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**Basic biographical data**

Name:	Alain Krivine
Other names (by-names, pseud. etc.):	H. Ancelot * Delphin * Éric * George * Tinville * Villetin
Date and place of birth:	July 10, 1941, Paris (France)
Date and place of death:	March 12, 2022, Paris (France)
Nationality:	French
Occupations, careers, etc.:	Assistant teacher, journalist, professional politician, party organizer (full-timer), presidential candidate, deputy of EU-parliament
Time of activity in Trotskyist movement:	Since adolescence (lifelong)

Biographical sketch

Alain Krivine was an "icon of May 68", for nearly half a century one of the most prominent exponents of French and European Trotskyism, the well-known founder, mastermind and mouthpiece of the *Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR)* [Revolutionary Communist League]; furthermore he belonged to the leadership cadre of the *Fourth International* for several decades.¹

Note: The present biographical sketch is based on information contained in Krivine's autobiography and in a variety of biographical sketches, appraisals and obituaries, which are all listed in our Selective preliminary bibliography below.

With regard to Alain Krivine's political itinerary, his family background undoubtedly played a special role. He came from a middle-class, well-ordered and child-rich family with solid prosperity, was born in Paris

[1] The *Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire* was founded as *Ligue Communiste (LC)* [Communist League] in April 1969, renamed *Front Communiste Révolutionnaire (FCR)* [Revolutionary Communist Front] in 1973 before eventually it became the *Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR)* [Revolutionary Communist League] in 1974, being one of the strongest and most influential sections of the *Fourth International (United Secretariat)*; in 2009, the LCR eventually dissolved and merged into a new organization named *Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste (NPA)* [New Anticapitalist Party], see below. – Our online available *Lubitz' Leon Trotsky Bibliography (LLTB)* (particularly its [chapter 7.5.07](#)) lists far more than a hundred books, articles, university works and other items about the history, role, significance and the leading figures of the LCR and its predecessors, respectively, and about the NPA as well as about the various other currents of French Trotskyism. We like to mention exemplarily the thorough monographs of H. Adam, F. Coustal, and J.-P. Salles, as well as the books, theses and analytical essays by F. Johsua, A. Artous, J. Birnbaum, C. Bourseiller, F. Charpier, M. Côme, J. Birnbaum, D. Coquema, V. Faburel, G. Filoche, C. Lafaye, J.-G. Lanuque, M. Lazar, J. Leclercq, P. Mobbs, G. Nick, S. Rizet, J.-L. Roche, J. Sonesi, P. Turpin, H. Weber, K. Yon. – For a short overview of the development (until 1985) of this current of French Trotskyism, which was decisively influenced by Krivine, see for example Alexander, Robert J.: *International Trotskyism 1929-1985, a documented analysis of the movement*, Durham and London 1991, pp. 390-398. – Lots of literature about the *Fourth International*, is listed within the framework of our *Lubitz' Leon Trotsky Bibliography (LLTB)*, too, particularly in its [chapters 7.2.01](#), and [7.2.04](#).

(15^e arr.) on July 10, 1941 as child of the dentist Pierre Léon Georges Krivine (1899-1977) and his wife Esther (b. Lautman, 1906-1981). Alain's paternal grand-father, Alter Meyer Krivine (1869-1946)², and his wife Soura Fraenkel (1867-?)³ were of Jewish-Ukrainian origin and had emigrated from the Russian Empire to France in order to escape anti-Semitic pogroms at the end of the 19th century⁴; Alain's maternal grand-parents were Sami Lautman (1870-1956), a Jew coming from that countryside of Romania which then was part of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, and his wife Claire Lajeunesse, a Parisian Jewess with Alsatian roots. Predominantly laicist, culturally interested and education-oriented, the Krivine family owned a large flat in the Rue Taitbout in the IX^e arrondissement of Paris. As a latecomer-child, Alain was sustainably shaped by the example of his older siblings of which he had five: four brothers and one sister⁵. Considering the potential danger in which particularly the Jewish population of France found itself after the occupation of the country by the German Wehrmacht, the father arranged at the end of 1941 for his wife and three of the younger sons to be housed in Danizy, a small town in the north of France (Dép. Aisne), while the other children could find shelter with relatives or friends in other places; he himself remained in Paris undercover until the family could re-unite there short after the liberation of Paris in September 1944.

After obtaining the baccalaureate at the renowned high-school *Lycée Condorcet* (IX^e arr.) in Autumn 1960, Krivine enrolled at the faculty of humanities of the *Sorbonne* University (Paris) and made studies in history which he completed in 1964 with a diploma⁶, enabling him to take up a half-time position as assistant high-school teacher for history⁷ at the *Lycée Voltaire* (XI^e arr.); however he remained enrolled at *Sorbonne*, officially preparing for a doctorate in history, but probably rather to avoid being called up for military service⁸. From 1966 to 1968 he worked as a part-time editorial secretary and co-editor at *Hachette* publishing house, before becoming a (paid) full-time party organizer at the end of the 1960s.

Practically all his life, Alain Krivine thoroughly was a man of politics. Already as a child, he developed a lively interest and commitment in politics and society, and – following his older brothers in this – soon began to engage himself in leftwing organizations. In 1955, aged 14, the schoolboy became a member of the *Union de la Jeunesse Républicaine de France (UJRF)* [*Union of the Republican Youth of France*] which in 1957 was renamed to *Mouvement Jeunes Communistes de France (MJCF, or commonly, JC)* [*Young Communists of France*], being the youth arm of the *Parti Communiste Français (PCF)* [*French Communist Party*]⁹. The young activist Krivine earned recognition e.g. as champion vendor of the party's weekly *L'Humanité Dimanche* and *MJCF's* paper *L'Avant-Garde*, by disseminating flyers as well as by diligently attending party educational courses, film screenings etc., although he began very early to be estranged from the party and its youth organization, both on which Stalinism weighed like a nightmare, also in view of the famous XXth congress of the *CPSU*. In 1957, he was sent by *JC* as a member of the French delegation to

[2] Name and life data according to other sources: Alter Meier Maurice Krivine (1866-1946).

[3] Name according to other sources: Sarah Frenkel. – A.M. Krivine and Frenkel probably married in 1893.

[4] According to other sources they came to France only at the beginning of the twentieth century.

[5] Alain was the youngest of the Krivine's children, together with his twin brother *Hubert* (b. 1941, physicist, also known by his pseudonym "Sandor"); the other siblings were: *Gérard Maurice Grégoire* (1930-2017, graduate engineer), *Jean-Michel* (1932-2013, surgeon, also known by his pseudonyms "Arnold", "Bui Ten-Chi", "Louis Couturier", "Jederman(n)" and "Nikita") [see also [here](#) and [here](#)], *Roland* (1935-2012), and *Michelle Esther Sophie* (1936-2005). Almost all of Alains's siblings were active in the communist and Trotskyist movement, respectively, and/or members of trade unions. Of particular importance for Alain were his brothers Jean-Michel and Hubert, who became Trotskyists at an early stage, joining the ranks of the *PCI* [see below] and were engaged in entrust work within the communist party. – By the way, a cousin of Alain Krivine is the well-known violinist and conductor *Emmanuel Krivine* (b. 1947). – See also [Famille Krivine](#) [Wikipédia article].

[6] More precisely, with a *diplôme d'études supérieures spécialisées (DESS)* in contemporary history. His thesis, directed by Jacques Droz, dealt with the First of May 1907 in France.

[7] The French job designation was "maître auxiliaire d'histoire".

[8] This account, essentially based on *Serge Curinier's* biographical sketch in "*Le Maitron*" [see our *Selective bibliography* below], deviates a little from Krivine's own, though seemingly not very accurate, narrative [see Krivine, Alain: *Ça te passera avec l'âge*, Paris 2006, pp. 68-69].

