

RG: Good sir, I will ask you, please, for your name and date and place of birth to begin

YC: My name is Yvon Chotard, I was born on August 3, 1946 in Guérande, a very old small town near Le Croisic

RG: And can you tell me something about your family of origin?

YC: On my mother's side, they were descended from millers. We go back to the seventeenth century, they were millers in the region of La Chapelle-des-Marais, in Brière. My mother was from the village of Mayun, a purebred Briéronne, with a very Catholic vibe. Her brothers were missionaries, two brothers were missionaries in India and Africa, one sister was a nun, you see, it was a very Catholic family.

RG: Isn't there an Alphonse de Chateaubriand novel happening there?

YC: Yes, exactly, and it's quite that atmosphere, from another time, because it was a very closed society, which my father was able to penetrate a little, since he was very far from the village of Mayun, because he lived in Herbignac, five kilometers away. But he came from a region, from La Roche-Bernard, Nivillac, that corner, on the Vilaine what. Him, his family, they were ploughmen, it goes back to the seventeenth too. His father was a clerk of the peace, that is to say occasional assistant to the justice of the peace, but he was a bit in business. He was quite well off, in Nivillac he was the one who had the first car, the first bathtub

RG: This is your grandfather

YC: My grandfather, Joseph, and my grandfather's father was a blacksmith in La Roche-Bernard and beyond, you see, it was a family of laborers, wealthy peasants, but still very Christian. What marked this family and then myself. I talk about it because it touched me a lot, it was very important to me, it was the war of '14 - '18, like many families at the time in Brittany, or also in Germany . It was something atrocious that we lost consciousness very often but which turned the lives of all these people upside down. He had fought in the war of '14 - '18, it was there that he had done his Law. This is why he became afterwards clerk of

the peace, but he lost his brother and many illusions, like many people. He came back, he made more or less fortune as a clerk, because the clerks were in charge of real estate sales. So he was very prosperous until the crisis of '30. '35, he lost everything, because he was surety, as a good Christian, for farmers who went bankrupt and he lost his situation, his position. For example my father was in boarding school with the brothers in Guérande and he had to give up his studies very quickly - he was delighted to give up his studies and the boarding house - it will come back to my own destiny afterwards. He gave up the pension because my grandfather could not afford to pay anymore he was surety, as a good Christian, for farmers who went bankrupt and he lost his situation, his position. For example my father was in boarding school with the brothers in Guérande and he had to give up his studies very quickly - he was delighted to give up his studies and the boarding house - it will come back to my own destiny afterwards. He gave up the pension because my grandfather could not afford to pay anymore

RG: Was it in the thirties?

YC: Yes, between thirty and forty. My father was born in '21, it must have been in '34. And the war of '39 -'45 - I was born in '46 from this very Catholic, very working-class family

RG: Sorry, what was your father doing at the time when you were born?

YC: He was a soldier, he was doing his military service. His military service had been delayed by the war, he was more or less resistant, well, very amateur, he never bragged about that, but I know that my grandfather and he helped the Allies during the pocket of Saint -Nazaire. The border was very close to Herbignac, where they lived. They got married during the pocket of Saint-Nazaire my parents, and my father and my grandfather gave as they were draftsmen - my grandfather by his functions was also quantity surveyor, that's why he was busy real estate - they made plans that represented the German artillery posts that were being sent across the Vilaine to the Allies. They never bragged about it, but I really got the

RG: For so-called resistance facts?

YC: Yes, there you go, I say it like that because it's the truth, they participated. In the family there was also an uncle, my grandfather's brother-in-law, so my paternal grandmother's brother, who did a lot of things to him. In any case, it was a bit like the family, Catholic, working-class atmosphere on the Brière side, on my mother's side, and it became a worker on my father's side because of this economic downgrading. My father returned to Chantier de l'Atlantique as a plotter and he became a designer, so a monthly as we used to say at that time, the working aristocracy, but he was always unionized, at the CFTC then at the CFDT, but nothing more. It led him to be a socialist, he was in the Socialist Party when we lived in Saint-Nazaire

RG: Sorry, I don't understand, are we talking about your grandfather or your father?

YC: From my father

RG: So he had become a designer after the war

YC: That's it, that is to say that the working-class side of my family is above all on my mother's side. But by economic downgrading, more than social moreover, and by the marriage of my father, my father found himself associated with this working life around the Chantiers de l'Atlantique, which at the time were called the Chantiers de Penhoët and the Loire

RG: And is that in Nantes, or in Saint-Nazaire?

YC: In Saint-Nazaire, the shipyard. Their life took place between Saint-Nazaire, the Guérande peninsula, where I was born, where we lived for six years, my father worked, and Brière, and up to La Roche-Bernard, the town of origin. of my father. It's a generation, now I'm talking about my father and my mother, otherwise we may not be over

RG: To come to your studies, what did you do?

YC: My parents, Catholics, workers, from that culture, which leads them to become activists, it is important for them, in the Action Catholique Ouvrière. We are three brothers and a sister, I am the eldest, and my studies are first at the Saint-Jean primary school, therefore the Catholic school, in Pornichet, always in the same area. And then, at eleven years old, for me it is important, I went to the minor seminary of the Foreign Missions of Paris, because one of my uncles was a missionary in India and of this congregation of the Foreign Missions of Paris, which was a congregation which was launched I believe under Louis XIV and which devoted itself to Asia: China, Japan, India for the most part. My uncle, who was my godfather, was therefore in India and that's how I

RG: When did you start your studies at the minor seminary?

YC: In sixth grade, so at eleven, maybe at twelve

RG: Around '58

YC: Yes, it was at the start of the school year '58, in September '58 that I returned to this small seminar in Beaupréau, it is in Maine-et-Loire

RG: Ah so it's not in Paris

YC: No, no, the congregation was in Paris, but the seminary was in Beaupréau in Maine-et-Loire. It was a time, you know, when we went to boarding school for three months, we came back every three months, and that had an influence on '68 that. So I stayed three years in this minor seminary. At the beginning I had a religious vocation, if we want to analyze that, it was certainly linked to my position within my family. I was the oldest, my brothers were born three years later and six years later, and it was a classic setup. I was a bit neglected by a very loving mother who had moved on, which was normal. I think my desire to shine religiously was a wish to regain the privileged love of my mother. I know this because as a criminal lawyer I obviously had to defend people in the Assize Court, a lot, and I notably defended a pedophile priest, several even. Good, but especially one whose story interested me because it was quite close to mine. And I realized in defending him, in trying to understand how he had had the religious vocation, that it was my path as well.

That is to say, it was in the family constellation, it was a way for the little boy of eleven years, twelve years old, to regain importance trying to understand how he had had the religious vocation, that it was my path as well. That is to say, it was in the family constellation, it was a way for the little boy of eleven years, twelve years old, to regain importance trying to understand how he had had the religious vocation, that it was my path as well. That is to say, it was in the family constellation, it was a way for the little boy of eleven years, twelve years old, to regain importance

RG: But in particular by doing religious studies or becoming a priest?

YC: By becoming a priest, my dream was to become a saint. It was a religious vocation not at all pushy. I didn't want to become a bishop or, I wanted to become a saint, to really please my mother

RG: And your father?

