. For the process of transformation, cf. Nigel Young, *An Infantile Disorder? The Crisis and Decline of the New Left* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1977), 163–88.
19. On the development of the peace movement in the 1970s and 1980s, cf. Lawrence S. Wittner, *Toward Nuclear Abolition. A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1971 to the Present* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003).
20. C.f. Nancy Zaroulis and Gerald Sullivan, *Who Spoke Up? American Protest Against the War in Vietnam, 1963–1975* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984); Charles DeBenedetti and Charles Chatfield, *An American Ordeal. The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990).
21. This opinion is supported by Van Gosse, "A Movement of Movements: The Definition and Periodization of the New Left," in *A Companion to Post-1945 America*, ed. Jean-Christophe Agnew and Roy Rosenzweig (Malden: Blackwell, 2002), 277–302.

# 9
# France

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## Social and Political Framework of the Country

The May movement in France did not start until international developments had reached their peak. Within a few weeks, however, it caught up with other movements in terms of mobilization and then surpassed the German and American protest movements in its political explosiveness. What began as a revolt by a small minority of students in the Parisian suburb of Nanterre quickly developed into a general strike that paralyzed the entire country. It also caused a political crisis that threatened to topple the Gaullist System. How could this happen?

The protests were not a reaction to an economic or political crisis. The mobilization of the student movement in France happened spontaneously as the result of an essentially self-generating process of action. Indeed, the French student movement emerged against the background of a general crisis in the university system that directly affected the learning environment, career outlook, and life prospects of the students. However, the student movement was more than simply a reaction to these deficiencies. Since the mid-1960s, the student union, *Union Nationale des étudiants de France* (UNEF), had been criticizing the structural weaknesses of the university and of government reform plans without receiving much support from the students. The student strike that UNEF helped to organize in Nanterre at the beginning of the 1967–1968 academic year faded after a few weeks. The mobilization process that led to the May movement in France was not triggered until small core groups of students began undertaking limited unconventional actions in the spring of 1968 and noticeably upsetting university operations by breaking rules, violating taboos, and committing other provocations.

## Organizational and Social Structure

The student groups that initiated the protest, the Enragés and the Movement of March 22, perceived themselves as anti-dogmatic, anti-bureaucratic, anti-organizational, and anti-authoritarian. For both groups, the university represented only a forum for action and the starting point for a comprehensive, socio-cultural transformation process; the Enragés[1] aimed to abolish the university, whereas the protagonists of the Movement of March 22[2] strove instead to transform it into a "critical university." The Movement of March 22 was an alliance that emerged out of and was geared toward action. It emanated from the occupation of the administrative building of the University of Nanterre on March 22, 1968, and it comprised Trotskyites, Maoists, and Anarchists, who elsewhere acted separately or even against each other. Their highest maxim was that the revolutionary combat unit arose directly out of action and was not a result of a certain policy or ideology. This maxim was aimed against the sectarian mentality that had disrupted the left-liberal groups and made them incapable of forming alliances, thereby robbing them of almost any political influence. The negation of action along a political line or ideology was a result of the rejection of the Leninist organizational and action strategy and its replacement by a new strategy, organizational concept, and theoretical program. The theory of a proactive minority constantly played the role of ferment and called for action without claiming leadership.[3]

Their success in mobilizing large numbers of students was initially limited to the Nanterre campus. It might easily have subsided in the manner of the UNEF strike had the student protest not spilled over to the Sorbonne, which was responsible for disciplinary actions against eight students from Nanterre. Repressive measures were used against the small core of student activists at the Sorbonne, including the use of massive police force in the inner courtyard. These events caused the previously inactive student majority to demonstrate its solidarity with the active student minority. In a matter of days, the mobilization accelerated in alternating student actions and government repression into a series of violent clashes between demonstrators and police around the Sorbonne and in the streets of the Latin Quarter. The events' dynamics brought more and more high school students, youths, and a few young workers onto the university students' side. From May 3 to 10, merely a week after the beginning of the conflict, France caught up with the developments in other Western nations. Within another twenty-four hours, the French student movement surpassed the other movements. A large part of the organized working class showed solidarity with the students. Within a few days, an estimated 7.5 to 9 million workers went on strike without a call from union headquarters. The workers' mobilization process followed the

same spontaneous action strategy as the student movement. The parallel movements were united by common values and practices.

## Cognitive Orientation

The protest movements of 1968 saw themselves as movements of the New Left and were preceded by the formation of an intellectual *Nouvelle Gauche* in France, the New Left in Great Britain and the United States, and the *Neue Linke* in Germany. Intellectual dissidents from traditional leftist parties were their founding members. By the late 1950s and early 1960s, this intellectual New Left emerged internationally in publications, discussion circles, journals, and actions. French developments best exemplify the systematic evolution of the new cognitive orientation, or cognitive praxis, of the New Left. The intellectual New Left in France constituted itself around the journals *Socialisme ou Barbarie* (1949–1966), *Arguments* (1956–1962), and *International Situationniste* (1958–1969). The cognitive orientation with which the free-floating intellectuals of the New Left confronted the traditional Left consisted of the following five elements.[4]

First, the new orientation centered on a reinterpretation of Marxist theory. Referring to the early writings of Marx, the New Left accentuated the aspect of alienation rather than exploitation. It attempted to open the theoretical interpretation by combining Marxism with existentialism and psychoanalysis to free the former from its sclerotic paralysis and identification with institutionalized Marxism. Second, the New Left envisioned a new model of socialist society that would not be restricted to political and social revolution, seizure of power, and nationalization of means of production. Rather, it would eliminate the alienation felt by the individual human being in everyday life. Third, partisans of the New Left embraced a new transformation strategy. They believed the individual should be freed from subordination to the collective. The premise was that changes in the cultural sphere must precede social and political transformation. New lifestyles and modes of communication had to be developed along with an anticipatory, experimental basis by creating new cultural ideals, applying them in subcultures, and testing them as alternatives within existing institutions. Fourth, the new cognitive orientation required a new organizational concept. The maxim was action, not organization. The New Left understood itself as a movement, not a party. As a movement, it used the full spectrum of direct action strategies, from the demonstrative-appellative to the direct-coercive action. It sought to generate awareness through action and agitate the public by provocation while simultaneously using action to change those participating in it. Finally, the New Left also called for redefinition of the leaders of

social change. The proletariat was no longer seen as the leader of social and cultural change; instead, the New Left believed that the impetus for social transformation came from other groups such as the new (skilled) working class, young intelligentsia, and social fringe groups.

The interrelationship of individual and collective emancipation, social and cultural criticism, and cultural and social revolution inherent in New Left thought gave rise to internal tension in the movement of 1968. It also explains the plethora of categories with which researchers label the movement: As expression of a generational conflict, as Neo-Marxist and anti-bureaucratic, or as a movement of cultural revolution or sexual emancipation. Its overarching social utopia combined these diverse threads and places the movement in the tradition of social utopias, such as those espoused by Saint-Simon, Fourier, Proudhon, Marx, and Bakunin. However, its utopian content was not limited to the expectation of a collective emancipation of labor from outside control. It articulated themes and individualistic values that we now call post-materialistic and represented a transition between old and new social movements.

## Attitudes toward Superpowers and the Cold War

The separation of the New Left from the Old Left resulted in part from contemporary occurrences, such as the events in Prague in 1948, the Twentieth Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the suppression of the Hungarian Uprising, the Cold War, and the lack of public debate about nuclear arms in the East and West. However, this separation also had systemic causes that unfolded during a critical debate about the development of socialism and communism since the 1920s. The New Left was convinced that the self-imposed restriction of democratic socialism to a welfare-state model, as well as the perversion of communism under Stalin, had undermined the emancipatory content of the socialist and communist movement. This loss of the utopian perspective resulted in an incapacity of traditional left-wing parties to offer a real alternative to the status quo. They appeared to be imprisoned by *realpolitik*, unable to overcome the current political and social situation and unwilling to address present problems or to mould the future. They stagnated materially, as measured by their numerical strength, and philosophically, as measured by their capacity to solve problems.

With their anti-capitalist, anti-Communist orientation, the intellectual and student New Left in France emphasized their distance from both the United States and the Soviet Union. The quarrel with the Soviet Union was voiced through criticism of the Communist Party of France (PCF), from whose student association *Union des étudiants Communistes* (UEC) the New

Left's left-radical supporter groups had separated in the early 1960s.[5] Criticism of the United States was expressed in protests against the Vietnam War organized by the *Trotskyite Comités Vietnam Nationaux* (CVN) and the *Maoist Comités Viétnam de Base* (CVB), and in commitment to Third World liberation movements. The latter found a forum in two groups around the publisher François Maspero through the magazine *Partisans* and the readers' club *La joie de lire*.[6] Although the Algerian War sharpened attention for Third World problems, the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion became the decisive event that ignited their willingness to actively support the attacked party.

In 1966 the young French philosopher Régis Debray, a member of both of these groups around Maspero, departed for Cuba with the intention of supporting Castro's socialist experiment and foreign policy project—the foundation of the *Organización Latinoamericana de Solidaridad* (OLAS). This organization was intended to coordinate and reorient the fight of the liberation movements of Latin America. Debray became the writer and theorist of Castro's strategy of the Latin American armed fight, which was opposed to Moscow-oriented guidelines that claimed the supremacy of the party against the guerilla and tried to block guerilla warfare. Debray's *Revolution dans la révolution*[7] became worldwide canon of the 1968 movement and decisively helped convey the Cuban approach toward Latin American social problems and diffuse the guerilla strategy of Ernesto Che Guevara. The Cuban Model was considered as the Third Way to socialism until 1968; the French Movement of March 22 derived its name from Castro's Movement of June 26.