[9] Outside the Eastern Bloc, the *French Communist Party* was (after the Italian sister party) the numerically strongest of the communist (or, Stalinist) parties of Europe, at that time counting several 100,000 members; the French communists had won good reputation because of their part in the resistance fight during German fascist occupation, and from the mid-1940s to the late 1960s, the party gained regularly between 20% and 25% of the popular vote in parliamentary elections; it was deeply rooted in the working class, dominated the French trade-union federation *CGT* and at the same time enjoyed support and sympathy by a considerable number of intellectuals and cultural professionals. Under its long-time leaders *Maurice Thorez* (1900-1964) and *Jacques Duclos* (1896-1975) the party widely followed the respective Moscow line; in the 1960s, however, some oppositional currents emerged (see below).

the VIth *World Youth Festival* which was held in Moscow; there, he for the first time came closer in contact with some delegates of the Algerian *FLN* opposing the French communists' reservation towards the struggle of the Algerians for independence from French colonialism. In the following years Krivine began to fully develop his manifold organizational, recruiting and argumentative talents. After he had become clandestinely a member of *Jeune Résistance* [*Young Resistance*]¹⁰, the main focus of his political activities was directed towards a wide-ranging support of the armed struggle of the *Front de Libération Nationale (FLN)* [*National Liberation Front*] for national self-determination and Algeria's separation from France¹¹. In those years between the loss of the French colonies in Indochina after the disastrous defeat of Dien Bien Phu (1954) and Algeria's final achieving independence (1962), the situation in France was characterized by great political instability and tension. The prolonged *Algerian (decolonization) war* weighed on France like a nightmare and caused a long-standing political and permanent governance crisis of the IV^o Republic which only could (at least halfway) be resolved with General Charles de Gaulle's¹² seizure of power and the eventual victory of 'Gaullism' over the ultranationalists and other right-wing hardliners, e.g. the *OAS*¹³, eventually followed by the release of Algeria into independence from France (*Évian accords* of March 1962 and complete independence of Algeria after a referendum in July 1962).

After graduating from high school in Autumn 1960, Krivine took up university studies in history at *Sorbonne-Lettres* [*Sorbonne University, Faculty of Humanities*] as mentioned above; already as a high school-student, in 1958, he had become a member of the *Union des Étudiants Communistes (UEC)* [*Union of Communist Students*], the student arm of the *PCF*, and later functioned as its secretary at *Sorbonne-Lettres*. Further, he was an inspirer and activist of the *Front Universitaire Antifasciste Pour Combattre l'OAS (FUA)* [*Antifascist University Front for Combating the OAS*], launched in reaction to the April 23, 1961 failed *OAS* coup d'État of Algiers. During that time his anti-Stalinist attitude increased enormously and he soon began to approach Trotskyist positions and co-operated clandestinely with an entrust Trotskyist faction within the *Sorbonne-Lettres* section of the *UEC*. Not least following the example of his twin-brother Hubert, Krivine secretly established contacts to the *Parti Communiste Internationaliste (PCI-SFQI)* [*Internationalist Communist Party, French Section of the Fourth International*]; eventually, at the turn of the year 1961/62, he became a full member of this (numerically rather tiny) group of dedicated older Trotskyist cadres (practising entrust¹⁴, clandestine work in the *PCF* and its front organizations), grouped around *Pierre Frank (1905-1984)* who together with *Ernest Mandel (1923-1995)* and *Livio Maitan (1923-2004)* at the same time was one of the chief theoreticians and figureheads of the *Fourth International (USec)*. After only a short time, Krivine found himself at the side of Trotskyist "veterans" like *Pierre Frank* and *Michel Lequenne (1921-2020)*¹⁵ in *PCI's Bureau Politique* [*Political Bureau*], and as a tireless organizer, Krivine suc-

[10] "*Jeune Résistance* est la première organisation opposée à la *guerre d'Algérie* qui regroupe des *insoumis* et des *déserteurs* français, anticolonialistes, la plupart communistes (souvent oppositionnels au parti) ou d'extrême gauche et des militants qui les soutiennent" [cited from Wikipedia].

[11] Apart from continuous propaganda activities, Krivine also worked with support networks assisting the *FNL* militants for instance by smuggling materials and money across France towards North Africa ("suitcase carriers"), by hiding militants wanted by the police, by stopping trains or sabotaging signals in order to hamper the supply of soldiers and war material for the fight of the colonial power against the Algerian insurgents, by calling conscripts to refuse to be sent to Algeria, or by encouraging them not to enlist (or, to desert). Violent clashes with French ultranationalists could not fail to occur; thus as many other leftist militants, Krivine was more than once involved in street fighting with supporters of the para-military *OAS*, fascists etc.

[12] *Charles de Gaulle (1890-1970)*, reverently called *The General*, was the outstanding French hero of World War II and functioned as President of the (V^o) *République Française* from 1959 to 1969; the *Fifth Republic*, with its presidential constitution tailored entirely to his person, was De Gaulle's very own creation after he had swept to power at the end of 1958.

[13] The *Organisation Armée Secrète (OAS)* [*Organization Secret Army*] was a clandestine para-military and right-wing terrorist organization which radically fought the independence efforts of the Algerian *FNL* and its French supporters including the compromisers within the French government. The *OAS* was charged with at least 2,200 assassinations committed in Algeria and 71 in France as well as with dozens of bombings and other terrorist acts.

[14] The adjective "entrust" (also called "entryist") is derived from the term "entrism" (also called "entryism", or, "enterism"), being a key word when dealing with the history of the Trotskyist movement and the strategy and tactics of the Trotskyists. According to Wikipedia, *entr(y)ism* "is a political strategy in which an organization [...] encourages its members or supporters to join another, usually larger, organization in an attempt to expand influence and expand their ideas and program. If the organization being "entered" is hostile to entrism, the entrists may engage in a degree of subterfuge and subversion to hide the fact that they are an organization in their own right". – A thorough and balanced explanation of what "entr(y)ism" means is provided by Mackenbach, Werner: *Entrismus*, in: *Historisch-kritisches Wörterbuch des Marxismus*, Bd. 3, Berlin 1997, col. 506-512.

[15] For a thorough biographical sketch see Lanuque, Jean-Guillaume: *Lequenne Michel ...*, in: *Le Maitron : dictionnaire biographique mouvement ouvrier, mouvement social, période 1940-1968 / publ. sous la dir. de Claude Pannetier*. 8. Paris, 2012, pp. 76-81. [An enlarged and updated version is online available on the website *Le Maitron en ligne*.]

ceeded in covertly building up a strong leftist left cell of some 70-80 militants at the *Sorbonne's* faculty of humanities. More and more often, Krivine as well as many of his fellow comrades in the university milieu were crossed with the general line of the *PCF* and *UEC*¹⁶; thus eventually they were expelled in Autumn 1965.

Undaunted by this event and attracted by both Trotskyism¹⁷ and Guevarism, Krivine, together with some other 120 expellees, founded on April 2, 1966 the *Jeunesse Communiste Révolutionnaire (JCR)* [*Revolutionary Communist Youth*], an organization of committed militants which quickly gained a foothold in the academic and high-school milieu; its main organ was called *Avant-Garde Jeunesse*¹⁸. Since the phase of entrism gradually was coming to an end, the close ties with the Trotskyists of the *PCI* no longer needed to be hidden as before. Within two years, the *JCR* gained numerous supporters and fellow fighters, particularly on the campuses of the Paris and Nanterre universities, playing a central role in the Vietnam solidarity campaign work; Krivine was a very influential and touching figure of the *Comité Vietnam National (CVN)* [*National Vietnam Committee*]¹⁹. At that time – but actually throughout his life – he was inspired and enthused by the revolutionary liberation struggles of the Third World masses and their courageous vanguards, respectively, from Cuba to Vietnam and from Brazil to New Caledonia (Kanaky), while his tireless party-building, educational and propagandistic work as well as his irreproachable and unpretentious personality inspired many people on the left in France and elsewhere.