YC: My father was less important from that point of view. The love of my father was unconditional, and lighter, that's kind of what saved me, because I think I would have stayed locked in this crazy thing if I hadn't been helped by my father who is still alive, my mother is deceased. Well he was a bit cowardly - the personality in the family was my mother, but his light and loving temperament, led him to help me when I wanted to get out of this minor seminary, despite everything. Even though he listened to my mother, he was making his son's arguments. Because quite quickly I realized that I was not made to live in this prison, prison almost in the physical sense, and in the ideological sense. I obviously did not master all these questions at that time but my first fight, the second, my first was to go to the minor seminary to recover love from mine, and the second was to save myself from the minor seminary, to fight against the priests who brainwashed us. There are no other words, it now looks like it was a very sectarian universe, it was really the Catholic Church of the nineteenth century

RG: In the Vendée?

YC: In Maine-et-Loire, but it's the same thing

RG: It's the military Vendée, as they say

YC: Yes, exactly, we were also taken very regularly on pilgrimage to all the places where the Vendéans fought, for better or worse, it's also good, it doesn't matter, well it keeps us away. It should also be seen that the Fathers of the Foreign Missions of Paris, who were our teachers, were old and generally quite nice, the missionaries are backpackers what, but were very anti-Communist, because for the most part they had been driven out of China. , it was after the Chinese revolution. And it was very interesting, because I think my anti-communism has something to do, not with their teaching, but their feelings. My anti-communism, which I will tell you about later, was very much linked to the information they simply gave us, because it was not just pure propaganda, it was also precise information on how the Communists had taken power in China, and it referred us a little bit to the wars of Vendée. It was the Christian world that was defending itself against the blues, the republicans, it was the infernal columns too, and against the Chinese reds. There was this teaching, historical, fairly balanced. I don't think they ever said things that struck me as wrong long afterward, if you will it was something like preliminaries to what I found out afterwards with Simon Leys, Chairman Mao's New Clothes . It will be important afterwards for my positioning vis-à-vis the Leninists and the Maoists was also precise information on how the Communists had taken power in China, and it referred us a little bit to the wars of Vendée. It was the Christian world that was defending itself against the blues, the republicans, it was the infernal columns too, and against the Chinese reds. There was this teaching, historical, fairly balanced. I don't think they ever said things that struck me as wrong long afterward, if you will it was something like preliminaries to what I found out afterwards with Simon Leys, Chairman Mao's New Clothes . It will be important afterwards for my positioning vis-à-vis the Leninists and the Maoists was also precise information on how the Communists had taken power in China, and it referred us a little bit to the wars of Vendée. It was the Christian world that was defending itself against the blues, the republicans, it was the infernal columns too, and against the Chinese reds. There was this teaching, historical, fairly balanced. I don't think they ever said things that struck me as wrong long afterward, if you will it was something like preliminaries to what I found out afterwards with Simon Leys, Chairman Mao's New Clothes . It will be important afterwards for my positioning vis-à-vis the Leninists and the Maoists Christian universe which defended itself against the blues, the republicans, it was the infernal columns too, and against the Chinese reds. There was this teaching, historical, fairly balanced. I don't think they ever said things that struck me as wrong long afterward, if you will it was something like preliminaries to what I found out afterwards with Simon Leys, Chairman Mao's New Clothes . It will be important afterwards for my positioning vis-à-vis the Leninists and the Maoists Christian universe which defended itself against the blues, the republicans, it was the infernal columns too, and against the Chinese reds. There was this teaching, historical, fairly balanced. I don't think they ever said things that struck me as wrong long afterward, if you will it was something like preliminaries to what I found out afterwards with Simon Leys, Chairman Mao's New Clothes . It will be important afterwards for my positioning vis-à-vis the Leninists and the Maoists was something like a prelude to what I discovered next with Simon Leys, Chairman Mao's New Clothes. It will be important afterwards for my positioning

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RG: Can we go back a little on your crisis of faith, you rebelled against these priests at the age of fourteen?

YC: Fourteen, fifteen. I didn't want to stay at the minor seminary. And as there for the moment my mother was very Christian, but in a very bad sense, somewhere I would have solved a lot of problems by becoming a priest. It was a time when the people in France got richer, they worked a lot. My father worked maybe fifty hours at the site, plus ten or fifteen hours private planning, plus he built his house, and my mother ran a middle-class house on her own. I think we knew that, you are younger than me but you could still, it must be a bit the same

RG: Yes, it's the glorious Thirty

YC: Yes, we got richer, but working like crazy, and my mother certainly had a bit of a bad conscience about that as a Christian. And giving one of those sons to God, to the Church, in the tradition of his family, was not bad, it excused those little hats and little rugs, something like that. I wouldn't have given the impression of speaking harshly about my mom, but I know that, she would say things to me like: "You are not beautiful, you will not manage to get married", things like That, very astonishing things for me, when one thinks about it: "You are not capable of affection, you will not be able to live other than like". Really there was tremendous pressure for me to stay in this Catholic mold. And I had to cheat, that is to say I had to pretend to remain a good Catholic but not staying in the minor seminary. It led me to become an activist as a Catholic student, finally as a Catholic high school student

RG: Because you went to high school?

YC: So I left the Beaupréau minor seminary, which luckily for me was closing at that time, it was the beginning of the crisis, my parents tried for a while to put me in another minor seminary, and I had so much ill will, and my father still helped me, and for economic reasons too, they placed me at the Lycée Aristide Briand in Saint-Nazaire, mixed school, and since then it's been happiness

RG: So this revolt against the priests is also a revolt against your mother?

YC: Yes, of course, it was a revolt against my family, it's clear now. My liberation in quotation marks was made first against mine, against this very Catholic and very manipulative family. My mother was very good at this kind of sport, which I learned a lot, which later led me to be easily a lawyer, that is to say to fight against my mother. I also had to manipulate, whether it was counter-manipulation against manipulation. And so the Lycée Aristide Briand in Saint-Nazaire, wonderful, the girls, first the girls, then the girls, always the girls, it was the big thing, more friends, freedom what, something very hot , very horny. Then I came to Nantes to study Law,

RG: Did you go to law school?

YC: Law and Letters

RG: In what year?

YC: In '65. So I enrolled in Philo-Latin-Greek and then Classic Letters, Philo I think

RG: Did you first go to high school in Nantes?

YC: No, I stayed in high school until the end in Saint-Nazaire and I enrolled in Law, Nantes, and Letters. I didn't do much, it was always the party going on, a good band, because it was, somewhere '68 had already started in Saint-Nazaire, and even perhaps in Beaupréau. I'm going to come back to that, because that was how I was in contact with the networks we are going to talk about. At the same time it was celebrating in Saint-Nazaire, my concerns as a manipulator towards my parents, but not only, spontaneously too, these things are always quite mixed. I was very interested in Hinduism, it was also a way of moving away from Catholicism, it was a holiness, a somewhat mystical universe, but not giving the



RG: How did you find out about Hinduism?

YC: By reading. Lanza del Vasto and Gandhi, a lot. So yoga, I've always read a lot of course

RG: Alone or with friends?

