

*May 1968 in France**The Rise and Fall of a New Social Movement*

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## I

In France, the United States, and the Federal Republic of Germany, 1968 witnessed the greatest protest mobilization of the postwar period. The protest movements in each of these countries displayed a specific self-perception and constitution but were similar in values, forms of action, mobilization strategies, and accomplishments. These similarities go beyond national characteristics and illustrate features common to all social movements. Everywhere, the protesters challenged the established institutions of Western democracy. They questioned the exclusive right of representation by established parties and intermediary groups, confronted those parties and groups with an opposing power and public presence that negated traditional structures of institutional authority, and criticized the basic assumptions of the postwar order.<sup>1</sup> However one judges these phenomena historically, the spontaneous mobilization of protest movements within highly organized and affluent democratic societies requires explanation.

How, then, do we explain the events of May 1968 in France, for example, and the powerful effect they had? Different analysts have interpreted the May movement variously as a "new social conflict" (Touraine), a "generational revolt" (Morin), an "institutional crisis" (Crozier), and a "critical moment" in the development of society (Bourdieu). Just as divergent as these sociological constructions are the overall assessments of these events. They are judged as "revolts" (Touraine), quasi-revolution (Morin), "cultural

Sally E. Robertson of Arlington, Virginia, translated this chapter from the German.

<sup>1</sup> For more on the radical changes within the political and societal institutional framework that the movements brought about, see Claus Offe, "Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics: Social Movements Since the 1960s," in Charles S. Maier, ed., *Changing Boundaries of the Political: Essays on the Evolving Balance Between the State and Society, Public and Private in Europe* (New York, 1987), 63-106.

breakdown" (Crozier), or a crisis over control of the means of production that became generalized (Bourdieu).<sup>2</sup> All of these interpretations have their virtues. Insofar as they point toward long-term strains and problems, however, a link to the sudden mobilization is still missing and cannot be deduced. The analytical foundation of this study is distinct from the aforementioned approaches.<sup>3</sup> I view the May events as an expression of a new social movement.<sup>4</sup> Analytically defined, a social movement is an "organized and sustained effort of a collectivity of interrelated individuals, groups, and organizations to promote or to resist social change with the use of public protest activities."<sup>5</sup>

In this chapter I argue that the program and course of action of protest movements in the 1960s were aimed at mobilization, and that their forms of action and objectives came together in this process. I examine the May movement in France using theorems of research on social movements.<sup>6</sup> I also discuss strategies of mobilization and forms of action and analyze their dynamic effects within organizations as well as between the movement and the institutions of authority.<sup>7</sup> In addition, I describe the self-generating processes of action that occur within specific constellations of interrelations<sup>8</sup> and explain the concepts of "critical event" and "critical moment."<sup>9</sup> In section II, I reconstruct the cognitive constitution of the movement by the intellectuals of the New Left. In section III, I develop seven theses in order to explain the unique mobilization dynamics of the May movement in France. Finally, in section IV, I attempt to determine the effects of the

2 Pierre Bourdieu, *Homo academicus* (Frankfurt am Main, 1988); Michel Crozier, *La Société bloquée* (Paris, 1970); Edgar Morin, Claude Lefort, and Cornelius Castoriadis, *La Bête: Premières réflexions sur les événements* (Paris, 1968; reprint, Paris, 1988); Alain Touraine, *Le Communisme utopique: Le mouvement de mai 1968* (Paris, 1968); Alain Touraine, *Die postindustrielle Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt am Main, 1972).

3 Ingrid Gilcher-Holey, "Die Phantasie an die Macht": Mai 68 in Frankreich (Frankfurt am Main, 1995).

4 Alain Touraine also proceeds from this thesis. For the methodological differences between the structural analytical approach that he develops and the interactionist approach underlying this chapter, see Gilcher-Holey, *Phantasie an die Macht*, 24–30.

5 Friedhelm Neidhardt and Dieter Rucht, "The Analysis of Social Movements: The State of the Art and Some Perspectives of Further Research," in Dieter Rucht, ed., *Research on Social Movements: The States of the Art in Western Europe and the USA* (Frankfurt am Main, 1991). See also Dieter Rucht, "Offenlichkeit als Mobilisierungsfaktor für soziale Bewegungen," in Friedhelm Neidhardt, ed., *Öffentlichkeit, öffentliche Meinung, soziale Bewegungen*, supplement to *Kölnen Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, no. 34 (1994): 338–9.

6 Otto Rammstedt, *Soziale Bewegung* (Frankfurt am Main, 1978).

7 Jürgen Raschke, *Soziale Bewegungen: Ein historisch-systematischer Grundriss* (Frankfurt am Main, 1985); Patrice Mann, *L'Action collective: Mobilisation et organisation des minorités actives* (Paris, 1991).

8 Klaus-Peter Japp, "Selbsterzeugung und Fremderschulden: Thesen zum Rationalismus in den Theorien sozialer Bewegungen," *Soziale Welt: Zeitschrift für sozialwissenschaftliche Forschung und Praxis* 3 (1984).

9 Bourdieu, *Homo academicus*, 254ff.

movement on the political system, on the New Left, on the structure of business and industry, and on lifestyles.

## II

Social movements are categorized according to their goals. Whether they promote women, peace, or the environment, all gain their identity and distinction from their goals and specific viewpoints on social problems. The way in which problems are perceived and the strategic solutions that are then developed are the result of ideas and insights, explanatory hypotheses and interpretations, assumptions and attitudes. These in turn shape the self-concept of social movements. The movements are constituted in terms of ideas, or to use the new terminology, they are "cognitively" constituted.