## Key Events

Student protest was conveyed to the workers by means of a "critical event"[8]—the Night of Barricades—which synchronized the perception of different social groups. During the night of May 10–11, students and youths occupied an enclave in the Latin Quarter after a peaceful demonstration. In a spontaneous and playful manner, they built barricades within the occupied area. They were determined to leave this area only after the government had met their demands, which included release of students arrested during a protest march, reopening the Sorbonne—which had been closed by order of the university president and was being guarded by police—and the withdrawal of police from the Latin Quarter. The barricading of Paris during the night of May 10–11 was a historic allusion to the barricades of the Paris Commune in 1871 and the liberation of Paris from German occupation in 1944. Erected by high school and university students, the barricades evoked memories of those earlier examples without merely imitating them; they were expressive rather than instrumental in nature. Only later in the course

of this provocative action and subsequent police deployment was the student protest politicized by media response, public reaction, and the steps taken by the government and labor unions.

The students' activism attracted mass media attention. The effect of the movement on the outside world grew as a result of broadcasts from two radio transmitter vans driven into the occupied area immediately after the first barricades were erected. This spread the news not merely outside the Latin Quarter but beyond the limits of the capital itself. The media reports created an audience that attentively registered events and formed its own opinion of them. Thus, the flames of student protest jumped from Paris to the provinces.

The government was faced with a loss of reputation regardless of whether authorities reacted in a lenient or repressive manner; observers eagerly awaited a reaction. Finding itself under increasing pressure to act, the government lacked a convincing plan of action and decision-making capabilities. In the prime minister's absence, the cabinet ministers had difficulties coordinating their actions, and after mediation attempts failed, the ministers resorted to an interpretation of the situation that was strongly influenced by the president's opinion. They saw demonstrating students as rebels and the demonstration for the three demands as an *emeute* (riot). After much hesitation, the Minister of the Interior had the barricades removed by police and security forces in the early morning hours of May 11. Police brutality led to vociferous and immediate public protest. A "critical event" had occurred.

The Night of Barricades was neither determined by socio-structural factors nor planned by the groups or individuals involved. Rather, it was a result of uncoordinated decisions by the government, situational decisions by individual groups within the movement, and repressive police behavior. In other words, it resulted from contingencies and created an entirely new situation. This critical event disturbed the routine of everyday life and formal, unquestioned order. It synchronized the perception of different social groups and transformed a moment into a public event that was identical for everyone and measured by the same points of reference. It led the French labor unions to enter into solidarity with the student movement in its demands. To protest repression and emphasize student demands, the labor unions called for rallies and a 24-hour general strike.

The situation changed, however, after a second political intervention. Returning from Afghanistan on the evening of May 11, Prime Minister Pompidou granted all the students' demands in a television address just fourteen hours after the brutal clearing of the Latin Quarter. The prime minister's decision contributed greatly to the transformation of the critical event into Bourdieu's "critical moment." "If the government submitted to the students,

why shouldn't it submit to us?" the workers argued.[9] A situation was created wherein anything seemed to be possible. The horizon of possibilities also expanded for other groups, and new forms of action increased their willingness to act.

## Forms and Tactics of the Protest

The cognitive orientation of the New Left served as the integrative element of the socially heterogeneous movements. Again, the movement began with a single action by a small, proactive minority. On May 14, after the 24-hour general strike organized by the unions in solidarity with the students and in protest against police repression, young workers in an airplane factory near Nantes refused to go back to work. Instead, they occupied the factory workshops, sealed off the plant, and took the plant manager into custody. The occupation of a provincial factory, barely noticed at first by actors in the capital, triggered a chain reaction in the following days. The spontaneous strike spilled over to the Renault car factories, and from there to other plants. Within just a few days, about 7.5 to 9 million workers were on strike without a call from union headquarters. What was their motivation?

There was no economic crisis on the eve of the May events. There were conflicts over distribution of wealth and a rising unemployment rate, but the French economy had suffered far less from the recession of 1966 than had Germany's, and it was therefore less subject to economic fluctuation and breakdown. The protest can therefore not be imputed solely to socioeconomic causes. Rather, it was the result of an increasing discontent with authoritarian structures in industry. In May 1968, this latent dissatisfaction turned into collective willingness to act and an attitude of protest that could not be controlled, even by union leaders.

The workers in state-owned industries triggered the strike movement. Among them, the young workers were the driving force and activated the rest of the workers. Their goal was to force the *état patron* to submit by means of direct action. The direct action unleashed a dynamic force for mobilization. It was based on traditions within the labor movement and caused a collective willingness to act without directing it toward a specific goal. For example, the occupation of factories could be viewed as a means of exerting pressure on the government and industry to force them to negotiate or make concessions, a way to demonstrate the independence of the local rank and file from the Old Left labor union apparatus, or the beginning of a comprehensive transformation in the structure of industry, business, and economy based on either the anarcho-syndicalist strategy or the concepts of the New Left. It all depended on the actors' intentions. The goals of the workers' strike

movement evolved as a result of the process of societal interaction, as had the goals of the student movement.

The strike committees' initial demands were not fundamentally different from union requests made before May 68; however, a social movement is more than its printed words. The orientation of the non-Communist French workers union, *Conféderation française et démocratique du travail* (CFDT), was closest to that of the New Left, and they created a new term expressing the workers' expectations: *autogestion* (self–administration). Just two days after the first spontaneous strike, the slogan added a new dimension to the movement. With its demand for *autogestion*, the CFDT was calling for reforms in the management and decision-making structures of business and industry, reduction of hierarchies and concentration of power, and opportunities for workers to release their creative potential through self-determination and self-administration. Although the institutional and legal details of how *autogestion* would be implemented remained unclear, the anti-hierarchical and anti-authoritarian component was sufficient to unite the student and worker movements in their goals. The democratization of the universities was to be followed by the democratization of industry: *"A la monarchie industrielle et administrative, il faut substituer des structures démocratiques à base d'autogestion"* (The industrial and administrative monarchy must be replaced with democratic structures based on self-administration). Worker and student movements formed a community united by common endeavors, hopes, and expectations.[10]

The Old Left used its organizational power to crush New Left action strategies and goals. The conflict was channeled into institutionalized mechanisms of the collective bargaining system. The Communist-oriented General Workers Union, or *Confederation generale du travail* (CGT), did not support *autogestion* as a goal of fundamental social change. It dismissed the concept of *autogestion* as a hollow formula that was primarily oriented toward changing power and decision-making structures rather than the distribution of wealth. The CGT fought the alliance formed between the student and worker movements. Wherever possible, it tried to prevent direct contact between students and workers at the plants and vehemently distanced itself from the figurehead of the student movement, Daniel Cohn–Bendit. Furthermore, it did everything within its organizational power to transfer this social movement, which had paralyzed economic life and had the potential of triggering a revolutionary situation, into the well-established system of collective bargaining. It was the driving force behind a hasty collective bargaining agreement with representatives of government and industry the Grenelle agreements of May 27, which offered wage settlements and represented the first time that French business officially recognized the labor unions' right to engage in activities on plant territory, the right of union members to assemble, the right to post union announcements on plant bulletin

boards, and the right to distribute union newspapers. For the time being, however, the CGT was unable to enforce its strategy and goals effectively at the grassroots level. The general assemblies of workers in the plants protested against the wage settlements. Work did not resume.

The strike at the universities also continued, and the Sorbonne remained occupied. In the big auditorium, the Amphitheatre, endless debates dragged on. The walls of the Parisian Odéon theater, which was also occupied by students, read: "L'avenir est à prendre, car l'avenir est perdu par un gouvernement viellard. Inventer—c'est prendre le pouvoir de demain." (The future is at our disposal, because it has been lost by an aged government. To invent means to take the power of tomorrow into one's own hands.)

Thousands came daily to watch the process of the creation of a new world and to take part in it. The debates in the packed theater, whose balconies would almost bend under the influx of the masses, unleashed the spontaneous collective latent discomfort and reflected long-suppressed hopes, wishes, and desires. Creative excitement characterized the atmosphere. The theater offered a stage for the permanent self-production of the audience. Did the imagination come to power? "In May 68," the philosopher Michel de Certeau wrote, "people took hold of the word as if they took hold of the Bastille again." [11] What counted was not the spoken word but the word's capture as a symbol of the cultural revolution that was on the verge of being unveiled with this movement: the revolution of perception.

Most strikers in the plants supported a political solution to the social crisis. They considered their opponent to be not the *pouvoir patronat* but the Gaullist regime itself. They demanded a change in political power as a prerequisite for social structure reforms. This meant a shift in the movement's goal orientation and means of conflict resolution. After the failure of the Grenelle agreements, they retreated from the stage, and political parties took their place. The social movement entered a new arena, where, because of its spontaneous and anti-party character, it did not enjoy a firm structural foundation, and for which its core groups were conceptually unprepared. The non-Communist New Left was unsuccessful in its attempt to use the situation to define its own political standpoint. The Old Left used its organizational power to crush the action strategies and goal orientation of the New Left. By deciding to hold new parliamentary elections, the government reestablished a strategy of action based on the institutions of the Fifth Republic.

