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Managing Global Student Migration in the Twentieth Century

The Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris Experiment

Edited by
Dzovinar Kévonian · Guillaume Tronchet

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Dzovinar Kévonian · Guillaume Tronchet
Editors

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Localizing Global Student Migration: Geopolitics, Individual Path, and Transnational Dynamics

Dzovinar Kévonian and Guillaume Tronchet

What is the history of global student migration? Over the past thirty years, this research field has experienced remarkable growth, partly due to the surge in student migration. Although this phenomenon dates back to the Middle Ages and persisted through the modern era, it initially involved only a few hundred individuals each year. From the late nineteenth century onwards, as universities expanded to train the managers of industrial and post-industrial societies, there was a steady increase in inter-university relations and the number of students seeking higher education abroad. Europe has traditionally been the main hub in this global university landscape, with the exception of a brief period during

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and immediately after World War II, when North America (USA and Canada) surpassed it. From just 80,000 mobile students during the interwar period, the number steadily grew in the second half of the twentieth century, surpassing 100,000 after 1945, reaching around 500,000 in the 1970s, over a million in the 1980s, and over 2 million by the 2000s. By 2024, the number of mobile students has tripled to over 6 million and is projected to reach 10 million by 2030, according to UNESCO.¹

To explain the rise of these migrations, their geographical distribution, and their effects on organizations and societies, historians generally focus on three areas of analysis: the sociology of mobile students, the political and diplomatic history of strategies to encourage mobility, and the study of the student experience, particularly in relation to practices of student internationalism.

The first area focuses on the social history of demand, examining the backgrounds of mobile students, their national affiliations, social origins, gender, and their political, cultural, and religious allegiances. This analysis identifies three primary dynamics: national elites seeking social legitimization through study abroad; knowledge migrants pursuing qualifications unavailable in their home countries due to underdeveloped university systems; and those excluded from higher education at home, leading to academic exile. Pioneering work in this area by Victor Karady in the 1990s and 2000s,² followed by research conducted by the European network led by Hartmut R. Peter and Natalia Tikhonov in the 2000s–2010s,³ and studies on specific social groups since 2010–2020, such as the collective

¹ Isabella Löhr, *Globale Bildungsmobilität 1850–1930. Von der Bekehrung der Welt zur globalen studentischen Gemeinschaft* (Moderne europäische Geschichte, Bd. 21.) Göttingen, Wallstein 2021; H. Perraton, *International Students 1860–2010: Policy and practice round the world* (Cham, 2020), 195–224

² V. Karady, 'Student mobility and Western universities: patterns and unequal exchanges in the European academic market, 1880–1930' in C. Charle, J. Schriewer and P. Wagner (eds.), *Transnational Intellectual Networks: Forms of academic knowledge and the search for cultural identities* (Frankfurt am Main, 2004).

³ PETER, Hartmut R., and TIKHONOV, Natalia (eds.), *Universitäten als Brücken in Europa/Les Universités: des ponts à travers l'Europe*, Peter Lang, 2003; FERTÉ, Patrick, BARRERA, Caroline (eds.), *Étudiants de l'exil. Migrations internationales et universités refuges (XVIe–XXe s.)*, Presses universitaires du Mirail, 2009.

work on African and Arab students in the USSR and Eastern Europe⁴ or Sarah Legrandjacques' research on student mobility in colonial Asia, all fall within this framework.⁵

Concurrently, other studies focus on the dynamics of supply and university policies aimed at developing, regulating, or curbing student mobility. These efforts are part of a renewed transnational history of universities,⁶ seeking to understand the social conditions enabling mobility within the contexts of competition and collaboration between states and universities. This includes research on "academic diplomacy"

⁴ DE SAINT MARTIN Monique, SCARFO GHELLAB Grazia and MELLAKH Kamal (dir.), *Étudier à l'Est : Trajectoires d'étudiants africains et arabes en URSS et dans les pays d'Europe de l'Est*, Karthala, 2015

⁵ Sara Legrandjacques, "Voies étudiantes : pour une histoire globale des mobilités étudiantes en Asie (Inde britannique - Indochine française, années 1850–1940)", PhD thesis in History, Université Panthéon-Sorbonne - Paris I, 2021.

⁶ C. Charle, J. Schriewer and P. Wagner (eds), *Transnational Intellectual Networks: Forms of academic knowledge and the search for cultural identities* (Frankfurt am Main, 2004).

in western countries⁷ or in Soviet Union,⁸ transatlantic university relations,⁹ regional cooperation policies,¹⁰ and public and private scholarship

⁷ On this notion, see G. Tronchet, « Diplomatie universitaire ou diplomatie culturelle? La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris entre deux rives (1920–1940) », in Dzovinar Kévonian and Guillaume Tronchet, eds, *La Babel étudiante. La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (1920–1950)*, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2013, pp. 59–88 ; G. Tronchet, 'Savoirs en diplomatie: une histoire sociale et internationale de la politique universitaire internationale de la France', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne (2014); T. Adam and C. A. Lerg, 'Diplomacy on campus: The political dimensions of academic exchange in the North Atlantic', *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, 13, 4 (2015), 299–310; G. Tronchet, 'The defeat of university autonomy: French academic diplomacy, mobility scholarships and exchange programs (1880s–1930s)', in G. Scott-Smith and L. Tournès (eds) *Global Exchanges: Scholarships and Transnational Circulations in the Modern World* (New York 2017), 50–64; G. Tronchet, 'L'expertise universitaire en diplomatie: entre valorisation sociale et assignation à résidence, 1880–1940', in S. Jeannesson, F. Jesné and E. Schakenbourg (eds), *Experts et expertises en diplomatie: la mobilisation des compétences dans les relations internationales, du Congrès de Westphalie à la naissance de l'ONU* (Rennes 2018), 305–317; C. A. Lerg, *Universitätsdiplomatie. Wissenschaft und Prestige in den transatlantischen Beziehungen, 1890–1920* (Göttingen 2019). On Great Britain, see also H. Perraton, *Learning Abroad: A history of the Commonwealth scholarship and fellowship plan* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 2009); Perraton, Hillary, *A History of Foreign Students in Britain*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014; Tamson Pietsch, *Empire of Scholars Universities, Networks and the British Academic World, 1850–1939*, Manchester University Press, 2013.

⁸ C. Katsakioris, 'Les étudiants de pays arabes formés en Union soviétique pendant la Guerre froide (1956–1991)', *Revue Européenne des Migrations Internationales*, 35, 2 (2016), 13–38; KATSAKIORIS, Constantin, *The Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and Africa in the Cold War: The Educational Ties*, Working paper series des SFB 1199 an der Universität Leipzig, n°16, 2019;

⁹ P.A. Kramer, 'Is the world our campus? International students and US global power in the long twentieth century', *Diplomatic History*, 33, 5 (2009), 775–806; Werner, Anja, *The Transatlantic World of Higher Education Americans at German Universities, 1776–1914*, Berghan Books, 2013.

¹⁰ RAVINET, Pauline, *La genèse et l'institutionnalisation du Processus de Bologne. Entre chemin de traverse et sentier de dépendance*, doctoral thesis in political science, IEP de Paris, 2007; TEICHLER, Ulrich (et alii.), *Der berufliche Ertrag der ERASMUS Mobilität. Die Auswirkungen internationalen Erfahrungen auf die Berufswege von ehemals mobilen Studierenden und Lehrenden*, BMBF, 2009

programs,¹¹ supporting both voluntary and forced mobility, such as that of refugee students.¹²

Lastly, a body of historiography explores what happens during student mobility experiences, focusing on the intersection of youth leadership, international and transnational student sociability, and processes of social and political mobilization. For example, recent studies on student internationalism between the wars and during the Cold War,¹³ as well as on colonial and post-colonial student mobility as a breeding ground for nationalism and anti-imperialism, particularly in France¹⁴ and Germany,¹⁵ are noteworthy.

Let's make here a little note on terminology: why speak of student migration? How does *student migration* differ from *student mobility*? Most recent analyses of academic globalization that distinguish between *migration* and *mobility* agree that the distinction is based on three main criteria: duration of stay (mobility is shorter-term); purpose of movement (mobility is often associated with a temporary stay as part of an exchange semester, whereas migration is linked to a longer-term project of settlement and integration); and geographical scope (mobility is more

¹¹ G. Gemelli and R. MacLeod (eds.), *American Foundations in Europe: Grant-giving policies, cultural diplomacy and Trans-Atlantic relations, 1920–1980* (Brussels, 2003); Tournès and G. Scott-Smith (eds.), *Global Exchanges: Scholarships and transnational circulations in the modern world* (New York, 2018); DURAND, Antonin (dir.), *Les voyages forment la jeunesse. Les boursières scientifiques David-Weill à la découverte du monde (1910–1939)*, Presses universitaires de Strasbourg, 2020.

¹² TRONCHET, Guillaume, “L'accueil des étudiants réfugiés au XX^e siècle. Un chantier d'histoire globale”, *Monde(s). Histoire, espaces, relations*, n°15, 2019, pp. 93–116

¹³ W. Walton, *Internationalism, National Identities, and Study Abroad: France and the United States, 1890–1970* (Stanford, CA, 2010); Daniel Laqua, *Activism in the 'Students' League of Nations': International Student Politics and the Confédération Internationale des Étudiants, 1919–1939*, *The English Historical Review*, Volume 132, Issue 556, June 2017, pp. 605–637; and for a recent synthesis, see Laqua, D., & Papadogiannis, N. (2023). Youth and internationalism in the twentieth century: an introduction. *Social History*, 48(1), 1–16.

¹⁴ GOEBEL Michael, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism*, Cambridge University Press, 2015; BLUM, Françoise, *Trajectoires militantes et (re)conversions: à propos de la FEANF. Que sont-ils/elles devenus-e-s?*, Habilitation à diriger des recherches, EHESS, 2016.

¹⁵ SLOBODIAN, Quinn, *Foreign Front: Third World Politics in Sixties West Germany*, Duke University Press, 2012; PUGACH, Sara, “Agents of dissent: African student organizations in the German Democratic Republic”, *Africa*, n°89, Cambridge University Press, 2019, pp. 90–108

commonly discussed within national or regional frameworks, while migration tends to be framed in an intercontinental context).¹⁶ However, this distinction is often shaped by social and political perceptions: students from the Global North are more frequently described as mobile, while those from the Global South are more often categorized as migrants. This reflects unequal, ethnocentric representations linked to students' origins and economic status.

We find these semantic distinctions inadequate and propose a different approach. In our view, migration refers to a legal and political reality shaped by the regulation of interstate relations on an international scale—crossing borders, obtaining passports and residence visas, and differentiating between nationals and foreigners in access to education or the labor market. In contrast, mobility describes a physical dynamic of movement, which can apply to both international and domestic movements.

As this book contributes to a historical sociology of the international—focusing on the social and political dynamics governing student flows to France—we have chosen to use the term migration to encompass all the situations described (including exchange students, free movers or academic refugees). However, we occasionally use the term mobility when referring specifically to spatial movement.

Bringing together these different approaches, while addressing political and geopolitical issues, individual trajectories, and transnational dynamics, is a complex task, especially as it requires multi-scalar analysis (local, national, international, global). A potential approach is to examine the spatial and social positioning of the actors involved and the cultural transfers in question. As Jacques Revel observes, “there is no hiatus, let alone opposition, between local and global history [...], as the experience of an individual, a group, or a space allows us to grasp [...] a specific modulation of global history”.¹⁷ Additionally, as Blaise Wilfert-Portal notes, “the complex territoriality of cultural phenomena is not only in the eye of the researcher: it is regularly asserted by the actors themselves, formulated by them, and integrated into their strategies and resources, whether

¹⁶ R. KING and A. M., FINDLAY, “Student migration”, in M. MARTINIELLO & J. RATH (eds.), *An introduction to international migration studies: European perspectives*, Amsterdam University Press, 2012, pp. 259–280.

¹⁷ REVEL J., *Jeux d'échelles*, Paris, Éditions de l'EHESS, 2004, p. 26.

consciously or not”.¹⁸ In this context, the case of the Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris (CIUP) provides a stimulating observational framework. This is the purpose of this book, which builds upon two previous works by the editors, originally published in French,¹⁹ partially revised and presented here for the first time in English, supplemented by new, unpublished case studies conducted as part of the GlobalYouth research program.²⁰

PARIS’S FIRST MODERN INTERNATIONAL CAMPUS

Located in the southern part of the French capital, the CIUP is an expansive campus inaugurated in 1925. It spans over 30 hectares and includes approximately 40 houses for French and international students and researchers, as well as facilities for health (dispensary and later hospital), sports (swimming pool, gymnasium, and sports fields), dining, and cultural activities (libraries, music rooms, theater). At the time of its creation, there were no university campuses of this type in France, either in Paris or elsewhere. From the outset, the CIUP was designed as an innovative institution for campus life—uniquely so in France at its inception—offering modern comforts aligned with the hygienist trends of the 1920s and 1930s, and setting the stage for the development of French student life policy from the 1940s and 1950s onward.

The history of the CIUP’s construction can be divided into three phases. The first phase, during the founders’ era, extends from the 1920s to the Second World War and saw the construction of nineteen student

¹⁸ Blaise Wilfert-Portal, "L'histoire culturelle de l'Europe d'un point de vue transnational", *Revue Sciences/Lettres*, 1 | 2013.

¹⁹ KÉVONIAN, Dzovinar, TRONCHET, Guillaume (dir.), *La Babel étudiante La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (1920–1950)*, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2013; *Le Campus monde. La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris, des années 1950 à nos jours*, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2022.

²⁰ *A Global Youth in the Making: the 200,000 Residents of the Cité internationale universitaire in 20th-Century Paris*, Project GlobalYouth, financed by the French National Research Agency, Institut d'histoire moderne et contemporaine (University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, Ecole normale supérieure ENS-PSL, CNRS), lead by Guillaume Tronchet, ANR-17-CE28-0005, 2017–2022.

and service pavilions between 1925 and 1938.²¹ During this period, the CIUP accommodated up to 2,500 residents. The second phase began in the 1950s and resulted in the addition of seventeen pavilions between 1950 and 1969, increasing the CIUP's capacity to approximately 5,500 residents.²² The third phase, from 2010 to the present, involved the opening of ten new pavilions, with the goal of accommodating around 8,000 students simultaneously by 2025, and managing a total flow of approximately 12,000 people over a full academic year, considering varying lengths of stay.

Consequently, the CIUP has become an urban space in its own right, grappling with typical challenges such as land acquisition, spatial planning, architectural considerations, and connectivity to transport networks. It is also integrated into numerous development and expansion projects of both the University of Paris and the City of Paris throughout the twentieth century. The architecture of the CIUP, designed by internationally renowned architects (such as Le Corbusier and Dudok), is a notable feature of this campus, making it an exceptional institution in the French and global university landscape, where most international campuses elsewhere are characterized by architectural unity.²³

As an urban space, the CIUP is also an academic environment, operating under the authority of the Rector Chancellor of the University of Paris, from which it emerged in the early 1920s. It was established with the dual aims of addressing the student housing crisis that had plagued the French capital since the late nineteenth century²⁴ and enhancing the attractiveness of the University of Paris in a competitive international market for foreign elite training. Since July 1925, the *Fondation nationale de la Cité internationale universitaire de Paris* has been responsible for developing and administering the campus, managing its assets, enforcing

²¹ On this first period, see D. Kévonian and G. Tronchet, *La Babel étudiante*. Tronchet, *La Babel étudiante. La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (1920–1950)*, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2013.

