May '68

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List of acronyms and political organisations

1986 movement
Student movement protesting against the reforms to the university system proposed by the then Minister for Higher Education Alain Devaquet. They were concerned that the proposal would mean entry selection, an increase in tuition fees, and a double standard university system. Jacques Chirac, the President, ultimately withdrew the bill and Devaquet resigned.

1995 movement
1995 saw the most significant strikes since May’68. They were held in protest against the then Prime Minister Alain Juppé’s plan to reform the retirement system, pensions and social security. These strikes affected public transport, as well as major public administrations (the postal service, telecom services, electricity and gas, national education, hospitals, finances etc.). At its height, the movement attracted two million demonstrators.

ACO
Action Catholique Ouvrière. (Catholic Workers Action). The ACO is an organisation that aims to bring Catholicism to the workers through grassroots evangelism. It was founded in 1950.

AEAR
Association des écrivains et artistes révolutionnaires (Revolutionary Artists and Writers Association). This association of Communist writers and artists was founded as the French section of the International Union of Revolutionary Writers established by the Soviet Comintern in 1930.

Antifa
Action Antifasciste (Antifascist action) This is an extreme-left current of “autonomous” collectives that organise demonstration, reflection and sometimes violent action against fascism.

Attac
Association pour la Taxation des Transactions financières et pour l’Action Citoyenne (Association for the Taxation of financial Transactions and Citizen’s Action) is an activist network that opposes neo-liberal dominance in globalisation.

CAL
Comités d’Action Lycéen (High-school Action Committees) Committees based in secondary schools (Lycées) responsible for organising demonstrations, barricading and sit-ins. They played an important role in May 68 in mobilising younger students.

CFDT
Confédération française démocratique du travail (French Democratic Confederation of Labour). One of the five major national trade unions in France, it is left-wing, and was born of the secularisation of the CFTC (French Confederation of Christian Workers) in 1964.
CGT  Confédération générale du travail (General Confederation of Labour). One of the five major national trade unions in France, with historical links to the Communist party.

CLEOP  Comité de liaison étudiants ouvriers paysans (Student workers peasants' liaison committee)

CPE  Contrat première embauche (First employment contract). In Spring 2008, then Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin attempted to push through the introduction of an employment contract specifically for young people that would have seen made it easier to fire a young employee in the first two years. It provoked widespread opposition and demonstrations particularly among young people. The government ultimately withdrew the proposal.

CVB  Comité Vietnam de Base (Rank and File Vietnam Committees). Radical grassroots action groups aiming to raise awareness about the situation in Vietnam through posters, placards, brochures, and selling the “Vietnam Courrier” newspaper in marketplaces.

CVN  Comité Vietnam National (National Vietnam Committee) Trotskyist committees (linked to the JCR and more visible than the CVB due to meetings that attracted public and media attention.

DAL  Droit au logement (Right to housing) A non-profit organization created in 1990 to defend housing rights for the homeless and those in poor housing, in the name of the legal right to housing inscribed by French law.

EE  The Ecole Emancipée (Emancipated School) movement claims to be the oldest current in French unionism, dating back to 1910. More recently, it has been an important current in the FEN teachers' union. It combines extreme-left positions with alternative pedagogy (Freinet) in the goal of changing society through the school system.

FEN  Fédération de l'éducation nationale (Federation for National Education) A federation of teaching unions that existed between 1929 and 2000. There were a number of factions within it, particularly “Unity independence and democracy,” close to the Socialists, “Unity and Action,” close to the Communists, and the “Emancipated School” close to the far left.

FGEL  Fédération des groupes d'études de lettres (Federation of Humanities Study Groups) Groups that brought together activists from the UNEF student union particularly at the Sorbonne. Contributed to the formation of the MAU.

FGERI  Fédération des groupes d'études et de recherches institutionnelles (Federation of institutional relations study groups). A collective of
interdisciplinary research groups in different disciplines, inspired by Félix Guattari’s approach in the experimental clinic La Borde. It was founded in 1964 and in 1967 it was replaced by an association named the Centre d’étude, de recherche et de formation institutionnelles (CERFI), which still exists today.

Francas Fédération Nationale des Francas (The national federation of Francas)

A popular education non-profit youth organisation founded in 1944, designed to complement the school system through holiday programmes, and out of school hours activities, in order to provide opportunities for children from all backgrounds and thus work towards social justice.

FSU Fédération Syndicale Unitaire (Unitary Union Federation). This is one of the major unions in the education and public sectors today. It was formed in 1992 out of a schism within the FEN.