The years 1968-1969 were to become very special years of destiny for Krivine: as chief leader and strategist of the *JCR*, which in April 1968 comprised some 350 activists, he took – together with outstanding young co-fighters as Daniel Bensaïd (1946-2010)²⁰ and Henri Weber (1944-2020)²¹ – considerably part in many of those remarkable and sensational not to say seismic events which should become widely known as the "French May 68"²². Their activities, emanating from Paris and Nanterre, eventually culminated not only in nationwide campus and factory occupations but in a general strike of more than 10 millions of workers and employees which, albeit only for a very few weeks, brought the system of "Gaullism" and the whole state order close to the brink of collapse. Krivine's role in the "French May 68" events has been narrated both in his autobiography²³ and in a whole series of films, interviews, documentaries etc. By the way, it should be noted that there were some other leaders of the French student rebellion who were considered veritable icons of May 68, for example the anarcho-spontanist Daniel Cohn-Bendit (b. 1945)²⁴ and the

[16] Towards the middle of the 1960s, there were several oppositional currents within *PCF* and *UEC*, significantly (1) a pro-Chinese (Maoist) current (i.e. those who wanted that the French party should, with regard to the Moscow-Beijing communist schism, side with Beijing instead of Moscow), (2) a current taking positions which could be characterized as Trotskyist, or Guevarist, or Third-Worldist, and (3) a current which favoured positions similarly to those of the Italian communists which later should become known as "Eurocommunist" current. The *PCF* party leadership in a typical Stalinist manner tried to get rid of those dissidents through a rigid policy of exclusion and expellation.

[17] It should be mentioned here that Krivine as well as many of his *FUA* and *JCR* comrades were under the strong influence of the charismatic and persuasive Trotskyist Ernest Mandel who conducted numerous Marxist training courses and gave lectures to student audiences in the 1960s in Paris and elsewhere. In 1963 Krivine made closer acquaintance with Mandel in Paris.

[18] As director of this organ functioned Gérard de Verbizier (1942-2004) whose contributions (also those which later appeared in *Rouge*) were published mostly under his pseudonym Gérard Vergeat. Altogether 14 nos. of *Avant-Garde Jeunesse* were published between May/June 1966 and May 1968, in addition, there were more than a dozen numbered and non-numbered supplements as well as special local issues; two issues were published illegally after the decreed dissolution of the *JCR* in June 1968, one of them with title *La Nouvelle avant-garde*. For some more details see our *Trotskyist serials bibliography* as well as Pluet-Despatin, Jacqueline: *La presse trotskiste en France de 1926 à 1968*, Paris 1978.

[19] It should be mentioned here that Krivine's activities were not at all limited to France; thus for example in February 1968 he travelled to Berlin (West) and participated at head of a strong *JCR* delegation in the *Vietnam-Kongress*, an international gathering of thousands of leftists condemning the U.S. war in Indochina and declaring their militant solidarity with the anti-imperialist liberation struggles in Indochina and elsewhere; Krivine delivered a speech at this congress as did Rudi Dutschke, Ernest Mandel, Giangiacomo Feltrinelli and many other internationally known leftists; some 15.000 people eventually participated in the closing rally of the congress.

[20] For a thorough biographical sketch, written by Jean-Paul Salles, see *Le Maitron : dictionnaire biographique mouvement ouvrier; mouvement social, période 1940-1968 / publ. sous la dir. de Claude Pennetier*. 2. Paris, 2006, pp. 66-67. [An enlarged and updated version is available online (restricted access) in *Le Maitron*.]

[21] For a thorough biographical sketch, written by Jean-Paul Salles and Jean-Guillaume Lanuque, see *Le Maitron : dictionnaire biographique mouvement ouvrier; mouvement social, période 1940-1968 / publ. sous la dir. de Claude Pennetier*. 12. Paris, 2016, pp. 409-412. [Also available online (restricted access) in *Le Maitron*.]

[22] It goes without saying that what became known as the "May 68" in France admittedly had so many causes and facets, that obviously it cannot be discussed or appreciated in the context of this present short biographical sketch. For a summary overview see for example the Wikipedia article *May 68*.

[23] See Krivine, Alain: *Ça te passera avec l'âge*, Paris 2006, pp. 99-111.

[24] Cohn-Bendit was the founder and mouthpiece of the Nanterre-based *Mouvement du 22 Mars* [*Mouvement of* --- cont. on p. 5

Maoist Alain Geismar (b. 1939)²⁵.

Although seriously stricken²⁶, President De Gaulle eventually was able to hold on, and after dissolving the Parliament (*Assemblée Nationale*) on May 30 and calling new elections, the Gaullist party and its allies could gain an impressive majority of the popular vote in June, a so-called landslide victory. Thus, the revolution many had hoped for had not taken place, on the contrary: Gaullism survived, and the moderate and appealing course of the communist, socialist and reformist trade-union leaderships was rewarded with some social concessions to the workers, while the capitalist property relations factually didn't change at all. Nevertheless, it goes without saying that May 68 has produced many long-term consequences, particularly within the cultural superstructure of French society.

In response to the wake-up call of the May events, the French government on June 12 decreed²⁷ the immediate dissolution of Krivine's *JCR* and of ten other named leftist organizations. During the following days, some *JCR* militants as well as *PCI*-leader Pierre Frank were arrested as 'ringleaders'; Krivine, who in the meantime had gone into hiding in Belgium, was arrested together with his wife on July 10 after he returned to Paris for meeting her. He had to stay in the prison *La Santé* for some 7 weeks being treated as a political prisoner. Admittedly, despite the ban by the government, the work of the *JCR* and the Trotskyists, although temporarily deprived of their leading heads, continued, at least in the clandestine.

Soon after the disappointing end of the mass revolt, finally interpreted as a sort of great dress rehearsal, and despite the ban of the *JCR* and other Trotskyist organizations, the young revolutionary activists were far from giving up, but reorganized and regrouped within a short time. In Autumn 1968, Krivine was released from prison but at the same time he was enlisted to perform his military service with the 150^o infantry regiment at Verdun; the regiment was located in the barracks *Miribel* from where he managed to maintain connections with his comrades. In early 1969, Krivine, Pierre Frank and other leaders – encouraged, inspired and energetically supported by Ernest Mandel – engineered the factual fusion of the *PCI* and the *JCR* to form the *Ligue Communiste (LC)* [*Communist League*]²⁸: after several months of intensive and controversial preparatory debates, the formal launching of the new organization took place clandestinely outside France, in Mannheim (Germany) from April 5-8, 1969 in the presence of some 300 delegates; it was decided that the *LC* should affiliate with the *Fourth International (United Secretariat)* as its new *French Section*. Krivine and Frank became the most prominent members of the *Bureau Politique* [*Political Bureau*], functioning as the steering committee of the *LC*; other leading heads and thus Krivine's closest collaborators at that time were Daniel Bensaïd²⁹, Henri Weber³⁰, Catherine Samary, Janette Habel (Jeanette Pienkny)³¹, François Sabado³², and Charles Michaloux, to mention only a few. It is fair to say, that by the creation of the *LC* Trotskyism in France could enjoy a significant rejuvenation and revitalization cure³³. The *LC* soon stood out in particular for an extensive, professional and effective publication

--- cont. from p. 4 March 22] and of course the internationally most of all known leaders of the French students' protest and unrest in May 1968. – A biographical sketch, written by Sylvain Boulouque, is online available in *Le Maitron*.

[25] A biographical sketch, written by Jacques Girault, is online available in *Le Maitron*.

[26] It should only be mentioned in this context that in May 1968 President De Gaulle actually retreated and left Paris for several days to consult with his generals and ministers at the French-German border.

[27] See the *Décret du 12 juin 1968 portant dissolution d'organismes et de groupements* [Electronic resource]. With regard to Trotskyist groupings, the decree listed except the *JCR* the following: *VO (Voix Ouvrière)*, *FER (Fédération des Etudiants Révolutionnaires)*, *OCI (Organisation Communiste Internationaliste)*, *PCI (Parti Communiste Internationaliste)*, *CLER (Comité de Liaison des Etudiants Révolutionnaires)*.

[28] With this designation, reference was made to a homonymous earlier Trotskyist organization, namely the *Ligue Communiste* of the years 1930-1936.

[29] See footnote 20.

[30] See footnote 21.

[31] See biographical sketches in *Wikipedia* and in *Le Maitron*.

[32] Born 1953. For biographical information see the sketch, written by Bernard Thiéry and Jean-Paul Salles, in *Le Maitron*.