²² On this second period, see D. Kévonian and G. Tronchet, *Le Campus monde. La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris, de 1945 à nos jours*, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2022.

²³ Cf. Brigitte Blanc, *La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris : de la cité-jardin à la cité-monde*, Lieux-dits, 2017.

²⁴ Moulinier P., *Les étudiants étrangers à Paris au XIX^e siècle*, Rennes, PUR, 2012. Également: Bettar Y., Birk F., *Étudiants étrangers en France. L'émergence de nouveaux pôles d'attraction au début du XX^e siècle*, Nancy, Presses universitaires de Nancy, 2009.

its internal regulations, and welcoming its residents. While the Foundation's general missions have remained consistent over the past century, the profile of its administrators has evolved significantly, impacting the development of its institutional strategy. Initially led by political figures, diplomats, and academics—such as André Honnorat, former minister and senator, president of the CIUP from 1925 to 1948²⁵; Raoul Dautry, former minister, who succeeded him (1948–1951); and André-François Poncet, former minister and ambassador, president of the CIUP from 1951 to 1962—the Foundation gradually came under the leadership of senior French civil servants. Similarly, the governance of the CIUP, which before 1940 was dominated by the Jewish bourgeoisie of the Third Republic, faced a dramatic shift due to the anti-Semitic policies of Vichy, the Aryanization of the French economy, and Nazi extermination policies,²⁶ leading to dominance by social Catholics and Christian Democrats in the post-war period.

However, the CIUP is not a monolithic entity with a singular French perspective. It is important to distinguish between the *Fondation nationale* and the approximately twenty pavilions under its control and management, known as “maisons rattachées” and the other pavilions, which are generally financed by foreign states. While subject to the CIUP's common rules, these pavilions are managed autonomously by private foundations and are commonly referred to as “maisons non rattachées”. This distinction underscores another fundamental aspect of the CIUP: its international dimension.

The CIUP is distinctly international in its composition. Historically, over a third of its residents were foreign students in the 1930s, and today that figure exceeds 80%. The campus also practices “brassage,” a system of integrating students from various nationalities within each pavilion.²⁷

Additionally, the architectural diversity of the CIUP reflects its international character. Many buildings were designed in styles reminiscent of

²⁵ See G. Tronchet, *André Honnorat. Un visionnaire en politique*, Hémisphères éditions/Maisonneuve et Larose/, 2020.

²⁶ GRANGE Cyril, *Une élite parisienne: les familles de la grande bourgeoisie juive (1870–1939)*, Paris, CNRS Éditions, 2016.

²⁷ This practice means that a percentage of the students admitted by the admissions committees of each foundation or house are housed in another foundation or house, giving foreign students a double cultural experience: coming to France and living in a house that represents a second cultural and linguistic environment.

World's Fair pavilions, each symbolizing a different "national culture," sometimes incorporating elements inspired by folklore. Alongside contributions from the French state and local authorities (City of Paris, *départements*, and *régions*), the CIUP pavilions were primarily funded by international patrons, private philanthropists, and foreign governments who sought to provide accommodations for students from their countries studying in France.

The CIUP's ambitions are inherently international. In the aftermath of World War I, driven by the imperial and internationalist spirit prevalent among Western elites of the time,²⁸ its founders assigned it a dual mission: enhancing France's international appeal and fostering peace among nations by uniting the global elite of youth in training, in anticipation of the new League of Nations. The CIUP's idealistic goal is to teach future ruling elites from various nations to understand and respect one another to secure lasting peace. This vision is rooted in a pacifist utopia based on applying liberal solidarist philosophy to international relations—a form of liberal internationalism that posits the possibility of building an "international community" by leveraging the potential of each individual to be, in Alfred Zimmern's words, "educated to a global social consciousness".²⁹

However, this idealistic vision transcends mere description and prompts a deeper inquiry into the projections and expectations imposed on the institution by various stakeholders, including both French and foreign governments and patrons. These projections are embedded within specific political, social, and cultural contexts, which need to be carefully deconstructed and analyzed.

AN ACADEMIC DIPLOMACY ARENA: STUDENT MIGRATION IN THE STRUGGLE OF NATIONS

Considering the CIUP within its global context is crucial because, since the late nineteenth century, the internationalization of knowledge has been a pivotal component of national power. For "imperial nations," this meant extending their economic, political, or colonial dominance beyond

²⁸ Cf. CHARLE C., *La crise des sociétés impériales. Allemagne, France, Grande-Bretagne (1900–1940)*, Paris, Seuil, 2001.

²⁹ Quoted in SMITH M., *Realist thought from Weber to Kissinger*, Louisiana State University Press, 1986, pp. 55–56.

their borders by promoting a cultural model with varying degrees of universalist intent.³⁰ For other nations, particularly emerging states, the goal was to enhance the availability of high-quality education that was not yet available domestically. These nations sought to address this need through “planned” strategies for training functional elites abroad.³¹

As a result, the transnational intellectual field has been shaped by competition among major powers—primarily Germany, France, Great Britain, and the United States—whose state actors aimed to attract foreign elites seeking higher education by offering comparative advantages, such as scholarships and special programs.³² At the same time, these states

³⁰ CHARLE C., “Enseignement supérieur et expansion internationale (1870–1930): des instituts pour un nouvel empire?”, in HEILBRON J., LENOIR R., SAPIRO G., PARGAMIN P. (dir.), *Pour une histoire des sciences sociales. Hommage à Pierre Bourdieu*, Paris, Fayard, 2004, p. 323.

³¹ KARADY V., “L’émergence d’un espace européen des connaissances sur l’homme en société: cadres institutionnels et démographiques”, in SAPIRO G. (ed.), *L’espace intellectuel en Europe*, *op. cit.* p. 60.

³² Cf. KARADY V., “La migration internationale d’étudiants en Europe, 1890–1940”, *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, n°145, December 2002, pp. 47–60; MANITAKIS N., “Les migrations estudiantines en Europe, 1890–1930”, in LEBOUTTE R. (ed.), *Migrations et migrants dans une perspective historique: permanences et innovations*, New York-Brussels-Berlin, European University Press, 2000, pp. 243–270; PETER H. R. and TIKHONOV N. (eds.), *Les Universités, des ponts à travers l’Europe. Études sur l’histoire des migrations étudiantes*, Frankfurt-Am-Main, Peter Lang, 2003; FERTÉ P., BARRERA C. (dir.), *Migrations internationales et universités refuges (XVI^e -XX^e siècles)*, Toulouse, Presses universitaires du Mirail, 2009. For a perspective on France: “Mutations de la science et des universités en France depuis 1945”, CHAPOULIE J.-M., FRIDENSON P. and PROST A. (dir.), special issue of *Revue du Mouvement social*, no. 233, 201; TRONCHET G., *Savoirs en diplomatie*, *op. cit.*

sought to integrate these knowledge migrants into their national immigration policies to better manage their influx³³ as part of a broader strategy of “academic diplomacy”.³⁴

An examination of the geography of the CIUP pavilions reveals the evolution of this geopolitics of student mobility and the development of academic diplomacy. The initial pavilions established in the interwar years, such as the *Collège franco-britannique*, *Fondation des Etats-Unis*, *Maison des étudiants argentins*, and *Maison du Japon*, mirrored both the international networks of French scientific institutions and the strategic priorities of French diplomacy or colonial policy, as exemplified by the *Maison des étudiants indochinois*. Similarly, CIUP leaders like André Honnorat and mathematician Paul Appell, Rector of the University of Paris (1920–1925), connected the institution to the networks of Geneva internationalism and American philanthropy, including organizations such as the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the Rockefeller Foundation.³⁵

This highlights a fundamental aspect of the political reality of institutions managing student migration: their role in shaping a new international order. This new order, predicated on “the triumph of democracy and economic liberalism across Europe,” rested on “the right of peoples to self-determination and the full sovereignty of states,” with “the ideal European state being a nation-state in the French tradition—one based on the protection of individual rights rather than the recognition of historical or ethnic communities”.³⁶ The CIUP’s involvement in this dynamic

³³ Cf. in particular MANITAKIS N., “Étudiants étrangers, universités françaises et marché de l’emploi du travail intellectuel (fin XIX^e -années 1930) : certifier sans gratifier, des titres universitaires pour l’exportation”, in GUICHARD E. and NOIRIEL G. (dir.), *Construction des nationalités et immigration dans la France contemporaine*, Paris, Presses de l’ENS, 1997 pp. 123–154; see also part five of GREEN N., POINSOT M. (dir.), *Histoire de l’immigration et question coloniale en France*, Paris, Documentation française, 2008. It’s no coincidence that one of the Cité’s founders, André Honnorat, was heavily involved in redefining French immigration and nationality policies from the 1920s onwards. Cf. WEIL P., *Qu’est-ce qu’un français? Histoire de la nationalité française depuis la Révolution*, Paris, Grasset, 2002, pp. 76–82, 265–266.

³⁴ See above.

³⁵ Cf. G. Tronchet, “La Cité Universitaire: une joint-venture transnationale dans le Paris des années 1920 et 1930”, in Serge Jaumain and Pierre Van den Dungen (eds.), *Biermans-Lapôtre: Histoire d’un mécène et de sa fondation*, Brussels, 2013, pp. 85–100.

³⁶ SOUTOU G.-H., “La Première Guerre mondiale: une rupture dans l’évolution de l’ordre européen”, *Politique étrangère*, n°3/4, 2000, pp. 847–848.

is twofold: the institution either participated in existing efforts to redefine international relations³⁷ or actively promoted its own vision as part of a broader power strategy. In other words, by striving to serve as a practical school of international relations—a “school of nations” with its own model for integrating global student and academic elites through soft power diplomacy—the CIUP aimed to contribute to the establishment of enduring peace between nations in the wake of the First World War, within the framework of a global order dominated by Western, and preferably French, influence.

The influence of interstate diplomacy is evident not only in the houses that were constructed but also in the projects that failed.³⁸ The various attempts to establish a German house at the CIUP between the 1930s and the 1950s, along with unsuccessful proposals for houses associated with Central and Eastern European states between the wars, reflect a “virtual cartography” of the CIUP as envisioned by its leaders. These examples are emblematic of the constraints impacting the project’s realization. Moreover, the absence of a house at the CIUP did not imply a lack of significant student migration for certain nationalities or politically influential groups identified by French diplomacy, such as refugee students or exiles from Central and Eastern Europe. For these groups, the CIUP has occasionally offered accommodation within existing pavilions, as seen with Czechoslovak refugees in 1938.³⁹

This political ambition is mirrored in the legitimizing rhetoric of CIUP leaders, frequently articulated during inaugurations of new houses. By invoking the medieval “College of Nations,” these speeches aimed to root the creation of the CIUP in the long tradition of European university communities, thereby asserting their legacy. André Honnorat, for instance, often linked the medieval College of Nations with his “Society of Student Nations” and the League of Nations in Geneva. Similarly, Paris

³⁷ HORNE, J., “Reconstruction, Reform and Peace in Europe after the First World War”, in Verpoest L., Engelen L., Heynickx R., Schmidt J., Uyttenhove P., & Verstraete P. (Eds.), *Revival After the Great War: Rebuild, Remember, Repair, Reform*, Leuven University Press, pp. 297–316.

³⁸ BOCK, H. M., “Die Maison de l’Allemagne in der Cite Internationale Universitaire de Paris, 1956–1972. Zur Implimentierung des ersten kultupolitischen Projekts der Bundesrepublik in der französischen Hauptstadt”, *Lendemains - vergleichende Frankreichforschung*, 32, n°125, 2007, pp. 110–149.

³⁹ See Guillaume Tronchet, « Diplomatie universitaire ou diplomatie culturelle? », *op. cit.*

Rector Sébastien Charléty, during the 1930s foundation-laying for the Hellenic Foundation, remarked, “It’s the Acropolis visiting Montagne Saint-Geneviève”.⁴⁰ The CIUP project reflected a Eurocentric world-view, seeking to localize academic, political, and social exchanges in Paris, France, and thereby polarize an emerging international academic space.

Other international initiatives—some overlapping with the CIUP project—also found significant support at the CIUP. The extensive investments by international patrons, as detailed in various records, are less a sudden surge of disinterested generosity⁴¹ and more a manifestation of transnational philanthropy as a tool for shaping global space, what could be termed “philanthropic diplomacy”.⁴² American foundations, notably Carnegie and Rockefeller, play a prominent role in this context. It is notable that some foreign houses result not from state policies but from the efforts of individuals, associations, and private circles committed to establishing a student residence at the CIUP. For instance, the *Maison de Cuba*, initiated by French and Cuban figures and doctors’ associations, was made possible through financing from Pierre and Rosalia Sanchez Abreu in 1933.⁴³ Similarly, the *Maison des étudiants arméniens*, funded by philanthropist and political figure Boghos Nubar Pacha, aimed to reconstitute an Armenian elite devastated by genocide and the displacement of survivors and refugees. The CIUP exemplifies a major shift in international relations since the mid-nineteenth century: diplomacy has expanded beyond the realm of diplomats.⁴⁴ Alongside governments, “non-governmental actors, who develop ideas and implement actions in the realm of international regulation, have emerged as co-producers of

⁴⁰ AN, AJ/16/7041.

⁴¹ Cf. BOURDIEU P., *Raisons pratiques. Sur la théorie de l’action*, Paris, Seuil, 1994 (“Un acte désintéressé est-il possible?”, pp. 147–167).

⁴² TOURNÈS L., *L’argent de l’influence. American foundations and their European networks*, Paris, Autrement, 2010, p. 25.

⁴³ Pierre Sanchez Abreu (1890–1950) was the nephew of Professor Joseph Grancher, Pasteur’s research companion.

⁴⁴ BADIE B., *Le diplomate et l’intrus. L’entrée des sociétés dans l’arène internationale*, Paris, Fayard, 2008.

concepts such as the ‘society of nations’ and, later, the ‘international community’”.⁴⁵

After World War II, a significant turning point was reached. While the goals of the CIUP’s directors remained consistent, the international landscape of decolonization and the Cold War shifted the institution’s focus. The emphasis at CIUP moved from solely promoting French influence to accommodating foreign states aiming to establish their presence and project their influence in France. Constructing a pavilion at the CIUP became a means of cultural projection, integrated into the soft power strategies of both Western powers (such as the *Maison de l’Allemagne*, *Maison de l’Italie*, and *Maison du Portugal*) and newly independent states emerging from decolonization (including the *Maison de l’Inde*, *Maison du Maroc*, *Maison de la Tunisie*, and *Maison du Cambodge*).

From this perspective, the establishment of national pavilions at the CIUP mirrors the global expansion of the nation-state model, a consequence of the nationalization process underway in Europe since the nineteenth century.⁴⁶ This development underscores the need for national elites seeking to assert their influence on the international stage.⁴⁷ As Blaise Wilfert-Portal notes, “the invention of nations functions [...] in a highly international manner: nation-states recognize each other, which means, from a socio-historical perspective, that the elites governing these states only fully benefit when they receive recognition from other national elites”.⁴⁸ In this context, the CIUP can be viewed as a platform for identity entrepreneurs seeking to validate their presence in the international arena by financing a pavilion and sending their youth to Paris. Contrary to appearances, the CIUP is not merely the product of the French nation-state—or the French “imperial state,” to use Frédéric

⁴⁵ TOURNÈS L., *op. cit.* p. 192. See also: BOLI J. and THOMAS G. M. (eds.), *Constructing World Culture. International Nongovernmental Organizations since 1875*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1999.