In the case of 1968, the cognitive constitution of the movement cannot be deduced from its name alone. In fact, the movement had no universally recognized name, was not oriented toward a specific area of policy, but rather was directed toward the total structure of society. Its customary designation by a specific year lacks substance but indicates the peak of mobilization success and political effectiveness. In this respect, 1968 might be compared to 1848. Although university and high school students and young adults for the most part formed the core groups and adherents — in France, blue- and white-collar workers were also involved — it was not simply a student movement. Its cognitive constitution was not determined by problems of university reform or the educational system. Despite the fact that universities had the largest potential for mobilization, higher education was by no means the object or central topic of the movement.

Nineteen sixty-eight can be described in many terms. It was anti-authoritarian and individualistic, libertarian and socialist, as well as democratic, anti-institutional, and antibureaucratic. Given the internal diversity of the core groups and the lack of organizational unity, many viewpoints can be found that different leaders promoted and transformed over time. The question is whether a core of ideas, moral concepts, patterns of explanation, and interpretations of reality constituted the movement cognitively. Did a perception of the present and objectives for the future give the movement its identity and distinguish it from others?

These questions must be answered before we can analyze the process that gave rise to this particular social movement. Such movements are the result of social action, not just ideas. Still, social action is mobilized only after it has been directed toward certain goals and points of reference, after at least the core groups of a movement have attained a cognitive identity. In

their work. Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison have stressed this connection. They analyzed the process by which a movement forms its identity using what they call "cognitive praxis."<sup>10</sup> By this, they mean the development of an internal communication structure, a symbolic system of self-understanding and self-assurance that determines the direction of action and the intersubjective willingness to act. This "cognitive praxis" is determined by a framework of rules drafted by intellectuals and the transformation of those rules into relevant objectives. Over the course of the movement, this cognitive core is adapted and modified as a result of internal communication, continual grappling with the conditions under which actions are undertaken, and the internal and external interpretations of those events. The combination of the theoretical outlines, concepts, and projections of different intellectuals results in a syncretism that cannot be traced back to the theory of a single person. Nevertheless, the cognitive constitution of the movement, the formulation of the problem, the resulting perception of reality, and the objectives that are established cause the movement to develop according to specific dynamics that distinguish it.

The protest movements of 1968, which saw themselves as movements of the New Left, were preceded by the formation of an intellectual "Nouvelle Gauche" in France, the "New Left" in the United States, and "die Neue Linke" in Germany. Intellectual dissidents from traditional leftist parties were their founding members. By the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, these New Left movements had emerged internationally in publications, discussion circles, journals, and actions. The cleaving off 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 on nuclear arms in East and West. But it also had systemic causes that had unfolded during a critical debate on 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 mold the future. They stag-

10 Ron Eyerman and A. Jamison, *Social Movements: A Cognitive Approach* (Cambridge, 1991).

nated materially, as measured by their numerical strength, and philosophically, as measured by their capacity to solve problems.

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* (1949–66), *Arguments* (1956–62), and *Internationale Situationniste* (1958–69). What was new about the New Left? The new cognitive orientation with which the free-floating intellectuals of the New Left confronted the traditional Left consisted of the following five elements.<sup>11</sup>

1. 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 up the theoretical interpretation by combining Marxism with existentialism and psychoanalysis in order to free the former from its sclerotic paralysis and identification with institutionalized Marxism.
2. A new model of socialist society: The New Left was convinced that socialism must not be restricted to political and social revolution, seizure of power, and nationalization of the means of production. Rather, it must eliminate the alienation felt by the individual human being in everyday life, recreation, and family, as well as in sexual and societal relationships.
3. A new transformation strategy: 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 on an anticipatory and experimental basis by creating new cultural ideals, applying them in subcultures and testing them as alternatives within existing institutions.
4. 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 the action to change the individuals taking part in it.
5. A 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: the new (skilled) working class, the young intelligentsia, and the social fringe groups.

The interrelationship of individual and collective emancipation, social and cultural criticism, and cultural and social revolution inherent in the thought of the New Left gave rise to the internal tension in the movement of 1968. It also explains the plethora of categories with which researchers label the movement as the expression of a generational conflict, as neo-

11 Gilcher-Holley, *Phantastie an die Macht*, 44–104.

Marxist and antibureaucratic, or as a movement of cultural revolution or sexual emancipation. Its overarching social utopia combined the 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 "postmaterialistic," and it represented a transition between the "old" and "new" social movements.

The dazzling diversity that characterized the social movements in 1968 was magnified by the different trends in each country. By cutting the ties that bound the battle for emancipation to the proletariat, the "young intelligentsia" acquired a mandate to intervene in social conflicts as the new "revolutionary subject." Because of its loose form of organization and emphasis on external mobilization, the New Left attached itself to many causes, from the antinuclear and disarmament movements to civil rights and anticolonialism. In the United States, for example, the student movement, antiwar movement, and the civil rights movement acted together in 1968.<sup>12</sup> In Germany, the players included the *Ostermarsch* movement (campaign for nuclear disarmament), the opposition to the Emergency Laws, and the student movement.<sup>13</sup> Only in France did an interaction between students and workers take place that year. University protests spread to industry, producing the largest general strike in French history.<sup>14</sup> For a short time, it seemed possible that the New Left would become a broad social movement that would revolutionize the parties of the Old Left "from the bottom up." It was also thought that the student movement would gain political influence through the parallel actions of the student and worker movements.

12 On developments in the United States, see James Miller, *From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago* (New York, 1987); Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York, 1989); Ronald Fraser et al., *1968: A Student Generation in Revolt: An International Oral History* (New York, 1988).  
13 On developments in Germany, see Karl A. Otto, *Vom Ostermarsch zur APO: Geschichte der ausparlamentarischen Opposition in der Bundesrepublik* (Frankfurt am Main, 1977); Karl A. Otto, *APO: Die ausparlamentarische Opposition in Quellen und Dokumenten (1960-1970)* (Cologne, 1989); Lothar Rolke, *Protestbewegungen in der Bundesrepublik: Eine analytische Sozialgeschichte des politischen Widerstands* (Cologne, 1987); Heinz Bude and Martin Kohli, eds., *Radikalisierte Aufklärung: Studentenbewegung und Soziologie in Berlin 1965 bis 1970* (Weinheim, 1989).