[33] At this point, however, for the sake of historical truth so to say, we should like to briefly mention the fact, that except for Krivine's *LC* there have been nearly a dozen other currents, parties, and grouplets in France claiming the label of Trotskyism in one way or another, some of them affiliated to rival *Fourth Internationals* or similar international associations. To mention only two of the more significant competing currents here:

(1) the '*Lambertist*' current', which was known under various designations between the 1950s and the 2000s, namely: *Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI)*, *Parti Communiste Internationaliste (PCI)* [*Lambertiste*], *Mouvement pour un Parti des Travailleurs (MPPT)*, *Parti des Travailleurs (PT)*. This current was named after its long-time leader and chief theoretician Pierre Lambert (1920-2008, pseud. of Pierre Bousset), --- cont. on p. 6

system³⁴, to which Krivine always paid special attention; in addition to high-profile theoretical journals such as for example *Critique communiste*, Krivine's journalistic brainchild and *LCR's* "scent mark" must be mentioned here in particular, namely the paper *Rouge* which was factually published under his overall direction for some 40 years³⁵ and to which he contributed numerous signed and unsigned articles.

Already a few weeks after its official foundation, *LC* could move from the shadows into the light of the cameras since it was decided by *LC's Bureau Politique* – notwithstanding that the new party considered itself a party of struggle not an electoral party – to participate in a nationwide election: thus Krivine, while still doing military service, ran as a candidate³⁶ in the presidential election³⁷ which was held in June 1969 after the acting president Charles de Gaulle, as a result of a referendum that did not go well for him, had decided to resign from office and to make way for a successor. For the very first time in the history of the French Republic, an avowed revolutionist (or, Trotskyist) stood in the first round of a presidential election, making speeches at mass rallies, repeatedly appearing on TV and in other mass media, always presenting himself openly as "the candidate of May 68". Within a very short time Krivine became as it were overnight a sort of media star, and one is certainly not wrong in assuming, that his candidacy made many people aware for the first time that there was an alternative on the left to both Stalinism and reformism³⁸. In view of the conservative (or, Gaullist) turn since June 1968, the meager result could not surprise, but was nonetheless quite respectable for the blatant outsider: Krivine could poll 1.06 % of the votes cast (=ca. 236.000 voters) in the first run of this presidential election³⁹.

As a full-timer of the organization, Krivine devoted himself during the following years to build up and bring forward the *League* with great energy and never-failing verve. "In the 1970s, the *Ligue [LC]* threw itself into a variety of campaigns and movements in colleges, universities and workplaces, welcoming the arrival of new social movements of women's and gay liberation, anti-racism, and building opposition to militarism and nuclear power. Always to the fore, Krivine sought to articulate the latest position in his articles for the *Ligue's* newspaper *Rouge*"⁴⁰.

Some days after a bloody attack by members of *LC's* steward service and other leftist militants against a public gathering of the ultra-rightist *Ordre Nouveau* and clashes with the police in front of the *Maison de la Mutualité* (Paris) on June 21, 1973 had taken place, the French government decreed the immediate dissolution both of the *LC* and *Ordre Nouveau*. Krivine was arrested together with *Pierre Rousset* and had to spend a short time in prison. Excesses of violence and "direct action" were hotly debated in the party at that time and rejected by a majority since they had proved to be very damaging to the organization. Just as

--- cont. from p. 5 (2) The *Lutte Ouvrière* (*LO*) tendency, named after its homonymous central organ, but also known as *Groupe Barta* (1939), as *Groupe Voix Ouvrière* (1956-1968), or under its semi-official designation *Union Communiste (Trotskyiste)*. Since 1968, the most prominent mouthpiece of *LO* has been *Arlette Laguiller* (b. 1940) [see also [here](#)], not least because she six times (!) entered the race for French presidency as *LO's* candidate including many TV appearances.

Both currents mentioned have participated, as Krivine's party also has done several times, in elections either for the presidency or in parliamentary and European elections, respectively. – A lot of academic and other literature about these as well as several other currents of French Trotskyism is listed in [chapter 7.5.07](#) of our *Lubitz' Leon Trotsky Bibliography*.

[34] The same applies to the successor organizations *FCR* and *LCR*.

[35] Some details about *Rouge* (ISSN 0035-8509), succeeding *JCR's* paper *Avant-garde jeunesse*. The first (inaugural) issue of *Rouge* was published on September 18, 1968 [and thus before the foundation of the *LC*] with sub-title *journal d'action communiste* (later the sub-title varied); the final issue was published on February 12, 2009. At the beginning, Krivine's close collaborator Jean-Pierre Beauvais (1945-2009) functioned as director (or, editor-in-chief), followed by Henri Weber and others. At the beginning, the *Rouge* was published in Paris, later by *PEC* in Montreuil-sous-Bois, it had a print-run of some 25,000 copies in 1975 and of some 12,000 in 1978. At the beginning, *Rouge* was published bi-weekly (*hebdomadaire*), then weekly, and from March 1976 to February 1979 it appeared as a daily. *Rouge* had a lot of regular and irregular supplements addressing specific readerships and milieus such as for example *Technique Rouge*. – For some more information about *Rouge* and *LC's* extensive publication activities you may consult our [Trotskyist serials bibliography](#) or some of the books mentioned in footnote 1 above. – The *RadAR* website contains a lot of facsimiles of French Trotskyist journals, bulletins etc., thus of the [first issue of Rouge](#), too.

[36] To conduct his electoral campaign, he was given a special furlough, see Alexander, Robert J.: *International Trotskyism 1929-1985, a documented analysis of the movement*, Durham and London 1991, p. 391.

[37] For some facts and figures about the presidential elections we like to refer to the website [Petite histoire des présidentielles en France depuis 1965](#).

[38] See for example *Alain Krivine for president of France*, in: *Intercontinental Press* (New York, NY), 7.1969 (19), pp. 474-475.

[39] In the run-off election, the Gaullist candidate *Georges Pompidou* (1911-1974) won with ca. 58% of the votes.

[40] Cited from McGrogan, Manus: *He never gave up the fight : remembering Alain Krivine* [Electronic resource, dated March 22, 2022].

before, the *LC* after this 1973 setback resurfaced anew, first as *Front Communiste Révolutionnaire (FCR)* [*Revolutionary Communist Front*] before in December 1974 it was renamed to *Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, Section Française de la Quatrième Internationale (LCR)* [*Revolutionary Communist League, French Section of the Fourth International*]. Thanks to its numerical strength and outstanding leadership personnel, the *LCR* – often referred to just *La Ligue* [*The League*] – from the beginning became the flagship, so to speak, and a real heavyweight within the *Fourth International*⁴¹; and in France, Krivine's *League* succeeded in acquiring, little by little, the reputation of a serious and calculable force on the left, to which for instance also many artists, writers, and intellectuals could pay respect or sympathy; it is striking indeed that a large number of well-known academics and artists as well as people employed in the public sector as teachers, educators, nurses etc. were among *LCR's* members or at least in its haze. By the way, in 1979 the *LCR* established a youth group called *Jeunesses Communistes Révolutionnaires (JCR)* [*Revolutionary Communist Youth*].

When in 1974 – after the death of acting President Georges Pompidou – presidential elections were once again on the agenda, Krivine, candidate of the *League* (at that time officially the *Front Communiste Révolutionnaire*), ran for office again, but could win only 0.37% of the votes, thus being clearly eclipsed by *Lutte Ouvrière's (LO's)* candidate Arlette Laguiller who was able to collect comparatively good 2.35%. The year before, both Trotskyist parties (*LO* and *LCR*) ran with a joint list in the elections to the *Assemblée Nationale* receiving 2.29%. In municipal elections held in 1977 they together gained 3,78%.

Still a few more words on elections: in the 1999 elections to the *European Parliament* *LCR* and *LO* with their top candidates Alain Krivine and Arlette Laguiller, respectively, successfully campaigned on a joint ticket, receiving together respectable 5,18% of the valid votes; thus, five Trotskyist deputies from France could be sent to Strasbourg for the 5th parliamentary term (1999/2004) of the *EU-Parliament*, namely Alain Krivine and Roseline Vachetta⁴² for the *LCR*, and Arlette Laguiller, Chantal Cauquil and Armonie Bordes for the *LO*.