⁴⁶ THIESSE A.-M., *La création des identités nationales. Europe XVIII -XX^{ee} s.*, Paris, Seuil, 1999.

⁴⁷ On this subject, see CHARLE C., *La crise des sociétés impériales*, *op. cit.* and Iriye A. and Saunier P.-Y. (eds.), *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan publication, 2009.

⁴⁸ WILFERT-PORTAL B., “Nation et nationalisme”, in DOSSE F., GARCIA P., OFFENSTADT N. (dir.), *Dictionnaire d’historiographie*, tome 2, Paris, Gallimard, 2010, p. 1100.

Cooper's term⁴⁹—but also a product of the transnational circulation of elites engaged in both national and international power strategies.⁵⁰

Certain trends have persisted: the post-war leadership of the CIUP, rooted in Christian Democratic circles, explains the strong connections with Europeanist groups and the creation of the German⁵¹ (1956) and Italian (1958) houses amid European economic integration. The CIUP's ongoing integration into the national-imperial framework, despite the decolonization movement, is still evident in projects such as the inauguration of the *Maison de la France d'Outre-mer* in 1951 (modeled on the *Maison de l'Indochine*, a residence for students from colonial territories) and the construction of pavilions for Morocco and Tunisia in 1953 (three years before their independence). Similarly, the Cambodian government's donation in 1950 facilitated the construction of the *Maison du Cambodge*, which was inaugurated post-independence.

In this new era, the CIUP operated within an international system structured by the Cold War. The CIUP did not build houses for Eastern European countries, aligning instead with the contours of the Iron Curtain and the Western bloc, in line with prevailing French foreign policy orientations. This period also saw a shift in the balance between private investment and government funding, as newly independent states from decolonization asserted their presence. Unlike the interwar period, new pavilions funded by private endowments were relatively rare from the 1950s onward (such as the *Maison Victor Lyon* in 1950, which followed the model of patronage by the upper middle classes of the III^e republic,⁵² or the *Maison du Portugal* in 1963, financed by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation) and were predominantly driven by foreign state authorities and/or government funds. Examples include the *Maison du Mexique* (1953), the *Maison du Brésil* (1959), the *Maison de l'Inde* (1968), and

⁴⁹ COOPER F., *Le colonialisme en question. Théorie, connaissance, histoire*, Paris, Payot, 2010.

⁵⁰ DEZALAY Y. and MADSEN M. R., "Espaces de pouvoir nationaux, espaces de pouvoir internationaux", in COHEN A., LACROIX B., RIUTORT P. (dir), *Nouveau manuel de science politique*, Paris, La Découverte, 2009, pp. 681–682.

⁵¹ Deed of gift signed in 1953, first representation of the FRG in France.

⁵² Victor-Lyon (1878–1963) was a businessman and art collector, married to Hélène Loeb (1883–1946), from an Alsatian Jewish family who had emigrated to Paris. In 1948, he donated 100 million francs to the University of Paris for the construction, fitting-out and management of a student residence in memory of his wife. Décret du 27 août 1948 in *JORF*, 1^{er} septembre 1948, p. 8641.

the *Maison de l'Iran* (1969). Newly independent states structured their internationalization and recognition by investing in universities of former imperial metropolises, often lacking sufficient internal university infrastructure or choosing to invest in the overseas education of their new elites through public scholarships.⁵³

The final decade of the twentieth century was marked by a dynamic process of renovation and modernization of facilities to meet new expectations of student comfort, such as individual sanitary facilities and showers. This period also acknowledged the end of the Cold War and the “shattering of empires” with a refounding speech that revitalized the notion of “esprit de la Cité,” promoting both French and international culture, friendships transcending political and intellectual boundaries, and “the fight against centrifugal forces that push each House to turn inward”.⁵⁴ In the brief interval between the collapse of communism and the 2001 attacks, the CIUP experienced a resurgence of liberal internationalism, highlighting the vibrancy of civil societies and private transnational actors amid the decline of a “Westphalian” world of rival states and ideological blocs, frozen since the 1970s. This belief in the ideological triumph of liberal democracy and the representation of the CIUP as a territorialization of an international civil society of youth and new migratory flows of elites does not, however, mark the end of the history.⁵⁵ Since the early 2010s, as part of its new phase of development and urban expansion (notably with the construction of the *Maison de l'Égypte* and the *Maison de la Chine* in 2023–2024), the CIUP has become integrated into an international university landscape characterized by the decline of French influence, the dominance of Anglo-American standards, the rise of commercial logic driven by the knowledge economy, and the increasing interest of authoritarian states in student migration. For these states, student mobility is no longer merely a tool of soft power but also of hard

⁵³ See, for example, Valentin Rebour's current thesis, « L'expérience migratoire des étudiants et étudiantes iraniens en France et en RFA. Espaces, sociabilités et mobilisations (1953–1989) », under the supervision of Dzovinar Kévonian, Université Paris-Nanterre.

⁵⁴ LAURENT Pierre (President of the Fondation nationale de la CIUP), “L'esprit de la Cité”, *Revue de l'Alliance internationale de la Cité universitaire de Paris*, n°1, 1992, p. 3.

⁵⁵ See Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye's theories on the dynamism of civil societies and FUKUYAMA Francis's famous article, “The End of History?”, published in *The National Interest* in 1989.

power, as illustrated by recent debates on Chinese influence in Western universities.

This extensive history of the geopolitics of student migration at CIUP reflects the ambivalence of the discourse on international cooperation as perpetuated by the institution throughout the twentieth century and into the present day. As sociologist Pierre Bourdieu points out, “We believe that intellectual life is spontaneously international. Nothing could be further from the truth. Intellectual life, like all other social spaces, is the site of nationalism and imperialism, and intellectuals, almost as much as anyone else, convey prejudices, stereotypes, and very basic, elementary representations”.⁵⁶ Thus, the notion of the “ideal of the CIUP,” which aims to unite elites from all nations within a shared intellectual sphere to foster mutual understanding and peace in international relations, does not encapsulate the essence of the CIUP. Instead, it represents one of many discourses propagated by elites who may, in practice, act contrary to their stated aims, within an international space whose axiological neutrality remains unestablished.

REAPPROPRIATION: EXAMINING THE AGENCY OF MIGRANT STUDENTS

Analyzing the CIUP as a site of international student migration extends beyond merely assessing the stated objectives of the institution’s stakeholders. It needs a deep examination of the students who are the intended beneficiaries of the institution, exploring the diversity of their sociological backgrounds, trajectories, and practices.

Who are these students? Prior to World War II, foreign students were a minority at CIUP, with between 100 and 900 foreign residents recorded between 1925 and 1939 out of a total student population ranging from 350 to 2,500. These early foreign students often included individuals from countries aligned with the nationalities of their respective residences (e.g., English, American, Japanese, and Belgian). However, by the latter half of the twentieth century, this ratio shifted significantly. In 1947, with a total of just over 3,000 residents, French students still constituted the majority (53.5%), while 11% were from French Union territories and

⁵⁶ BOURDIEU P., “Les conditions sociales de la circulation internationale des idées”, *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, n°145, December 2002, p. 3.

35.5% were international. By 1955, as capacity increased to 4,600 residents, the proportion of international students remained stable at 33%, but the number of French residents decreased to 48%, with residents from the French Union rising to 19%. By 1965, international students made up 52% of the approximately 5,400 residents.⁵⁷ This trend continued through to 2003, when international students represented 72% of the CIUP's population, while French students made up only 28%. Given that no new buildings have been constructed at the Cité since 1969, this widening gap reflects not just an increase in international students, but also a decline in French students, alongside an overall decrease of around 15% between 1965 and 2003.

From the 1960s onwards, the representation of students from "Third World" countries increased compared to their European and American counterparts, whose numbers remained stable but whose share of total enrollment decreased. In 1947, 64% of international students were from Europe and 18% from North America. By the 1970s, the proportion of European students at the CIUP had decreased to 30% (a figure that remained relatively stable until the 2000s), while North American students made up only 10% (6.5% in 2003) of the population, which now included over 120 nationalities. Although the number of African students increased significantly (a 68% rise between 1947 and 2003), their proportion of the foreign student population declined from 35% in 1947 to 19% in 2003.

Conversely, there was a notable increase in the number and proportion of students from Asia (0.5% of residents in 1947, compared to 18.9% in 2003), Central and North America (4.5% in 1947, compared to 12% in 2003), and the Middle East (1.7% in 1947, compared to around 15% in 2003). This increase reflects both the expansion of accommodation capacities at the CIUP (such as the creation of houses for Indian, Brazilian, and Cambodian students) and shifts in international student mobility trends during the latter half of the twentieth century, particularly in the context of the "brain drain" towards Western educational institutions. These regional trends, however, mask significant internal fluctuations driven by international political dynamics, such as the disappearance of certain nationalities from the CIUP (e.g., the decline from 25 Chinese students in 1946 to just one in 1970, as well as changes in

⁵⁷ *La Cité (AIRCUP)*, n°2, 1965.

Iranian student numbers), the influx of refugees, and the reception of foreign scholarship recipients funded by either the French government or their home governments. These sub-groups warrant further detailed study, considering the specific dynamics influencing each group.

Similar to the previous period, refugee students remain largely invisible in official records⁵⁸ due to the absence of specific documentation in admissions files. Only a longitudinal analysis of nationalities within the general admissions file, which is organized alphabetically, could offer a quantitative perspective, though it would only include those who are formally declared residents. To fully understand this situation, it is necessary to cross-reference indirect sources such as residents' testimonies, charity association archives, and police records concerning foreigners. For instance, within the International Alliance of Former Residents, Spanish and Central European members who had previously been student refugees at the CIUP acted as intermediaries to assist new refugees. In March 1957, the Alliance issued an "S.O.S." to its members for approximately thirty Hungarian refugees residing at the CIUP, encouraging them to "adopt" a refugee into their family to provide a supportive and familial environment.⁵⁹ By 1953, Joseph Molnos, a Hungarian refugee and General Secretary of the Centre Culturel International de Royaumont, was already included on the Alliance's board of directors and later served as a member of the Bureau.

By 1965, over 68% of residents were under the age of 24. However, by the 1980s, this proportion had decreased to 44%,⁶⁰ while the percentage of residents over the age of 30 had increased from 8% in 1965 to over 17% in the early 2000s. This change was primarily due to the introduction of an internship policy and the restriction of student admissions to those in the second and third cycles of university education. There were also significant changes in the fields of study: the proportion of medical students

⁵⁸ ANGOUSTURES Aline, KÉVONIAN Dzovinar, Dossier Réfugiés, sujets d'une histoire globale, *Monde(s). Histoire, espaces, relations*, n°15, 2019. In this issue: TRONCHET Guillaume, "L'accueil des étudiants réfugiés au xx^e siècle : un chantier d'histoire globale", pp. 93-116.

⁵⁹ *L'Alliance internationale des anciens de la Cité universitaire*, n°24, 1^{er} March 1957, p. 12.

⁶⁰ "La population totale de la Cité internationale universitaire en 1984-1985", *Bulletin de l'Alliance internationale des anciens de la Cité universitaire de Paris*, n°104, January 1986, p. 4.

declined sharply from 19% in 1947 to 7% in 2003, and literature students decreased, though to a lesser extent (24% in 1970 compared to 17.5% in 2003). Conversely, the number of students pursuing sciences increased substantially, comprising more than half of all students in universities and grandes écoles by the early 2000s. Additionally, there was an increase in students studying law and economics, with their numbers rising from 11% in 1970 to nearly 20% in 2003. New profiles also emerged, such as art school students, who were virtually absent in the 1940s but made up almost 8% of the student body by 2003.

Another notable development during this period is the shift in gender distribution. In 1947, there was a ratio of 83% men to 17% women, a distribution that remained relatively stable until 1968. The CIUP continued to reflect pre-war practices of spatial gender segregation, with most pavilions either prohibiting or regulating access based on gender. For example, the Résidence Honnorat, completely renovated in 1965 to accommodate female students, featured Swedish furniture and turquoise walls, but maintained strict access controls with glazed doors monitored by bells.⁶¹ Only a few pavilions, including the *Maison de Monaco*, the *Maison des Provinces de France*, the *Maison du Maroc*, and the *Maison du Japon*, allowed mixed-gender movement.

In the case of the *Maison des Provinces de France*, the significant change occurred in 1958 rather than 1968. That year, residents threatened a rent strike, which led the new director, Henri van Effenterre, to end the “taboos of sexual morality” and introduce co-management of the house’s board of directors.⁶² Although the proportion of women in the workforce increased significantly, reaching over 25% in 1970, it experienced a surprising decline thereafter, dropping to 11.2% by 1985. A comprehensive study to understand this decline, which contrasts with the overall feminization of the international academic workforce, is ongoing. This study also aims to analyze gender relations at the CIUP and the impact of the masculinization of the workforce on social practices. Similarly, no detailed analysis of students’ social origins is available, though existing data from certain periods suggest a notable underrepresentation of children from blue-collar and artisan backgrounds compared to those from civil service, executive, professional, and merchant families.

⁶¹ “*La Cité (AIRCUP)*”, n°1, January 1965.

⁶² *Bulletin de l’Alliance internationale des anciens de la CIUP*, n°94, 1982, p. 2.

The diversity within the student population highlights the importance of studying student sociability, cultural exchange, and social and political mobilization facilitated by these interactions. This can be explored through the activities of formal campus-wide associations. For example, the *Association Internationale des Résidents de la Cité* (AIRCUP), affiliated with Christian Democrat Europeanist circles and UNESCO networks, publishes student newsletters, organizes an annual “Garden Party of the Nations” starting in 1948, provides mutual aid, and played a key role in social mobilizations during the 1950s and 1960s. Another example is the *Association Sportive de la Cité* (ASCUP), established in 1945 as a successor to a pre-existing sports club, which organizes competitions and connects with transnational university sports networks.⁶³ Additionally, the *Alliance Internationale*, an alumni association created in 1948 following the Prague coup and the Congress of Europe in The Hague, was significantly influenced by François Fontaine, a former resident of the Collège Franco-Britannique and a key figure in European integration.

These associative and cultural activities were closely linked with the union and militant activities of CIUP residents, who were involved in social and political mobilization reflecting the international political struggles of the period. The CIUP served as a forum for national (political mobilizations, revolutions, dictatorships, and civil wars), regional (e.g., the Arab–Israeli conflict, the Armenian question, the Palestinian issue, South American repression), and international (e.g., major Cold War crises) conflicts, with the May 1968 crisis and the early 1970s representing significant moments. Authoritarian regimes in Portugal (1933–1974), Brazil (1964–1985), Greece (1967–1974), and Argentina (1976–1983) affected both the residences and their interactions with the CIUP. The arrival of refugee and exiled students paralleled waves of repression in various countries (e.g., Hungary and Egypt in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, Chile in 1973), often remaining invisible as in the interwar

⁶³ LESNYKH Lidia, “La réorganisation du sport dans la Cité universitaire d’après-guerre. Entre autonomie associative et enjeux institutionnels”, in KÉVONIAN D., TRONCHET G., *Le Campus-monde...*, *op. cit.* pp. 251–264.

period⁶⁴ through clandestine residence and discreet admissions by house directors.