14 On developments in France, see Touraine, *Le Communisme utopique*; Edgar Morin, Claude Lefort, and Jean-Marc Couday, *Le Communisme utopique*; Laurent Joffrin, *Mai 68: Histoire des événements* (Paris, 1988); Geneviève Dreyfus-Armand and Laurent Gervereau, eds., *Mai 68: Les mouvements étudiants en France et dans le monde* (Nanterre, 1988); Alain Delale and Gilles Ragache, *La France de 68* (Paris, 1978); Adrien Dansette, *Mai 1968* (Paris, 1971). For an overview of the divergent interpretations of May 1968, see Michèle Zancarini, "Les Interpretations de mai 68," in IHTP, ed., *Les Années 68: Evénements, cultures politiques et modes de vie*, Lettre d'information no. 10 (Feb. 1996): 4-23.

## III

In France, the formation of the 1968 movement began later than in other developed nations. One can observe a continual process of mobilization in the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany beginning in 1964 and 1965, respectively. In contrast, although there were scattered protests in France (for example, criticism of the universities in Paris in 1964 and in Strasbourg in 1966, as well as protests against the war in Vietnam), no direct link can be drawn between these smaller protests and the protest movement of 1968. The French movement did not start until international developments had reached their peak. Within a few weeks, however, it had caught up with the other movements in terms of mobilization and then surpassed the German and American protest movements in its political explosiveness.<sup>15</sup> 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?

*Thesis No. 1:* The mobilization of the student movement in France happened spontaneously as the result of an essentially self-generating process of action.

To be sure, the French student movement emerged against the backdrop of a general crisis in the university system that directly affected the learning environment, career outlook, and life prospects of the students. But it was more than just a reaction to these deficiencies.<sup>16</sup> Since the mid-1960s, the student union (Union nationale des étudiants de France or UNEF) had been criticizing the structural weaknesses of the university and of government reform plans without garnering much support from the students. The student strike UINEF helped to organize in Nanterre at the beginning of the 1967-8 academic year faded away after a few weeks. The mobilization process which 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 "upset" university operations by breaking rules, violating taboos, and committing other provocations.

15 On the mobilization, see Gilcher-Holley, *Phantasm an die Macht*, 105-269.

16 On the formation of the student movement and its cognitive orientation and politicization, see Jean-Pierre Duteuil, "Les Groupes d'extrême-gauche à Nanterre," in Dreyfus-Armand and Gervereau, eds., *Mai 68*; Daniel Cohn-Bendit and Gabriel Cohn-Bendit, *Linksradikalismus: Geauhtler gegen die Altkrankheit des Kommunismus* (Hanburg, 1968); on the core political groups, see Hervé Hanon and Pierre Rotman, eds., *Génération*, vol. 1: *Les Années de rêve*, vol. 2: *Les Années de poudre* (Paris, 1987-8); Richard Gombin, *Le Projet révolutionnaire: Eléments d'une sociologie des événements de mai-juin* (Paris, 1969).

The student groups that initiated the protests, the "Enragés" and the "Movement of March 22," made explicit reference to the intellectual leaders of the New Left, or at least were influenced by their writings and viewpoints.<sup>17</sup> In particular, the writings of the "international situationists," that is, the group involved with *Socialisme ou Barbarie* and *Arguments*, played a large part in their thinking. Not only their strategies of action (direct, provocative, situative) but also their self-perception (antidogmatic, antibureaucratic, antiorganizational, and antiauthoritarian) fit into the philosophy of the New Left. Both groups focused on the university — the Enragés to abolish it, the Movement of March 22 to transform it into a "critical university" — as a means of action and a starting point for the radical transformation of society. They perceived themselves as the core movement of such a change. Their success in mobilizing large numbers of students was at first limited to the Nanterre campus. It might easily have subsided, as had the UNEF strike and other student protests before it, had the student protest not spilled over to the Sorbonne, which was responsible for disciplinary actions against eight students from Nanterre. Repressive measures were then used against the small core of student activists at the Sorbonne (in particular, 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 a chain reaction of 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 dynamics of the actions brought more and more high school students and youths (and a few young workers) onto the side of the university students.

Within a week (from May 3 to 10), France had caught up with the developments in other Western nations. Within another twenty-four hours, the French student movement had surpassed the movements in the other countries. A large part of the organized working class showed solidarity with the students. What brought about the solidarity of French workers with the student movement?

*Thesis No. 2:* The student protest was conveyed to the workers by means of a "critical event" (Bourdieu).

In his book *Homo academicus*, Pierre Bourdieu develops a model that ascribes an innovative role and function to the "critical event" in the synchroniza-

tion of latent crises in different societal spheres. He thereby introduces a factor to the analysis of macrosociological structures and structural conflicts that "can definitely involve an element of chance." However, he also adheres to the theory of structural determination of events because events lead to the "critical moment" of general crisis only "if there exists a relationship of mutual, objective harmony between the agents experiencing crisis in one field that has reached the critical state and other agents endowed with similar dispositions produced by similar social conditions of existence (identity of condition)."<sup>18</sup> From his point of view, this independence within a larger dependence constitutes the "critical" historical event.

In France, the critical event that synchronized the perception of different social groups was the Night of Barricades (May 10–11) during which students and youths occupied an enclave in the Latin Quarter after a peaceful demonstration. In a spontaneous and playful manner, they started to build barricades within the occupied area. They were determined to leave this area only after the government had met the following demands: (1) the release of students arrested during a protest march, (2) reopening of the Sorbonne, which had been closed by order of the university president and was being guarded by police, and (3) withdrawal of police from the Latin Quarter. The barricading of Paris during the night of May 10–11 was a historic allusion to barricades of the Paris Commune in 1871 and the liberation of Paris from German occupation in 1944. Erected by high school and university students, they 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 the subsequent police deployment was the student protest politicized by the media response, the public reaction, and the steps taken by the government and labor unions.