## Transnational Relations

Before, during, and after May 1968, a boundary-transgressing diffusion of ideas and slogans, types of actions, and strategies had taken place between the French 1968 movement and other 1968 movements. This phenomenon

enabled a connection of student support groups in Berkeley, Berlin, Paris, London, and Turin. This is true not only for synchronization of perception of the Vietnam War and coordination of protest activities against this war but also for types of action within the framework of criticism of the university system and working conditions in the plants. If one differentiates two types of international diffusion of "ideas" and "tactics" of social movements—direct relational ties and non-relational channels—one can state that processes of exchange took place through direct personal contacts and networks, as well as through indirect channels such as the media.[12] For example, Alain Krivine and Daniel Bensaïd, members of the Trotskyite group *Jeunesse Communiste Révolutionnaire* (JCE), brought the principle of "limited rule violation" to Paris as *stratégie escalade-provocation*. They became acquainted with this particular principle during a demonstration at the International Vietnam Congress in Berlin and did not realize that Rudi Dutschke, the figurehead of the German student movement, had borrowed it from the Situationists around Guy Debord. Another example is the German author Hans Magnus Enzensberger, who adopted the magical formula of *autogestion* and demanded the creation of "French conditions" in the Federal Republic of Germany.[13] *Autogestion* became a keyword that transgressed inner European boundaries and promised to link the dual emancipation strategy of the New Left: the demand for self-determination and self-administration through the transformation of steering and deciding mechanisms on the one hand, and self-experiencing and self-realization through the testing of new types of communication in all fields of society and emancipation of the individual from subordination to the collective on the other.

## Consequences, Narratives, and Politics of Memory

The stability of the institutional system steered New Left impulses toward subculture experimentation with new lifestyles and cultural forms that dealt with institutional problems by withdrawing from them. Being both individualistic and socialistic, the New Left rebelled against alienation in the realm of production and everyday life. In the struggle against alienation they broke taboos, norms, and traditional values. They violated rules to provoke and to delegitimize institutions of authority. Most activists felt a subjective emancipation in violating rules and disregarding established structures of organization and power. They perceived their experiences as progress toward individual self-determination and self-actualization. Subcultures developed that preserved the atmosphere of awakening present in New Left origins, but the political program gave way increasingly to a cult of individual affliction. Thus, the awakening of 1968 ended for many people as the shaping of alternative lifestyles and

individualization of life's opportunities and risks, but also as political retreat into the private realm.

Individual emancipation based on eliminating alienation in everyday life and personal relationships was inherent in New Left strategy. However, its concept of transformation did not end with individual self-actualization but included political and social emancipation through collective self-determination and self-administration. The essential goal was to escape from the "*stahlharten Gehäuse der Hörigkeit*" (iron cage of bondage)[14] that blocked individual actions by means of the power wielded over human beings by the need for consumer goods and the dependence on hierarchically organized bureaucracies that govern all aspects of an individual's life in modern society. It was a program that questioned not only the secular tendencies of the drive for efficiency in Western capitalist society but also the modern way of life and the political, economic, social, and cultural structures that produced it.

May 1968 in France has undergone diverse interpretations. The first analyses were offered by sociologists; according to their different approaches, their theses about May 1968 and their constructions of the social phenomenon behind it varied greatly. So the events were interpreted as "a new social conflict" (Touraine), as "generational conflict" (Morin), as "general crisis of institutions" (Crozier), or as a "critical moment" (Bourdieu) in the societal development of France. The overall evaluation showed the same variety as the construction of the phenomenon. The events were classified as "revolt" (Touraine), "quasi-revolution" (Morin), "breach of culture" (Crozier), "carnival" (Aron), and "crisis of the mode of reproduction," which developed into a "general crisis" (Bourdieu). As in other countries, the recollection of May 1968 in France was dominated by the autobiographies, monographs, essays and interviews, novels, and movies of the protagonists, which were published decades after the events took place.

Two narratives can be differentiated: modern and postmodern. Both try to integrate May 1968 into the history of postwar France and to determine the effects of the events. Perceiving the French May as "cradle of a new bourgeois society," Régis Debray claimed that these events have opened France "to the American way of life and to American-style consumption habits." Ten years after the events, Gilles Lipovetsky attributed to May 1968 the acceleration of "the arrival of contemporary narcissistic individualism" and stated that the movement was a central element in the rise of postmodernism. Both were convinced that the effects of the events were not intended by the protagonists but could be considered the result of a "ruse of history."[15] In 1987–1988, Hervé Hamon and Patrick Rotman attempted to influence the struggle about collective memory of May 1968. To the central representatives of the New Left's supporting groups, they offered the chance to publish their

retrospective opinions about activities in May 1968. According to literary scientist Kristin Ross, the successful television and book project of Hamon and Rotman was able to fuel the myth of the "generation" as the mainstay of the May movement by emphasizing the generational aspect, whereas the central role of the working class was almost completely left aside. The most refined analysis of the effects of May 1968 has been published by Luc Boltanski and ève Chiapello (2003), who argue that the criticism of hierarchical structures and demand for self-administration and self-responsibility that were voiced by avant-garde groups of the 1960s had been taken up by employers in the 1970s. However, the authors opine that granting a higher degree of autonomy in the plants and offices weakened the collective protection system of the workers (unions, collective bargaining, regulations, contracts). It thereby led to precariousness and individualization of the labor conditions.

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## Notes

1. For a history of "The Enraged," see René Viénet, *Enragés et situationnistes dans le mouvement des occupations* (Paris: Gallimard, 1968).
2. For a history of the Movement of March 22, see Jean-Pierre Duteuil, *Nanterre 1965–66–67–68. Vers le mouvement du 22 mars* (Mauléon: Acratie, 1988); or Daniel Cohn-Bendit and Gabriel Cohn-Bendit, *Linksradikalismus: Gewaltkur gegen die Alterskrankheit des Kommunismus* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1968).
3. Sic Daniel Cohn-Bendit in a dialogue with Jean-Paul Sartre, published in Jacques Sauvageot, Alain Geismar, and Daniel Cohn-Bendit, *Aufstand in Paris oder Ist in Frankreich eine Revolution möglich*? (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1968), 77.
4. Compare regarding formation and cognitive orientation of the New Left Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, *'Die Phantasie an die Macht'. Mai 68 in Frankreich*, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2001), 44–104; idem, *Die 68er Bewegung. Deutschland, Westeuropa, USA*, 3rd ed. (München: Beck, 2007), 11–24.
5. See Richard Gombin, *Les origienes du gauchisme* (Paris: Seuil, 1971).
6. François Maspero, *Les Arbeilles et la Guêpe* (Paris: Seuil, 2003).
7. Régis Debray, *Révolutions dans la révolution*, (Paris: Maspero, 1967).
8. According to Bourdieu, a critical event synchronizes perceptions of heterogeneous protagonists, causes a breach with everyday routines, forces people to comment the event, and evokes and projects expectations and claims. Comp. regarding the terms "critical events" and "critical moment" Pierre Bourdieu, *Homo academicus* (Paris: Seuil, 1984); Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, "La nuit des barricades," in *La Nuit. Société & Représentations*, vol. 4, ed. Véronique Nahoum-Grappe and Myriam Tsikounas (Paris: CREDHESS, 1997), 165–84.
9. Quoted according to Philippe Gavi, "Des ouvriers parlent," *Les Temps Modernes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1968), 82–83.
10. See *Albert Detraz et les militants de la CFDT, Positions et actions de la CFDT en mai 1968*, Syndicalisme, Numéro spécial 1969, 53 ff.
11. Michel de Certeau, *La prise de parole: Pour une nouvelle culture* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1968), 16.
12. Comp. Doug McAdam and Dieter Rucht, "The Cross National Diffusion of Movements Ideas," in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 528, (Thousand Oaks: Sage, l993), 56–59.
13. Comp. Grass, Günter (1968c), *Französische Zustände*, Grass-Archiv (Archiv der Akademie der Künste: Berlin), 1594.

14. Max Weber, "Parlament und Regierung im neugeordneten Deutschland," in *Gesammelte politische Schriften*, ed. Johannes Winkelmann (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1971), 331–332.
15. Régis Debray, *Modest contribution aux discours et cérémonies officiels du dixème anniversaire* (Paris: Maspero, 1978); Gilles Lipovetsky, *L'ère du vide. Essais sur l'individualisme contemporaine* (Paris: Gallimard, 1983).

# 22
# Terrorism

*Dorothea Hauser*

Although the political mobilization of students and workers throughout (Western) Europe in the late 1960s comprised violent forms of protest in some countries, the practical pursuit of concepts of armed struggle meant to trigger a revolutionary response by the masses proved to be—with the notable exception of West Germany and Italy—a brief and peripheral episode.

Coinciding with the decline of the protest movements, the birth of guerilla groups like the Angry Brigade in Great Britain and the Red Youth in the Netherlands was but the somewhat desperate endeavor of a very small number of militants anxious to perpetuate the dwindling dynamics of "1968." Because their activity met with little sympathy, let alone support from former activists, their political impact was almost negligible. Even the anti-imperialist Dutch Red Youth, who had initially chosen the German Red Army Faction (RAF) as their role model and had received military training in a camp of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) in South Yemen, did not achieve much more than local significance, as a couple of bomb attacks they carried out in 1971–1972 against police targets and a mayor's home remained essentially confined to the city of Eindhoven. Furthermore, their assaults caused only property damage—something that also holds true for their British counterpart. The libertarian Angry Brigade, already virtually extinct in 1971 but assumed to be responsible for about twenty-five bombings aimed at banks and the homes of Tory politicians between 1970 and 1972, in fact explicitly declared "we attack property not people."[1]

In France, by contrast, the *Gauche Prolétarienne* (GP) was a relatively large organization that temporarily contemplated urban guerilla tactics. Indeed, this Maoist group, which amalgamated the most radicals after May 1968, possessed a strong foothold both with intellectuals and in factories. Deliberately referring to the French anti-Nazi resistance of the 1940s, the GP

set up the *Nouvelle Résistance Populaire* (NRP) as its armed wing as early as summer 1969 to combat an alleged *fascisation* in France. Yet, the NRP's manifold activities, eighty-two actions between July and October 1969 alone, fell somewhat short of outright armed struggle and often comprised symbolic acts like the short detention of politicians and entrepreneurs for questioning. After the GP had been officially forbidden in 1970, and with some of its leading members taking to more civil projects like the creation of the newspaper *Liberation*, it dissolved and renounced armed struggle altogether in 1973; one of its members, Pierre Overney, had been killed by a security guard while distributing pamphlets the year before.