YC: Alone, I have always been quite individual in my life, I always had lots of friends, but in my intellectual research, I was more individual. So I was in this quest, which led me to be a disciple of Lanza del Vasto and Gandhi, to become non-violent, that means, it was at the time of the Algerian war which ended, non-violent that meant positioning oneself in relation to military service. I was interested at that time in the status of conscientious objectors. At that time, there were no conscientious objectors in France, we were going to prison

RG: Because in principle you should have done your military service in '66, or after graduation

YC: Yes, I was suspended, I didn't really know what was going to happen from that point of view, then we didn't really know, we took care of it, but on the other hand I didn't want to go to the army. . So I was interested in the status of conscientious objectors, and that's how it is, so there were only two categories of people who were interested in the status of objectors: there were Jehovah's Witnesses, but I already had gave a lot, and anarchists. And so that's what led me to intellectually associate with anarchists, especially Louis Lecoin, who had been on a hunger strike, you see?

RG: I see who he is, was he of a certain age?

YC: Yes, he was an old activist who had sympathized with the objectors, and who had gone on a very strong hunger strike, Pompidou was prime minister at that time, to obtain a statute for objectors; he got it. My father told me that I went on a hunger strike at the same time as him. I don't believe it's true, I don't think so, but I was very motivated

RG: What year was it around?

YC: It must have been in '63. At the same time, I was an activist for the Catholic Student Youth, as I told you earlier, I even had responsibilities in this youth organization, but it was a way for me, frankly, to stay in touch. with the religion of my parents, no trouble on that side, and give a little change

RG: How did you reconcile Catholicism and anarchism?

YC: I don't know, I obviously didn't reconcile him, it's a time when I participated in international work camps, an organization called ... In any case I went to Austria and Holland during the holidays work in international labor camps

RG: Have you met anarchists around here?

YC: No, it was not at that time, but on the other hand in these international sites, it was very open to anarchists. I have met a number of them, people without particular qualities, but nice. So I liked that atmosphere, I liked it a lot, it was very free, very pre-sixty-eight. And I knew in Saint-Nazaire, at the end of my high school, Gabriel Cohn-Bendit, who was a teacher, whom I had known him not through conscientious objection, but whom I had known because I was, as responsible for Catholic students, I had been elected responsible for the school, I had the majority during the election at the Lycée Aristide Briand, so I had participated in the board of directors of the school. And there had been a scandal because we were opposed - I am simplifying because we would not finish - the grading system, the principal had asked us to ensure - it was another time - that the pupils did not cheat, and I had caused a scandal by saying : "The problem is not cheating, it's the notes that are stupid and we wouldn't cheat if there were no notes". It was very precursor to ... I had had trouble, there had been a commotion in the school and I had been defended by Gabriel Cohn-Bendit and friends of his, that's how it is we met is not cheating, it is the notes which are idiotic and one would not cheat if there were no notes ". It was very precursor to ... I had had trouble, there had been a commotion in the school and I had been defended by Gabriel Cohn-Bendit and friends of his, that's how it is we met is not cheating, it is the notes which are idiotic and one would not cheat if there were no notes ". It was very precursor to ... I had had trouble, there had been a commotion in the school and I had been defended by Gabriel Cohn-Bendit and friends of his, that's how it is we met

RG: But what was he doing there?

YC: He was a German teacher

RG: By chance

YC: He was previously in La Baule, where my first wife had been a student and my high school friend was the brother of this young woman, you see in the cronyism he was part of the family. I was closer to him at one point, and that's how I met my first wife. I married her, it is also important if we want to talk about it, it is that my boyfriend, who was called Yves Cochetel and who was not interested in India, he was interested in Greece, to Greek philosophy, and he committed suicide in senior year. He took cyanide

RG: For what reason?

YC: Existential discomfort and accident at the same time, like you commit suicide at seventeen, and it's true that somewhere it could well have been me. We talked a lot about these things and therefore his sister, who became my wife afterwards, it was a little morbid, but I don't think it was excessive. I think it was pretty commonplace at that age as long as we encourage this kind of trend, in any case his suicide was important as a benchmark. So it was after I came to Nantes, always in this little band, my girlfriend at the time, my wife at the time was there

RG: What was her name?

YC: Gwenolène Cochetel, we have a child together, who now has

RG: Where did you get married?

YC: We got married in '67, but we got married, it was a bit the same, a bit the same kind of manipulation as my participation in Catholic activities. It is because we were very libertarian and the parents pissed us off, we said to ourselves: "Well, we are going to get married like that, we will manage". We loved each other, it was not a white marriage, but we planned to only be accountable between us and that the parents leave us alone, we were married, etc. It was still quite young, it was just a month after my legal majority, as quickly as possible. Obviously there were differences of interpretation on this marriage. I was not married, it was just a convention to have peace, a manipulation. For her obviously, women may think differently, maybe at the beginning she saw things like me and afterwards differently, well that's life. In any case, in Nantes it was a party, we drank, we played poker, we had adventures, and it was, we worked little, we read a lot, there was a very marginal effervescence, we were on the fringes of the university. The university at the time was in the hands of the children of the Nantes bourgeoisie, it was very conventional, especially in Law, and I was not comfortable in that, that's what brought me to be elected as a representative with the minority of the UNEF at the time, people of the left, but without really great conviction, I also frequented people of the right, I was very free maybe at first she saw things like me and afterwards differently, well that's life. In any case, in Nantes it was a party, we drank, we played poker, we had adventures, and it was, we worked little, we read a lot, there was a very marginal effervescence, we were on the fringes of the university. The university at the time was in the hands of the children of the Nantes bourgeoisie, it was very conventional, especially in Law, and I was not comfortable in that, that's what brought me to be elected as a representative with the minority of the UNEF at the time, people of the left, but without really great conviction, I also frequented people of the right, I was very free maybe at first she saw things like me and afterwards differently, well that's life. In any case, in Nantes it was a party, we drank, we played poker, we had adventures, and it was, we worked little, we read a lot, there was a very marginal effervescence, we were on the fringes of the university. The university at the time was in the hands of the children of the Nantes bourgeoisie, it was very conventional, especially in Law, and I was not comfortable in that, that's what brought me to be elected as a representative with the minority of the UNEF at the time, people of the left, but without really great conviction, I also frequented people of the right, I was very free well that's life. In any case, in Nantes it was a party, we drank, we played poker, we had adventures, and it was, we worked little, we read a lot, there was a very marginal effervescence, we were on the fringes of the university. The university at the time was in the hands of the children of the Nantes bourgeoisie, it was very conventional, especially in Law, and I was not comfortable in that, that's what brought me to be elected as a representative with the minority of the UNEF at the time, people of the left, but without really great conviction, I also frequented people of

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RG: Right-wing or far-right?

YC: Right. The extreme right, that would not have bothered me, I mean if, it would have bothered me, but there was not, it was a very Catholic right, but a Catholic good bourgeoisie in Nantes. In fact I think because there were two beautiful girls who were in this group, that was what gave interest to the thing, but it did not last very long, because of the social unrest that I experienced as an offspring of the working class. For example, I didn't dare go with my bike to college, I didn't find it chic enough, so I went in a tie. But I did not go there, so much so that at the end of the year I failed both exams in June the first year, and in September I was admitted to Law, so I dropped Letters to go to Law

RG: Is that in '66?

YC: '66 what. In '66 I found a scheme with the tax inspectors, we had our studies paid for. It was a time of plenty, we had our studies paid to take the examination for tax inspector. The only difficulty was not having it. I remember a friend, it was quite an atmosphere, very light, very pleasant, a friend who had done his entire dissertation on the Europe of the six, at the time, saying all the time "The five countries of the Europe of the six", he still used bad faith (YC laughs). But it was a bit of a game. So we got stuck afterwards, I was a pawn in Sables d'Olonne. It was a time when you could study while working, part-time

RG: Were you going back and forth?