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

The government was in a tight spot, and a reaction was expected. It was faced with a loss of legitimacy, regardless of whether the authorities reacted in a lenient or in a repressive manner. Finding itself under increasing

<sup>17</sup> For a history of "The Enraged," see René Vienne, *Wütende und Situationisten in der Bewegung der Besetzungen* (Hamburg, 1977).

<sup>18</sup> Bourdieu, *Homo academicus*, 276.

pressure to act, it lacked a convincing plan of action and decision-making capabilities. In the prime minister's absence the cabinet ministers had difficulty coordinating their actions. After mediation attempts failed during the night, the ministers resorted to an interpretation of the situation that was strongly influenced by the president's opinion of how to deal with the situation. They started to see the demonstrating students as rebels and the demonstration for the three demands as an *émeute* (riot). After much hesitation, the minister of the interior had the barricades removed by police and security force troops in the early morning hours of May 11. The brutality of the police force (described by *Der Spiegel* magazine as a "battle without mercy") led to vociferous and immediate public protest. A critical event had occurred.

The Night of Barricades was neither determined by sociostructural factors nor planned by the groups or individuals involved. Rather, the critical event was a sequence of, more accurately, a coincidence of uncoordinated decisions by the government, situational decisions by individual groups within the movement, and repressive behavior on the part of the police. In other words, it resulted from contingent situations, creating an entirely new situation. This critical event disturbed the routine of everyday life and the normal unquestioned order of things. 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 and its demands — not only in word but also in deed. To protest repression and emphasize the students' demands, the labor unions called for rallies and a 24-hour general strike. There was nothing more to it — at least at this point.

The situation changed, however, after a second political intervention. Returning from Afghanistan on the evening of May 11, Prime Minister Georges Pompidou granted all of 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 this critical event into Bourdieu's critical moment.<sup>19</sup>

*Thesis No. 3:* The workers' mobilization process followed the same action strategy as the student movement. Common values united the parallel movements. The cognitive orientation of the New Left served as the integrative element of the socially heterogeneous movements.

<sup>19</sup> On the model of the critical moment, see Ingrid Gilcher-Holey, "Die Nacht der Barrikaden: Eine Fallstudie zur Dynamik sozialen Protests," in Neidhardt, *Öffentlichkeit*, 375–92.

Again, the movement began with a single action by a small, active minority. On May 14, after the 24-hour general strike organized by the unions, young workers in an airplane factory in the vicinity of Nantes refused to go back to work. Instead, they occupied the factory workshops, sealed off the plant, and took the plant manager into custody. With their actions, they were following the lead not only of the students in Paris, who had occupied the Sorbonne just after it reopened a day earlier, but also of agitation by the *Force Ouvrière* union in the Loire Atlantique region, with its anarchosyndicalist orientation. For some time, the representatives of that union had promoted direct action as a means of achieving worker demands — without success. Only under this specific sociopolitical constellation in the days between May 11 and 13 did this strategy succeed. The occupation of a provincial factory, barely noticed at first by the 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.<sup>20</sup> What was their motivation?

There was no economic crisis on the eve of the May events, so the spontaneous process of mobilization cannot be explained by structural economic factors. There were conflicts over distribution 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. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies, France in 1968 was a stable and crisis-resistant country.<sup>21</sup>

This latent dissatisfaction cannot be traced 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 a collective willingness to act and a manifest attitude of protest that could not be controlled even by union leaders. The success of the students in getting the government to agree to their demands served as a model. The horizon of possibilities also expanded for other groups. New forms of action increased their willingness to act. In a statement that can be consid-

<sup>20</sup> On the strike movement, see Pierre Dubois et al., *Grèves revendicatives ou grèves politiques: Acteurs, pratique, sens du mouvement de mai* (Paris, 1971).

<sup>21</sup> OECD, "Prospects in France After the Strikes," *Economic Outlook* 3 (1968): 52–69; I.N.S.E.E. (Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques), "La Situation et les perspectives dans l'industrie d'après les enquêtes effectuées par l'I.N.S.E.E. en juillet 1968," *Etudes Conjoncture: Revue mensuelle de l'I.N.S.E.E.*, supp. 8 (1968).

ered a typical illustration of the mood of labor at the time, one worker said, "If the government submitted to the students, why shouldn't it submit to us?"<sup>22</sup> A situation was created wherein anything was possible, or at least seemed to be.

The workers in state-owned industries triggered the strike movement. Among them, the young workers in particular were the driving force and activated the rest of the workforce. Their goal was to force the *Eiat 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 funneled a collective willingness to act without directing it toward a specific goal. For example, the occupation of factories could be (1) a means of exerting pressure on the government and industry in order to force them to negotiate or make concessions, (2) a way to demonstrate the independence of the local rank and file from the labor union apparatus dominated by the Old Left, or (3) the beginning of a comprehensive transformation in the structure of industry, business, and the economy based on either the anarchosynicalist 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 dynamics of the process of societal interaction, as had the goals of the student movement.