Concurrently, the CIUP emerged as a hub for nationalisms and anti-colonial, anti-imperialist, and anti-authoritarian political cultures, with several generations of activists and international leaders beginning their journeys there from the 1930s to the 1970s. Many CIUP pavilions became centers of protest and mobilization, with demonstrations, hunger strikes, brawls, occupations, and administrative closures becoming commonplace, particularly in pavilions housing opponents to their countries' political regimes (Brazil, Argentina, Portugal, etc.), with a mix of residents and illegal immigrants, many of them refugees. For instance, the *Collège d'Espagne* was closed by Franco in 1968 after being occupied by residents and remained closed until 1987, while the *Maison du Cambodge* was closed from 1973 to 2003, and the *Maison de l'Iran* saw disengagement in the 1970s after becoming a center of political protest against the Shah Reza Pahlavi's regime.

HISTORY AT THE HEART OF A STUDENT MELTING POT

This book seeks to address some of these several questions by examining the transnational dimensions of an internationalized social space through the lens of twentieth-century international student migration.

Since the publication of the first doctoral thesis in law in 1931,⁶⁵ the CIUP has been extensively studied, primarily focusing until the 2010s on its institutional and architectural history. These studies often appeared in commemorative publications, and a comprehensive bibliography of such works is provided at the end of this volume. However, scholarly work specifically addressing the CIUP as a site of student migration has been minimal. Notable exceptions include Anne d'Huart-Gouletquer's sociology thesis defended in 1977⁶⁶ and Frank Séréni's

⁶⁴ With the exception of the Armenian Students' House (1930), intended for young students who had become stateless following the denationalization of Ottoman Armenians by the new Kemalist regime in Turkey.

⁶⁵ PRIAULT M., *La Cité universitaire et son rôle social*, Paris, Rousseau, 1931. A study which, as we know, owes much to exchanges between the author and André Honnorat himself.

⁶⁶ HUART GOULETQUER A. d', « Étude psycho-sociologique sur la Cité universitaire de Paris », 3^e cycle thesis in sociology, Université Paris-V, 1977, 2 vols.

brief studies in international relations, which explore the reception of international elites at the CIUP and the interplay between Europeanism and Geneva internationalism.⁶⁷ It was not until the 2000s that social and political history studies emerged, focusing on the institution's early decades and the wartime period, as well as its role in mediating tensions between cultural internationalism and French ambitions for international "influence" during the interwar years.⁶⁸

Since the 2010s, there has been a notable advancement in academic research related to the CIUP. This includes the publication of the first two review books in French by Dzovinar Kévonian and Guillaume Tronchet in 2013 and 2022,⁶⁹ respectively, Guillaume Tronchet's 2014 thesis on the history of the French academic diplomacy,⁷⁰ Marion Ink's 2018 dissertation on the sociology and micropolitics of the sociabilities within three international university residences, including the CIUP,⁷¹ as well

⁶⁷ SÉRÉNI F., "Les contacts entre élites internationales dans le cadre de la Cité internationale universitaire de Paris, 1924–1954", DEA thesis in history, Université Paris-I, 1988; "La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris, ambitions mondiales et réalités européennes, 1925–1956", in GIRAULT R. and BOSSUAT G. (eds.), *Europe brisée, Europe retrouvée. Nouvelles réflexions sur l'unité européenne au XX^e siècle*, Paris, Publications de la Sorbonne, 1994, pp. 89–107; "La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris de la Société des Nations à la construction de l'Europe", *Relations internationales*, n°72, 1992, pp. 399–407.

⁶⁸ POLSIMON A., « La Cité universitaire de Paris des origines à la Seconde Guerre mondiale », Master's thesis, Université Paris-I, 2003; TRONCHET G., « André Honnorat (1868–1950). Essai de biographie politique », Master's thesis in history, Université Paris-I, 2004; KELLER A., « La Cité universitaire de Paris face à la montée de l'État nazi et à la guerre : un idéal en question (1937–1945) », Master's thesis in history, Université Paris-X, 2005; REIS J., "French and Foreign Students in Interwar Paris: Creating the Cité Universitaire", PhD Dissertation, University of Virginia, 2007; REIS J., "Cultural internationalism at the Cité Universitaire: international education between the First and Second World Wars", *History of Education*, vol. 39, n°2, March 2010, pp. 155–173.

⁶⁹ KÉVONIAN, Dzovinar, TRONCHET, Guillaume (dir.), *La Babel étudiante*, op. cit.; *Le Campus monde*, op. cit.

⁷⁰ *Savoirs en diplomatie...*, op. cit.

⁷¹ INK Marion, *Sociologie et micropolitique des sociabilités. Ethnographies comparées dans trois résidences universitaires internationales - France, Etats-Unis, Canada*, Doctoral dissertation from PSL University, EHESS, 2018. See also: INK Marion, "Les quatre temps d'un séjour en résidence universitaire", *Temporalités* [online], 27 | 2018, consulted on June 16, 2024.

as various monographs, dissertations, and articles reflecting the current scholarly interest in student mobility and knowledge exchange.⁷²

This book represents the first English-language volume dedicated to the history of international student migration to France in the twentieth century, using the CIUP as a focal point. The CIUP serves as a transnational social space and meeting place influenced by major twentieth-century social and political movements, including imperialism, colonialism, nationalism, communism, fascism, anti-fascism, and the Cold War. It has been a site of cultural and ideological exchange among migrant students.

By examining the diversity of students welcomed at the CIUP—such as democratic elites, exiled students from military dictatorships, emerging elites from developing countries, and scholars at risk⁷³—this book aims to explore the discourses, practices, social positions, and trajectories of migrant students. It also considers the various stakes of this migration—academic, cultural, and political—within the context of a unique global institution specifically designed to accommodate international students. This study contributes to a broader understanding of the history of universities, diplomacy, philanthropy, social and political movements, and cultural exchange.

The book features ten detailed case studies, each contributing a unique perspective on the transnational dimensions of student migration at the CIUP.

The chapters are structured around four central themes. The first ones examine the role of Paris and the CIUP in the dynamics of international academic migration and their impact on the experiences of international students, particularly through the lens of campus-wide political engagements from the 1930s to the 1970s. In “Choosing France,” Antonin Durand examines international students’ applications to the CIUP by analyzing their cover letters. This study forms part of a social history of representations, probing the motivations behind student migrations and

⁷² See in particular, in the bibliography at the end of the volume: Sophie Mouton (2006 and 2009), Hans Manfred Bock (2007), Perrine Plisson (2008), Violette Matuszeski (2014), Matthieu Gillibert (2015), Antonia Maria Mora Luna (2016), Elisa Capdevila (2017), Angelica Müller (2018), Nino Lima (2018), Kostis Kometis (2018), Valentin Rebour (2018 and 2019), Sara Legrandjacques (2019).

⁷³ See: Leyla Dakhli, Pascale Laborier, Frank Wolff, *Academics in a century of displacement. The Global History and Politics of protecting endangered scholars*, Springer, 2024.

the influence of French policies aimed at enhancing the attractiveness of the University of Paris during the 1950s.

In “Hijacking Internationalism”, Guillaume Tronchet investigates the politicization of internationalism as reflected in student migrations. Tronchet demonstrates how the CIUP functioned as a laboratory for the development of nationalism, anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, and anti-authoritarian political cultures. He explores how the institution became involved in global “currents of contentious politics” and contributed to the transnational circulation of protest discourses and practices, as well as the formation of “cross-border coalitions” that challenged the prevailing political order between the 1930s and 1970s.

The following three chapters present a series of case studies addressing the tensions and reconfigurations associated with the pre-war, Second World War, and post-war periods.

Elisa Signori’s contribution explores the reactions of various Italian cultural and political circles to the CIUP’s development. She traces how the project’s evolution during the 1920s and 1930s was closely linked to the rise of fascist imperialism, which rejected collaboration and pursued cultural “autarchy,” ultimately leading to strained relations with the “Latin Sister” and explicit hostility during the war years.

Dzovinar Kévonian focuses on the pre-war period and World War II, analyzing the paradoxes faced by an institution grappling with radicalized and fragmented youth amidst forced exile. During the Occupation, Kévonian examines the CIUP’s ambivalent role between clandestine resistance networks, the anti-Semitic policies of the Vichy regime, and the protection of a campus that aligned with the hygienist ideology of the National Revolution.

Elisa Capdevila examines the CIUP’s transition to civilian life and its educational missions from the end of World War II to the onset of the Cold War, with particular emphasis on the role played by the United States during this period.

The next three chapters focus specifically on issues concerning students from colonial and post-colonial contexts.

Guillaume Denglos and Pierre Vermeren investigate the politicization of North African students at the CIUP from the early 1920s through to independence and beyond, up to the 2000s. He explores the history of the houses of Morocco and Tunisia, as well as the failed project for a house for Algeria, highlighting the complex interplay between state

control, elite training, and political dissent among students who asserted themselves against authorities in Paris.

In “Going West,” Sara Legrandjacques examines the *Maison des Étudiants de l’Indochine*, inaugurated in 1930, and its role in shaping regional and political identities in Asia until its renaming in 1972. By providing a broad chronology that extends before and after World War II, she challenges existing studies that focus solely on the politicization of colonized students in the 1930s, questioning the notion of a break linked to decolonization post-1945.

Françoise Blum offers a micro-historical analysis of the *Maison de la France d’Outre-Mer*, focusing on the African student movement from its acquisition of the house in the 1950s and 1960s to its peak in 1968, and its eventual institutional takeover. Blum’s study highlights the renegotiation of France’s relationships with its former African colonies at the end of the French Empire.

The final three chapters examine the particular case of student migration from countries affected by authoritarian regimes or undergoing democratic transitions.

Victor Pereira explores the history of the Portuguese Students House from the 1920s through the Carnation Revolution of 1974. This chapter details several student mobilizations, occupations, and debates on anti-fascism, anti-colonialism, and anti-authoritarianism, illustrating the impact of radicalized resistance against the Portuguese dictatorship and colonialism up to April 25, 1974.

Angelica Müller examines the socio-cultural relations between Brazil and France through the lens of the *Maison du Brésil* during the late 1960s. Her study highlights the paradox of the Maison as both a refuge for exiled and potentially persecuted academics and a site of “subversion,” juxtaposed with the perspectives of the military regime as revealed through official surveillance documents and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Finally, Valentin Rebour investigates how Iranian student opposition organized itself at the CIUP between the 1950s and 1970s. Amidst a repressive Iranian regime and rising student demands in France, Rebour uses CIUP sources, French Intelligence Service archives, and interviews with former residents to illustrate how Iranian students leveraged the CIUP’s opportunities for socialization and political organization to establish themselves as a significant opposition force. He also discusses how the

CIUP, particularly the *Maison de l'Iran*, became a focal point for these struggles.

Conflict of Interest The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare that are relevant to the content of this chapter.

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CHAPTER 2

Choose Paris: Letters in support of application to the Paris' Cité Universitaire in the 1950s

Antonin Durand

The use of cover letters to select candidates for employment or training is a relatively recent invention. The use of the written word—whether on the part of recruiters in the form of job advertisements published in the press and then on the Internet, or on the part of candidates in the form of curricula vitae and cover letters—is the result of a historical process that only took shape during the twentieth century. The cover letter has accompanied this process, extending its hold from specific job offers requiring candidates to demonstrate their appetite for positions requiring particular forms of investment, to being required in almost all professional fields and even for the youngest seeking internships, training, or entry into specific school or university courses. Despite the widespread

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nature of this practice, historians have shown little interest in it. Even sociologists of work, who could find a rich field here, have rarely examined the question.¹

How can we explain the relative silence of the human sciences? No doubt, the genre lacks nobility and material diversity: the cover letter certainly belongs to the genre of ego-documents, but the self-image it constructs is entirely focused on one objective—to convince and be recruited—so that little attention is often paid to its content. One might argue that no self-presentation, even a diary, is entirely devoid of rhetorical strategy, but the cover letter definitely presents the purest form of a written document basically aimed at convincing. In this respect, it is similar to the neighbouring genre of the supplication or the petition, much better known to historians²: in these two types of documentation, an actor addressed an authority who has the power to grant or deny him a right or a status: in each case, the aim is to bend the authority's position in his favour, by means of a self-presentation calibrated to correspond to the authority's expectations as one imagines them to be: A good Frenchman, a good subject, a good student... The particularity of the cover letter is that it is required in a dossier, whereas the supplication is the result of the supplicant's initiative and is most often presented as an exceptional

¹ See Yves Lochard, Pascal Ughetto, "Candidater et embaucher: le courrier de candidature comme dispositif de rencontre", *La Revue de l'Ires*, vol. 52/3, 2006, pp. 133–154; Marie-Paule Couto, Marion Valarcher, "La motivation au pied de la lettre. Construction et expression des aspirations scolaires sur Parcoursup", *L'Orientation scolaire et professionnelle*, 51/1, 2022, pp. 41–75. More generally, labor sociologists have taken a more or less direct interest in cover letters as part of their work on recruitment processes: François Eymard-Duvernay, Emmanuelle Marchal, *Façons de recruter: le jugement des compétences sur le marché du travail*, Paris, Métailié, 1997. Guillemette de Larquier, Emmanuelle Marchal, *Le Jugement des candidats par les entreprises lors des recrutements*, Centre d'études pour l'emploi, Document de travail, n° 109, November 2008. Emmanuelle Marchal, *Les Embarras des recruteurs. Enquête sur le marché du travail*, Paris, Éditions de l'EHESS, 2015.

² For a recent update on this type of writing, see for example Enrica Asquer and Lucia Ceci (eds.), *Scrivere alle autorità. Suppliche, petizioni, appelli, richieste di deroga in età contemporanea*, Rome, Viella, 2021. See also Frédéric Moret, "Adresses et pétitions" in Michel Pigenet, Danielle Tartakowsky (eds.), *Histoire des mouvements sociaux en France de 1814 à nos jours*, Paris, La Découverte, 2014, pp. 152–159. Lex Heerma van Voss (ed.), *Petitions in Social History*, Cambridge University Press, 2002 or the classic Natalie Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives. Pardon Tales and Their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1987.

request. This observation leads to question the ambiguous status of the cover letter: what sense does it make to be motivated on request?

Analyzing the cover letters of applicants for a room at the Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (CIUP) is thus very instructive. Firstly, because the institution was one of the first to systematically require such a document in all applications. This choice is the result of particularly strong pressure on student rooms, forcing academic authorities to make a drastic selection of applications. How to choose between students from universities all over the world, at all levels of study and in all disciplines? There were many possible selection criteria: giving preference to students from certain countries or regions, as part of a strategy of influence or university diplomacy, as Guillaume Tronchet puts it³? Selecting students according to their level of study, either to give priority to the youngest, so that they can take advantage of their first years in Paris to find accommodation elsewhere, or to encourage more advanced students? Should housing be used to reinforce disciplines or faculties considered to be priorities, or to aim for a balance, or should the room allocation be independent of disciplinary issues? Should it prioritize academic excellence or encourage social diversity? All these criteria can be taken into account in a selection process made all the more complex by the fact that its players are multiple: some houses of the CIUP reserve a monopoly on recruiting their tenants, while others leave it up to the CIUP management and the Paris Academy rectorate.