As EU-deputy (1999-2004), Krivine⁴³ was able to pay an assistant; he chose young Olivier Besancenot⁴⁴ for the job, whose rich political and expressive talents Krivine promoted in every way and whom eventually he encouraged to enter the ring for the *LCR* in the next upcoming presidential elections to be held in Spring 2002. In fact, Besancenot competed, made several TV appearances with considerable media attention, and the result in the first round of the elections was more than respectable, as he received sensationally 4.25% (=1.210.562) of the votes⁴⁵. By the way, it should be mentioned that in the 2002 presidentials French Trotskyists achieved the greatest electoral success ever, as besides Besancenot two other candidates from the

[41] In 1969, some major differences (particularly about the evaluation of guerilla warfare and the application of armed struggle by revolutionaries) arose within the *Fourth International (USeC)* and its leading body, the *International Executive Committee (IEC)*. In these controversies (or, factional fights), Joseph Hansen (1910-1979), the most prominent delegate sent by the influential U.S. *Socialist Workers Party (SWP)*, acted as the chief spokesman of the *SWP-based Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency (LTT)* opposing the European-based Mandel-Maitan-Frank tendency, the latter however holding the majority in the *IEC*. In August 1973 the members and supporters of the Hansen tendency eventually formed the *Leninist-Trotskyist Faction (LTF)* after they had come to the conclusion that the *International Majority Tendency (IMT)*, chiefly inspired by Mandel, Maitan and Frank, was functioning as a 'secret faction' carrying its own internal discussion outside the elected bodies of the *F.I.* In these and similar factional controversies, which should only come to a (preliminary) end in 1977/78, Krivine always sided with the Mandel-Maitan-Frank majority.

[42] Born 1951. Together with Olivier Besancenot and Alain Krivine one of three mouthpieces of the *LCR* til 2009 and then a leading figure of the *NPA*.

[43] As deputy of the *EU Parliament* he joined a faction called *Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left*; he was a member (or, a substitute) of various parliamentary committees, thus e.g. of the *Committee on Legal Affairs and the Internal Market*, the *Temporary Committee on the Echelon Interception System*, the *Committee on Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs*, and the *Delegation for Relations with the Member States of ASEAN*.

[44] Born 1974, a graduate historian who made his living as a letter carrier. In 1991, he affiliated with the *LCR* and from 1998 he belonged to its leading bodies. From 1999 to 2000 he worked as assistant to Krivine in the *EU Parliament* in Strasbourg. – In 2007 Besancenot ran another time (as already in 2002) [see below] as *LCR* candidate in the first round of a presidential election, obtaining some 4,08 % (=ca. 1.5 mio.) of the vote whereas Arlette Laguiller (*LO*) got 1.33%. In the run-off election, Nicolas Sarkozy decided the election in his favour with an absolute majority. – In 2009, together with Krivine and others, he engineered the creation of the *Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste (NPA)* succeeding the *LCR*. – Besancenot's quite remarkable media and electoral successes at the beginning of the 2000s have been reflected in a whole series of biographical and similar publications (a good deal of which are listed in chapter 7.5.07 of our *Lubitz' Leon Trotsky Bibliography*), of which only two should be mentioned here: Eric Hacquemand: *Olivier Besancenot : l'irrésistible ascension de l'enfant de la gauche extrême*, Paris 2008, and Julien Beauhaire: *Olivier Besancenot ou la révolution en recommandé*, Paris 2008.

[45] If only first-time voters (i.e. people up to 25 years of age) are taken into consideration, he even received 14% of the vote.

Trotskyist camp could gain considerable results: Arlette Laguiller (LO) got even 5.72% (=1.630.045) and the Lambertist Daniel Gluckstein 0.47% (=132.686), thus adding up to some 10.45% (=some 3 mio.) in favour of the three Trotskyist candidates⁴⁶; in retrospect, it can be stated that "this was a highwater mark in terms of electoral politics"⁴⁷.

However, "there were many setbacks, and a succession of splits, but the contribution of the '*Ligue*' to creating a dynamic, innovative, democratic political culture of the revolutionary left was ongoing. Krivine knew how to encourage younger militants"⁴⁸. Undoubtedly he was the face of the *LCR* for about 3 decades, its mouthpiece and media-effective figurehead, but neither its big boss nor its infallible wise leader – just compare his role with those played by, e.g., Lambert, Laguiller, Cliff, or even Healy in their respective organizations. It is also not the case that Krivine was always uncontroversial in his own party, on the contrary: at some party conferences, another 'tendency' prevailed instead of the one he favoured, and there were even some painful separations from minority tendencies or even from some long-time companions when the political or strategic differences between the tendencies had become too severe; thus, during the 1980s and 1990s, respectively, there were the secessions – to mention only some of the most relevant – of Julian Dray (b. 1955), Henri Weber (1944-2020), Paul Allières (b. 1952), and Gérard Filoche (b. 1945)⁴⁹, the last mentioned taking with him no less than 150 members.

After having already passed the torch of the *LCR* for the 2002 and 2007 election campaigns to the much younger Olivier Besancenot, Krivine, now approaching his seventieth, retired from party leadership, i.e. from *LCR's Bureau Politique*, but remained for the moment one of the three speakers of the party. In early 2009, together with Besancenot and in accordance with a majority vote of *LCR's* 18th congress, he pleaded for the dissolution of the *LCR* and its merging into a new, more broadly conceived party; thus, the good old *League*, which at last however counted only some 3,000 members, ceased to exist while the *Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste (NPA) [New Anticapitalist Party]*⁵⁰ was launched on February 5, 2009; after almost 40 years of existence, *LCR's* party organ *Rouge*⁵¹ ceased publication being replaced by *L'Anticapitaliste*, and the theoretical journal *Critique communiste* was merged with *Contretemps*.

Eighty years of age, Krivine deceased on March 12, 2022 in Paris, survived by his wife Michèle with whom he got married in 1962, their daughters Nathalie (b. 1968) and Florence (b. 1974), and two granddaughters.

The funeral took place on March 21 at *Cimetière du Père-Lachaise* in the presence of about 2000 people⁵². A mass meeting to honor and remember Alain Krivine was held at the *Mutualité (Paris)* on April 30, 2022⁵³. Numerous obituaries published after his death from a wide variety of political camps made clear that Krivine's political reliability but also his very human manner had won him sympathy and recognition far beyond the narrow party lines; by the way it should be mentioned that condolences even came from the *Elysée Palace*⁵⁴.

[46] In the run-off election, Gaullist candidate Jacques Chirac decided the election in his favour with an absolute majority.

[47] Cited from Falconer, Colin: *Alain Krivine: The May 68 activist and lifelong anti-capitalist remembered* [Electronic resource, dated March 21, 2022].

[48] Cited from *ibid.*

[49] See biographical sketch (as electronic resource) by Jean-Paul Salles in *Le Maitron*.

[50] In 2009, the *Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste (NPA)* had about 9,000 members, Besancenot being its first mouthpiece. Other prominent *NPA* members were (as at 2009) Roseline Vachetta, Michael Löwy, Myriam Martin, Christine Poupin, Francois Chesnais, Daniel Bensaïd and Alain Krivine. Philippe Poutou (b. 1967) ran as *NPA's* candidate in the first round of the presidential elections of 2012, 2017, and 2022, gaining 1.15 % (2012), 1.09% (2017) and 0.8% (2022), respectively. – In the European elections of 2009, *NPA* gained 4.88 %.

[51] A few years earlier, on January 16, 2003, *Rouge* could celebrate the appearance of its issue n° 2,000.

[52] See for example Telo, Laurent: *Dernier hommage à Alain Krivine...* [Electronic resource, dated March 22, 2022].

[53] For a report about this homage see Billard, Cathy: *Ciao Alain : ton combat continue*, in: *L'Anticapitalisme : l'hebdomadaire du NPA (Montreuil)*, 2022 (n° 614=May 5) : pp. 6-7. Oral appreciations and obituaries were delivered there by H. Krivine, C. Samary, T. Ali, F. Sabado, F. Coustal, R. Vachetta, J. Machado, and more than two dozen more participants from France and several other countries. Video recordings of this event can be found on YouTube.