The emergence of indigenous terrorist factions in France—*Action Direct* (AD)—and, more sporadically, in Belgium—*Cellules Communistes Combattantes* (CCC) and *Front Révolutionnaire d'Action Prolétarienne*—did not take place until the early 1980s.

Among the AD's less than a dozen steady affiliates there was only one, Jean Asselmeyer, who had already been politically active in 1967–1968[2]; these were rather isolated organizations that were neither perceived as being related to the 1968 movement by the terrorists nor by the country's former activists.[3] In fact, the AD was largely dominated by militants of Spanish origin who had before been engaged in anti-Franco campaigns on French soil and beyond.[4] Nevertheless, the AD later cooperated with the third generation of the German RAF and Italian terrorist splinter groups. The miniscule Belgian CCC, in turn, which refused to join the "European anti-imperialist front" called for by the RAF and AD in 1985, originated in 1983 from RAF support groups and was ideologically controlled by the Spanish-born Frenchman Frédéric Oriach.

## Terrorist Armed Struggle

West Germany and Italy, then, were the only European countries experiencing significant revolutionary terrorism in the wake of "1968."[5] It induced serious political repercussions in their democratic systems that reached their dramatic climax in 1977 and 1978, respectively. Thereafter, left-wing terrorism largely lost its environmental setting and, hence, its political effect in both countries. Still, the phenomenon proved to be persistent—in the German case lasting for almost thirty years.

Exceptional as the terrorist aftermath of protest may have been, the various clandestine factions that first sprung up around 1970 in West Germany and Italy were initially ideologically and personally connected to the foregoing revolt. They played on the ambivalent sentiments of a broad radical leftist milieu that did not necessarily embrace terrorist acts as a means to further

the revolutionary cause, but in its fundamental opposition to a democratic system despised as "fascist" still felt obliged to a certain solidarity which ranged from—often critical—sympathy to practical support. In this context, the legacy of Germany's Nazi past and Italy's Fascist history, albeit in a somewhat intricate and often purely instrumental manner, played a decisive role as both point of reference and political weapon. The specific digestion of this reference, however, differed considerably, not the least because in Italy the memory of the anti-Fascist partisan *Resistenza* between 1943 and 1945 offered positive identification. As a further difference, the Italian case was marked, as "a history of long duration,"[6] by a second wave of protest in 1977. Most notably, from 1969 onward, Italy witnessed massive neofascist terrorism that, as part and parcel of a conspiratory anti-Communist "strategy of tension,"[7] was to some extent facilitated by the Italian secret service, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, and parts of the army. Right-wing terrorist acts preceded, and for many years by far exceeded, left-wing ones. Moreover, against the backdrop of frequent assaults by neofascist thugs, the arming of leftist groups in Italy initially took place for predominantly defensive purposes.

In Germany, by contrast, the notion of an urban guerilla came from the center of the protest movement and had a much more willful character, with internal debates to that effect dating back to 1966.[8] In the end, only a small number of West Germany's mainly intellectual activists, beyond to some degree sympathizing with the idea and its protagonists, actually got involved in armed struggle. Yet, the clandestine factions that eventually emerged were clearly the product of the anti-authoritarian wing of the German student rebellion and its fusion with leftist subcultures thriving in walled West Berlin in the late 1960s and, to a lesser extent, in Frankfurt.

## Organizational and Social Structure

The West German protest movement spun off of four distinct guerilla groups: the Tupamaros, the RAF, the 2nd June movement, and the Revolutionary Cells (RZ). The RZ, a network of anonymous, semi-clandestine cells, originated in 1973 in Frankfurt, before one of its branches decidedly turned to international, even mercenary-style terrorism and became infamous with the Carlos Connection. The other three armed factions were all launched in divided Berlin's Western half and, with the exception of the RAF, remained essentially limited to West Berlin.

The Tupamaros, though short-lived, were the very first to seek military training in an El Fatah camp in Jordania in October 1969 and the first to become a clandestine militant group on return. Like their counterpart in Southern Germany, the Tupamaros Munich, the group's approximately fifteen core

members were communards of mainly middle-class origin with a history of activism in the SDS and the militant wing of the Berlin Blues. Organized as a network of autonomous conspiratorial cells, the Tupamaros were, nonetheless, clearly dominated by two leading figures, Georg von Rauch and Dieter Kunzelmann, who before had been a principal provocateur of the *Kommune I*. The realization of their terrorist plans, however, was often seriously hampered by a lack of discipline brought about by the Tumpamaros' frequent drug abuse. After Kunzelmann's arrest in 1970 and von Rauch's death in a shootout with the police in December 1971, the group ceased to exist. Some members subsequently folded into the RAF, but mainly they joined the somewhat anarchic 2nd June movement. The latter, initiated in January 1972, considered itself to be the RAF's proletarian counterpart, although the social background of its members barely met this claim. Still, RAF and 2nd June arranged a policy of reciprocal information regarding imminent attacks in summer 1977 and finally joined forces in 1980.

The Red Army Faction, publicly also referred to as Baader-Meinhof Gang, became the most prominent, tenacious terrorist group in West Germany, declaring its breakup as late as April 1998. Launched in May 1970, the RAF set out to be a tautly organized and ambitious revolutionary undertaking with a meticulous sense for the logistics of clandestinity and armed combat. Its members mostly had a bourgeois background and were, apart from the gifted dropout Andreas Baader, highly educated university students and professionals. Baader and his girlfriend Gudrun Ensslin, a clergyman's daughter, had already gained some fame through an arson attack on two department stores in April 1968. The other cofounders were Horst Mahler, a well-established leftist lawyer, and Ulrike Meinhof, West Germany's most renowned left-wing journalist of the late 1960s. As in other German guerilla groups, there was a relatively high proportion (34 percent) of female members. Although the number of core affiliates never exceeded forty, the RAF initially found significant backing among the protest generation. Polls revealed in 1971 that a fourth of West Germans under age thirty sympathized with the RAF and a sizable 14 percent of the total population were ready to help or shelter RAF members. After the arrest of all key figures in summer 1972, the Baader-Ensslin twin leadership was able to mobilize and widely control a second RAF generation from within prison walls, surrounded by a ramified network of support groups, including lawyers, that provided communications, assistance, and future recruits.

In contrast to West Germany, ultra-left armed factions in Italy were, like the preceding protest movement itself, much more socially enrooted. They were, just like parties and governments, also extremely numerous and fragmented. Almost five hundred different left-wing groups, many of them

ephemeral, claimed responsibility for terrorist attacks between 1969 and 1980. About three thousand participants were directly involved in these assaults, and the number of accomplices was even higher. In the late 1970s, left-wing terrorist groups could resort to an estimated potential of ten thousand people for logistics and support among the youthful autonomist movement alone. In contrast, Italian terrorism remained confined to Northern Italy and Rome. Except for the much higher proportion of women involved in ultra-left armed groups (25 percent), the social composition of terrorist factions of the Left[9] and the Right was largely similar, with both drawing from a wide range of the social stratum.

The plethora of terrorist groups in Italy was, for the most part, linked to the 1977 *autonomi* revolt rather than the 1968 protest movement. This does not apply, however, to clandestine organizations like the *Gruppi di Azione Partigiana* (GAP), the *Nuclei Armati Proletari* (NAP), and the Red Brigades (BR). The GAP, led by the millionaire publisher Giangiacomo Feltrinelli after having received military training in Jordania, had a somewhat exemplary function. Founded in spring 1970, it disintegrated just two years later after Feltrinelli died, reportedly blowing himself up in a premature blast. The NAP spontaneously emerged in 1974 from the ranks of *Lotta Continua*, after this most important extra-parliamentary opposition group since 1969 shied away from matching its violent rhetoric with adequate action. Partly because of its somewhat impulsive beginnings, the NAP, organized in loosely knit cells, exposed a high degree of dilettantism and a somewhat existential streak in its glorification of violence as a cathartic act. Multiple arrests brought about its abrupt end in 1977.

The BR rose to become the most notorious, long-lasting Italian armed group. With a judicially estimated total of 426 members, they were also the largest. The BR emerged in October 1970 from local workers' and students' committees in Northern Italy to perpetuate the 1969 labor conflicts within the large factories of Milan and Turin. The social background of its founders somewhat resembled the make-up of 1968 in Italy: Renato Curcio and his girlfriend Mara Cagol came from the Catholic left-wing student stronghold Trento, Alberto Franceschini represented staunch Communist tradition as well as genuine *Resistanza* links, and Mario Moretti constituted the factory element. Other than the RAF, BR members were neither bent on full illegality nor on the build-up of a nationwide revolutionary army. Instead, the BR was strictly organized into regional columns and local cells. Over time expanding into Rome, Genoa, and Venice, these cells were increasingly seen as making up a combatant Communist party. From 1974 on, when the core BR decided for clandestinity, the organization was further centralized through the establishment of a so-called strategic command. With Cagol

killed in a shootout in 1975 and most key members arrested until 1976, Mario Moretti headed the BR in its most bloody phase, although the decision for an escalation of violence into lethal terrorism had been already taken before. In 1977, then, the BR was virtually overwhelmed from an inflow of violence-prone youth, thereby linking extremists of the successive protest movements. Splitting up into concurrent factions in the early 1980s, the BR finally disbanded in 1988.