The initial demands of the strike committees were not fundamentally different from the requests the unions had made prior to May. But a social movement is more than its printed words. The general assemblies inside the occupied plants expressed a certain "creative unrest" (*effervescence créative*), calling not only for an increase in wages and reduction of working hours but also for structural changes within industry and business. The noncommunist French Democratic Workers Union (Confédération française et démocratique du travail or CFDT), the orientation of which was closest to that of the New Left, created a new term expressing the expectations of so many workers: *autogestion*.<sup>23</sup> Just two days after the first spontaneous strike, the new slogan *autogestion* gave the strike a new dimension. With its demand for *autogestion*, the CFDT was calling for (1) reforms in the management and decision-making structures of business and industry, (2) reduction of hierarchies and the concentration of power, and (3)

22 Philippe Gavi, "Des ouvriers parlent," *Les Temps Modernes* 265 (1968): 82-3.

23 It was the first time that the national office of the CFDT mentioned the term *autogestion* in an official statement. The internal debates can be traced back to 1963. On the concept of *autogestion*, see Pierre Cours-Salles, *La CFDT: Un passé porteur d'avenir. Pratiques syndicales et débats stratégiques, depuis 1946* (Paris, 1988); Pierre Rosanvallon, *L'Age de l'autogestion* (Paris, 1976); and Gesine Schwan, "Demokratischer Sozialismus zwischen Wohlfahrtsstaat und Selbstverwaltung," in Hannelore Horn et al., *Sozialismus in Theorie und Praxis. Festschrift für Richard Löwenthal* (Berlin, 1978).

opportunities for workers to release their creative potential through self-determination and self-administration. Although the institutional and legal details of how *autogestion* was to be developed and implemented remained unclear, the antihierarchical and antiauthoritarian 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 autogestion). It was a "communauté d'aspiration" (A community united by common endeavors, hopes, and expectations) that united the worker and student movements.<sup>24</sup>

*Thesis No. 4*: The Old Left used its organizational power to crush the action strategies and goal orientation of the New Left. The conflict was channeled into the institutionalized mechanisms of the collective bargaining system.

The communist-oriented General Workers Union (Confédération générale du travail or CGT) did not support *autogestion* as a goal of fundamental social change. It dismissed as a *formule creuse* (empty formula) the concept of *autogestion*, which was oriented primarily toward changing power and decision-making structures rather than the distribution of wealth.<sup>25</sup> The CGT fought the alliance that had been 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 derail this social movement, which had already paralyzed economic life. Between 7.5 million and 9 million French citizens were on strike, and the crisis had the potential of turning into a revolutionary situation; but the CGT made every effort to direct the protest into the orderly channel of a mediated settlement. As the driving force behind a hasty collective bargaining agreement with representatives of government and industry (the Grenelle agreements of May 27), the CGT de-escalated the social crisis using traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. For the time being, however, the CGT was unable to enforce its strategy and goals effectively at the grassroots level.

24 Albert Detraz et les militants de la CFDT, "Positions et action de la CFDT en mai 1968," *Syndicalisme*, supplement (1969).

25 See also Peter Jansen et al., *Gewerkschaften in Frankreich: Geschichte, Organisation, Programmatik* (Frankfurt am Main, 1986), 36.

The general assemblies of workers in the plants protested against the wage settlements. Work did not resume, but the strike movement remained under the control of the union even after Grenelle, despite the fact that the workers had refused to agree to the wage settlements. On the plant level as well as industry-wide, the unions initiated new negotiations to restructure labor relations and wage scales, while continuing to try to suppress spontaneous protest and direct it into institutionalized channels. The strike movement turned into a labor dispute, the heterogeneous demands of which were distributed among various commissions and other bodies, which recommended economically acceptable compromise solutions. The power structures within businesses and the economic order of society were no longer subjects of discussion. However, the ensuing dialogue between employers and the unions was the result of pressure by the strike movement, which had forced employers to the table for collective bargaining and made them willing to compromise. The Grenelle agreements represented the first time that French businesses officially recognized the labor unions in their plants. They guaranteed the freedom of union locals to engage in union activities on plant property, the right of union members to assemble, the right to post union announcements on plant bulletin boards, and the right to distribute union newspapers.<sup>26</sup> Thus, the position of unions in the plants improved as a result of the spontaneous strike movement.

Still, this did not bring French workers anywhere near the level of participation in industrial relations enjoyed by German workers. To be sure, co-determination, in the sense of the German union tradition, had not been a goal of the French unions, which believed it would narrow the scope of their action. The unions also dismissed the idea of institutionalizing labor relations with an agreement that both sides were bound to honor for a specified contract period. The catchword *amalgamation* expressed the sentiment of a minority, and it was never cast into a formal mold.

Only a few businesses tried to introduce self-governing structures. Most strikers supported a political solution to the social crisis. They considered their opponent to be not the *pouvoir patronal* but the Gaullist regime itself. They demanded a change in political power as a prerequisite for reforms of the social structure. This meant a shift in the goal orientation of the movement and in the means of conflict resolution. The unions paved the way for solutions but were at first unable to push them through. After the failure of the Grenelle agreements, they retreated from the stage, and the political parties took their place. The social movement entered a new arena

where, because of its spontaneous and antiparty character, it did not enjoy a firm structural foundation and for which its core groups were conceptually unprepared.

*Thesis No. 5:* The unintended consequences of the competing strategies of Prime Minister Pompidou and President de Gaulle led to a worsening of the political crisis. Pompidou's strategy was intended to pacify, depoliticize, and institutionalize the social conflicts, whereas de Gaulle's strategy was oriented toward mobilization, politicization, and plebiscitary preservation of power. As a result, the two strategies impeded each other.

The political establishment's options for reacting to such social movements can be said to have followed two alternative strategies: tolerance or repression. The strategy of tolerance implied recognition of the movement's interests and readiness to enter into a dialogue or negotiations, at least with the moderate factions of the movement. The strategy of repression, which rejected the movement as either unrealistic or illegitimate, defended the status quo by using police force to ban the organization and its activities. The two methods could be combined or applied alternately as they were by the government and president of France in May 1968. This strengthened the dynamics of the movement.

One reason that May 1968 in France became such a dramatic event was that the internal conflict between divergent strategies to cope with the conflict resulted in a power struggle between the holders of the two most important political offices — President de Gaulle and Prime Minister Pompidou. The bicentral political system of France, which was dependent on cooperation, was permanently damaged by their overt strategic differences and covert personal rivalry.