FUA Front universitaire antifasciste (Antifascist University Front). Founded in reaction to the putsch in Algiers in 1961, this group was organized by Trotskyist students from the Sorbonne, federating various antifascist action committees among high school and university students that had been set up since the 1950s. It advocated radical opposition to the extreme-right, including the use of violence. It paved the way for the JCR that would emerge in 1966.

GP Gauche prolétarienne (Proletarian Left) A Mao-spontex movement established in 1968, inspired by the May 22 anti-authoritarian movement and the UJC(ml), when these two organisations were banned by government decree in 1968.

JAC Jeunesse Agricole catholique (Rural Catholic Youth) Founded in 1929, initially intended to evangelise rural and farming milieus, it also allowed farmers to organise themselves professionally (health insurances, cooperatives, unions). It was replaced by the MRJC in 1965.

JC La Jeunesse communiste (Communist Youth) is the political youth group of the French Communist Party.

JCR Jeunesse communiste révolutionnaire (Communist Revolutionary Youth). Born of the expulsion of “entryist” far-leftists from the UEC in 1965. Involved in the anti-Vietnam war committees, high-school action committees (CAL), and antifascism. They were also motivated by anti-colonialism and internationalism. JCR activists were very much involved in the March 22 Movement, and on the barricades and in confrontations during May ’68. It was officially disbanded by government decree on June 12, 1968 as part of the law against radical and armed political groups.
JEC  Jeunesse étudiante chrétienne (Young Christian Students) The group originated in France but is now a worldwide movement. It encourages Christian students to associate social responsibility and faith. During the 1960s the JEC criticised France's opposition to Algerian independence and the use of torture.

JOC  Jeunesse ouvrière chrétienne (Young Christian Workers) Originating in Belgium in the 1920s, this movement spread to a number of countries including France. The goal was to reconcile the Church with the industrial workers of the world, and to bring Catholicism to the working classes.

Larzac  The fight for Larzac was a ten-year long protest movement which began with farmers opposing an extension to a military base on the Larzac plateau (in the south of France). From 1973 it attracted support from a much wider group of activists, with rallies in 1974 numbering up to 100,000. The movement became a symbol of wider resistance to the Pompidou government and ended in 1981 when François Mitterrand announced the project would be abandoned.

LCR  Ligue communiste révolutionnaire (Communist Revolutionary League) A Trotskyist political party in France, it was the French division of the Fourth International. It was formed after the JCR was banned in 1968. It published a weekly newspaper called "Rouge" (Red). It officially abolished itself in 2009 to form the New Anticapitalist Party.

Lip  The Lip factory was a watch and clock company that was shut down in the late 1960s due to financial problems. After strikes and factory sit-ins, the factory was taken over by workers as a project in workers' self-management in 1973. The factory was liquidated again in 1976 which led to a second round of protests.

LO  Lutte ouvrière (Workers' Struggle) A Trotskyist political party. Due to tensions between this group and the PCF, the LO (and its predecessor Voix Ouvrière, VO, Workers' Voice) adopted semi-clandestine tactics to distribute bulletins in factories. The LO was established after the VO was banned in the wake of May '68. It continues to run presidential candidates today.

March 22 movement  A student movement that began at the University of Nanterre on March 22, 1968 and led to a prolonged sit-in of the administration building. It was led by Daniel Cohn-Bendit, among others, and brought together anarchists, situationists, and Trotskyists. Based both on opposition to the Vietnam War, demand for greater everyday autonomy among students, and an end to sex-segregation in dorms, it
was one of the key elements that led to the events of May '68. It was also banned in the presidential decree of June 1968.

**MAU**  
Mouvement d'action universitaire (University Action Movement). Created by activists from the FGEL at the Sorbonne which felt that traditional union structures were no longer appropriate after the March 22 movement. It attempted to provide a unified framework for immediate action, in order to move beyond traditional organisational structures. They sought to move from "a critique of politics to critical politics."

**MLAC**  
Mouvement pour la liberté de l'avortement et de la contraception (Movement for free access to abortion and contraception). Created in 1973, this organisation aimed to legalise abortion in France. It was dissolved in 1975 after the Veil law legalised abortion.

**MLF**  
Mouvement de libération des femmes (Women's liberation movement) Formed in the wake of the American Women's Lib movement and May '68, this movement aims to gain access to reproductive rights for women, as well as the fight against misogyny and all forms of oppression of women.

**MRJC**  
Mouvement rural de jeunesse chrétienne (Rural Christian Youth Movement) A movement run by young Christians aged between 13 and 16 years old. It claims to be motivated by goals of social justice and equality. It is one of the only movements to be entirely run by and for young people.

**NRP**  
Nouvelle resistance populaire (New Popular Resistance) Created as the armed wing of the GP following the death of an activist killed during an intervention in a factory in 1972. However, the GP refused the use of violent action and the NRP remained nonviolent until the GP was banned in 1973.