YC: Yes, we were doing thirty-five hours in Les Sables d'Olonne, we kept driving, in '68 - we will talk about it later - during times of crisis, I took sick leave, since I was president of the student union in Nantes. So I arrived at high school where I was a pawn in Les Sables d'Olonne and the headmaster had the newspaper where I was photographed, where there was my name, "Were you sick? (Laughs from RG and YC). I was not kept either in the National Education, I had thanks to my exploits the worst mark of the Academy. Afterwards I worked at the regional ASSEDIC where I had found a job thanks to Alexandre Hébert, who - revolutionary solidarity - had found me a job

RG: When is that?

YC: '69

RG: When did you meet Alexandre Hébert?

YC: When he arrived in Nantes, because he was friends with Cohn-Bendit, that was the anarchist milieu of Loire-Atlantique. So I dated him naturally at that time. There were also the abortion networks, which were organized by the anarchists, so it brought us to see each other from time to time.

RG: To abort working class women?

YC: Yes, and the activists, it was very committed from that point of view. I remember, they were former riflemen from Bordeaux, the Lapeyre brothers who officially exercised the activity of hairdressers but who had as activists aborted people everywhere in France and even in Spain because they had fought in the Spanish Civil War. . They did that at militant rates, and this network organized their travel and their

RG: Because there was a new method? We're talking about new methods, I don't know them but

YC: Yes, it was, I don't really know either, but they had very developed methods, it worked very well, except that there was an accident one day and Aristide Lapeyre, so the Lapeyre brothers, who came a lot to Nantes, was imprisoned. He became hemiplegic in prison and he was released from prison, to die in short, by Pompidou by intervention of Bergeron, since Alexandre Hébert was the secretary of the Departmental Union of Force Ouvrière. So is it Freemasonry networks, things like that? I dunno. Or maybe the union network only, but in any case there was this link between the anarchist circles in student quotes of which I was a part and then the traditional anarcho-syndicalists, who were many in FO, in the company of Trotskyists.

RG: And did you also meet Guy Debord?

YC: So Guy Debord it's a little later, around '66, '67, it's done in a very simple way. It was Gabriel Cohn-Bendit who had been in possession of the pamphlet that the Situationists had made in Strasbourg, which is called "De la misère en milieu universitaire", which was apparently written by Khayati and Debord. And I liked this literature a lot and so I wrote, quite simply, because it was published by the federation of students of the UNEF of Strasbourg and so it was by correspondence that I had returned to contact with them. There was an exchange of correspondence and we had sympathized with Debord in particular, and we had met a lot in Paris, I often went to Paris, I slept with Daniel Cohn-Bendit, a lot, or other friends, and I saw the Situationists. This is in '67

RG: I found a letter from him to you in his correspondence

YC: Yes, I know, they are not all there, there is one which is more interesting than this one and which was obviously censored by Alice Becker-Ho, who publishes the correspondence, because of the little story of (inaudible 39:51). It is the letter in which he proposed to me to join the Situationist International, before our rupture. And that letter she did not put it, but I have it, well I can find it. I am not very archivist but my son has a copy, the son of Gwenolène precisely, but it is a letter which was written after '68, in '68 moreover undoubtedly, at the end of the year '68

RG: Because when did the breakup happen?

YC: I would say in '69, something like that

RG: What did the Situationist International represent for you?

YC: For me, they were very attractive people because they were very intelligent, they made me discover a lot of things that I had not thought of, in particular the thesis of the society of the spectacle, the criticism of town planning, lots of things like that. Finally all this modern criticism of society that they have brought. It was the legacy of the Lettrists, I discovered after how much Debord had plundered the Lettrists a lot, Isidore Isou, it was this intellectual breath that they brought, it is especially what I liked about them. What I didn't like was their sectarian side. I had reservations, I found them dogmatic and sectarian, what followed proved that I was not totally wrong. But that said, they were still smarter than the rest, and more interesting. And in particular - you can approach the problem from that angle - I never, never, never, never liked Leninism. I'm going to talk about my studies in my first year of Law, at least I did something. I read all of Lenin at that time, but I read it against, it was under the pretext of doing a dissertation or I don't know what, but in fact I read it to convince myself that 'there was no hope on that side, there was no future on the side of Leninist thought. I remember the only thing that I liked but I read it against, it was under the pretext of making a memoir or I don't know what, but in fact I read it to finish convincing myself that there was no hope on this side- there, there was no future on the side of Leninist thought. I remember the only thing that I liked but I read it against, it was under the pretext of making a memoir or I don't know what, but in fact I read it to finish convincing myself that there was no hope on this side- there, there was no future on the side of Leninist thought. I remember the only thing that I liked

RG: But for reasons, because you read Lenin or because you knew the Communists or Communism here or elsewhere?

YC: It was because I had read, it seems to me that reading Lenin was in line with my spontaneous reluctance towards, listen, when we were brought up by the Catholic fathers who said (inaudible 42:34) of communism, especially when one was an anarchist, that is to say a young anarchist reader of Bakunin, Daniel Guérin, there was everything, Volin, Kropotkin, it was my evening prayer! So when you've been anti-Communist since the first International, you can't be, find yourself convinced by Lenin. But I still went into that and it makes me think, the question you ask, it brings me back to the question you asked me earlier - was I close to the right or to the right? extreme right when I was in college? The far right no, but a certain right yes, because of this anti-Leninism, this anti-communism. I was at UNEF but I didn't like the left-wing atmosphere, I found it stupid, I found that it was poor, that on the bourgeois side in short, despite the unease it caused for me, it was still more interesting



RG: Left or leftist, finally Maoist, Trotskyist?

YC: At that time it was the left. There were not, there were very few leftists, in '65, '66 I remember having met in '65 with Gabriel Cohn-Bendit who was close to two militants - it was funny that - two militants of Struggle A worker who militated at the Chantiers de l'Atlantique, in any case who regularly came to distribute propaganda to the workers on the construction sites. So I remember we had a drink between Gabriel, then these two assholes, because I found them like that, from Lutte Ouvrière, who seemed to me to be completely Jehovah's Witnesses or whatever. And we listened on the radio to the songs of Peter Paul and Mary, who sang Boris Vian's song "The Deserter" very well and I said to myself: "Here I am". I was in this atmosphere of Vian, anti-militarist Americans, but certainly not leftists. And even the left, at that time, it was the SFIO, they had just finished the war in Algeria, I never liked that, and I found their student salary stupid, there were demands like that, c 'were already very utopian demands, at the same time utopian, that is to say there was a kind of market, and stupid, since I could clearly see how such a system would have deprived students of their freedom, when instead of studies I was doing, totally disjointed and earning my bread, I did not see why. It brought me back to the experience of the student inspectors, where you were paid but on the condition that you submit. So this reluctance was only deepened on the theoretical level, by reading Lenin, but that

RG: What about the Vietnam War?