[54] Originally published with title *Décès d'Alain Krivine* [Electronic resource, dated March 13, 2022] from which we like to cite the following text passage: "Le Président de la République salue une vie d'engagement et de militantisme menée avec cette soif inaltérable, cet espoir inentamé de justice et d'égalité. À sa famille et ses amis, à ses anciens collègues et camarades, à tous ceux qu'il a inspirés, il adresse ses condoléances respectueuses". – For an English translation see [here](#). – *Elysée Palace* is the official residence of the French President.

Selected obituaries

At the end of our biographical sketch we still want to append a few passages cited from some of the numerous obituaries, reminiscences and appraisals which have been published in March and April 2022⁵⁵:

Olivier Besancenot⁵⁶:

«Je me souviens du premier meeting où je suis venu écouter Alain. Je devais avoir 15 ans et ma vie a basculé. La sincérité de son discours, son ardeur et sa conclusion sur « la révolution qui remet à l'endroit un système qui tourne à l'envers » m'avaient définitivement conquis. Je voulais être de ce combat. Il était fringant, refusait de se prendre au sérieux tout en défendant des idées qui pourtant l'étaient à plus d'un titre. Ses intérêts ne relevaient que de ses convictions et cela se ressentait au premier abord. L'opposé du politicien carriériste. Et déjà, à l'époque, cette authenticité constituait une véritable bouffée d'oxygène. Plus tard, durant toutes les années de notre militantisme en commun, j'ai pu apprécier sa simplicité et son engagement sans compter. "Qu'il y ait 10 personnes dans un meeting ou des milliers, il faut aller les chercher un par un" me répétait-il. Alain n'avait foi qu'en la vertu de l'activité militante dont il mesurait les sacrifices de chacun et de chacune – exceptés les siens. Comme beaucoup également, j'ai souvent eu l'occasion de savourer son goût pour la dérision – cette autodérision singulière qui le rendait tellement accessible –, ainsi que son sens de l'humour légendaire qui, sans conteste, était lui aussi accessible à tous. Durant tout ce temps, notamment durant la décennie 1990, Alain nous a sauvé la mise plus d'une fois en nous permettant de maintenir la tête hors de l'eau grâce à sa popularité et la surface sociale de son intervention. Son carnet d'adresses a servi à de nombreuses reprises pour mettre sur pied ou amplifier des initiatives militantes, de la campagne pour l'annulation de la dette "Ça suffait comme ci !" en 1989 à la mobilisation des sans-papiers dans l'Église Saint-Bernard de 1996, sans oublier les réquisitions de logements vides avec le DAL au côté de son complice, le professeur Léon Schwartzberg. Je me rappelle aussi qu'Alain avait été un des premiers au Comité central de la Ligue à voir arriver la grève générale de 1995 contre le plan Juppé, essayant quelques remarques amusées au passage. C'est pourtant lui qui avait vu juste. En 1999, au Parlement européen où nous formions une petite équipe autour de Roseline Vachetta et Alain, j'ai en mémoire qu'il ne remarquait jamais la mauvaise conscience qui s'affichait distinctement dans les yeux de certains autres anciens leaders de Mai 68 lorsque nous les croisions dans les couloirs. Eux étaient confortablement élus depuis des années après avoir épousé une trajectoire politique bien différente de la sienne. Lui s'en moquait éperdument car il ne versait pas dans ce genre de jugement. Une qualité qu'il a essayé avec d'autres de m'inculquer tant bien que mal. Il existe mille et un souvenirs partagés et je sais qu'Alain n'aimait pas non plus verser dans le registre de la nostalgie. Je voudrais juste souligner l'immense force qu'il m'a léguée durant les campagnes présidentielles, à tenter de me donner la confiance que je n'avais pas, et par tous les moyens nécessaires. Avant et après chaque meeting et chaque émission. Sans condescendance, sans paternalisme. Avec une fidélité à toute épreuve et une extraordinaire amitié. Alain insistait toujours pour dire que la plus belle manière de célébrer la mémoire des disparus consiste à perpétuer leur combat. Aussi je veux garder le sens de son engagement en guise d'étendard. Un bel étendard dont je me sens fier grâce à lui. Floqué d'un internationalisme non négociable, qui était chez lui rétif à toute forme d'impérialisme ou d'union nationale. Drapé d'un antifascisme aussi viscéral que construit, celui-là même que l'Histoire réclame une fois encore de nous. Rouge d'un marxisme vivant, unitaire et non dogmatique. Auréolé de son obstination révolutionnaire à vouloir bâtir un monde meilleur. Tu as bien raison Alain : "Il y a encore plus de raisons, aujourd'hui, d'être révolté et révolutionnaire qu'hier".»

Colin Falconer⁵⁷:

«A committed Marxist, Krivine is not known as a theoretician, and the list of his publications is short (this role was played by his close friend, Daniel Bensaïd, and others). He was above all an activist, a charismatic speaker, a formidable debater, and no task was too small if it helped build the organisation. In later years, when I knew him, he was a stalwart of the LCR (and later the NPA) in the Paris suburb of Saint-Denis – then a stronghold of the PCF – where he asked for and received no special treatment, despite his aura of 'grand old man' of the far left. He could be found in the town centre every Sunday morning, selling the party's paper,

[55] It should still be mentioned that by the end of March the NPA and its organ *L'Anticapitaliste*, respectively, received several hundred letters of condolence by individuals and organizations.

[56] Cited from Besancenot, Olivier: [Obituary], in: *L'Anticapitaliste : l'hebdomadaire du NPA (Montreuil)*, 2022 (n° 607=March 17), p. 10. – About Olivier Besancenot see footnote 44.

[57] Cited from Falconer, Colin: *Alain Krivine: The May 68 activist and lifelong anti-capitalist remembered* [Electronic resource, dated March 21, 2022]. – Colin Falconer (b. 1953) [pseud. of Colin Richard Bowles] is a British free-lance journalist who made a name for himself as an author of historical novels; he is now living in Australia.

Rouge (later *L'Anticapitaliste*), and amiably greeting local residents [...] However, he was never a 'star'. It is indeed extraordinary how often two adjectives come up in tributes from comrades who knew him well – 'modest' and 'kind'. He would be the first to volunteer to carry out the humblest organisational tasks, and his first thought was often to put at ease the newest or youngest recruit or offer to help a comrade in difficulty. Alain was a very human revolutionary. He also had a nice line in anecdotes and jokes [...] There is a saying that it is normal to be a revolutionary when you are young and a conservative when you are middle-aged. It is true that many, but far from all, of Krivine's best-known contemporaries and comrades on the radical left would leave revolutionary politics to become successful academics, politicians, media personalities or even neo-conservative 'intellectuals'. Alain himself would never abandon his belief that "Another world is possible". When he published an autobiography in 2006 it was called "*Ça te passera avec l'âge*", which could be translated as "You'll get over it, son" or "You'll grow up one day". It was another example of his humour and playfulness. He never did "get over it", of course. Nor, contrary to the myth, did the majority of those who took to the streets in 1968 – though few had the willpower to dedicate themselves so single-mindedly to the cause.»

Mitchell Abidor⁵⁸:

«[...] as we discussed his life and the events of May 1968, he was a man free of the plagues of the left, of empty triumphalism, of clichés, of sanctimoniousness. He spoke to me honestly, openly, and humorously. [...] It was clear that Krivine never lost hope that the revolution would one day come. He ended our conversation by telling me that "I've kept, not my physical youth, but my youthful ideas. And history shows I'm right when I say this is a rotten society. People used to think I was crazy when I said I was anti-capitalist. Now they say I'm not crazy, but there's nothing can be done about it, but that I'm right. That's something new. And something positive." Our conversation over, Krivine took me for a tour of the building, introducing me to his comrades and extolling the magnificence of their printing operation. Again, his manner was that of a proud father, which he was. Alain Krivine was, after all, the founder of the most significant force to the left of the PCF. That it was still laying the groundwork for increasingly hypothetical barricades, more than fifty years after its original founding, was a tribute to Alain's dedication. As I was leaving he handed me a copy of his autobiography *Ça te passera avec l'âge* ("*You'll Get Over It When You're Older*"), with a lovely inscription: "To Mitch Abidor, who understands that this title is false." I had to a large extent "gotten over it" as I got older, and I no longer share Krivine's beliefs, but it was impossible not to admire the man. And I was far from alone: even Emmanuel Macron issued an official statement, praising Alain's "life of commitment and activism." May 68 is indeed far in the past.»