The policy of appeasement and accommodation followed by Pompidou immediately after his return from Kabul, Afghanistan, not only counteracted de Gaulle's position that "the state will not surrender" but also made it look ridiculous, as Raymond Aron has noted.<sup>27</sup> The power struggle between the two men escalated against the backdrop of the strike movement. Pompidou bet everything on the collective bargaining card, whereas de Gaulle dramatized the power struggle by announcing a referendum aimed at proving the public's confidence in him. Meanwhile, the whole political system started to shake.

The announcement of the referendum, and the inevitable politicization

26 Raymond Aron, *Erkenntnis und Verantwortung: Lebenserinnerungen* (Munich, 1985), 335–6.

27 Cited in Hamon and Rotman, eds., *Citation*, 555.



of the conflict that ensued, made it more difficult to achieve a socio-economic solution to the crisis through the conflict-regulating channels of collective bargaining. The protest was transferred into the political arena and offered critics of the Gaullist regime the chance to turn their claim of "Dix ans ça suffit" into a political decision. The failure of the Grenelle agreements and the anticipated defeat of de Gaulle in the referendum created a situation in which the opposition parties in parliament stood a realistic chance of succeeding in their plan to form a "transitional government."

*Thesis No. 6:* The noncommunist New Left was unsuccessful in its attempt to use the situation to define its own political standpoint.

The New Left could not bridge the gap between its self-perception as a movement that mobilized by means of action and was committed to the autonomy of the grass roots and the increasing pressure to coordinate actions, organize divergent interests, and direct them toward a specific political goal. It developed no political plan of action and therefore disintegrated into two factions. One faction defended the grassroots mobilization of action groups united in a network with nationwide coordination based on a democratic model. The other supported the establishment of a new left-wing party. Only a minority acknowledged — and then too late — the option offered by Pierre Mendès-France and the United Socialist Party (Parti socialiste unifié or PSU), a small party influenced by the ideas of the New Left, to integrate representatives of the movement into a transitional government and to organize new elections. Twenty years later, Daniel Cohn-Bendit said that they had had only one chance and that was Mendès France: "We ourselves should have proposed elections and put forward the name of Mendès-France."<sup>28</sup>

At the end of May 1968, however, the Communist Party (Parti communiste français or PCF) took a stand against precisely this opportunity. Just as the CGT had mobilized against the concept of *auto-gestion*, the PCF now used its organizational strength to prevent a transitional government under Mendès-France. Even the united left under François Mitterrand, the Federation of the Democratic and Socialist Left (Fédération de la Gauche Démocratique Socialiste or FGDS), supported him only conditionally. Differences between the New and Old Left prevented the formation of uni-

fied left-wing opposition to the Gaullist regime. They missed the chance for a change in power provided by the dramatic political situation at the end of May. The great parallel action of student and worker movements, which had shaken French society and rocked the Gaullist regime, now dissolved. The unifying ideas of the New Left were too weak; the organized interests of the Old Left prevailed.

*Thesis No. 7:* By abandoning the referendum and deciding to hold new parliamentary elections, the government reestablished a strategy of action based on the institutions of the Fifth Republic.

The new elections transferred the sociopolitical conflict into the traditional channels of the competitive democratic party system. The political and social crisis quickly subsided. The old parties and established interest groups dominated the election campaign while the masses of mobilized youths were disenfranchised, since the voting age was twenty-one. The political factions in the bourgeois camp emerged from the crisis stronger than before. The transfer of power, which had seemed possible and very close at the height of the crisis, did not take place. In the view of the PCF, the election results supported their analysis that the social crisis of May 1968 was not a revolutionary situation. Responsibility for the defeat was assigned by *L'Humanité* even before the votes were counted. René Andrieu wrote in his editorial the day after the first ballot that it would be of great historical interest to know exactly who had taken the initiative to build the barricades in the streets of Paris. "Chaque barricade, chaque voiture incendiée apportait des dizaines de milliers de voix au parti Gaulliste, voilà la vérité" (Each barricade, each burning car brought tens of thousands of votes to the Gaullist party; that's the truth!).<sup>29</sup> Only the statement by the PSU mentioned that all of the problems voiced by the social movement of May 1968 still existed and awaited solutions.

#### IV

The May movement in France was a spontaneous, unforeseen development. The success of the effort to mobilize large numbers of people was extraordinary, and the shock to the political system was considerable. Nonetheless, it is difficult to clearly identify its effects. In the following dis-

28 See *L'Humanité*, June 24, 1968, 1.

29 François-Georges Dreyfus, *Histoires des gauches en France, 1940-1974* (Paris, 1975), 308.

cussion, I examine four aspects that may be viewed as the results of the movement.

#### *Effects on the Political System*

Researchers on social movements assume that in order for a movement's central concerns to become part of the mainstream political agenda they have to be accepted and adopted by intermediary groups in the political decision-making process. Such a transfer did not occur in France, at least in the immediate aftermath of the events.