YC: So, it's funny because I was talking about it with, I don't know if you have met Jean Breteau

RG: I'll see him tomorrow

YC: You can talk to him about that, because we were, we got to know each other a bit before '68, not a lot before '68, but a bit nonetheless. '67 if I remember, he sent me a congratulatory letter on my marriage. So we knew each other well then, and he was in the UNEF office as well. Jean Breteau was very basic Vietnam Committee, that is to say against the Americans and for Vietnam. Well, I'm exaggerating a bit, because he was not blind to Stalinist reality after all. But in any case, I was very careful to say okay to militate against the American imperialists, but certainly not for the benefit of Ho-Chi-Min and his gang. And it's

funny because we always have the same kind of, he's a socialist, and not me, it's funny, things are born early apparently. So the links with the Situationists, which are friendly links, in fact, episodic but finally nice, and then of discussion, exchange, but we are all the same very different, we in Nantes are very linked to the real working class, as well the unions, in any case FO, even the peasant unions, the CFDT, even the CGT, and linked to what we called the zonards. It was important in our perception of things, which were young people more or less thugs, more or less unemployed, more or less downgraded, and who - the situationist influence too, the cult of the black jacket, something like that, the fact of taking into account the revolt of the thugs as something politically significant, it is always difficult after to go further.

RG: Because their criticism was more cultural than social or ...?

YC: Yes, we used to say a de facto critic, almost arms in hand, of society. Well, that was situationist theories, it was also the anarchist tradition, the Bonnot gang, something like that, and we were, when I speak about it again now, we were really very Rousseauists in the conception of being human. Our idea was really that man is good, perfect, and that he was only alienated, enslaved, brought about by a system. We even thought of systems, the economic system on the one hand, the ideological system too, on the bourgeois ideology side, but also on the Stalinist and Leninist ideologies side. And we said to ourselves that if we succeeded, it is a reflection that took shape afterwards, at the time of '68, that if we succeeded in ridding the

RG: But how to do it?

YC: Now we're going to go into '68, even if it means coming back later. How to do ? We had a magic solution, which could leave us a little skeptical. I remember in any case the moment when I was discussing it with Vaneigem, so another of the Situationists, well there was only Cohn-Bendit, I was a little skeptical, I have always been a little skeptical. The instrument was the general assembly, in other words the power of the workers' councils. If these liberated beings to whom their sovereignty was restored, that is to say both workers and students, everyone, everyone where they are, and freed from all external influence, hence our fierce desire to let Leninist, Maoist or Communist ideologues take over the movement

RG: The workers' councils like in Italy after the first war or in Germany after the first war?

YC: There you are, as in Kronstadt, as in Aragon, as in Budapest, it's that tradition. The Situationists have played a lot on this tradition, the Paris Commune, Aragon, all those things. In my opinion it's stupid, it's an analysis error, it's not the subject. But if we come back to Durruti or the Makhnovchtchina, it was the armies which were supposed to liberate the villages everywhere, but which bore the name, it was armies which bore the name of their general, so we were all supposed to vote the days to elect leaders. But in fact we were somewhat in a feudal system with people who, the Durruti column, the Makhnovchtchina, their names clearly indicated that we were in the illusion, but we were also in this illusion. We had created a small group,

RG: And who was in there?

YC: People like Georges Mathé (?), A guy from Sable d'Olonne, I don't know what happened to him, names like that keep coming back to me

RG: People from the region?

YC: Yes, it was in Nantes, it was student revelers, anarcho-revelers from Nantes, by calling themselves the Tocsin it was a cover of Makhno, which had a, I think because of Makhno, who had I Believe, his army was called Le Tocsin, Labat, something like that, or his movement. But anyway, we were in that romanticism and from the point of view of thought, the best we had, even without claiming it at all, was Rousseau. But for the rest it was the Situationist, anarcho-Situationist soup, therefore this international power of the workers' councils. So the discussion with Vaneigem was about the following stuff, that is to say after the start of the occupations movement, we were like: "What are we doing now, we are occupying, and what are we doing now?" what we do ? "" Okay, let's - I'm quoting Vaneigem, he had come to Nantes for a walk - we are going to close all the factories that are useless, already so for example the manufacture of food for dogs and cats, etc., we are going to close everything that is useless, so we will be able to considerably reduce the working time, and then the others one makes restart the production in self-management and one federates ". There we found the Proudhon-type federations, more than the Yugoslav experience, and frankly when I heard that, I said to myself: "But he's kidding completely, well it can't work" and I realize when thinking back to that moment- there that I was totally engaged in the movement in that it was negative, but for what is positive, there was nothing, I had no ideas. I remember a demonstration that I had called, where I had intervened in '68, and they had all gone in procession to visit some occupied factories in Nantes. I had gone to drink with the zonards, well I will not say what I did that day, I suddenly realize that my children will read it maybe, it is to say that there was not really

perspective, it was very negative, but it's interesting that it's negative, Le Tocsin already said it well, the resumption of this, even if it was a little exaggerated compared to reality

RG: Did you publish things?

YC: I think so, but I kept nothing. There were things that were kept, the Situationists kept something that I had written, that was from the time of Tocsin, that I had not written on my own, but I had written the essentials, in their book *Enrageous and Situationists in the Occupation Movement*. In postscript there is a program, it was funny, well it was called "Minority program for UNEF", and we see that it was very negative since it was a question of ensuring a minority revolutionary presence in the country. within the student union, but without union activism. Well, maybe it's a little complicated, it was the interest of our movement, it's that it was - nantais, I'm talking about the time of Tocsin as well as a suite in '68 or after, when we also gave the Nantes council, it was really the end of the period - the aspiration was very critical, the theoretical and practical outlets were practically non-existent. It was the revolution that was desired for itself and which explains when it happened, unexpectedly, we were very disappointed, and we had no real ideas for the future, which led to movements of despair. , there were still deaths, there were people who destroyed themselves, I myself have known periods after that not brilliant. First of all it's very difficult I think to have this exhilaration of a power even ephemeral so young, this feeling of all power that could not live in us, we militated exclusively for an impossible revolution for years,

RG: Tell me a bit about this revolution of '68

YC: So you see that we were in this construction of the negative, it was really the negative at work. And that had led us little by little to take control of all the bureaucracies of the student union in Nantes, because there were small means, small budgets. There were activists, that gave a showcase and a basis for action, on the basis of a somewhat hazy program. Finally, it's nasty to say smoky, a little imprecise, drawing a lot from what the Strasbourg people had done, from what the Enrages of Nanterre were doing at the same time as us, with Danny Cohn, with whom we were in contact. , also drawing inspiration from discussions with the Situationists, we can say that. And then there were also local specificities which were,

RG: Through people like Hébert?

YC: Yes, on the one hand, Hébert, that was the working class. Through our families too, for many, we were working class families, we had gone in shadow to support the strikers of '67. And then by a sort of refusal to become bourgeois, something like that, we were well aware, we denounced a university which was going to manufacture future watchdogs for the bourgeoisie. It was our vocabulary, we didn't want to become bourgeois watchdogs. So that necessarily led us to seek solidarity with the proletarians and even the sub-proletarians.

RG: Do you think that in '68 the links with the proletarians and the workers' movement worked better in Nantes than elsewhere?

YC: Well, it only worked in Nantes, it started in Nantes and after that it spread but being, that seems to me to be really the objective specificity of what happened in Nantes. I don't need to tell you about this general revolt of Western youth and not just Western, since the Japanese, the Poles, the Czechs, there was this youth revolt that we could also perceive under rock & roll, with hippie moves, and all that stuff. And in Nantes this movement, in which we participated, found itself with an anarcho-syndicalist heritage if you will, in any case the heritage of social struggles which had remained alive. This is how people like Pelloutier, Aristide Briand, when they were campaigning for the general strike, all that was an influence at the same time general and local, and it was inter-common with militant workers like Alexandre Hébert, especially him. We talked a lot after the peasants, but the peasants frankly were not at all the same thing, people like Lambert and all that, they were all the same very linked to the social movement of the Church.