## Cognitive Orientations

Neither Italian nor German left-wing terrorist factions had an idea about the society they were fighting for in their armed struggle. Their motivations, however, are sufficiently clear, as is the framework of their ideological justifications and references. This holds true for the 2nd June movement, which took little effort in theoretical substantiation. Its naming in January 1972 alluded to a defining date of the German protest movement: the killing of a student demonstrator by a policeman in 1967. Although the event had taken place five years before, this was meant to prove an attitude of self-defense, and thus conveys the extent to which a threat justifying terrorist action had to be manufactured. In contrast, the RAF's elaborate manifests, largely authored by Ulrike Meinhof, were certainly important for the group's public outreach to sympathizers. Within the RAF they were almost meaningless, as Meinhof's academic Marxist determinism was out of place with the RAF's triumphal voluntarism that focused on liberation and revolutionary identity, not class struggle.

Overall, German terrorist organizations were decidedly anti-imperialist, anti-American, and anti-Zionist, if not anti-Semitic. Radically re-localizing its declared internationalism, the RAF showed a clear nationalist sentiment that was sometimes voiced with surprising pathos. In this context, the traditional national side of Meinhof's GDR-style Communist anti-fascism indeed rejoined with the Baader-Ensslin existentialist trait. The latter, under the peculiar conditions of an imprisoned but acting RAF command, quickly developed into a subjectivist ideology that celebrated Andreas Baader as the epitome of an adamant guerilla representing the new revolutionary avant-garde. In addition, and contrary to popular belief, the RAF's fixation on Germany's Nazi past had nothing to do with an attack "against the Auschwitz generation."[10] In reality, the RAF cultivated a mere cynical reference to the Holocaust. On the one hand, it frivolously, but effectively, exploited it for self-description, and hence mobilization, in its campaigns against its alleged torture in prison. On the other hand, as was true for most West German guerillas, the Holocaust served as the somewhat paradoxical rationale for the RAF's militant anti-Zionism.

Besides their critical fixation on the Communist party PCI, the *Resistenza* undoubtedly was the main reference for Italian terrorist factions, as they already signaled with their naming. Internationalism, by contrast, had relatively little significance in their cognitive framework. Dating from 1973, however, the armed groups' symbolic and legitimatory appropriation of the memory of a "red resistance" was increasingly endangered by the PCI's historiographic reappraisal that preceded its "Historic Compromise" with the Christian Democrats. In 1975, therefore, when the traditional identificatory links with the PCI had been shattered and, simultaneously, the blatant drop in neofascist violence weakened the urgency of militant anti-Fascism, the BR abruptly reoriented on an "attack against the heart of the state" and toward an anti-imperialist ideology. Nevertheless, the terrorism of the Red Brigades still retained an overwhelmingly national focus, the abduction of NATO general Dozier in 1981 taking place only in the final phase of the BR's multiple splits and downfall.

## Attitudes toward the Superpowers and the Cold War

For German guerillas, the United States definitely was "the archenemy of mankind."[11] In an odd historical vein, they characterized not only West Germany but also Nazi Germany as client states of the United States. In fact, the RAF claimed that Allied bombing of Germany had been the main reason for the lack of resistance "against the Hitler clique" and that even the Nazi aggression against the Soviet Union in 1940 had been nothing but "the Anti-Communist extermination maneuver of US-imperialist strategists."[12] To no one's surprise, then, Ulrike Meinhof publicly complained in 1972 that "the Americans have not been charged by us after the war."[13]

The RAF's attitude to the Eastern Bloc, by comparison, was less clear-cut. As anti-imperialists, they were critics of Soviet-style orthodox Communism, and rather looked for inspiration in Mao and Third World liberation movements. In contrast, as the principal antagonist of the detested United States, the Soviets were never subjected to more than academic critique and the liberating aspirations behind the Iron Curtain to less than indifference. Instead, all West German armed factions welcomed the low-key support they regularly received from Communist East Germany with regard to transit possibilities and the like. There is also evidence that, in 1971, the RAF was willing to seek support from North Korea, by all measures even at the time one of the most rigidly orthodox Communist states in the world.

Somewhat paradoxically for a state that was seen as being on the Cold War frontline by the architects of the "strategy of tension," leftist extremists in Italy showed little interest in the superpowers' global quarrels. This was not

only because of the inherent localism of Italy's radical left. Important, too, was the strength of the Italian Communist party as well as the fact that, thanks to the *Resistenza*, postwar Italy had been far less dominated by the Allies than West Germany. Hence, in Italy, anti-Americanism was much more muted, whereas legal Communism was already fully catered to at home.

## Key Events

The forty-four days of the so-called "German autumn" of 1977—the successive bloody kidnapping of the head of the German Federal Employers' Association, Hanns-Martin Schleyer, by the RAF and a plane with German tourists by Palestinian terrorists, to liberate imprisoned RAF members—and the fifty-five days of the bloody kidnapping of the Italian Christian Democrats' leader Aldo Moro in spring 1978 by the BR equally aimed at the liberation of imprisoned affiliates, must be singled out as the two most important and dramatic events in the history of 1970s European left-wing terrorism. In both countries, these highly symbolic showdowns between terrorists and the state were felt to be the so far most serious legitimation crises in postwar history and resulted in an almost complete political standstill that due to the governments' unaccommodating reaction prompted fears of a democracy on the verge of collapse. The result, however, was quite to the contrary. Instead of an authoritarian turn, these cathartic events, ending with the killing of Schleyer and Moro as well as the collective suicide of the imprisoned RAF leadership, brought about the strategic defeat of left-wing terrorism and eventually led former 1968 activists to reconcile with a democratic system they had hitherto fundamentally rejected.

## Forms and Tactics

From the beginning, German guerilla groups showed a greater readiness for lethal attacks than Italian groups. Indeed, given the traditionally high level of political violence in Italy[14] and the neofascist menace, left-wing militants demonstrated a remarkable restraint from deadly attacks. Although in Milan a major portion of the radical left was already equipped with arms in 1972, they did not use them until 1974. Also, unlike German extremists, they avoided clashes with the police. Apart from bloodless kidnappings, the seventy actions carried out by the BR until 1974 consisted mainly of small-scale attacks on industrial targets or personnel. The practice of kneecapping, however, had by then already become a typical feature of the Brigades. Although acts of violence of neofascist origin were ten times higher than those of leftist extremists between 1969 and 1974, this ratio reversed completely in the second half of the 1970s.

The RAF's bombing campaign of May 1972, which targeted the Springer press and American forces, deliberately took up topics that had been the focus of criticism in 1968. The second RAF generation's assaults, by comparison, lacked propagandistic direction, as its attacks and kidnappings were all carried out solely for the sake of liberating imprisoned affiliates. Yet, it must be noted that the first act of left-wing terrorism in West Germany was the Tupamaros' failed bomb attack on West Berlin's Jewish community center on November 9, 1969, the anniversary of the 1938 Nazi *Kristallnacht*, and that its last act with human victims was the RAF's 1991 attack on a bus with Russian-Jewish émigrés in Hungary.

## Transnational Relations

In spite of its declared internationalism, the transnational relations of the first generation of the RAF and the 2nd June movement remained rudimentary and somewhat aloof. Although the border between latent and manifest cooperation, especially with Palestinian terrorist factions, was often blurred, until 1977 it remained essentially limited to military training and arms supplies, with Arab countries like Yemen and Iraq not offering much more than retreat. However, in 1974, for instance, a joint RAF–Palestinian scheme to highjack an Israeli passenger plane to liberate imprisoned terrorists was apparently foiled. The German RZ's international wing, in contrast, naturally had quite strong transnational links and took part in actions like the 1973 attack on OPEC in Vienna or the 1976 hijacking of an Air France plane that bloodily ended in Entebbe. On a propagandistic level, too, the activity of RAF support groups in neighboring countries and the Europe-wide solidarity of intellectuals with the RAF's torture campaigns was quite a successful transnational project, as was, for example, demonstrated when the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre visited Andreas Baader in prison in 1974.[15]

Analogous to its cognitive orientations, Italian terrorism lacked substantial transnational links, even if the future GAP founder Feltrinelli had supplied German student leaders with explosives back in 1968. In fact, there was a short contact between the BR and Palestinian terrorist factions only in summer 1978, the initiative coming from the Palestinians. Different from West Germany, anti-Zionism never was a basic leftist ideologem in Italy, where the army had tried to save Jews from German persecution during World War II.

## Consequences, Narratives, and Politics of Memory

The terrorist aftermath of 1968 has been engraved in public memory in West Germany and Italy under the term "leaden times" (*Bleierne Zeit*) and "Years of lead" (*anni di piombo*). Even today, it has strong repercussions on the perception

of the protest movements in both countries. In particular, the precise nature of the relations between the revolt and the emergence of clandestine violence remains a refractory issue. This is all the more so because today's globalized terrorist menace at the same time morally highlights and factually belittles the terrorism of the 1970s.[16] On the one hand, terrorism has undoubtedly been instrumental to attempts to unjustly vilify the generation of 1968 as a whole. On the other hand, terrorism has, at least with respect to West Germany, been aptly called the "crucial Achilles' heel"[17] of any monumentalistic interpretation of 1968; that is, an interpretation that squares the movements' anti-democratic stance with its alleged civilizing and democratizing effects.