The immediate effects of the May movement on the political parties included the breakup of the tactical consensus between the FGDS and the Communist Party as well as the disintegration of the FGDS, which was the big loser in May 1968. The FGDS not only lost its votes and mandate but also its ability to maintain internal integration and form external coalitions. The Radical Party left the *Fédération* because it felt that the tactical liaison with the Communists sought by Mitterrand was no longer viable after the May events and the coup in Prague (August 1968).<sup>30</sup> The socialist party, the French Section of the Workers' International (Section française de l'international ouvrière or SFIO), also distanced itself from Mitterrand and his plans, criticizing in particular his high-handed decision of May 28, 1968.<sup>31</sup> The disintegration of the *Fédération* and the consequences thereof became especially obvious in the presidential elections of 1969. Unlike four years earlier, the Left no longer challenged with one candidate but with four competing candidates. Gaston Defferre ran for the FGDS, Jacques Duclos for the PC, Michel Rocard for the PSU, and Alain Krivine for the Trotskyites. Together, the Left received only 30.3 percent of the votes on the first ballot. Of these, 21.5 percent voted for the Communist candidate and 3.7 percent for the PSU candidate. Gaston Defferre got just 5 percent and Alain Krivine slightly more than 1 percent. They were therefore unable to nominate a candidate for the second ballot. The race was decided between the Gaullist candidate, Georges Pompidou, and Alain Poher, who was nominated by the political center and supported by the Radical Party (Parti radical), which had separated from the united left. With 57.6 percent of

the vote, Pompidou surpassed even the victory of de Gaulle in 1965 (54.5 percent), thus consolidating the political power of the Gaullists even after de Gaulle had left politics.

The debacle of the presidential election accelerated the internal transformation process within the SFIO, which reconstituted itself in July 1969 under new leadership as the Socialist Party (Parti socialiste or PS). In the following years, the PS was able to integrate the noncommunist Left. In 1971, the Convention des institutions républicaines under the leadership of Mitterrand joined the PS, as did a large part of the PSU in 1973-4 after the defection of Rocard. The concept of *intégration* served as an integrative umbrella internally and as a distinguishing feature externally. The new Socialist Party, which had already come out in favor of cooperation with the Communists in 1969, drafted an election program together with the PCF in 1972. Setting aside ideological differences, it contained a list of reform measures and thus added a pragmatic political dimension to the tactical election coalition between the FGDS and the PCF (1965-8).<sup>32</sup> The formal rapprochement of socialists and communists following the divisions within the Left after the May events first proved effective in the presidential elections of 1974. Mitterrand received 49.2 percent of the vote on the second ballot, just barely losing to the candidate of the Independent Republicans and Gaullists, Giscard d'Estaing (50.6 percent). Compared to 1965, when Mitterrand garnered 43.7 percent of the vote against de Gaulle, the increase of 5 percent in nine years may seem minimal, but it signaled a trend that was to lead to a change in power in 1981. The resurgence in the socialists' strength after their relative and absolute defeat in 1968-9 was supported by a new generation of voters, those who were between seventeen and twenty years old in 1968. An opinion poll by the French Society of Public Opinion (Société française d'enquête par sondage or SOFRES) in 1974 showed that most of the young voters had a positive attitude toward the May events. They mostly supported the Socialist Party.<sup>33</sup> The public celebration that followed Mitterrand's election victory in 1981, buoyed by the feeling that a new France would now emerge, was reminiscent of the euphoria of May 1968 - a feeling of awakening and the projection of a new political perspective. Two years later, however, the socialist government had to change course again. Economic factors set limits on the hopes for a new society.

30 On the events of May 28, 1968, see Glicher-Holley, *Phantasmie an die Macht*, chap. 5, on the critique of the SFIO, see Philippe Alexandre, *Le Duel de Gaulle-Pompidou* (Paris, 1970); and *L'Express*, no. 888, July 15-21, 1968, 8-9.

31 See Wolfgang Jäger, "Die sozialistische Partei und die kommunistische Partei Frankreichs," in Dieter Oberdorfer, ed., *Sozialistische und kommunistische Parteien*, vol. 1: *Stalander* (Opladen, 1978), 65ff.

32 Jérôme Jaffré, "A Preliminary Note on French Political Generations," *European Journal of Political Research* 5, no. 2 (1977): 151.

33 Niklas Luhmann, *Universität als Milieu: Kleine Schriften* (Bielefeld, 1992), 152-3.

*Effects on the New Left*

The May movement in France clearly demonstrated the dilemma of the New Left as a social movement. The uniquely dynamic mobilization it provoked was a challenge to the government, the political parties, and the unions, yet the New Left as a movement was unable to prevail against established parties and organizations. The New Left had been defeated by the institutions of the Old Left. The reasons for the failure of the New Left lay not in its values but in its refusal to give those values a permanent structure for action and an institutional base. Therefore, "power to the imagination" remained a vital program that fascinated and mobilized individuals but was unsuccessful in gaining power because power is based on entirely different organizational and decision-making premises than is the mobilization of the imagination. The internal tension and limited effectiveness of the New Left were due to the fact that it could not assume power without destroying itself.

With its strategy of self-organization through action, the New Left rocked the structures of authority, temporarily paralyzed the economy, and plunged the political system of France into what everyone involved perceived was a serious crisis. However, as successful as its strategy was in the initial phase, and as effortlessly as its actions managed to topple established structures, the New Left was unable to maintain the dynamics of its mobilization strategy. Mobilization by means of action is always a short-lived process. Permanent mobilization is impossible without a stabilization of the mobilized resources. Stabilization of the movement, however, required organization. Antiauthoritarian and antihierarchical in its values and practice, the New Left refused to establish permanent organizational structures.

It established no functional, democratically legitimated, and controlled leadership within the movement, because it believed that organizational structures would automatically lead to oligarchy. Therefore, it relied on the spontaneity and creativity of the grass roots to determine independently and autonomously the movement's goals, methods, and forms of action through a process of continual discussion and interaction. The volunteerism and activism of the movement released great energy and imagination. Individuals were changed by the actions, but the institutions of society were not. As Niklas Luhmann states laconically in his analysis of the movement of 1968, "Society does not have an address. Whatever one wants from it must be addressed to organizations."<sup>34</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Rainer Paris, "Der kurze Aem der Provokation," *Kölnner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 41 (1989):33-52.

Focusing, internally and externally, on the autonomy and authenticity of the movement, the New Left as a social movement rejected political cooperation with intermediary organizations and developed no ability to build coalitions with potential partners in the political establishment. Without alliances, defined as the coordinated collaboration of autonomous but convergent political powers, no movement can successfully accomplish its goals. By failing to establish a network of potential allies, the New Left blocked its chances for mediation and sacrificed political influence.