RG: But did you have contact with people like Lambert?

YC: Yes, a little bit, in '68 he participated in the Intersyndicale. It was above all Hébert, and then a few individuals from the CFDT, and a sort of conflicting but tonic relationship with the CGT. We argued but we interested them, and we too, at the same time as we fought them as Stalinists, we respected them as workers. We had this link through the Intersyndicale, the Intersyndicale was really the place where this contact took place between the rebellious youth of the world, the Nantes section, and the traditional struggle of the working class.

RG: And when you speak of Intersyndicale, is it a movement of the central strike committee?

YC: No, the central strike committee, which was at the town hall, it was much less important than the Intersyndicale, because the Intersyndicale had real power, the Intersyndicale was the representative at the highest level of each of the unions which exchanged, which planned demonstrations, speeches, it was a place of war

RG: But who trained at the time?

YC: Which already existed but which took on a particular meaning with our arrival, that is to say that we see that it existed - I read that not long ago I don't know where - that it There were correspondences between the CGT and the UNEF of Nantes when it was held by communist students. But it was a little formal and it didn't get very far, it took a student to the gallery, well. But obviously us with our inflammatory speech, participating in the Intersyndicale, that invigorated the debate a little.

RG: So you were part of it ...

YC: When we took the student union, then I don't know the dates, Breteau will tell you that, he knows that well. And then there were events, like February 14, which we talk about a lot because obviously it is the very beginning of '68 in France, where the red flag, black flag came out for a very muscular demonstration, carrying demands. very diverse, but not at all corporatist. It was general demands, but it was above all a demand, regardless of the slogans, it was the demand for something else, I believe it was more political than union as a demonstration, the presence of the black flag, you see, we can't imagine the presence of a black flag in a traditional student corporatist demonstration, it was to say something else, to refer precisely to the black flag of the past, the black flag was brought out. There was the movement in the university residences, where it was even clearer, it was a question of refusing a regulation, a prohibition which was made for boys to go to girls and to girls to go to boys. , that's a fight we shared with Nanterre that

RG: You were involved in this

YC: Yes, yes, the first occupation of the city, it was the cities of the girls, it was not bad

RG: That was late '67

YC: Yes, that's it. There was also the fight in favor of the Greeks in the days of the colonels, there was the coup d'etat of the colonels, there were Greek students in Nantes, we were fighting with them against the regime of the colonels.

RG: Do you have any specific names?

YC: Yes, there was something, because there were posters. I remember we made posters here, which we stuck up here. I believe I was arrested while putting up posters for Greek democracy. Very international demands - Vietnam, Greece, for example - were blithely mixed up in a happy catch-all, and we also had international contacts, many through the Situationist International, with Italians, well, and at the same time we had demands. very related to everyday life. I refer to the work of the Situationists on this or of Lefebvre on the criticism of everyday life, that spoke to us well, that's how we were led to close the university psychological aid office, we pretended to resist the formatting of thought by shrinks who would have helped us swallow the system. Finally it is this idea, it is the Strasbourg people who did it first, we had done it after, as well as the invasions of the cities, I believe that the first was in Nanterre and at home afterwards. , but on the other hand the black flag in the street, you see. There was this small peloton between Nanterre, Paris, Strasbourg, Nantes especially, but there was also Lyon

RG: The communications were by people who were traveling, by phone?

YC: Almost by phone, by correspondence and then by travel, by trip, we had people who came, who stayed for two weeks, three weeks, people from Nanterre, (inaudible, 1:09:17), Danny Cohn came in Nantes, I remember a football match at Marcel-Saupin with him, we were going to Paris, it was a party. I haven't been to Strasbourg, I was in Bordeaux, Toulouse a little later, there were exchanges like that, I was in Turin, at Easter '68

RG: Do you have a particular contact in Turin?

YC: I don't remember anymore; yes we went to see someone, a girl who was in contact with the Situationists. The international contacts were nevertheless a lot through the Situationists, who had this international position, obviously by definition, who were more experienced, older than us, they were ten, fifteen years older than us, we were young people. On February 14, the movement that began in Paris, suddenly on May 13 here, and on the 13th but it is also important, it is there that we attacked the Prefecture - Breteau will speak to you very well about it because 'he - and it was the next day that the first factory was occupied in France with Sud-Aviation. And that is really the Nantes contribution to the movement, it is this articulation of student youth, but more generally the youth of the revolted world, and the working class. Because after the movement it was widespread, but the CGT in particular was powerful enough everywhere to prevent the junction, and we were assured the junction by the Intersyndicale and by demonstrations.

RG: Who met where?

YC: At the Labor Exchange in general. Either at FO or at the CGT, and it was in the same corner, rue Arsène Leloup. And that was something fun, this place that was not just a folding seat, that we had at the Intersyndicale, because the real power was the unions during the most crucial crisis, during a month, a month and a half, it was the Intersyndicale, it was she who created the central strike committee, but which was only an emanation, a little laborious, I tend to consider that it was a bit folkloric

RG: Because there are a lot of people, I think it started with the Cahiers de Mai and with the struggle of Yannick Guin, who talks about the Municipality of Nantes, he thinks it's nothing at all, that it's exaggerated

YC: It's a bit exaggerated, it's very frankly exaggerated, we protested only softly, because it was still good for us (laughs from RG and YC)! What was of the spectacle is good, it is true that it was for our aura in France and in Europe, it was not bad! I said that to Guin one day: "You made a bad book, but basically it was about us!" (Laughs from RG and YC)

RG: And that lasted for the month of May, then ended?



YC: We were nevertheless in Nantes among the last to enter, the last factories, it was in Nantes that it was happening, that is to say that we returned to order by saying to ourselves - we were young and full of hopes - that we were going to resume this in the fall. The gasoline had been redistributed, people were going on vacation, but we were going to take the thing back in September

RG: And what happens at the start of the school year?

We held on for a long time like that, on very anti-Leninist bases, we were against the grassroots committees, I don't know what, there were committees like that all over the place, but which were run by the Leninists, who were doing the Bolsheviks again and we were against that. I wrote something, a text, I don't know where it is, I could find it, which had been supported at the time by - we were still friends with the Situationists - by Guy Debord, it's "Address to the grassroots committees ", and it was precisely: "Defend yourself from the influences of ideologies, keep control of your destiny "to simplify a lot but which were held by the Leninists, who remade the blow of the Bolsheviks and we were against that. I wrote something, a text, I don't know where it is, I could find it, which had been supported at the time by - we were still friends with the Situationists - by Guy Debord, it's "Address to the grassroots committees ", and it was precisely: "Defend yourself from the influences of ideologies, keep control of your destiny "to simplify a lot

RG: And there were links with peasants at that time, with this Council of Nantes?

YC: Peasants, I don't think so, no. The peasants have always been apart, they have played spectacularly well, in particular being filmed during a demonstration where they had come to Nantes for three thousand with tractors, etc., they renamed the Place Royale the place of the people, which means that these images, commemoration scenes parade all the time, but in the end it was not at all at the heart of the movement, it was the campaign that came to support the city

RG: And when you say that you supported Sud-Aviation, the report, how did it work?