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For the Angry Brigade in Britain, see Vague (1997); for *Action Directe* in France, see Dartnell (1995). For Italy, see Della Porta (1995) for an overview, Moss (1989) for a thorough, and Cantazaro (1991) for a multifaceted account. Essential for all aspects of German leftist terrorism is Kraushaar (2006) and Weinhauer (2006), unfortunately not available in English, whereas ID-Verlag (1997) presents the RAF's extensive texts. Aust (1987) chronicles the actions and characters of the RAF in detail but lacks context and analysis, as does Baumann's (1977) personal account of the 2nd June movement. For a comparative approach including state response see Katzenstein's (1998) synthesis and Varon (2004).

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## Notes

1. Tom Vague, *Anarchy in the UK. The Angry Brigade*. (London: AK, 1997), 40.
2. The others were born between 1952 and 1959.
3. Even when alluding to the death of Pierre Overney, the AD and its predecessor NAPAP tried to court the nascent autonomous youth movement rather than the former GP spectrum. In 1977 NAPAP assassinated the Renault guard who had killed Overney, and an AD commando "Pierre Overney" executed Georges Besse, the general manager of Renault, in 1986.
4. Mainly in the Southern France based *Groupes d'actions révolutionnaires internationalistes* (GARI).
5. Interestingly, the only other state where "1968" had a serious terrorist sequel was Japan, thus, in a wider context, limiting the phenomenon to the countries that had made up the axis powers of World War II. See Dorothea Hauser, "Deutschland, Italien, Japan: Die ehemaligen Achsenmächte und der Terrorismus der siebziger Jahre," in *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*, ed. Wolfgang Kraushaar (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2006), 1272–1298.
6. Luisa Passerini, "Das Jahr 1968 in Italien. Eine Geschichte der 'langen Dauer,'" in Etienne François, et al., eds., *1968—ein europäisches Jahr*? (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 1997), 79–88.
7. Besides a mass of speculative literature, there is yet no solid work on the subject. For some aspects, see Daniele Ganser, *Nato's secret Armies: Operation Gladio and Terrorism in Western Europe* (London: Frank Cass, 2005).
8. See the chapter by Martin Klimke in this volume.
9. For details, see Donatella della Porta, *Il terrorismo di sinistra* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1990).
10. Lutz Taufer, "Gegen die Auschwitz-Generation," *Jungle World* 45 (1997).
11. ID-Verlag, ed., *Rote Armee Fraktion. Texte und Materialien zur Geschichte der RAF* (Berlin: ID, 1997), 258.
12. Ibid, 202.
13. Otto Schily and Hans-Christian Ströbele, *Plädoyers einer politischen Verteidigung. Reden und Mitschriften aus dem Mahler-Prozeß* (Berlin: Merve, 1973), 141.
14. Between 1946 and 1971, almost 150 people were killed during demonstrations alone, 14 of them policemen, and by 1977 there were another 96 deaths during protest marches.
15. France, where Italian and German terrorism was often enough sympathetically watched by former activists who at the same time were strictly opposed to armed struggle as an option for their own country, also became a safe haven for Italian militants (and in 1985 even guaranteed them immunity from extradition).

16. Left-wing terrorism resulted in more than sixty fatalities, including terrorists, in West Germany and in about two hundred in Italy, with many more, often seriously, wounded.
17. Edgar Wolfrum, "'1968' in der gegenwärtigen deutschen Geschichtspolitik," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B 22–23 (2001), 28–36, here 35.

# 23
# The Women's Movement

*Kristina Schulz*

In modern societies, social inequality has produced hierarchical structures that are grounded not only on classifications of class and race but also on biological sex. A social movement known variously as the "women's movement," the "women's liberation movement," or the "feminist movement" made personal relationships between men and women a central political issue. These movement names are often used interchangeably; however, they have differing meanings in different linguistic contexts. Among the social movements in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the second wave of feminism of the 1960s–1970s, the term "feminist movement" or "mouvement féministe" was commonly used in English- and French-speaking areas, whereas the adjective "feminist" in German implied a connotation of radicalism generally only attributed to the new feminist movement.[1] In most countries, the formation of the new women's movement was strongly influenced by leftist discourses; second-wave feminists classified their movement as "radical" to distance themselves from first-wave "feminism," which was seen as a bourgeois idea. In France, West Germany, Switzerland, or Great Britain, radical feminists regarded the traditional women's organizations with skepticism until at least the second half of the 1970s.

Trying to define the women's movement is therefore complicated by the choice between dealing with one social movement, including both the first and second wave, or with two related yet clearly distinct social movements, each having its own mobilization dynamics.[2] This chapter is based on the assumption that the 1970s feminism in Western European countries and the United States was one specific and historically determined form of feminism, defined as a process in which women became political subjects.[3] In many countries, though the feminism of the 1960s and 1970s was related to the first wave of feminism by unfilled requirements and concerns, in these later decades it explicitly developed into a social movement.

According to Dieter Rucht, a social movement consists of two key components. First, there is a network of groups who are prepared to organize protests aimed at social change. Second, a "social movement" needs a number of individuals who will attend protests and demonstrations or contribute resources.[4] Thus, the word "movement" suggests two ideas simultaneously: that of a distinct group with identifiable members, and that of a larger social movement supported by a mass of unidentified women.

## Roots of the Movement

During the past thirty years, historians have documented various manifestations of female resistance, including both individual action and collective protest. The structural transformation of women's resistance in the modern era corresponded to the emergence of a new bourgeois ideal of womanhood since the late eighteenth century. This ideal affected not only middle-class women but also women of the emerging working class. The idealization of the private sphere occupied by mothers and housewives reduced women's activities to the household, whereas wage-earning, conceived as part of a public sphere and executed mostly by men, became increasingly important. Therefore, women's resistance in the nineteenth century in the social environment of the middle class shifted from collective protest in public (hunger riots, carnival-like rituals, and public mockery) to private forms of protest such as individual denying of norms, excessive reading, illness, sexual refusal, homoerotic friendships, and religiosity.[5]

Nevertheless, women in many countries began building women's associations from the mid-1850s on. The "first wave" of the women's movement refers to the period from 1890 until World War I. After the war, though women's organizations in most countries were not able to regain prewar levels of mobilization, many continued protest activities until World War II, which, in most countries, put an end to feminist activities. Some women's organizations survived the war years or were reestablished in the postwar period, but we know little about feminist activities immediately following the war. Even though the "women's question" was raised periodically during the two decades after World War II, it was only after the events of 1968 that feminist activities intensified and led to the emergence of a new social movement carried out by women.

## Cognitive Orientation and Aims

When women began to collectively analyze their situation, they concluded that to understand their growing dissatisfaction and subaltern positions in

both family and working life, they had to take into account what they all had in common: they were women. Thus, gender became a central category of the women's movement's self-conception, drawing significantly from theories on femininity circulating in Europe in the 1960s and 1970s. Three paradigms contributed to the analysis of specific conditions of women's subordination in politics, economy, and culture.

The first of these paradigms was radical feminism. The women's movements in Europe were preceded by the U.S. women's liberation movement, which appeared at the end of the 1960s. Though sometimes reinterpreted in a different way, key concepts of American radical feminism informed European thinking about the possibilities of women's emancipation. As in other countries, traditional U.S. women's organizations disappeared from the political landscape after World War II. The first sign of a renewed feminist engagement was the foundation of the National Organization of Women (NOW) in 1966. Among the initiators was Betty Friedan, sociologist, psychologist, journalist and author of *The Feminine Mystique*. In addition to NOW, many autonomous women's groups appeared in 1967 and afterward. Whereas NOW affirmed a moderate, reformist strategy tied to classical feminist grievances, the activists of those new groups—coming partly from the community organizing projects of the New Left and the civil rights movement—propagated a new, radical feminism. Intellectuals such as Shulamit Firestone and Kate Millet emphasized that they were aiming for social revolution independent from a socialist revolution. Whereas revolution in Left terms was linked to class struggle, the feminist revolution was an overarching women's project, spanning social origins. Radical feminists also proclaimed that the struggle for liberation could not be delegated to other social groups but should be the result of an active process by the oppressed. In this sense, the feminists joined the theoretical position of the New Left. In opposition to the Old Left, the New Left abandoned the idea that revolutionary action relied on one single principal agent, the proletariat. Both assumptions were adopted by European feminists.

Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, published in 1949, provided a second paradigm for the new women's movement. De Beauvoir argued that there was no direct link from biological differences between men and women to social discrimination against women For de Beauvoir, the oppression of women was historically, not naturally founded. *The Second Sex* therefore attempted to comprehend this historical process and to show mechanisms and institutions contributing to a continuing unjust situation. According to de Beauvoir's existentialist point of view, each individual realized his or her own existence. Over centuries, philosophy, religion, literature, and science linked biology and nature with gender relations and thus legitimized gender-specific inequalities.