Claude Piperno⁵⁹:

«Alors qu'ils ont cessé tout militantisme anticapitaliste, tout compagnonnage avec l'idée de la révolution ou ne l'ont jamais côtoyée, certains disent qu'avec sa mort ce serait "*un morceau de la gauche qui s'en va*". Avec le décès d'Alain, ce n'est pas "*un morceau de la gauche*" qui s'en va. C'est l'un des jalons de l'extrême gauche qui disparaît avec lui. C'est en ce sens que nous présentons à l'ensemble de ses proches, à sa famille, à sa compagne et à ses camarades de parti et d'internationale, nos condoléances militantes et que nous entendons, également, poursuivre le combat contre ce système et l'ensemble des oppressions, injustices et catastrophes qu'il engendre. "*On a plus de raison encore de se révolter, aujourd'hui, qu'en 1968*", aimait à rappeler Krivine, dans ses interventions. Désormais, pour sa mémoire également, nous aurons encore plus de raisons de lutter pour la révolution.»

Dan La Botz⁶⁰:

«Krivine soon became, as he writes, one of the principal inspirers of the 'Trotskyist-Guevarist', anti-Stalinist opposition among the young Communists, most of whose leaders had joined the Fourth International. As an anti-imperialist activist, he began working with anti-war intellectuals such as the philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre and mathematician Laurent Schwartz. In 1966, the PCF expelled Krivine and his fellow oppositionists because of their "factional activities." Once independent they formed the Revolutionary Communist Youth

[58] Cited from Abidor, Mitchell: *Alain Krivine's last barricade* [Electronic resource, dated Apr. 1, 2022]. – Mitchell Abidor is an author and translator of several books on subjects like anarchism, libertarian socialism etc. and made more than 1,000 translations for the *Marxists Internet Archive* (MIA) website from French and other romance languages; he also writes for the *Jewish Currents* magazine.

[59] Cited from Piperno, Claude: *Hommage à Alain Krivine (1941-2022). un militant de la révolution* [Electronic resource, dated March 13, 2022]

[60] Cited from Dan La Botz: *Alain Krivine : French revolutionary socialist, 1941-2022* [Electronic resource, dated March 12, 2022]. – Daniel H. La Botz (b. 1945) is an American journalist, author and labour union activist, member of *Solidarity*, and co-editor of *New Politics*, an independent socialist journal.

(JCR). Now in the Trotskyist milieu, Krivine met the leading older figures of the movement such as Pierre Frank and Ernest Mandel. The young Trotskyists merged their group with Frank's Internationalist Communist Party, the most important Trotskyist party at the time. Krivine, in the course of his anti-imperialist work against the French war in Algeria and the U.S. war in Vietnam developed like many of his generation, a Third Worldist perspective, something that was very common in France and in fact throughout much of the developed world. While the European working class was still important to these leftists, the colonial independence struggles moved to center stage. [...] Alain Krivine and his comrades who became Trotskyists in the late 1960s had a significant impact on Trotskyism in France and on the Fourth International. On the one hand they revitalized Trotskyism, bringing hundreds of new activists and a fresh energy and enthusiasm to the movement. Some took industrial jobs and went into the working class in an attempt to win workers to socialism. At the same time, the turn toward Che Guevara's ideas, particularly the theory of the *foco*, that is, a small group of committed revolutionary guerillas in the mountains or the jungle engaged in armed struggle, represented a significant turn from the historic Marxist idea of the central role of the working class as the agent of socialist revolution. Such guerrilla groups were often isolated from the working class, seldom democratic, and nearly all were defeated by rightwing military regimes. [...] This Trotskyist-Guevarist politics, adopted by other French Trotskyist leaders and shared by other sections of the Fourth International, had an important impact on the Fourth International and its theory of revolution. [...] While taking their inspiration from Trotsky and Che, Krivine and his comrades were very involved in the French student movement in the universities. They also worked to try to connect the youth movement to the Communist-led unions, most importantly the enormous Renault plant at Boulogne-Billancourt. Krivine and his JCR comrades, working closely with Daniel Cohn-Bendit who played a significant role in the great May 1968 general strike of students and workers. May and June of 1968 represented the highpoint of the French radical movement of that era, during which Krivine was imprisoned twice for his radical activities, though he only served a relatively short time. All of this made him a very prominent figure on the left. [...] Krivine remained active in France throughout the 1980s and 1990s, involved in every domestic and international issue of any significance. In 1999 he won the race for delegate to the European parliament. In 2009 the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR) that Krivine had helped to found in 1969 dissolved itself in order to merge with activists from the new environmental and feminist movements, creating the New Anti-capitalist Party in 2009. Alain Krivine, through it all, remained an anti-capitalist, a revolutionary socialist all of his life, and contrary to that common adage and the title of his memoir, he did not give up his leftist politics as he aged.»

Léon Crémieux⁶¹:

«He was one of the most prominent leaders of the May 68 movement, the JCR playing a predominant role among student youth, especially in the Paris region. After all the far-left organizations, including the JCR, were dissolved by the Gaullist regime following the end of the general strike, Alain was incarcerated with other comrades during the summer of 1968 and then enlisted to perform his military service. At the same time, the militants of the JCR laid the foundations for what would become the Ligue communiste (Communist League - LC) which, together with the forces of the PCI, became, in the spring of 1969, the French section of the Fourth International. From then on, Alain's life would merge with that of the Ligue communiste for which he became the standard-bearer after the French presidential election of 1969 when he was a candidate for the Ligue. At the same time, with other young comrades of the Ligue, he became part of the leadership of the International [...] He then became for 40 years the main political referent of activists in the LC/LCR, a daily pillar of the leadership and contact with the towns and cities. As chief spokesperson, the only one really known on a large scale up until 2002, he was the voice of the LC/LCR, the tireless moderator of hundreds of meetings for the sections of the Ligue, large or small. He was surely the leader who best knew the sections and the comrades in the town and cities, a living political map of the LCR. Attached to meticulous militant work, he was as attentive to the daily political activity of the party as he was to seizing every opportunity to organize unitary campaigns, to get in touch and collaborate with other militant currents. [...] At the international level, he showed the same energy, a tireless traveller, making our International benefit from the echo received by a figure of the French May, with many tours of meetings and initiatives such as that of Red Europe in Brussels or the anniversary of the Paris Commune in 1971. He had the energy also to develop solidarity with the Palestinian people, the FLNKS or the anti-bureaucratic resistance of Solidarnosc, solidarity with the anti-bureaucratic struggle in Czechoslovakia of Petr Uhl and his comrades, and links with the comrades in countries subject to neo-colonialism. His office in the premises of the Rotographie printshop in Montreuil saw visits from hundreds of comrades, representatives of anti-imperialist and revolutionary organizations, and he

[61] Cited from Crémieux, Léon: *Alain Krivine (1941-2022) : optimism of the will* [Electronic resource, dated March 16, 2022]. – Léon Crémieux (b. 1951) has been a member of the LCR from 1974-2009 and of its *Bureau Politique* from 1981-2009, then a member of the NPA and its *Comité Politique National*, further a member of the *Executive Bureau of the Fourth International* from 2002-2021. He is an activist of the *Solidaires* trade-union federation. Many articles from his pen have been published in alia in *Inprecor*; *Rouge*, *L'anticapitaliste*, *Cahiers de critique communiste*, *ContreTemps*... – For further biographical information see the biographical sketch by Robert Kosmann in *Le Maitron*.

devoted much energy to visiting many countries to defend our ideas and meet the revolutionary movements. In the 1970s and 1980s, as a daily reader of the PCF daily [L'Humanité], he was always attentive to what was happening in and around it and the other CPs, to the international crisis of Stalinism. Thus, he was always interested, in France, in the possibilities of unitary work with currents coming from the PCF. He was anxious to go beyond the borders of the LCR to move towards a political grouping capable of taking the place of the PCF among the popular classes. Among the first to grasp the importance of movements such as those of 1995, the struggles of the undocumented, his passionate anti-colonialism led to active participation in the links with the comrades and organizations of Algeria, the Antilles, Corsica and Kanaky. After the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua, he participated twice as an observer at the elections in 1984 and 1990, and also visited the Venezuela of the Bolivarian Revolution. Similarly, in the early 2000s, he made contact with the comrades who wanted to found an organization of the Fourth International in Russia. [...] Alain was focused on the organization of our current, concrete political action to advance our ideas, unitary initiatives, direct debate with other international forces, other currents to find ways of common action. He was one of the architects of the strengthening and opening up of the Fourth International which made it possible to welcome activists and organizations from other traditions. His intelligence tried to make optimism of the will compensate for the pessimism of setbacks. He taught us a revolutionary Marxism without arrogance, unitary and constantly seeking the path of concrete action, and we will try to remain faithful to it.»