YC: Sud-Aviation was put on strike by the Trotskyists and anarchists of the FO, who were with us in the street against the Prefecture the day before. You surely know this episode, during the attack on the Prefecture, there was a negotiation between certain trade unionist teachers of the CGT and the Prefect, and the Prefect undertook to withdraw the complaints that were directed against me. , as president of AGEN-UNEF, there were complaints because of the demonstration of February 14, and then something in defamation, and then I do not know what, I did not care madly, I did not take care of That was the subject of demand, the withdrawal of complaints and he had reinstated, above all, the subsidy to AGEN-UNEF, which the General Council had removed from us following February 14. I believe that was a million at the time, no, it would have been ten thousand francs obviously, it was quite important at the time and we had made this subsidy available to the Sud-Aviation strike committee. So, I don't know how anymore, I'm pretty sure it's true, you know forty years later it's hard, I don't know how it's done anymore, I don't even rule out that it is simply a promise which was not followed by the facts, I do not know, but in any case, the political decision had been taken to put this money at the disposal of the strike committee of Sud-Aviation. There were a lot of visits to the Sud-Aviation picket line, it was quite nice, the weather was fine, it was quite this atmosphere of sixty-eight discussion, there were some in the city squares and then there were also some in certain occupied companies or factories, in the Faculty of Letters as well. But this is the spirit of May that everyone has been able to know

RG: And did you speak in public from time to time?

YC: Yes

RG: How was that?

YC: Sometimes a lot, on May 13 for example, I remember that because I remember it was a very beautiful speech, because I went around the world saying that this movement that we represented in Nantes and in France, since it was after the first Parisian riots, he came from afar, since in Berkley, in Berlin, well, and I had had an incident, that's why I remember it, I had an incident with the Communists, when I arrived in Warsaw, I mentioned that and it was swollen at that time, there were twenty thousand demonstrators and on that a lot of CGT, and someone from, a a certain Molinari, who has since committed suicide, said: "Ah, you can't say such things, they're not the same thing!" », There was this, in Nantes we could afford to say that, in Paris when Cohn-Bendit was doing it, the CGT was no longer there, he had spoken, it was a bit the same thing, when he spoke of the Stalinist scoundrels, but only

they did not organize a meeting together with speaking from the CGT and speaking from the representative of the students. And there, everyone was there. I remember also intervening in Saint Nazaire, in a very inter-union forum, I don't know what I said, but it was, no memory. I intervened so I told you earlier before a processional demonstration, which did not have much to ask, yes quite often the CGT itself asked the UNEF - it was us - to intervene, well I was president, I intervened,

RG: And then after to come back to the start of the school year and then the rest, there are some who say that '68 was only a beginning, for you it was a beginning or was it an end?

YC: Yeah, I know what you mean. It is neither a beginning nor an end, it was a pivotal time, a moment, a passage between a very old time in many respects, which I knew well, it really sends me back to the minor seminary, and this society of the nineteenth which is almost that of the thirteenth, yes when you see this film "The name of the rose" which was taken from, well I know all the hymns that are sung in there, I know them, I have them sung, and I don't know if it's the thirteenth or the twelfth The name of the rose, but there is something there that ended in '68, that does not mean that there was not the revolution French and then the revolution everywhere, the Enlightenment, etc., but still there was in France in any case a good throwback to the nineteenth century, a kind of takeover of society by the Catholic religion and it continued undoubtedly because of the weakening of the whole society by the war of '14 -'18, it continued until the second war, that it was continued with the Thirty Glorious Years, where there were very strong contradictions between the new appetites, the enrichment we were talking about earlier, and then the old structures of society, which no longer fit at all. , and then all that indeed was visibly shaken up in '68, it was the case in France but we find similar paths in comparable countries, it is at that time. It wasn't over after '68, but like all joints, it was both an end and a beginning, but I think that in terms of morals in particular, of personal life, the change was seen very quickly, long before the arrival of the left in power, Giscard-Destaing had understood that well from '68, he had made an interesting speech, he had understood very well, Mitterrand had understood nothing, nor Mendes France, they had gone on ancient paths, but Giscard he had understood that, that's how he legalized the 'abortion, divorce by mutual consent, coming of age at eighteen, lots of things that were wrong on their own, the proof is that it was not until '74 for this to happen. The left, she, in my opinion, took advantage of the sixty-eight breath, when she had nothing to do with it at all, and she did nothing,

RG: And you yourself continued to campaign after '68?

YC: No. After '68, I had strongly contributed to the creation of the Council of Nantes, but there were stories in there, as always when there are defeats and settling of scores, there

were very violent tensions. , even unworthy things, not so much inside the Council of Nantes, but there were pamphlets, really disgusting things, I said to myself all the same at that time, luckily we did not take the power because that would have been great, the return against others too, we are surprised to see terror set in, the trials, it's almost fatal, because when we take power with too many contradictions, we can do nothing with it, so we save the conscience that we have things by all means, and hey we create catastrophes. We had discussions like that at the Nantes Council, I remember some of us saying to others: "When you take power we will immediately go into the opposition!" », We had this conscience, and well I left the Council of Nantes a little bit before it dissolves itself, it did not last long, it lasted a year. It's also something that we can be quite happy with, in Nantes, it is that we may be veterans of '68, of '67, '66 and previous years if we want, each in his own way, but we are not veterans of the seventies, whereas most of our counterparts on the right and on the left, with "Liberation" and all that, "The cause of the people" and all these things, it was after I remember some of us saying to others: "When you take power we will immediately go into the opposition!" », We had this conscience, and well I left the Council of Nantes a little bit before it dissolves itself, it did not last long, it lasted a year. It's also something that we can be quite happy with, in Nantes, it is that we may be veterans of '68, of '67, '66 and previous years if we want, each in his own way, but we are not veterans of the seventies, whereas most of our counterparts on the right and on the left, with "Liberation" and all that, "The cause of the people" and all these things, it was after I remember some of us saying to others: "When you take power we will immediately go into the opposition!" », We had this conscience, and well I left the Council of Nantes a little bit before it dissolves itself, it did not last long, it lasted a year. It's also something that we can be quite happy with, in Nantes, it is that we may be veterans of '68, of '67, '66 and previous years if we want, each in his own way, but we are not veterans of the seventies, whereas most of our counterparts on the right and on the left, with "Liberation" and all that, "The cause of the people" and all these things, it was after "When you take power we will immediately go into the opposition!" », We had this conscience, and well I left the Council of Nantes a little bit before it dissolves itself, it did not last long, it lasted a year. It's also something that we can be quite happy with, in Nantes, it is that we may be veterans of '68, of '67, '66 and previous years if we want, each in his own way, but we are not veterans of the seventies, whereas most of our counterparts on the right and on the left, with "Liberation" and all that, "The cause of the people" and all these things, it was after it didn't last long, it lasted a year. It's also something that we can be quite happy with, in Nantes, it is that we may be veterans of '68, of '67, '66 and previous years if we want, each in his own way, but we are not veterans of the seventies, whereas most of our counterparts on the right and on the left, with "Liberation" and all that, "The cause of the people" and all these things, it was after it didn't last long, it lasted a year. It's also something that we can be quite happy with, in Nantes, it is that we may be veterans of '68, of '67, '66 and previous years if we want, each in his own way, but we are not veterans of the seventies, whereas

most of our counterparts on the right and on the left, with "Liberation" and all that, "The cause of the people" and all these things, it was after

RG: While you, it was already over

YC: When we saw that it would go wrong and that we had no hope of succeeding in the revolution, somewhere maybe we were happy about it, because these discussions that I am evoking were realizations aborted, which may have led some to suicide, in different forms, but we closed the book quite quickly, and we did well. And we let the others recover, the leftists first and after the Union of the Left. I've always been against the Union of the Left, I thought it was a sham and I didn't like it, so that didn't lead me to go and militate on the right, it's quite difficult, even if objectively my ideas were perhaps largely as much of the right as of the left, also of the republican right as of the left, in any case not socialist

RG: So in '81 who did you vote for?