Women defined themselves as insignificant in relation to male significance. De Beauvoir suggested three procedures to liberate women. She proposed uncovering the myth of eternal womanhood, exercising a creative, professional work, and fostering socialist revolution as the starting point of a complete transformation of society. After viewing the actual development of women's situation in socialist societies in the 1950s and 1960s, Simone de Beauvoir lost her faith in the feminist potential of a socialist revolution; beginning in the early 1970s, she established the priority of feminist struggle over class struggle and actively supported the collective actions of the French Women's Liberation Movement. The cognitive orientation of the women's movement was influenced by the author's philosophical assumption that "THE woman" was not determined by her anatomical, biological sex, but by society, and that therefore the struggle for liberation must begin with challenging social order. Simone de Beauvoir was considered the mother of feminism by many within the new women's movement, and *The Second Sex* was their Bible.

Finally, a new reading of psychoanalysis and the sexual revolution was also paradigmatic for the new women's movement. Psychoanalysis had been renewed and reinterpreted in the 1950s and 1960s, both through a post-structuralist interpretation linked to Jacques Lacan and through New Left interest in psychoanalysis and therapy embedded in a new conception of social order embraced by European and North American intellectuals following the late 1950s.

During the 1950s and 1960s, French heterodox psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan (1901–1991) fundamentally revisited psychoanalytical thought. He paved the way for a new understanding of psychoanalysis within the context of philosophy, linguistics, and structural anthropology. His reinterpretation affected the cognitive orientation of the women's movement because it enabled the imagining of transformative strategies for gender relations. Lacan indicated the direction of a new interpretation of feminine sexuality and feminine submission by connecting the oppression of women to repressive structures in the symbolic order. Furthermore, he referred to linguistic structures and stressed their subversive potential. Based on Lacan's assumptions, feminist activists interpreted language as the starting point of social change. Lacan also accentuated and revaluated the early mother–child relationship. By giving weight to early childhood, during which the father was typically absent, Lacan prepared a theory of women's liberation based on feminine specificity and feminine autonomy.

Lacan and his disciples contributed to the expansion of psychoanalysis, particularly in France. Many intellectuals believed this paradigm—its therapeutic praxis as well as popularized forms such as simply talking about sexuality—to be the starting point not only to deal with forms of individual

mental disorder but also to solve social problems. Supporters of Lacan's interpretation of psychoanalysis developed a feminist praxis that stressed the therapeutic effect of small-group discussions. Furthermore, they discovered the emancipative and revolutionary potential of a specific feminine use of language—*écriture feminine*.

Classical psychoanalysis was also the object of New Left criticism. The term "New Left" covers an intellectual movement formed in the late 1950s in many European countries and the United States; it also refers to leftist social movements from the 1960s onward. New Left thought and activism was a reaction to contemporary developments in countries ruled by socialism, such as the Soviet intervention in Hungary in 1956, or the increasing degree of concern about Stalinist terror. The New Left embraced organizational autonomy from traditional leftist groups and disagreed with key aspects of classical Left doctrine. The New Left's intellectual leaders conceptualized a theory of social transformation by including ideas of the early Frankfurt School, the surrealists, the Situationists, and the writings of Wilhelm Reich. They developed a cognitive orientation that combined psychoanalysis and revolution to accentuate power relations in the sphere of reproduction. The women's movement integrated central elements of the New Left's cognitive orientation into a feminist self-conception, particularly the definition of a new revolutionary subject and transformation strategy.

Classical Left thought was oriented toward the proletariat as the main subject of revolution. Based on critical thinkers such as Charles Wright Mills (1916–1962) and Herbert Marcuse (1891–1979), the New Left broke in a radical way with this absolute term of socialist analysis of capitalist societies. Searching for a new historical subject, the New Left concentrated on individuals and groups who were excluded from the system of social appeasement and comfort because of their skin color, social origin, or education. This opened an intellectual space in which women could recognize themselves as subjects of social change. Furthermore, the reproductive sphere was particularly important for the New Left. Whereas classical socialist thought put the accent on the realm of production, the New Left considered mechanisms of social reproduction to be the starting point for change of social structure. Thus, New Left theory emphasized the revolutionary potential of women by focusing on oppression and alienation in that area.

The cognitive orientation of the women's movement also integrated New Left transformation strategy. The New Left developed a new conception of collective action from a belief in the clarifying effect of provocation. They used provocative and symbolic forms of action to enable activists as well as spectators to realize the overwhelming power of public authorities, bureaucracy, and members of the political and economic elite. Also, New Left transformation

strategy put the emphasis on self-organization in counter-institutions such as free universities and urban communes as free space in which people should anticipate a revolution of everyday life. Finally, anti-authoritarian thinking was particularly important for the New Left in West Germany. Intellectuals studied the works of Theodor W. Adorno on "The Authoritarian Personality" and from it deduced the importance of children's education for social transformation. These reflections led to a reevaluation of the social role of mothers in society and became an often-discussed subject within the new women's movement.

In summary, we can systematically profile five elements of the cognitive orientation of the new women's movements. First, new feminism rejected a Marxist perspective that reduced discrimination to the problem of class struggle. Instead, new feminist theory tried to link a socialist analysis of capitalism with extensive criticism of patriarchy. Second, new feminism went beyond classical feminist issues. Whereas first-wave feminism in Europe and the United States sought legal equality between men and women, particularly the right to vote, second-wave feminism aimed to overcome the separation of private and public spheres and to do away with gender-based hierarchies in all areas of society. Third, new feminism developed a strategy of transformation that attempted to uncover and scandalize mechanisms of power execution. Political and educational institutions along with cultural elements like language and literature were suspected of reproducing masculine domination. One of the central goals of the new feminists was therefore to raise consciousness among women. In contrast to the majority of the first wave's feminists, new feminists defined the women's movement as a revolutionary movement. While preceding generations of activists were convinced that legal and political achievements would naturally contribute to gender equality, new feminists thought that the structures of a male-dominated society had to be overthrown in an active liberation process. Fourth, the new feminist movement's organizational structure was based on the concept of the small group. Explicitly dissociating themselves from conventional women's associations and political parties, new feminists emphasized the informal structures of their movement and the high degree of autonomy of largely decentralized groups. Finally, new feminism defined a new subject of social and historical change. The movement was conceived as a "women's only" movement, temporarily willing to agree to alliances with other revolutionary movements but principally fixed on the idea of the women's movement's complete autonomy.

## Organizational Structure

From a conceptual point of view, a social movement is not an organization. When we refer to the term "organization," we therefore have to differentiate

between informal coordinating networks structuring the mobilization process of social movements (*social movement organization*, SMO), and the organizational infrastructure of a movement. In spite of the organizational resources and critical mass of supporters first-wave women's associations utilized, they played only a marginal role in the formation of the second-wave movement. During its formative stage, the new movement's organizational infrastructure relied on spontaneously built, informal groups at the local level, such as those involved in the campaign for free abortion. In France this was the *Mouvement pour la liberation des femmes* (MLF), in Germany the *Aktion 218*, in Switzerland the *Frauenbefreiungsbewegung* (FBB) and the MLF, and in the Netherlands the *Dolle Minnas*. The individual protest culture of each country determined the role played by these supporting groups. For instance, in West Germany, regional action committees were built during the course of the abortion struggle. They were loosely coordinated by *Aktion 218*, who brought together delegates from women's groups throughout the country. The mission of this informal group was purely operational and consisted of organizing regular meetings to inform delegates from regional groups about recent developments and to plan protest activities. The regional groups then widened the scope of their concerns from abortion to manifold aspects of women's emancipation. In contrast, the French Women's Liberation Movement was already constituted when the abortion campaign started. MLF Activists viewed the abortion issue as a subject able to mobilize countrywide support for women's rights and to forge alliances with such powerful partners as the unions and left-wing parties.

During the second half of the 1970s, women's centers (*Frauenzentren, Centres de femmes, centri culturale*) became locations of feminist agitation. One question constantly under discussion was whether women's centers and other women's projects such as houses for battered women or women's emergency telephones should receive public support, and correspondingly how far would they accept public interventions in the decision-making process of the institution. These debates resulted in diverse organizational models with varying degrees of independence. Some groups attempted to achieve gender equality by pointing out gender discrimination within and by order of public institutions. Other groups concentrated on the realization of relatively autonomous women's projects, such as women's health centers, which sought recognition by health insurance agencies. Yet other organizations focused on founding counter-institutions that refused all forms of public intervention and support. Although the overall organizational structure of the women's movement varies from country to country, it is still possible to summarize some general characteristics. Many of the groups were built around a decentralized structure reliant on local networks, exhibited weak bureaucracy accompanied by a collective decision-making structure, and

employed a broad, informal definition of membership, embedded in a low degree of formality.

Feminist activists also attempted to establish international contacts to advance their goals. Moments of successful cooperation were numerous; one example took place in Brussels in 1976 when European feminists organized an international tribunal denouncing violence against women. International women's congresses and summer universities helped to develop international networks as well. As a social movement, feminism is deeply inscribed in the political culture of Western democracies. Beginning in the 1980s, women in Eastern European countries also began to develop and demonstrate a sensibility toward gender discrimination and were supported by Western movements. They began to criticize the failure of the Soviet system in this area; one strategy they employed was distributing forbidden texts such as Western feminist literature or clandestine periodicals.[6]

## Relation to the 1968 Protest Movement

The relation to the 1968 protest movement was difficult but constitutive. Early women's groups appeared in the course of the students' movement and benefited from the context of mobilization. The 1968 protest movements' activities had a positive effect on women's willingness to participate in a "revolutionary" project. Women who had an academic background made friends and built relationships with other women during movement activities such as community life, Free Universities, *Kritische Universität*, and demonstrations. Those contacts were crucial for the creation of autonomous women's groups within the 1968 movement.