Despite its success at mobilization, the New Left, as a collective agent for mobilization, lost its initiative. Within the movement, antiauthoritarian elements were infiltrated by authoritarian left-wing cadre groups. Foremost among these were the Maoists, who shared the New Left's opposition to Gaullism and the Communist Party, but not its rejection of the orthodox model of democratic centralism. The "short breath of provocation," that is, the structural weakness of the New Left as a movement that mobilized by means of action campaigns, left the door wide open for the hierarchically organized cadre groups.<sup>35</sup> Their influence increased in proportion to the decline in mobilizing power of the New Left. After May 1968, they took the place of the New Left movement without carrying on its legacy. To the extent that they became militarized and used terrorist methods, they destroyed the "charisma of ideas."

The self-exclusion of the New Left from the process of political coordination of interests led to an isolation of the movement and a renunciation of the opportunity to influence the political process. The opportunity to share in the power along with Mendes France was discussed but not pursued. They did not even consider cooperating with a left-wing alliance led by Mitterrand. The imagination and energy of the New Left's core groups were directed not toward participation in making politically feasible changes but toward the ideal of forming an autonomous left-wing movement. This movement would gain strength by weakening the Old Left, breaking down its organizational power, and causing its members to reaffiliate by means of spontaneous actions.

*Effects on the Structure of Business and Industry*

Being anticapitalistic and at the same time believing in economic growth, the New Left still perceived the problems of society primarily as problems

<sup>35</sup> Gesine Schwan, "Demokratischer Sozialismus zwischen Wohlfahrtsrat und Selbstverwaltung," in Horn et al., *Sozialismus in Theorie und Praxis*, 584.

of distribution, that is, material equalization of disadvantages and abolition of personal inequality and the asymmetry in human relations. It sought to achieve equal opportunity by expanding participation rights and chances for economic partnership. It concentrated on the control of management power through worker councils but did not develop a new model for industrial organizations. Anti-institutional in its orientation, it advocated development of the power to counter existing institutions. Yet the action-oriented power it created did not produce a stable counter-system.

The possibility of encroachment onto the Old Left's organizational and recruiting territory was seen at the beginning of the spontaneous plant occupations, but the New Left did not succeed in holding the workers permanently with its actions. The plant occupations did not mean a change in industrial structures, or in the ownership or authority structures of the plants. In the end, the unions' strategy of material claims and equalization of disadvantages prevailed over the concept of redistributing leadership and decision-making powers advanced in the *antigestion* model but not given institutional form in 1968.

By the time the election campaign began, if not before, the New Left had succumbed in the political arena to the organizational power of the parties of the Old Left. After the collective bargaining of Grenelle failed, the Old Left had been unchallenged in formulating alternative action strategies in the environment of political crisis exacerbated by the continuing strike. Its willingness to participate in the new parliamentary elections pulled the rug out from under all hopes of a political opposition constituted by direct democratic methods, strengthened the power of unions as intermediary negotiating partners, and contributed to demobilization of the strike movement and stabilization of the political order. That the intermediary mechanisms continued to function, even under the exceptional conditions created by the general strike, was an important reason for the resolution of the grave crisis of May 1968.

None of the parties adopted the central idea of *antigestion* during the election campaign. It took time to accomplish the programmatic implementation and dissemination of the idea, which conveyed the hope "of eliminating alienation and exploitation, as well as hierarchy and power in general, wage labor, and the division of labor, in short, the realization of true democracy."<sup>36</sup> It did not begin to take root until the 1970s, after the concept had been discursively and theoretically developed within the

CFDT.<sup>37</sup> After the Socialist Party united with the Convention des institutions républicains in 1972, it included *antigestion* in its platform, entitled "Changer la vie." Two wings developed within the party, a radical and a moderate faction, each of which had its own interpretation of the *antigestion* concept.<sup>38</sup> Finally, even the party that had dismissed the concept as a *formule creuse* in May 1968, namely, the Communist Party, implicitly adopted it in 1977-8. However, this did not lead to a change in their concept of socialism.

#### *Effects on New Lifestyles*

The stability of the institutional system steered the impulses of the New Left toward subculture experimentation with new lifestyles and cultural forms that dealt with the institutional problems by withdrawing from them.

Being both individualistic and socialist, the New Left rebelled against the alienation in the realm of production and in everyday life. In the struggle against alienation, they broke taboos, norms, and traditional values. They violated rules in order to provoke and to delegitimize the 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 the origins of the New Left, but the political program gave way increasingly to a cult of individual affliction. Thus, the awakening of 1968 ended up for many people as the shaping of alternative lifestyles, as the individualization of life's opportunities and risks, but also as political retreat into the private realm.

Individual emancipation based on eliminating the alienation in everyday life and in personal relationships was inherent in the strategy of the New Left. However, its concept of transformation did not end with individual self-actualization but included, as a *sine qua non*, 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) that blocked individual actions by means of the power wielded over human beings by the need for consumer goods and the

<sup>37</sup> See party congress of Paris in 1975, cited in Jäger, "Die sozialistische Partei und die kommunistische Partei Frankreichs," in Oberndörfer, ed., *Sozialistische und kommunistische Parteien*, 93-100.

<sup>38</sup> See Wolfgang Jäger, "Gewerkschaften und Linksparteien in Frankreich," in Hans Rühle and Hans-Joachim Veen, eds., *Gewerkschaften in den Demokratien Westeuropas*, vol. 1: *Frankreich, Italien, Spanien, Portugal, Griechenland* (Paderborn, 1983), 63-7.

dependence on hierarchically organized bureaucracies that governs 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 society but also the modern way of life and the political, economic, social, and cultural structures that produced it. This is the source of the fascination that surrounds the events of May 1968 in France.