Edwy Plenel⁶²:

«*Ça te passera avec l'age* - "You'll Grow Out of It". When, in 2006, Alain Krivine agreed to write a memoir recounting not his life but a "collective adventure" embodying "the possibility of a democratic revolution", he chose this phrase for the title of his account. From his commitment to the Communist cause as a Paris schoolboy in the 1950s, to handing over the reins to a new generation in the New Anticapitalist Party (NPA) half a century later, via his constant role as spokesman for the Revolutionary Communist Youth (JCR) in 1968 then the Communist League (1969-1973) and, Revolutionary Communist League (1974-2009), Alain Krivine never did really grow out of "it". But what was "it"? It was this simple idea that emancipation, the quest for freedom, the hope for equality, the demand for justice, are first and foremost a refusal, a negation of the existing order, an outburst against its miseries, its lies, its many forms of domination. What we normally call the Left is born of this infinite, ever renewed and unfinished movement, confronting the constantly reborn conservatism of all types. [...] Krivine's was a sincere and good-natured intransigence - explaining his popularity, as today evidenced by the many tributes coming from his political rivals. He wore his ever-joking modesty on his sleeve; he loved laughing with his fellows and willingly indulged in self-mockery. Krivine professed the asceticism of a bon vivant who had abandoned any desire for fortune or any ambition to "make it".»

Elfriede Müller⁶³:

«Er war sein Leben lang Aktivist und an allen relevanten Kämpfen in Frankreich beteiligt: bei der Solidarität mit der Besetzung und Selbstverwaltung der Uhrenfabrik Lip, den Soldatenkomitees, den Streiks und Demonstrationen der Schüler*innen und Student*innen, der Anti-AKW- und Frauenbewegung, Miet- und Arbeitskämpfen und bei einer Kirchenbesetzung der Sans Papiers. Aus der häretischen Arbeiterbewegung kommend und sich auf deren Tradition beziehend, integrierte sich die LCR in die neuen sozialen Bewegungen und stellte sich gleichwohl zur Wahl. Sie sah zwischen Klassen- und Anerkennungskämpfen keinen Widerspruch, sondern eine gegenseitige Befruchtung. Alain Krivine war ein Produkt dieser kollektiven Erfahrung der Linken, der er sich ein Leben lang zugehörig fühlte und die ihn prägte. Er hielt sich eher für einen guten Organisator; die Theoriebildung überließ er lieber anderen, wie seinem Freund und Genossen, dem Philosophieprofessor Daniel Bensaïd. Der Zusammenbruch des Realsozialismus schwächte die KPF weiter, während die LCR ihren Wirkungskreis erweitern konnte. Bei der Europawahl von 1999, bei der die LCR mit der trotzkistisch etwas anders ausgerichteten Gruppe Lutte Ouvrière eine gemeinsame Liste bildete, wurde Krivine mit 58 Jahren für fünf Jahre Abgeordneter im EU-Parlament. Sein Assistent war Olivier Besancenot, ein studierter Historiker, der als Postbote arbeitete. Er wurde der neue Präsidentschaftskandidat der LCR und erreichte 2002 und 2007 über eine Million Stimmen. Daraufhin beschloss die LCR, sich aufzulösen und eine neue, breitere Organisation zu bilden. Die Lösung: "Neue Periode? Neues Programm? Neue Partei". Und 2009 entstand die Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste (Neue Antikapitalistische Partei). Die Idee war, dass eine neue Generation die Linke breiter aufstellen sollte. Gemessen an diesen Ambitionen ist das Projekt gescheitert.»

[62] Cited from Plenel, Edwy: *The integrity of a revolutionary: Alain Krivine, 1941-2022* [Electronic resource, dated March 16, 2022]. – Hervé Edwy Plenel (b. 1952) is a French author and journalist (inter alia *Rouge, Le Matin de Paris, Le Monde...*), in the 1970s he was a member of the LCR.

[63] Cited from Müller, Elfriede: *Die Revolution ist möglich* [Electronic resource, dated March 20, 2022]. – Elfriede Müller (b. 1956) is an actress and free-lance author.

Hubert Krivine⁶⁴:

«We were five brothers: Gérard, Jean-Michel, Roland, Alain and me. There is only one left and I happen to be that one. Hard to have become the brother... of no one. My relationship with Alain started early since I knew him nine months before he was born. We now know that a whole psychic life develops in utero between mother and child; it must certainly be true between twins and have left unconscious traces for me. [...] It's hard to talk about your brother. Moreover, the Krivines do not like to talk too much about themselves; for fear of being immodest. Contrary to appearances, Alain was very shy in front of two or three people he did not know. But not in front of a few thousand... (We were truly false twins, with complementary qualities and flaws). [...] There is an Israeli joke that you could not be simultaneously a member of Mapam, intelligent and honest. You have to choose combinations. This applies quite well today to so-called left-wing organizations. But Alain showed that you could be a Trotskyist, intelligent and honest at the same time. The loss of the socialist or communist ideal, betrayed or soiled by the parties that bear their names, is one of the reasons blocking many mobilizations. With his enthusiasm and talent, Alain contributed in practice and on a large scale to a beginning of this rehabilitation which is essential to move forward. I liked his form of humour; he summed up the *Katangais* (the black blocs of May 68), with this mordant formula: "those who want to destroy the bourgeois university, starting with its furniture...". Just recently, in the nursing home when he hardly spoke anymore, he was shown pictures of people to recognize; in a photo of me he suddenly answered the question "who is he?" with a "he's a jerk!". So, he recognized me. Which gave me immense joy. Joy that I felt again when he surprisingly understood Cathy's phone call that announced the 500 sponsorships for Poutou. Alain showed a lot of political courage and, on many occasions, physical courage; he died without ever complaining, surrounded by the tireless affection of Michèle and their two daughters Nathalie and Florence. The constant support and camaraderie of his NPA comrades also meant a lot to him. In Latin America, militants do not call each other "camarada", but "hermano" (brother). Alain was both for me. But not only for me [...].»

[64] Cited from Krivine, Hubert: "*Alain showed that you can be a Trotskyist, intelligent and honest at the same time*" [Electronic resource], an obituary speech delivered at Alain Krivine's funeral on March 21, 2022, here in Engl. translation. – Physicist and mathematician Hubert Krivine has been senior lecturer at *Université de Paris VI Pierre et Marie Curie*. He is Alain Krivine's twin brother and in his youth he was – like his late brother – a communist before becoming a Trotskyist and a member of the *PCI*, later of the *LC* and *LCR* to the *Bureau Politique* of which he belonged; after the dissolution of the *LCR* he became an adherent of the *NPA*. Furthermore, Hubert Krivine functioned as a member of the *Comité Exécutif International* of the *Fourth International (USec)*; in the Trotskyist milieu he has been widely known by his pseudonym *Sandor*. – A thorough biographical sketch, written by Daniel Couret, is online available in [Le Maitron](#).

Selective bibliography

Please note that we are not claiming completeness with the following bibliographic listing which – with regard to the 'primary sources' – only records books and pamphlets written by Krivine as single or co-author, but not journals and serials to which he used to contribute. Of particular interest, of course, should be Krivine's autobiography published in 2006, listed below both as primary and secondary source.

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