In many countries, women moved away from their leftist comrades, and in most cases tensions resulted in an explicit break. Women rebelled against male adherents of the 1968 protest movement in France, the United States, and the German Federal Republic. They accused the male activists of reproducing mechanisms of discrimination against women within daily movement practices. When student and filmmaker Helke Sander appealed in vain in September 1968 to delegates of the German *Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund* (Socialist German Students League, SDS) to take into consideration the "women's question," one woman from the *Aktionsrat zur Befreiung der Frauen* (Women's Liberation Action Council) threw tomatoes at the podium, marking a definite break between the "male movement" and women's activists from the *Aktionsrat*. In France, the slogan "Le steak d'un révolutionnaire est aussi longtemps à cuire que celui d'un bourgeois" ("A revolutionary's steak takes as long to be done as a bourgeois' steak") expressed women's vehement opposition to male chauvinism within the

1968 protest movement. However, their chosen forms of action—symbolically charged actions, cartoons, plays on words—by which they expressed their distinctiveness vis-à-vis the male movement were still inspired by that very movement. Even today, the 1968 protest movement is a subject of controversy among former women's movement activists.

It is important to note that in many countries such as France, the German Federal Republic, and Italy the women's movement did not derive directly from the 1968 protest movement. The women's groups that were founded within the 1968 movements disintegrated, as did the movements they stemmed from. However, later women's groups could rely on the organizational resources such as preexisting networks, potential allies, means of communication, and recruitment potentials that grew from the movements of 1968. Social movement theory has given weight to the idea that "a history of prior activism increases the likelihood of future activism."[7] Many examples show that the significance of 1968 for the women's movement can hardly be overestimated.

## Key Activities

Social movement theory distinguishes between an expressive logic of action that is identity-orientated and an instrumental logic of action that is centered on changes in the political arena. With regard to the cultural dimension of feminism and movement practices that enhanced internal mobilization and movement solidarity (music, consciousness-raising groups, women's literature, specific use of language, symbolically charged actions, etc.), it has been noted that the women's movement followed a mainly expressive logic of action.[8] However, the women's movement was originally not a purely identity-orientated movement but, rather, has from its beginning challenged the political order and addressed the state as a key target. The struggle for free abortion is emblematic in this respect. Women's movements played with the rules of the political field by using the designated channels for articulating interests in democratic societies, but also by consciously compassing them. To systematize the diversity of feminist activities, it seems to be helpful to distinguish between expressions and activities of symbolic and social feminism. According to this distinction, symbolic feminism aimed at a perceptual change that included a shift of attitude and behavior, whereas social feminism sought to directly influence the political decision-making process. Symbolic feminism considered women "qua women" and developed specific means of individual and collective "liberation," such as a specific feminine use of language (*écriture feminine*), consciousness-raising by therapy or encounter groups, or creative activities.

Representatives of social feminism centered on social institutions and aimed at social rather than at individual mental change. They concentrated on campaigns against sexual violence or pornography and on the installation of women's centers and houses for battered women. Social feminists desired equal opportunities for men and women in all areas of society, especially in employment.

The variety of themes and growing internal differentiation of feminism led to a multiplication of activities and forms of collective action. Demonstrative-appellative, sometimes direct action was particularly important for the women's movement. Activists threw wet nappies in political assemblies to put pressure on political decision-makers, demonstrators burned bras in public and distributed cartoons of the pope and other personalities defending the interdiction of abortion. As a reaction to the decision of the communal authorities in Geneva to shut down the autonomous women's center, militant feminists laid bricks in order to close the town hall in a symbolically charged action. Countless demonstrations on the local, national, and sometimes even international level took place. The women's movements also made use of institutions of meaning-making by initiating mass petitions and collecting signatures against women's deprivation of the right to control their own bodies, and by getting the attention of mass media. In Switzerland, pro-abortion associations such as the FBB launched a referendum in favor of liberalization of the abortion law in 1977.

## Consequences and Narratives

The women's movement of the 1970s was characterized by the competition between different groups struggling with the definition of the direction, strategies, and goals of feminism. These conflicts were reflected in narratives about the movement's founding myth. Even today, women's movement activists disagree about the birth of the women's movement; they are polarized by the question of how far "1968" was influential in the formation of the new women's movement. Radical feminists described it as a mainly male-dominated movement. To most feminists, the 1968 claim for free sexuality aggravated women's sexual exploitation, so that the "sexual revolution" was the center of criticism. Nevertheless, some groups stressed the effect of "1968" as a trigger for change, an awakening, and the beginning of a new era. Others clearly stated that change did not happen until the women's movement occurred, and that the women's movement developed not from but against the spirit of 1968.

Strictly speaking, the movement's date of birth was not the only point of contention. Conflicts surrounding the relative importance of 1968 were

symptomatic of other ideological differences. By accepting or refusing continuity with the events of 1968, different currents within the women's movement negotiated the forms and content of feminist engagement such as the modes of mobilization (mass or elite), instruments of the struggle (consciousness-raising by psychoanalysis or by provocative actions) and its direction (symbolic level, *écriture féminine* or material/legal level). The significance of 1968 was in this context symbolic rather than historical.

Internal conflicts contribute to the decomposition of social movements. However, in the case of the women's movements, these conflicts had some positive effects as well. They led to a broad diversification of grievances and ensured that women's concerns were put on the agenda in such different domains as public health, the academy, and labor.

When social movement researchers measure movement success, they face complications because movements compete with other forms of social transformation, and thus social change can hardly be attributed to one single social actor. Therefore, analysis of social movement's effects has to balance factors. In view of the problem of imputation, we can only give a rough draft of the consequences of the women's movements, taking into account four areas. First, public women's politics have been reformed in many countries since the mid-1970s and reached new heights in the 1980s. Whereas officials formerly posed the "women's question" as a problem of family and population politics up to the 1970s and centered on the protection of women as potential mothers, women's politics in the 1980s added the aspect of women's promotion in the public sphere to that of women's protection. Secondly, there were shifts in the organization of work. The women's movement radically challenged a mode of social organization based on separation between family (married women and mothers) and work (unmarried women and men). Feminists asked for equal rights and equal pay; this eventually led to measures promoting equality in employment. Third, feminist scholars made advances in the realms of knowledge and learning; they struggled for the institutionalization and recognition of women and gender studies in academia. In the early 1980s, gender-specific study and research programs began to be integrated in official curricula. Though initially poorly financed, women's studies were eventually successful in convincing authorities that these matters deserved financial support. The women's movement also promoted teaching and research activities outside the university. Progressive nonprofit organizations like adult education centers, libraries, and archives began to offer courses on women's employment, women's rights, adult education for women, and aspects of mental and physical health. Finally, there occurred a marked change in gender stereotypes, attitudes, and opinions. The women's movement questioned the perceived biological grounds for

male domination over females. Feminists denounced mechanisms that contributed to a definition of women as the "weaker sex" and showed how biological arguments were used to legitimize a social order based on women's subordination. Instead, they argued for the importance of social attributions in the distribution of power between men and women. Understanding the social mechanisms of oppression not only allowed women to develop new perspectives on how to escape traditional feminine role expectations but also upset the traditional stereotypes of masculinity.

The fact that women run for office to reach the highest positions in government in several countries may be a hint to such a change. But the fact that women in European academia represent only a tenth of all professorships may also show that, when it comes to change, each sector of society has its own rhythm.

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Usually researchers on the women's movement treat either the first or the second wave movement. The *classic overview* is provided by Morgan (1984). *Literature on the early women's movement* is exhaustive; for an *international dimension* see Rupp (1997); for a national overview on the *French case* see Riot-Sarcey (2002), for *Germany* Gerhard (1990) and Wischermann (2003).

Some works focus on the *old and on the new movement*, as Ryan (1992), or on the *in-between*, as Chaperon (2000). Gubin et al. (2004) provide an excellent reader on *transversal issues* of feminism. The new women's movement is still a new field of historical analysis, though sociologists and anthropologists started earlier; see, for instance, Picq (1993). For a first overview of *the international dimension*, turn to Dahlerup (1986) and Smith (2000). From a *comparative point of view*, see Apostolidou (1995), Rucht (1994), and Schulz (2002).

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## Notes

1. See Ute Gerhard, "Concepts et controverses," *Le siècle des féminismes*, Eliane Gubin et al. eds. (Paris: Les Editions de l'Atelier, 2004), 47–63.
2. See Ute Gerhard, "Die langen Wellen der Frauenbewegung—Traditionslinien und unerledigte Anliegen," in *Atempause. Feminismus als demokratisches Projekt*, ed. Ute Gerhard (Francfurt: Fischer 1999), 12–38.
3. Joan W. Scott, "Lire autrement l'histoire du féminisme" in *La citoyenne paradoxale. Les féministes françaises et les droits de l'homme* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1998), 35.
4. Dieter Rucht, "The Impact of National Contexts on Social Movement Structures: A Cross-Movement and Cross-National Comparison" in *Comparative Perspectives On Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, ed. Doug McAdam, John D. Mc Carthy, and Mayer N. Zald (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 186.
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6. Linda Racioppi, Katherine O'Sullivan See, "Organizing women before and after the fall: women's politics in the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia" in *Global Feminism since 1945*, ed. Bonnie G. Smith (London: Routledge, 2000), 205–34.
7. Doug McAdam, John McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, "Social Movements" in *Handbook of Sociology*, ed. Neil J. Smelser (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1988), 708.
8. See Dieter Rucht, "The Strategies and Action Repertoires of New Movements" in *Challenging the Political Order. New Social and Political Movements in Western Democracies*, ed. Russell J. Dalton and Manfred Kuecheler (Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 1990), 156–75.