However, the latter case is in the majority, and has the advantage of producing centralized sources, now gathered at the Archives Nationales de France, in the more than fifty boxes that preserve the files of former residents. Of course, not all the letters in this collection have been preserved. In the individual files deposited at the Archives Nationales, only a minority include one or more cover letters, without it being known whether the others were missing from the file from the outset, or whether the administration did not deem it useful to keep them. Nonetheless, several thousand letters are kept in the files, a few hundred of which were consulted for the preparation of this article, taken from five randomly selected boxes. This number seems sufficient to get an idea of the general tone of these documents, and to review the arguments developed in them.

³ Guillaume Tronchet "Savoirs en diplomatie. Une histoire sociale et transnationale de la politique universitaire internationale de la France (années 1870-années 1930)", PhD thesis in contemporary history, under the supervision of Patrick Weil, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, 2014.

While the files cover a broad period from the CIUP's origins to the end of the twentieth century, a large majority of the cover letters date from the 1950s, with no documentary evidence to suggest that the practice was subsequently lost. This focus on the 1950s nonetheless provides an excellent observatory of the reconfiguration of student mobility to Paris in a context where the French empire was called into question, with the independences of Tunisia and Morocco, the start of the Algerian war and the decolonization of almost all of French sub-Saharan Africa. The way in which decolonization reconfigured relations between metropolitan France and the former colonies, masterfully analyzed by Françoise Blum,⁴ can thus be observed anew thanks to the partial observatory of motivational letters from mobile students: how did the geopolitical context transform their desire to study in France, and how did it affect their self-presentation to the authorities responsible for evaluating them?

Following in the footsteps of sociologists who have taken an interest in this type of documentation, we will consider these letters as *dispositifs* [device], adopting a concept inspired by Michel Foucault and defined by Nicolas Dodier and Janine Barbot as follows: “Generally speaking, a *dispositif* can be conceived as a prepared sequence of sequences, intended to qualify or transform states of affairs through the intermediary of an arrangement of material and linguistic elements”.⁵ The cover letter thus combines biographical elements and life projects with a performative ambition. It also embodies the discretionary power of the administration, which, by relying on the impression produced by an uncoded document, protects itself against any objectification of its judgment criteria—and therefore against any challenge.

While the cover letter exercise has become routine for students of the twenty-first century, it was still unfamiliar to those of the first twentieth century. This makes it all the more interesting to watch the development of the norms of a new academic genre⁶: we can observe the trial and

⁴ Françoise Blum. *Trajectoires militantes et (re)conversions: à propos de la FEANF Que sont-ils/elles devenus-e-s? Mémoire d'habilitation à diriger des recherches*, EHESS, Paris, 2016.

⁵ Nicolas Dodier and Janine Barbot, “La force des dispositifs”, *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 2016/2, pp. 421–450, p. 431.

⁶ We had already tried our hand at this type of analysis with the trip report, another new genre of academic practice in the first part of the 20th^e century: Antonin Durand (ed.), *Les voyages forment la jeunesse. Les boursières scientifiques David-Weill à la découverte du monde (1910–1939)*, Strasbourg, Presses universitaires de Strasbourg, 2020.

error surrounding the expectations of the exercise: was the cover letter a simple account of previous studies demonstrating the candidate's aptitudes? Should it describe the more intimate reasons why the candidate wishes to live in Paris? Based on fairly succinct guidelines, aspirants had to develop an argument capable of persuading the people in charge of examining their files. The task was made all the more complex by the fact that the procedure for processing the letters was not at all clear to candidates—and far from clear to historians. While the letters were formally addressed to the rector in person, it is certain that most of them followed a reading circuit that can only be reconstructed through clues in the letters themselves. The lack of publicity surrounding the procedures for allocating rooms tended to accentuate inequalities between candidates, who were confronted with a strong asymmetry of information between nationals and internationals, as well as between those who already had networks within the CIUP as opposed to complete *outsiders*.

What explains the relative lack of interest in cover letters—their uniquely strategic dimension—is therefore also, what makes their study so interesting? Neither letter-writers nor recipients were fooled by the other's aims, but each tried to play on them, some to get a room, others to inform their judgment. The result is a series of questions that we will address one by one to the same letters, since they offer different possible readings of this source and, as a complement, the forms they accompany. What were the students' real motivations for applying for housing at the CIUP? How did the administration present its expectations? How did applicants imagine these expectations, and what strategies did they implement to meet them? How did evaluation committees receive these letters? Can we measure the impact of these letters and the arguments they developed in the selection and recruitment process?

WHAT STUDENTS WERE LOOKING FOR

Nothing is more difficult than establishing the motivations of past actors. Even when intimate writings mention motivations, it is always easier for the historian to establish facts than to reconstruct the reasons for action that led to them. Cover letters are no exception to this principle: on the contrary, there is every reason to believe that the motivations set out in the letters often differed from those displayed. For example, it's safe to assume that the primary reason for wanting to move to the CIUP was the affordability of the rooms.

The CIUP project itself was born as a reaction to the serious shortcomings of student housing in Paris, perceived as an obstacle to the intellectual influence of the French capital.⁷ While furnished hotels and boarding houses had, year in, year out, absorbed the needs during the nineteenth century, the development of student housing was slow to keep pace with the massification of universities that began at the turn of the century. The problem was even more acute for young women who, apart from very limited initiatives such as the *Student hostel* founded on Boulevard Saint-Michel in 1906 by patron Grace Whitney-Hoff and later to become the *Foyer International des Etudiantes*, faced a real housing shortage.

Things seem quite clear: it's necessity that drives students to apply for a room at the CIUP. A perusal of the motivation letters, however, reveals a certain discomfort with too material reasons. While some letters candidly conceded that this was the primary reason for their choice, as Frenchman Jacques Berna did, acknowledging that he "would be happy to be able to live at the Cité [...], as any other accommodation would be difficult to find and especially to support financially",⁸ most of the letters referred to it only in passing, as if it were something obvious that they didn't want to emphasize too much. The few letters that went into details about the difficulties of housing are nevertheless interesting sources of information about the material conditions of student life in the Paris region, as shown by this extract from a letter from the Tunisian Touhami Khalfalaa:

I'm currently living in an uncomfortable room in the Halles district. I pay 6,000 francs in rent and am warmed only by the few puffs of tepid air I get from my landlady's kitchen. On the other hand, I would so much like to abandon this district full of grime and night-time tumult for the eminently friendly neighborhood of the Cité, where I could enjoy all the cultural advantages it provides.⁹

⁷ Dzovinar Kévonian and Guillaume Tronchet (dir.), *La Babel étudiante, la Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (1920–1950)*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2013.

⁸ Letter from Jacques Berna to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, July 4, 1947, AN, 20090013/546.

⁹ Letter from Touhami Khalfalaa to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, December 27, 1951, 20090013/572.

The more subtle ones try to make the link between the obvious material advantages of residence in the CIUP and the characteristics expected from applicants. Mohsen Achty, for example, argued as follows:

As you know, the question of accommodation in Paris for a student of modest means is difficult to resolve. Above all, the atmosphere in the hotels that are not student-friendly, is incompatible with the essential purpose of my coming to France, which is to make contact with French fellows and others.¹⁰

This letter shows a willingness to conceal the obsessive problem of student housing in a discourse already matching the expectations of the Paris Academy's rectorat, or at least how the candidate perceived them: those of hard-working students engaged in exchanges with their French and foreign fellows. But how could candidates anticipate these expectations?

WHAT THE RECTOR WANTED

To guide them in drafting their letters, applicants were given brief instructions in a letter signed by the rector and enclosed with all applications. In this letter, the rector explicitly ruled out material arguments: "The Cité Universitaire is not a furnished hotel in a pleasant setting, with ancillary amenities that no other hotel can offer".

Before specifying the expectations of the exercise, the rector introduced the letter as follows:

Although the large number of requests leads me, for reasons of economy, to give this letter an anonymous execution, you will please regard it as personally addressed to you.

This ambiguous formula reflects the tension between the need to process a large number of applications and the desire for a personalized selection process. The "reasons of economy" that prevented the Rector from writing personally to each candidate may well prevent him—or even his departments—from reading the letters in question. Indeed, the

¹⁰ Letter from Mohsen Achty to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, July 4, 1949, AN, 20090013/540.

Rector reiterated the need for a drastic selection process, and presented the opportunity to live in the CIUP as a “privilege” which “as such, must be reserved for an elite”. In addition to responding to the material impossibility of welcoming all applicants, selection thus assumed an elitist dimension, the growing importance of which Guillaume Tronchet has shown in the policy of welcoming foreign students to France since the 1930s¹¹.

The rector also specified what the letter should not be: because the file already contained all the elements concerning the “family, [the] financial situation, etc.”, other elements were expected:

Would you please tell me how you intend to contribute to the common good? It goes without saying that we are not asking you to demonstrate exceptional gifts; but every resident must bring to the City a wholehearted willingness to cooperate, and know in which direction (social, cultural, sporting, etc.) this willingness is most likely to be employed effectively.

The letter went on to emphasize in bold print that the candidate’s response constituted a commitment to get involved in the life of the community. Clearly, the requirements formulated by the rectorat included two expectations and excluded one: an assumed elitism coupled with a desire to facilitate community life by selecting the candidates most likely to take part in it. On the other hand, social criteria—family situation, distance—were explicitly excluded from the letters, even though it was specified that they would be taken into account on the basis of the application file.

HOW CANDIDATES PERCEIVED THE INSTITUTION’S EXPECTATIONS

While the criteria of excellence and social origin were already well known at university, the idea of convincing a student of his or her motivation in writing is quite disconcerting. In a letter from 1955, a Moroccan applicant, Maurice Adjiman, expressed his astonishment:

¹¹ Guillaume Tronchet, “La qualité plutôt que la quantité”: le tournant élitiste de l’accueil des étudiants étrangers en France dans les années 1930”, in Marianne Amar and Nancy Green (dir.), *Migrations d’élite. Etat des lieux et approches comparatives*, Tours, Presses universitaires François-Rabelais, 2022, pp. 189–206.

As for me, this is the first time I have been given the opportunity to make an entirely personal application. It is customary for an institution requiring a written application to provide a stereotyped template. But this is something quite different, and I believe the best way to respond is to be direct and sincere. We all feel that we have to do the right thing, and that we will be judged somewhat on what we have written.¹²

The applicant did not seem surprised by the necessity to assess his motivation, but by the necessity to do it in writing. Another French candidate, Michel Sanouillet, considered that “an interview [would] undoubtedly have provided a better understanding of the nature of the qualities [sought] in [future] residents”.¹³ It’s worth noting that some files included cover letters for applications to re-enter the CIUP—either to extend their stay, or to return after a break outside Paris. These letters tend to be more detailed and well-argued, which suggests that those who knew the CIUP from the inside had a better grasp of its expectations.

However, even the most outsider candidates had no choice but to try to meet these expectations. The unusual nature of the request can be seen in the fact that many applicants adopted a rather academic approach to the expectations announced in the letter, in an attempt to fit into the framework thus set: they highlighted their academic background to match the elitism displayed, and described their passion for sport or theater to prove their willingness to cooperate.

The reference to elitism is not self-evident, however. Some candidates pointed to their academic credentials or results with aplomb. But most of the time, students seemed embarrassed to have to highlight their own merit, like Frenchman Michel Kernevez, who stressed how “it’s always difficult to give one’s own eulogy”¹⁴ or Moroccan Hamid Khalès, who mocked an exercise that “verge[d] at all times on personal panegyric”.¹⁵

¹² Letter from Maurice Adjiman to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, [1955], AN, 20090013/540. NB: when letters are undated—which is the case in the majority of cases—the date in square brackets corresponds to the year of application known from the rest of the file.

¹³ Letter from David Sanouillet to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, [1956], AN, 20090013/591.

¹⁴ Letter from Michel Kernevez to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, [1953], AN, 20090013/572.

¹⁵ Letter from Hamid Khalès to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, *ibid.*

More often than not, then, candidates refused to take the plunge. Such is the case of Frenchman Hervé Bernard, who described himself as having “no exceptional personal qualities”¹⁶ or Michel Bernier, who made it clear from the outset that he was “not an exceptional person”.¹⁷ As for Jean Keravec, in his letter of April 17, 1953, he denied any “vanity in believing that he belong[ed] to an elite”, and acknowledged only an “honorable level”.¹⁸ The rhetorical balancing act is clear: distinguish oneself through academic excellence without offending with excessive arrogance. In the most extensive applications, where cover letters were coupled with letters of recommendation from a parent or teacher, this contradictory injunction to excellence and modesty translated into a division of labor: the candidate’s modest posture, the recommender’s elitist emphasis.

As for the “willingness to cooperate” that the rector expected from applicants, this is the subject of a series of comments on the cultural and sporting activities that applicants had enjoyed in the past, and which they promised to pursue in contact with new comrades: scouting, drama classes, a taste for travel... This is also where the French students highlighted their language skills, and the foreigners talked about their previous stays in France. Serial reading of the letters reveals few salient features in these expected arguments.

Despite the injunction to leave social aspects aside, many students took advantage of their cover letters to clarify their social position, sometimes in opposite directions. Some emphasized the influence of their wealthy families, even if it meant dangling the benefits that the CIUP could derive from these relationships. Mohamed-Mehdi Abdeljalil, for example, “simply point[ed] out” that he “belong[ed] to a great Moroccan family”.¹⁹ The Syrian Abd Kelzieh was more explicit in 1951:

I’m in touch with the former Minister of Public Education, Dr. A. Homed, a doctor of law from Paris, and with other wealthy people in Syria in order to set up a Maison de la Syrie at the Cité Universitaire in Paris. It is

¹⁶ Letter from Hervé Bernard to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, [1956], AN, 20090013/546.

¹⁷ Letter from Michel Bernier to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, [1953], *ibid.*

¹⁸ Letter from Jean Keravec to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, April 17, 1953, AN, 20090013/572.

¹⁹ Letter from Mohamed-Mehdi Abdeljalil to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, [1956], AN, 20090013/540.

commonly said that “opening a school closes a prison”. But founding a house at the Cité Universitaire is more like closing a war factory.²⁰

Even if the Syrian House project was unsuccessful, the red pencil lines in the margin show that the argument was taken into account.

Candidates who pointed to their wealth were, however, very much in the minority. In fact, it is more often difficult situations that were put forward to justify the imperative need for housing facilities. Cover letters are full of more or less tragic stories, such as the one written by Ali Ozcan Kaya from Turkey:

Since last year, having lost my father, I have been an orphan and being the eldest son in my family, I have had to work to replace my father's work. His death has caused many difficulties in the pursuit of my studies [...]. However, I worked hard to arrange my father's affairs and left them to my brother to come to France to satisfy my sole desire to study. But it's very difficult to live in Paris on the 10,000 frcs I get. Rent is very expensive.²¹

Others pointed to the number of their brothers and sister their parents had to feed, or to more or less serious health problems. Although the CIUP was not specifically equipped to accommodate students in poor health, the argument seemed to be one of commiseration. In the aftermath of the Second World War, many candidates also put forward their war experience, either because they had fought in the war themselves, or because they or their parents had been prisoners or displaced during the conflict. More seldom, a candidate could refer to direct persecution, for example, Cuban Rafael Santadreu, a victim of the closure of the University of Havana in 1956, relied on the hospitality of the CIUP to enable him to complete his medical studies, which had been interrupted in their third year.²² The sample does not allow for an in-depth analysis of the type of arguments developed in the letters. It does not, however, preclude the hypothesis that this argumentative register, rare as it was, is essentially masculine, while arguments relating to health or a need for security were

²⁰ Letter from Abd Kelzich to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, [1951], AN, 20090013/572.