**OCI**  
Organisation communiste internationale (International Communist Organisation) Born of the Trotskyist International Communist Party in the 1967, it was also banned in the wake of May '68 but later revived.

**OG**  
Opposition de Gauche (Left Opposition) An organisation founded by Félix Guattari around anti-psychiatry.

**Panthères Roses**  
(Pink Panthers) This is an international LGBT organisation created in Montreal in the 2000s. It fights against homophobia, sexism, transphobia, racism and classism.

**PCF**  
Parti communiste français (French Communist Party) The PCF remains a strong political force in France, although it has declined in recent decades. During May '68, the PCF supported the workers' strikes but were critical of the revolutionary student movements.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSU</td>
<td>Parti socialiste unifié (Unified Socialist Party)</td>
<td>This party was formed in 1960 through the union of two socialist autonomous parties. Unlike other socialist parties at the time, it supported the student movements during May ’68. As self-management was part of its platform it also supported the self-management movement at the Lip Factory.</td>
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<td>Ras l’Front</td>
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<td>This is an extreme-left antifascist network created in 1980 to combat the rise of the Front National in France.</td>
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<td>RESF</td>
<td>Réseau éducation sans frontières (Education without borders network)</td>
<td>A support network for undocumented immigrant families with children enrolled in French schools, as well as for young adult undocumented migrants.</td>
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<td>Scalp-Reflex</td>
<td>Section carrément anti-Le Pen (Completely anti-Le Pen Group)</td>
<td>An anti-fascist and anarchist group that developed during the 1980s and was associated with violent actions (or attempted actions). It published a revue called REFLEX which is an acronym for the French of ‘study network on fascism and the fight against xenophobia and the extreme right’.</td>
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<td>SGEN-CFDT</td>
<td>Syndicat Général de l’Education nationale – CFDT (National Education Sector General Union)</td>
<td>A union federation affiliated with the CFDT, drawing its membership base from all kinds of employees within the national education system (teachers, researchers, lecturers, but also ministerial personnel, librarians etc.)</td>
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<td>SNECMA</td>
<td>Snecma is a French public aeronautical company that has been subject to a number of strikes, with workers protesting against insufficient pay increases and dismissals of workers.</td>
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<td>SNI</td>
<td>Syndicat National des instituteurs (National Primary School Teachers Union)</td>
<td>Between 1920 and 1992 this was the main union for primary school teachers in France.</td>
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<td>Socialisme ou barbarie</td>
<td>(Socialism or Barbarianism)</td>
<td>A French non-Stalinist Marxist group founded in 1948 whose members included workers as well as intellectuals such as Cornelius Castoriadis, Guy Debord and many others. They produced a journal of the same name from 1949.</td>
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<td>SUD</td>
<td>Solidaires Unitaires Démocratiques (Solidarity, unity, democracy)</td>
<td>A trade union federation favouring progressive views and working with the anti-globalization movement, created in 1981. It operates unionism based on struggle, in opposition to the more reformist unions like the CFDT.</td>
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UCMLF  Union des communistes marxistes léninistes de France (Union of French Marxist Leninist Communists) A Maoist group between 1963 and 1985, it was opposed to other far-left groups of the time, including the GP.

UEC  Union des étudiants communistes (Union of Communist Students) Independent of but close to the PCF, particularly on student issues. In 1965 the UEC expelled a number of members, accused of being “entryists,” extreme-left activists, who were excluded for refusing to support François Mitterrand’s candidacy for the presidential election and for their support of Trotskyism. This expulsion led to the creation of the JCR (trotskiste) on one hand and the UJCml (maoïste) on the other.

UGE  Union des Grandes Ecoles. This union was established in 1974, independently of the major student union, UNEF, to specifically address students from the elite universities, management and business schools known in France as the Grandes Ecoles. After May ’68 the UGE was entirely integrated into UNEF.

UJCml  Union des jeunesses communistes marxistes-leninistes (Union of Communist Marxist-Leninist Youth) A maoist organisation born in 1966 of the expulsion of the maoïsts students of the UEC, the UJCml absorbed most of the UEC’s members at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris. Banned in 1968 by government decree, it led to the emergence of the GP.

UNEF  Union nationale des étudiants de France (French National Student Union) is the main national students’ union in France, working to present the interests of students in both the national and European political spheres.

Vie nouvelle  Vie Nouvelle (New Life) is an independent popular education organisation, founded in 1947. Its objective is to help its members achieve self-fulfilment while working to improve society. Its philosophy is based in Christian humanism and it works towards equality, justice, inclusion and an end to poverty.