YC: Frankly I care a lot about the secrecy of the ballot (laughs from RG), no but I have no memory of that, I don't know, it's not impossible that I voted for

RG: But you did not welcome the arrival to power of the left?

YC: No. We were happy to see the other go, even if he understood well what we could get from '68, we weren't fair, there was popular joy, a very strong illusion of the return of the sixty-eight movement. , and then Lang, Mitterrand, knew how to do it very well, Badataire (?), we were the last in Europe to abolish the death penalty and it was the no more ultra of the world revolution, I considered that, from the beginning, like a sham. So I didn't campaign at all during that time. I did my job, I was a lawyer quite late, in '75 I became a lawyer, I traveled a lot, I worked in Bulgaria, I did a lot of things, so I worked in ASSEDIC, I have done a lot of trades, I have always worked, I

RG: But not a tax inspector

YC: No (RG laughs), I only failed the exam, I was in charge of employment studies at ASSEDIC, I was employed in the Scriptures, I was a travel agent, and then around thirty years old I said to myself, and until this moment when I asked myself the question, I was in the beast fidelity to '68, roughly: we must do nothing, as we could not do the revolution, there is nothing interesting to do, and hey we do nothing. Cultural and individual revolution, I remembered a memory of hitchhiking when I was a young high school student and I went to Paris to see my Dutch fiancée whom I had met in the context of the international work camps, when I returned to Paris. stop I had been taken by a lawyer, at the time it was nice hitchhiking, there were not too many attacks and people took hitchhikers to talk and like that, a kind of free psychoanalysis, without consequences, he too had become a lawyer at thirty, and he told me that he was said, a little before turning thirty, that it is at thirty that one becomes a failure. And so I was in Bulgaria, I was a travel agent, that is to say in fact the life of a patachon, my mother had told me so much that I will not please girls that I had to finish convince myself of the contrary, tourists as well as Bulgarians, but without speaking of the Slivova and all the earthly benefits that can be found there, I went to Istanbul a lot too, I was in Moscow too and this was an interesting experience, hotel and the foreign representative and hotel customers, we were celebrating the maid's birthday, things that we don't do in our world. To be honest, I came back from there still very anti-Communist but with the idea that we could behave better with the proletarians, it would suffice to put more respect, humanity and then no one would want communism, or even socialism, it seems to me, but hey, that was also part of my thinking. I close this parenthesis on the discovery of communism and I come back to that moment in my life when I told myself that I was going to become a failure, always partying, I had a few specimens of old people in my kind at the time and that did not excite me, and so I came back to Nantes to pass my exams in disaster to be a lawyer. In fact I had not studied

RG: In '75

YC: Yes, it was in '75, and I was received first in the CAPA, Certificate of aptitude for the legal profession, and therefore I became a lawyer at that time

RG: And you mentioned a first marriage

YC: Yes, I was still married at that time to Gwenolène, we separated in '79 and we divorced later. Since we still kept from our anarchist past, or at least I kept, the disrespect for conventions, and therefore I did not want to initiate proceedings. So we stayed, besides in the meantime I had two other children from a new common-law relationship before we

ended up divorcing and suddenly I remarried, I am still married to a woman lawyer, but who works not with me at the moment

RG: Last question: when I looked for your name, I saw that you were deputy mayor, so when were you elected to city council?

YC: That in '89. So I served three terms with Jean-Marc Ayrault, I was initially at the municipal council in charge of tourism, it was an extremely modest position, which I had had great difficulty in obtaining because I was not supported. by any party. I had an idea, I wanted to be elected municipal, it was somewhat difficult from a cultural point of view for me, like to become a lawyer, but I wanted to do it because I was very interested at that time in psychology of Jung, to collective consciousness and I was convinced that there had been an attempt in '85 to do in Nantes - I had not participated in that - to make an exhibition on triangular trade, Nantes was the first slave port of France, and the right had refused, it was Michel Chauty who was Mayor at the time, had refused this exhibition, it had troubled me, it had referred me to this story of the collective unconscious and I told myself that Nantes would suffer all the time - I like very much my town - would suffer from a certain complex all the time if it did not elucidate parts of its past which were causing it harm. There are lots of chapters, there is the French Revolution, I think we haven't dealt with it yet because the left obviously didn't want to deal with it, but there was that slave past there. And so I came back with a program, which was to say, to want to express the posthumous lesson of the Nantes slaves, in '88 I had written that, and I had tried to convince Ayrault, therefore the future mayor to take me for do that.

RG: To buy from you?

YC: In short, but it was a very fun sport, because I had to say over and over again that obviously I had not become a Trotskyist, that I was not a socialist either, that I was not a communist, j 'was none of that at all, but as an independent I was aware of Jean, like of Alexandre Hébert, and was telling him that too, that he would look at Ayrault's list with a minimum of sympathy if I were in. So it was civil society but supposed to ease the difficulties with a fringe of Trotskyists, who could have, in reality they had no intention of presenting a list at all, so I sold with the help of my friend Alexander I planned absence of a Trotskyist list to find myself on the list. So I took care of

RG: On the slave trade past?

YC: Yes, it was the biggest exhibition in the world

RG: When was that?

YC: From '92 to '94. Suddenly the Mayor found me not bad and gave me the responsibility of international relations for a second term. And then he had problems with the justice system, it was a miracle for the criminal lawyer that I am, and so he kept me for a third term (Laughs from RG). Unfortunately it's all over, so he didn't keep me for the fourth, and as he played a trick on me, politically it's very commonplace, he made me believe until the last moment that 'he kept me, and that I would therefore continue to work on the international relations of the city of Nantes, which interested me a lot. I consider that the political emancipation of cities is important and that their international policy of decentralized cooperation in particular with cities in Africa, America, Haiti, that interested me a lot, and he took me until the last moment so that I did not have time to make a list, and so I was furious, I tried to introduce myself anyway, well and that's when I contacted the opposition list who was delighted to welcome me in its ranks and I was elected city councilor a month ago. I resigned immediately, because it was difficult to find myself on the city council with my old friends, so I'm a free man again, that's it at the last moment so that I didn't have time to make a list, and so I was furious, I tried to introduce myself anyway, well and that's when I made contact with the list of opposition which was delighted to welcome me to its ranks and I was elected municipal councilor a month ago. I resigned immediately, because it was difficult to find myself on the city council with my old friends, so I'm a free man again, that's it at the last moment so that I didn't have time to make a list, and so I was furious, I tried to introduce myself anyway, well and that's when I made contact with the list of opposition which was delighted to welcome me to its ranks and I was elected municipal councilor a month ago. I resigned immediately, because it was difficult to find myself on the city council with my old friends, so I'm a free man again, that's it

RG: Okay, I think we can end there, thank you very much

YC: Beh listen, I hope I wasn't too talkative ...