²¹ Letter from Ali Ozcan to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, [1954], 20090013/572.

²² Letter from Rafael Santadreu to the Rector of the Paris Academy, October 19, 1957, 20090013/591.

more common in female letters. These are impressions that may only be confirmed by a broader quantified analysis.²³

Appeals to commiseration place cover letters in the same vein as letters of complaint or supplication, which also borrow from this register as well as that of law. As with the latter, in order to capture the reader's benevolence, these letters required the author to demonstrate his or her adherence to the institution to which they addressed and to the standards it upheld. In this sense, addressing a letter of motivation to the rector is similar to the kind of "pact" identified by Simona Cerutti for supplications to the Piedmontese sovereign in the eighteenth century²⁴: the acceptance of an authority and the norm it upholds, in return for the benevolent consideration of a request. Essayist Johan Faerber calls this pact "Faustian" to denounce the consequences of the generalization of the cover letter in the school world today, which seems to force applicants to adhere to the capitalist system in which they are enrolled—the French mass selection process for entry into higher education *Parcoursup* set up in 2020 in his case.²⁵ Indeed, it presupposes at least formal acceptance on the part of the candidate not only of the exercise but of all the norms underlying its elaboration.

Without going that far, it is worth noting that many of the candidates for the CIUP turned their letters into internationalist professions of faith, demonstrating their support for the CIUP's project from its very origins.²⁶ Frenchwoman Rose-Marie Bernot, a candidate in 1953, described the CIUP's mission as follows: "The Cité universitaire offers all the possibilities of international cooperation: it represents in miniature what will one day be the whole Humanity".²⁷ The image of the CIUP and its pavilions as a reduced model of a humanity where conflict would

²³ We arrived at the same type of result by analyzing the letters of supplication addressed to the Piedmontese authorities during the expulsion of political refugees accused of having taken part in the anti-Austrian riots of February 6, 1853: Antonin Durand, "Éloigner les Barabbas. Sur une campagne d'expulsion d'étrangers en Piémont en 1853", *Diasporas. Circulations, migrations, histoire*, n° 33, 2019, pp. 119–135.

²⁴ Simona Cerutti, "Suppliques: De la déférence et des droits (États savoyards, XVIIIe siècle), in Enrica Asquer and Lucia Ceci (eds.), *Scrivere alle autorità...*, *op. cit.* pp. 21–44.

²⁵ Johan Faerber, *Parlez-vous le Parcoursup?*, Paris, Éd. du Seuil, 2023.

²⁶ On this project, see Dzovinar Kévonian and Guillaume Tronchet (dir.), *La Babel étudiante. La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (1920–1950)*, *op. cit.*

²⁷ Letter from Rose-Marie Bernot to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, [1953], AN, 20090013/546.

give way to peaceful competition based on culture and intellectual influence is to be found in an even more accomplished form in a letter from Alexandre Sarfati:

It pleases me to think that homelands are immortal realities, but also to believe that these homelands, daughters of the same civilization, that is to say of the same spirit and the same desire for refinement, can and must carry their rivalry to levels other than those of trade and arms.²⁸

These proclamations of principle, reminiscent of Geneva's pacifism between the wars, were given a new lease of life in the aftermath of the Second World War. Even the German candidates took particular care to place their stay under the banner of reconciliation based on greater understanding between young people on both sides of the Rhine, following the example of Helmut Kern, who in 1949 called for "overcoming the difficulties currently existing between countries and nations, and thus contributing to universal understanding".²⁹

In the same spirit, a number of international candidates have pledged to take on the role expected of them as representatives and ambassadors of French higher education, responsible for publicizing the quality of French universities in their home countries. Such is the case of Abd Kelzieh, who promised to write reports for the Syrian newspapers *Islah* and *Al Chabab* on "the activities of university life in Paris and all the creations of French civilization and culture".³⁰ Tahar ben Zouhami Abdou made the same promise, pledging: "Tomorrow, as each of these student brothers returns to his home country, he will not forget to emphasize and repeat aloud the unforgettable recognition of the City's work on his behalf."³¹

In some cases, internationalist professions of faith resemble a kind of catechism recited in writing, as in this letter from the Syrian Mohamed Katrangi, quoted here in full:

²⁸ Letter from Arthur Sarfati to the Rector of the Paris Academy, s. d., AN, 20090013/591.

²⁹ Letter from Helmut Kern to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, [1949], 20090013/572.

³⁰ Letter from Abd Kelzieh to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, [1951], AN, 20090013/572.

³¹ Letter from Tahar ben Zouhami Abdou Kelzieh to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, [1953], 20090013/591.

By entering the Cité, I will benefit from the work of peace and cooperation between men of good will to which the Cité is dedicated.

I pledge to bring to the Cité my full commitment to social, cultural and sporting cooperation.

I also pledge to join in the work of international understanding and cooperation.

It's hard to tell from these internationalist professions of faith whether CIUP residents were really committed to the values on which it was founded, or whether they were simply trying to live up to the institution's supposed expectations. The fact remains, however, that this omnipresent discourse confirms the image that the CIUP gave of itself: that of an institution heir to the pacifism of the inter-war years, which had not given up working to bring the world's youth closer together, despite the Second World War.

These various considerations help to sketch out the image of the ideal resident as the applicants thought the CIUP saw him or her: with an excellent but modest academic record, sociable and open-minded, all the more deserving for his or her journey having been fraught with difficulties, and who recognized himself or herself in the internationalist project promoted by the Institution. But did this anticipation of candidates match the reality of expectations?

HOW LETTERS WERE READ

A final way of looking at cover letters is to consider how they were read by their recipients, and the effectiveness of the strategies deployed by candidates. Understanding which arguments had an effect on reality is a fascinating and daunting question. What makes it complex is the difficulty of disentangling, in the complexity of the files, the elements that won the decision and those that had no effect. The weight of the letters themselves in the overall file is difficult to assess: subsequent exchanges with candidates requesting clarification or additional documents may even give the impression that they were not always read. Even when they were, it is highly likely that the final decision was often based more on strategic or diplomatic choices, or on the search for a balance within the CIUP between disciplines, nationalities, or gender, than on the arrangement of the arguments in the cover letters. What's more, even if the letters were decisive in some cases, how are we to know which of the many elements it contained caught the reader's attention?

To arrive at a satisfactory answer, a quantitative approach seems possible. The “Global Youth” project, which has set itself the goal of creating a vast database of CIUP residents’ files, makes such an approach conceivable: the large number of files (several tens of thousands) makes it possible to identify the various characteristics of candidates and their letters, and to isolate those which, all other things being equal, have an influence on the selection process. By coding the various argumentative elements presented in the letters—social difficulties, adherence to community values, sporting and cultural background, for example—we can hope to isolate those elements that have a significant effect on the recruitment process. There are, however, several obstacles to this considerable undertaking. The main one is the difficulty of understanding the constitution of the corpus: among the files kept, some did not lead to an actual residence in the cité, but it is highly likely that a significant proportion of the files of rejected applicants were not kept. Worse still, in a large number of cases, the outcome of the application remains uncertain. In addition, some of the letters addressed directly to the houses directors are not included in this corpus.

In any case, our ambition here is more modest: to rely on the letters themselves, and on the files in which they are embedded, in an attempt to detect traces of how they may have been read. The surest clue is, of course, the existence of a reply to the letter. This is not a frequent occurrence, but it does give an indication of which element of the letter the administration is bouncing off to ask for clarification or to contest a point.

Among the salient features of these responses, one in particular stands out: the administration systematically rejects applicants who claim to have a right to accommodation. In the complex dialectic between deference and assertion of rights that always structures the supplications, according to Enrica Asquer,³² the rectorate is keen to assert its discretionary power and to point out, as the Frenchwoman Hélène Sarrade must concede after an exchange with the administration, that “no one is *entitled to* admission to the Cité universitaire”.³³ Generally speaking, it seems that legal arguments are systematically dismissed. The standards governing the

³² Enrica Asquer, “Entre déférence et revendication des droits. Supplices et demandes de dérogation à la législation antisémite dans l’Italie fasciste et la France de Vichy” in Enrica Asquer and Lucia Ceci (eds.), *Scrivere alle autorità...*, *op.cit.*, pp. 71–112.

³³ Letter from Hélène Sarrade to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, October 23, 1950, AN, 20090013/591. Underlining is original.

recruitment of residents were designed to be unenforceable by applicants, making the legal approach ineffective.

However, responses to cover letters are rare. It is therefore on the letters themselves that we must focus in order to obtain clues as to how they have been read, drawing inspiration from ethnographic methods which pay attention to the meaningful content of texts as well as to material traces.³⁴

The reactions of the first readers can be reconstructed on several levels: sometimes there are mentions in the margin, either reacting directly to an argument in the letter, or giving a general opinion on the case, sometimes with an argument. For example, at the end of the letter from Abdelhamid Berrada, admitted to the École spéciale de mécanique et d'électricité, we find the following opinion, signed by Jean Arnaud, director of the *Maison du Maroc* at the CIUP: "Avis favorable à cause de l'orientation technique de l'étudiant" [positive opinion because of the technical orientation taken by the student].³⁵

In a different vein, Touhami Khalfallah, a Tunisian candidate for accommodation at the Deutsch de la Meurthe Foundation, seems to have hit the nail on the head in his letter of October 26, 1951, in which he compared his case with that of one of his less-qualified comrades who received a favorable response while he himself applied for the second time.³⁶ A line in the margin and a question mark indicate that a first reader had isolated the passage in search of an explanation. A second hand added the words "dossier à remettre à M. le recteur" (file to be given to the rector again) with a date of October 29, 1951, three days after the letter was sent. A third note, signed by the same hand but without the date, reads "Dossier à voir" ("File to be seen").³⁷

This succession of mentions, which are as many layers of readings, first gives an idea of the circuit followed by the letter once received. The fact that it is marked "to be delivered again" to the Rector indicates that a

³⁴ See, for example, Jérôme Denis and David Pontille, "Ficelles pour une ethnographie de l'écrit!" in Caroline Datchary (ed.), *Le sens du détail: petit précis méthodologique en sciences sociales*, Lormont, Le bord de l'eau Éditions, 2013, pp. 17–30.

³⁵ Notice stapled to letter from Abdelhamid Berrada to the rector of the Académie de Paris, [1954], AN, 20090013/546.

³⁶ Letter from Touhami Khalfallah to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, October 26, 1951, AN, 20090013/572.

³⁷ Ibid.

first reading was made on receipt at the Rector's Office, before being redirected, probably to the administration of the Deutsch de la Meurthe Foundation, which sent back to the Rector's Office those cases that merit further consideration. On the merits, the case is a little exceptional and perhaps the result of overzealousness on the part of the Foundation's reader. Questioning a fellow student's admission in order to highlight the injustice of which one feels victim is rarely good politics; it is an exceptional argument in letters and seems to have been deemed admissible only in this single case.

In addition to the few explicit references in the margins or at the end of letters, there are more subtle but frequent clues. In particular, a close reading of the various CIUP application files reveals the recurrent use of pencils—usually red, sometimes blue—to underline salient points in the file, to facilitate processing. Unfortunately, there is nothing to identify the authors of these pencil strokes, who could be secretaries in charge of an initial examination before reading by the decision-makers—hence the desire to highlight the elements to be retained during a diagonal reading—or decision-makers themselves—house directors, rectors... We find traces of these pencil strokes both on administrative forms—to underline the training followed, the number of brothers and sisters or the house the student was applying for at the CIUP—and within letters. In the letter from Parisian Nadine Katz, for example, the link she established between the conditions of accommodation at the CIUP and the specific needs of preparing for the agrégation in English seems to have caught the reader's attention.

This year, I am preparing for the second time for the English agrégation, and I realize that it is not merely a matter of residing in a student residence but also of living in an environment conducive to my studies.³⁸

Sometimes, the pencil stops over entire paragraphs with a line in the margin or systematic underlining, or both. In other cases, as in the letter from Vosgiens Jean Kempf, only certain expressions or passages were underlined, thus targeting more precisely the arguments that caught the eye.

³⁸ Letter from Nadine Katz to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, September 22, 1950, AN, 20090013/572.

Indeed, my rather profound nature leads me to avoid the inhabitants of the large city, particularly Paris and the Latin Quarter. Unable to tolerate the often superficial mindset manifested in trivial conversations, I have resolved to live in solitude. This is against my will, as I do enjoy company.³⁹

Several conclusions can be drawn from this analysis. The first is quite disappointing: it seems to confirm the fairly marginal weight of letters in the selection process. Pencilling is often much more intensive in the administrative part of the file—that which took the form of closed-answer forms. This is undoubtedly due to the sheer volume of applications to be processed, and the fact that it was easier to compare candidates on the basis of pre-defined criteria than on their motivation. Worse still, if we rely on pencilling alone, it appears that a significant proportion of the letters may not have been read, or may have been read with far less attention than the forms: in many files, the forms are the subject of pencilling and marginal notes, while the remaining letters bear no trace of having been read. This does not mean, however, that the letters have no effect on the process: on the contrary, it can be assumed that they are only read with attention for tangential files, for which the forms were not sufficient to make a decision.

In the same vein, it seems that letters of recommendation, which are less numerous in the files than cover letters, benefitted from more sustained attention, as evidenced by the more intensive pencilling they received. This is particularly true when recommendations came from political or diplomatic authorities—mayors of French communes, ambassadors of countries of origin—but it is also true when parents wrote letters to support their children's applications. This undoubtedly says something about the continued infantilization of adult students at the CIUP.

If we confine ourselves to the letters bearing traces of reading, what can we retain? Firstly, contrary to the request made in the Rector's letter, the information on the candidates' social and family situation were minutely examined in cover letters. Whether to emphasize the strength of their family network or, on the contrary, their extreme poverty, candidates who detailed their social position by adding elements to what appeared on their forms, had every chance of being read with attention. In the same way, a special case seems to be made of the assessment candidates

³⁹ Letter from Jean Kempf to the Rector of the Académie de Paris, [1953], AN, 20090013/572.

made of their own educational record: whether they indulged in elitist self-congratulation or sought to explain mediocre results, they increased their chances of being pencilled.

Conversely, internationalist professions of faith were largely ignored. With the exception of those candidates who skillfully combined their own career path with their internationalist commitment, simple declarations of support for the values of the City appeared too standardized and too unsurprising to attract the attention of decision-makers.

At the end of this reflection, it becomes clear that cover letters played a secondary, but not neglectable, role in the selection process. Not all were read, but those that were often concerned the most tangential or hotly debated applications. Our attempt to understand how the reading strategies of some sought to neutralize the rhetorical effects of the writing strategies of others does, however, enable us to make progress in understanding the vocation of the CIUP and the image it projected in France and internationally. This observatory is all the more interesting in that it comes at a time when the expectations of the cover letter exercise were in full development. While the genre has come to dominate application practices among students, the CIUP was one of the first institutions to make systematic use of it. As a result, there was a gap between expectations and proposals, and standards were gradually being set. The rector himself, in expressing his expectations, formulated requests that did not always correspond to the elements that seemed to attract attention at the time of the selection process.

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Hijacking Internationalism: International Student Migration, Political Activism, and the Western Order at Paris' Cité Universitaire, 1930s–1970s

Guillaume Tronchet

What do these diverse political and intellectual figures have in common: Hô Van Nga, leader of Vietnam's National Independence Party in 1945; Habib Bourguiba, first president of the Republic of Tunisia in 1957; Léopold Sédar Senghor, first president of Senegal in 1960; Aimé Césaire, poet of Negritude and member of parliament for Martinique for nearly fifty years; Henri Lopes, former minister and prime minister of Congo; Saloth Sâr, the Khmer Rouge leader in Cambodia, better known as Pol Pot in the late 1970s; Mahmoud Hamchari and Ezzeddine Kalak, the first representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization in France; Greek terrorist Alexandros Giotopoulos; Japanese leftist Toru Tagaki; and Iranian journalist and feminist Farangis Habibi?

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Apart from the fact that they were contemporaries, all of these activists and political leaders, along with several hundred of their compatriots, were residents of the Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris (CIUP), mostly during their higher education in France, where many received their political training. This presents a paradox. The CIUP was never intended by its founders to be a haven for rebellion or subversion. On the contrary, it was created in the 1920s by Parisian political and academic elites at the intersection of French cultural imperialism, academic diplomacy,¹ and liberal internationalism. Its mission was to bring together the future elites of international student youth in post-war Paris, with the dual goals of promoting world peace and maintaining a global order under Western dominance.² Situated on Boulevard Jourdan in the southern part of Paris, the 30-hectare campus housed up to 2,500 students in the interwar period, across some twenty national and colonial pavilions funded by French and foreign patrons, as well as certain states (e.g., Fondation des États-Unis, Maison de l'Argentine, Maison de l'Indochine).

From its inception, the CIUP aligned itself intellectually with the League of Nations (it was even nicknamed the “League of Nations of

¹ On this notion, see G. Tronchet, ‘Savoirs en diplomatie: une histoire sociale et internationale de la politique universitaire internationale de la France’, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne (2014); T. Adam and C. Lerg, ‘Diplomacy on campus: The political dimensions of academic exchange in the North Atlantic’, *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, 13, 4 (2015), 299–310; G. Tronchet, ‘The defeat of university autonomy: French academic diplomacy, mobility scholarships and exchange programs (1880s–1930s)’, in G. Scott-Smith and L. Tournès (eds) *Global Exchanges: Scholarships and Transnational Circulations in the Modern World* (New York 2017), 50–64; G. Tronchet, ‘L’expertise universitaire en diplomatie: entre valorisation sociale et assignation à résidence, 1880–1940’, in S. Jeannesson, F. Jesné and E. Schakenbourg (eds), *Experts et expertises en diplomatie: la mobilisation des compétences dans les relations internationales, du Congrès de Westphalie à la naissance de l’ONU* (Rennes 2018), 305–317; C. Lerg, *Universitätsdiplomatie. Wissenschaft und Prestige in den transatlantischen Beziehungen, 1890–1920* (Göttingen 2019).

² For more details, see G. Tronchet, ‘La Cité Universitaire: une joint-venture transnationale dans le Paris des années 1920 et 1930’, in S. Jaumain and P. Van den Dungen (eds) *Biermans-Lapôte: Histoire d’un mécène et de sa fondation* (Brussels 2013), 85–100; G. Tronchet, ‘Diplomatie universitaire ou diplomatie culturelle? La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris entre deux rives (1920–1940)’, in D. Kévonian and G. Tronchet (eds) *La Babel étudiante: La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris, 1920–1950* (Rennes 2013), 59–88; J. Reis, ‘Cultural internationalism at the Cité Universitaire: international education between the First and the Second World Wars’, *History of Education*, 39, 2 (March 2010), 155–173; J. Reis, ‘French and Foreign Students in Interwar Paris: Creating the Cité Universitaire’, unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Virginia (2007).

Students”³ or the “League of Nations of Youth”⁴) in a context characterized by the growth of international university exchanges and competition among Western powers for the training of national elites.⁵ Its leaders, such as Senator André Honnorat, President of the CIUP from 1925 to 1948, and mathematician Paul Appell, Rector of the University of Paris (1920–1925), were closely connected with networks of Geneva internationalism and American philanthropy, including the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the Rockefeller Foundation.⁶ John D. Rockefeller Jr. himself financed the construction of an International House at the CIUP, modeled after similar International Houses already established in cities like New York, Berkeley, and Chicago to accommodate international students.⁷

Moreover, from the 1920s to the 1960s, all political activism was prohibited within the CIUP, as its administrators feared the diplomatic repercussions of conflicts between students from different nationalities. Political meetings, publications, and the distribution of pamphlets were banned by the internal regulations, and the institution enforced what Pierre Bourdieu termed a “depoliticized political discourse”,⁸ which, under the guise of neutrality, sought to neutralize the politicization of

³ *Gazette de Lausanne*, 25 May 1936.

⁴ *Excelsior*, November 8, 1936.

⁵ Among many references, see C. Charle, ‘Paris: National, International, Transnational, Cultural Capital City? (19 h-20th Century)’, in M. Middell (ed.), *The Practice of Global History: European Perspectives* (London 2019), 45–80; T. Bevis, *A World History of Higher Education Exchange: The Legacy of American Scholarship* (Cham, 2019); C. Charle, ‘L’internationalisation des universités, XIX–XX^e siècles’, in F. Le lièvre et al. (eds) *Langues et cultures dans l’internationalisation de l’enseignement supérieur au XXI^e siècle* (Bern 2018), 5–40; D. Laqua, ‘Activism in the “Students’ League of Nations”: International Students Politics and the Confédération Internationale des Etudiants, 1919–1939’, *The English Historical Review*, 32, 556 (2017), 605–637; W. Walton, *Internationalism, National Identities and Study Abroad: France and The United States, 1890–1970* (Stanford 2010); V. Karady, ‘La migration internationale d’étudiants en Europe, 1890–1940’, *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, 145 (2002), 47–60.

⁶ See G. Tronchet, *André Honnorat: Un visionnaire en politique* (Paris 2020).

⁷ W. Weymans, ‘At Home Abroad? International House New York and the Cité Universitaire in Paris: Cosmopolitan versus Diasporic Internationalism’, in F. Kläger and K. Stierstorfer (eds) *Diasporic Constructions of Home and Belonging* (Berlin/Boston 2015), 279–295.

⁸ P. Bourdieu, *Ce que parler veut dire* (Paris 1982), 155.

international issues by promoting a technical approach to international relations, supposedly less contentious.

However, upon closer examination of the historical sources, rather than merely accepting the statements of the institution's founders and leaders, it becomes clear that from the 1930s to the 1970s, the CIUP was precisely the space where a student activism critical of the global political order flourished. This period witnessed the repoliticization of internationalism from below, transforming the CIUP into a unique laboratory for the growth of anti-colonial, anti-imperialist, and anti-authoritarian nationalisms and political cultures. As a result, the CIUP presents historians with a striking example of the "return of the political repressed",⁹ a process that has attracted growing attention in studies of international organizations, countering long-standing theories in international relations that have perpetuated the myth of their apolitical or politically impotent nature.¹⁰

In this context, this article seeks to demonstrate the role of the CIUP in global "streams of contentious politics",¹¹ illustrating how, as a central hub for international student migration to France, it inadvertently contributed to the transnational circulation of oppositional discourses and practices. Moreover, it helped to forge "coalitions across borders"¹² that challenged and reshaped the dominant political order between the 1930s and 1970s.¹³

⁹ F. Petiteville, 'The resilient politicization of international organizations', *Critique internationale*, 76, 3 (2017), 16.

¹⁰ See M. Barnett and M. Finnemore, *Rules for the World. International Organizations in Global Politics* (Ithaca 2004). Hans-Martin Jaeger, "Global Civil Society" and the Political Depoliticization of Global Governance", *International Political Sociology*, 1, 2007, pp. 257–277; Béatrice Pouligny, "La construction de la paix", *Annuaire français de relations internationales*, vol. IV, 2003, pp. 791–799.

¹¹ C. Tilly and S. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics* (Oxford 2006).

¹² See *Coalitions across Borders: Transnational Protest and the Neoliberal Order*, edited by Joe Bandy and Jackie Smith, Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005.

¹³ This article is a translated and revised version of the following contribution: « "La Cité en ébullition": jeunesse étudiante et action collective à la Cité internationale universitaire de Paris, de 1945 aux années 1968: contestations, mobilisations et circulations », in Dzovinar Kévonian et Guillaume Tronchet (ed.), *Le Campus monde. La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris, de 1945 aux années 2000*, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2022, p. 71–120.

A CAULDRON OF TRANSNATIONAL ANTI-COLONIALISM AND ANTI-IMPERIALISM

Since welcoming its first students in 1925, the CIUP quickly became a hub for anti-colonial and nationalist student movements and a training ground for many future leaders in the struggle for decolonization and independence. Despite its significant role in this historical context, the CIUP's contribution remains largely overlooked and warrants closer examination.¹⁴

Among the most organized groups were the Indochinese students. Housed in the *Maison des étudiants de l'Indochine* since the 1930s, a colonial project financed by French business interests in Indochina, these students were grouped under the *Association des étudiants annamites de Paris*, which openly resisted the colonial administration's control over the *Maison*, a tool to regulate student migration from Southeast Asia to France.¹⁵

The CIUP facilitated the exchange of activist practices: the institutionalization of the Indochinese student movement directly inspired the creation of the *Association des étudiants musulmans nord-africains* (AEMNA) in 1927, modeled on the former association.¹⁶ A small group of Tunisian, Moroccan, and Algerian students, expelled from the cafés of the Latin Quarter by French police, established their organization in the Belgian Pavilion of the CIUP.¹⁷ This group included future leaders of North African nationalism, many of whom resided at the CIUP: Tunisian Ahmed Ben Milad (1902–1994) and Moroccan Mohammed Hassan el-Ouazzani (1910–1978), both central figures in Moroccan nationalism, shared a room in the Belgian Pavilion; Tunisian nationalists Bahri Guiga (1904–1995) and Tahar Sfar (1903–1942), close friends of Habib Bourguiba, shared a room in the *Pavillon Deutsch-de-la-Meurthe*

¹⁴ The Cité Universitaire is thus hardly mentioned, for example, in Michael Goebel's book, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

¹⁵ For more details, see the work of Sarah Legrandjacques, particularly in her chapter in this book.

¹⁶ C.-R. Ageron, 'L'Association des étudiants musulmans nord-africains en France durant l'entre-deux-guerres. Contribution à l'étude des nationalismes maghrébins', *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer*, 70, 258–259 (1983), 29.

¹⁷ Youssef Belal, *Le cheikh et le calife: Sociologie religieuse de l'islam politique au Maroc*, Paris, ENS Editions, 2014, p. 35.

with Bourguiba; Slimane Ben Slimane (1905–1986), another Tunisian student, was eventually expelled from the CIUP for his activism.¹⁸ By the late 1920s, Tunisian students at the CIUP formed the core leadership of the *Néo-Destour*, the political party created in 1934 to combat French rule in Tunisia.

In the 1930s, the CIUP campus also became a site for the emergence of black anti-colonialist consciousness. A small group of Africans and Overseas Students became active in several student organizations, including the *Association des étudiants ouest-africains*, founded in 1933 at the CIUP¹⁹ and led by Léopold Sédar Senghor (1906–2001), a resident at the *Fondation Deutsch de la Meurthe*. Similarly, the *Association des étudiants martiniquais*, founded in 1932, headquartered on campus from 1933,²⁰ where leaders such as Aimé Césaire (1913–2008), Joseph-Henri Edmé, Joseph Marty, Aristide Maugée (1914–1967), and René Sauphanor were based.²¹ Under their leadership, the publication *L'Étudiant noir* was launched in 1935, with its offices at the *Maison des Provinces de France*, marking the birth of the Negritude movement led by Senghor and Césaire. The magazine criticized racial injustices, such as the domination of Europeans “over the best opportunities in colonized countries”.²²

Most of these anti-colonial student movements had connections with socialist and communist movements. Some CIUP residents, such as Senghor among socialist students, were actively involved. Others included Claude Lewy (1906–1981), a future mayor of Orléans and close associate of Front Populaire minister Jean Zay, and Georges Soulès (1907–1986), who would later gain prominence as the writer Raymond Abellio. The CIUP also attracted leftist groups from its inception in 1925, with the presence of socialist and communist-affiliated groups opposing far-right movements like *Action Française*.²³ By the late 1930s, student groups,

¹⁸ S. Ben Slimane, *Souvenirs politiques* (Tunis, 1989).

¹⁹ *Bulletin de l'Office central des œuvres de bienfaisance*, 41, May 1934, 38.

²⁰ *Journal officiel de la République française*, 14 January 1934, 407.

²¹ *L'Étudiant noir*, 1, March 1935, 8.

²² *L'Étudiant noir*, 1, March 1935, 8.

²³ “Petites nouvelles de la nuit”, *L'Action française*, March 5, 1926.

such as the little known *Fédération des étudiants révolutionnaires*²⁴ and the *Comité international des étudiants* created in 1931,²⁵ operated on the campus, although communist leadership faced challenges from far-right factions during student strikes in 1936 and 1937.²⁶

After 1945, communist influence grew at the CIUP in the context of the Cold War, with the formation of communist cells on campus. Resistance fighter and history student Armand Guillotin (1920–1995) led one such cell in 1946–1947,²⁷ as did Henri Van Regemorter (1925–2002), a resident at the Belgian Pavilion and a doctoral student in astrophysics, who trained numerous communist students at the CIUP between the late 1940s and early 1950s. The history student Pierre Brocheux recalls in his memoirs three Communist cells at the CIUP.²⁸ These students led anti-nuclear campaigns and protested the Indochina War and German rearmament, circulating petitions and distributing newspapers such as *La Cité libre* and *Propositions*, which supported in 1950 student peace movements, under the lead of Henri Van Regemorter and several students from the Pavillon Belge and Pavillon Deutsch.²⁹

This communist presence revitalized pre-war anti-colonial traditions, especially as the CIUP expanded to accommodate more colonial students, with new pavilions such as *Maison de la France d’Outre-mer* (1951), *Maison de la Tunisie* and *Maison du Maroc* (1953), and *Maison du Cambodge* (1957). According to Pierre Brocheux, “the anti-colonial struggle, the fight against the Indochina War, and the Cold War were

²⁴ Quoted by André Balent, “Grau Roger, François, Gabriel”, *Dictionnaire biographique du Mouvement ouvrier (Le Maitron)*, online: <https://maitron.fr/spip.php?article87253>.

²⁵ *Bulletin de la coopération intellectuelle*, May 1931, 243.

²⁶ *L’Etudiant français*, 16^e year, June 8, 1936; 17^e year, December 2, 10, 1936; January 4, 25, 1937; February 5, 10, 1937; February 6, 25, 1937; 18^e year, January 4, 25, 1938; 19^e year, April 5, 1938; see also “Une provocation des fascistes à la Cité universitaire”, *Le Populaire*, February 19, 1937.

²⁷ GIRAULT Jacques, “Guillotin Armand, Albert, Joseph, Marie”, *Le Maitron. Dictionnaire Biographique. Mouvement ouvrier. Mouvement social*, online version May 3, 2010, modified June 14, 2014.

²⁸ BROCHEUX Pierre, “Henri Van Regemorter at the Cité universitaire internationale de Paris (1952–1954). Souvenirs”, *Viet Nam, une coopération exemplaire. Henri Van Regemorter (1925–2002). Parcours d’un militant*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 2004, p. 22–24.

²⁹ SIMON-CORTÈS Nicole, “Henri Van Regemorter et Propositions, journal du Conseil de la paix du Quartier Latin (1950–1954)”, *Viet Nam, une coopération exemplaire...*, *op. cit.* p. 17–21.

all intertwined during these years. The CIUP offered a fertile ground for far-left activism”.³⁰

Colonial students from Asia, Africa, Overseas territories, and Latin America, many of whom would become political leaders, joined the CIUP’s communist networks against colonialism and imperialism, much to the dismay of the French police, who kept a close watch on their activities.³¹ These included Haitian poet René Depestre (b. 1926), resident of the *Maison de Cuba*,³² Guadeloupean Henri Bangou (b. 1922), president of the residents’ committee of the *Maison de la France d’Outre-mer* (1949), vice-president of the *Union nationale des étudiants de France* (UNEF), president of the *Association générale des étudiants guadeloupéens* and leader of the *Comité de liaison des étudiants anticolonialistes* with future lawyer Jacques Vergès.³³ This was also the case of South American students “of communist or at least progressive leanings” who, in January 1950, set up at the CIUP the “first political group” in Paris to “discuss political issues of interest to Latin America”.³⁴ There were also African students at the communist cell of the *Maison des Provinces de France*, such as Senegalese Amady Aly Dieng (1923–2015) and future Minister and President of the Supreme Court Ousmane Camara (b. 1931), both linked to the Marxist-Leninist African Independence Party and residents of the *Maison de la France d’Outre-mer* in 1957.³⁵ In the same time, other residents from the Portuguese colonies in Africa who, following orders from the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP), sought to establish at the CIUP “links between international communism and the PCP, and to more easily

³⁰ BROCHEUX Pierre, *op. cit.* p. 22.

³¹ “La propagande communiste au sein de la Cité universitaire”, report from the Préfecture de police de Paris, 1952 (AN, 19,880,312/6).

³² Cf. COUFFON Claude, René Depestre, Paris, Seghers, 1986.

³³ BANGOU Henri, *Ancien sénateur et maire de Pointe-à-Pitre: Soixante années d’engagement politique, de l’UNEF au Sénat en passant par les cinquante années de gestion municipale*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 2008, p. 21–23.

³⁴ “Formation d’un groupe politique d’étudiants sud-américains à Paris”, note from the Préfecture de police de Paris, January 25, 1950 (APP, 77W/74, 34,181/2).

³⁵ CAMARA Ousmane, *Mémoires d’un juge africain. Itinéraire d’un homme libre*, Paris, Karthala-CREPOS, p. 44; BLUM Françoise, “Dieng Amady Aly”, *Le Maitron. Dictionnaire Biographique. Mouvement ouvrier. Mouvement social*, online version February 13, 2015, modified March 11, 2016.

disseminate communist propaganda designed to uplift the African continent”³⁶. From 1957 onwards, within the *Maison de l’Indochine* and later the *Maison du Cambodge*, Vietnamese and Cambodian students played a significant role in the communist cells of the CIUP. Initially active in the *Association des Étudiants Khmers*, founded at the *Maison de l’Indochine* in 1946 and dissolved by French authorities in 1953, they later formed the *Cercle Khmer d’Études Marxistes* and ultimately the *Union des Étudiants Khmers* in 1957. These increasingly revolutionary organizations nurtured the future leadership of the Khmer Rouge regime, including Saloth Sâr, later known as Pol Pot (1925–1958), and Khieu Samphan (b. 1931).

The widespread influence of anti-imperialist communism significantly increased the opportunities for leaflet distribution and meetings related to the ongoing processes of decolonization and independence. For instance, in February 1955, a lecture by Léopold Sédar Senghor on federalism in Black Africa, held at the *Maison Internationale*, transformed into an anti-colonial rally initiated by members of the *Fédération des étudiants d’Afrique noire en France* (FEANF).³⁷ A few weeks later, on April 16, 1955, during the Bandung Conference of “Third World” countries in Indonesia, another meeting was organized at the *Maison Internationale*, “which was regarded as important among Middle Eastern student groups”.³⁸ This gathering brought “together around one hundred students of various nationalities (Syrian, Lebanese, Egyptian, Sudanese, Iraqi, Iranian, Jordanian, and Armenian)” to “protest against all forms of colonialism”. The meeting resulted in a manifesto, written in Arabic, that was sent to the Bandung delegates. According to the Paris Prefecture of Police, “Syrian officers were present as observers”.³⁹

In December 1955, during a book fair, a group of around twenty far-right students disrupted the event by overturning tables displaying books on the Indochina War and “student life in the USSR”, sparking a violent

³⁶ Note from the Portuguese State Political Police to the French Direction de la Surveillance du Territoire (DST), October 12, 1957 (quoted in PEREIRA Victor, *La dictature de Salazar face à l’émigration. L’Etat portugais et ses migrants en France (1957–1974)*, Paris, Presses universitaires de Sciences Po, 2012, p. 373).

³⁷ AGERON Charles-Robert and MICHEL Marc (dir), *L’Afrique noire française, l’heure des indépendances*, Paris, CNRS Éditions, 1992, p. 50.

³⁸ “Student meeting at the Cité Universitaire”, April 20, 1955, confidential note (APP, 77W/74, 34,181/2).

³⁹ *Ibid.*

altercation.⁴⁰ The Algerian War further intensified tensions at the CIUP, where “announcements about the disappearance of Algerian students were regularly posted at the campus gates”.⁴¹ In February 1956, during a leaflet distribution, Algerian students were attacked by other students supporting French Algeria. This incident prompted the formation of the *Comité antifasciste de la Cité universitaire*, led by Communist students.⁴² Various unofficial collectives, including the *Comité antifasciste des États-Unis*, the *Comité antifasciste de la Deutsch*, and the *Comité d’union des gauches du Parc Ouest*, joined forces with other student political groups, such as socialist, radical, and MRP students.⁴³ A few weeks later, another confrontation with far-right students led to the expulsion of Claude Quin, a member of the communist student group, from the CIUP.⁴⁴

By the late 1950s and early 1960s, the influence of the communist left at the CIUP— or at least the perception of its influence—had become so pronounced that it was publicly condemned by right-wing factions, even from the floor of the French National Assembly. The Gaullist right criticized the distribution of communist leaflets and newspapers at the CIUP,⁴⁵ while the Poujadist right denounced what they described as the “colonization” of the CIUP by the French Communist Party (PCF).⁴⁶

⁴⁰ “Incident between students at the Cité Universitaire”, note from the Commissaire Principal of the 14^e arrondissement to the Directeur Général de la Police Municipale, Paris, December 19, 1955 (APP, 77W/74, 34,181/2).

⁴¹ LE GALLOU Claude, *Une fille du siècle. Une autobiographie*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 2019, p. 37.

⁴² During an intervention at the Cité against a leaflet distribution by the committee, the police arrested Simon Lévy (1934–2012), a Jewish Moroccan anti-Zionist, communist and anti-Islamist student, then staying at the Maison du Maroc, and who would become—among others—one of the co-founders of the Union nationale des étudiants du Maroc (“Distribution de tracts à la Cité universitaire”, note from the Préfecture de police de Paris, February 11, 1956, APP, 77W/74, 34,181/2).

⁴³ “No fascist demonstrators at the Cité”, leaflet n.d. (APP, 77W/74, 34,181/2).

⁴⁴ “Après l’expulsion de la Cité universitaire, pour activité politique, du résident Claude Quin”, note from the Préfecture de police de Paris, July 4, 1956 (APP, 77W/74, 34,181/2).

⁴⁵ Question écrite du député Michel Habib-Deloncle au ministre de l’Éducation nationale, n°7728, November 5, 1960, *Journal officiel, Assemblée nationale, Débats parlementaires*, December 8, 1960.

⁴⁶ “You are not unaware of the role played by the communization of black and North African students by the Communist Party which, over the last fifteen years, has literally colonized the university campus, the Latin Quarter and the new university campuses”

However, this influence waned in the aftermath of decolonization and in the lead-up to May 1968. Like elsewhere,⁴⁷ the influence of communist students at the CIUP declined as they faced growing competition from nationalist and anti-imperialist movements linked to the home countries of post-colonial residents. Additionally, new leftist movements emerged, including the Parti socialiste unifié (PSU), which had a presence among residents, and far-left groups such as Trotskyist and Maoist factions active in Vietnam solidarity committees.⁴⁸ Among these activists was Greek student Alexandre Giotopoulos, a 21-year-old son of a former Trotskyist, who was part of the leftist group at the Hellenic Foundation between 1965 and 1967.⁴⁹ Italian philosopher Alessandro Fontana, 25, who resided at the *Maison de l'Italie* in 1964, also became an active militant in support of Vietnam, working alongside comrades from the *Ecole normale supérieure* who were associated with Althusser.⁵⁰

In the mid-1960s, however, militant engagement appeared relatively marginal among the residents of the CIUP. Although the diverse nationalities present in the pavilions and the prevailing international context—the Vietnam War, the Cultural Revolution in China, Che Guevara’s activities in Latin America, and so forth—were conducive to the development of “political consciousness”,⁵¹ the actual level of activism remained limited. The CIUP served as a venue for meetings and debates, fostering a form of intellectual politicization. As Gérard Mauger, a resident at the *Fondation Biermans-Lapôtre* from 1964 to 1965, recalled, “We used to go to Maspero and explore Marx, Freud, Althusser, and others. I remember we organized a reading group for *Capital* at the CIUP”.⁵²

The management of the CIUP continued to strictly enforce its internal regulations prohibiting all forms of political activity, including

(Speech by Jean-Marie Le Pen, Séance du 30 avril 1959, *Journal officiel, Assemblée nationale, Débats parlementaires*, 1^{er} mai 1959, p. 408).

⁴⁷ BANTIGNY Ludivine, 1968. *De grands soirs en petits matins*, Paris, Seuil, 2018.

⁴⁸ “La Cité universitaire. De l’intégration à la lutte”, *Politique hebdo*, January 25, 1973, p. 17.

⁴⁹ CHICLET Christophe, “Grèce: une démocratie apaisée”, *Politique internationale*, n°98, 2003 (note 5).

⁵⁰ FONTANA Alessandro, “Una educazione intellettuale”, *aut aut*, n°362, April-June 2014, pp. 7–8.

⁵¹ Telephone interview with Ezio Ornato, May 29, 2020.

⁵² Telephone interview of June 2, 2020.

group meetings, publications, leaflet distribution, and conferences. This included expelling individuals deemed undesirable and perceiving subversion in even the slightest criticism. In 1966, following the disturbances and confrontations around the *Maison du Maroc* related to the Ben Barka affair from the previous year, the directors of the *Maison* were unequivocally reminded of these policies, which, in practice, proved increasingly unfeasible and were even criticized as “too rigid” in the pages of the french newspaper *Le Monde*.⁵³

Despite this, the management of the CIUP remained clear-eyed about the situation. Pierre Marthelot, the CIUP’s general delegate, noted in his annual activity report, “No conflict, no internal revolution or coup d’état in the world occurs without its repercussions here at the Cité. It is not always easy to convey to students, or even to the representatives of the concerned countries, that debates should be conducted outside the Cité”.⁵⁴ The events of May 1968 would ultimately validate his observations even further.

THE CIUP IN THE GLOBAL STUDENT PROTEST OF THE LONG ’68

The events of May–June 1968 at the CIUP represented not so much a rupture as a radical intensification of earlier protests from the 1950s and 1960s. This new phase in the cycle of mobilizations at the CIUP was significantly influenced by the intersection of traditional Parisian student demands—such as student co-management, co-education, and opposition to paternalism and elitism—with critiques of the political and international order that had previously been localized within specific pavilions. These critiques included anti-authoritarianism and anti-imperialism, and they emerged within a context of increased international exchange of ideas and protest practices.⁵⁵

⁵³ “La direction de la Cité internationale de Paris interdit toute conférence politique”, *Le Monde*, February 7, 1966.

⁵⁴ “Rapport moral sur l’année 1967”, Appendix to the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting of February 9, 1968, p. 11 (AN, 20,090,013/88).

⁵⁵ For a recent overview, see Françoise Blum and Guillaume Tronchet (ed.), *Les passeurs de révolte. Etudiants et intellectuels étrangers et postcoloniaux dans les années 1968 en France*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, forthcoming 2025.

This analysis will not delve into the specific events of May 68 at the CIUP, which have been discussed extensively elsewhere,⁵⁶ including the demonstrations, building occupations, and the formation of organized associations and collectives. Instead, it will focus on the transnational dynamics of student mobilization on campus. These dynamics primarily stemmed from opponents of the political regimes associated with their respective occupied houses, who transformed these symbolic spaces into platforms for their anti-imperialist, anti-authoritarian, and revolutionary demands. As a result, the Cité came to be perceived as a “sanctuary of subversion”.⁵⁷

For instance, the *Maison d’Afrique* underwent a name change to explicitly denounce French neo-colonialism and assert control over what was perceived as a house under French influence. Similarly, the *Maison du Portugal* was occupied with cries of “Death to Salazar! Down with colonialism!” and was declared the “first free and socialist territory of Portugal,” with its rooms renamed after Che Guevara, Marx, and Engels.⁵⁸ The *Maison du Maroc* also saw its management flee, and residents, supported by “members from the Maison des Étudiants Nord-Africains, 115 boulevard Saint Michel”,⁵⁹ transformed the “liberated” space into a center of opposition to Hassan II’s regime. The two buildings were renamed “Ben Barka” and “Al Fath” respectively,⁶⁰ and debates were organized to reassert anti-imperialism from the pre-68 era, such as the May 19, 1968, discussion titled “Third World and Europe against Soviet-American Imperialism” aimed at “exploring strategies to dismantle the global imperialist system”.⁶¹

⁵⁶ See Guillaume Tronchet, “‘La Cité en ébullition’. Jeunesse étudiante et action collective à la Cité internationale universitaire de Paris, de 1945 aux années 1968: contestations, mobilisations et circulations”, in KEVONIAN Dzovinar and TRONCHET Guillaume (eds.), *Le Campus monde...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 71–120.

⁵⁷ Michel Kajman on the events of May 68 at La Cité in *Le Monde*, June 25, 1975.

⁵⁸ Agnès Pellerin, *Les Portugais à Paris: au fil des siècles et des arrondissements*, Paris, Éditions Chandeigne, 2009, p. 154.

⁵⁹ Letter from Pierre Marthelot to Jean Basdevant, Director General of Cultural Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Paris, May 30, 1968 (AN, 20,090,013/22).

⁶⁰ “La Cité universitaire. De l’intégration à la lutte”, *Politique hebdo*, January 25, 1973, p. 17.

⁶¹ Tract no. 2405, May 19, 1968 (BnF, 4-LB61–600).

The same was true for the Hellenic Foundation,⁶² where intelligence reports indicated that most residents—anarchists or far-left militants—were actively opposing the military dictatorship in Greece.⁶³ Among them were several individuals aged between 25 and 31, including students from the Sorbonne and the École Pratique des Hautes Études (EPHE), as well as a researcher from the CNRS. These residents were affiliated with the *Association des Étudiants Hellènes de Paris* and the *Comité d'Action des Étudiants Grecs de la Sorbonne*, which brought together Maoists, Trotskyists, and young revolutionary communists. With a black flag raised atop the Hellenic Foundation, the occupiers declared it “free Greek territory” and called for “the overthrow of fascist tyranny in our country”.⁶⁴

At the Collège d'Espagne, red flags were prominently displayed alongside portraits of Che Guevara, Cuban slogans such as “The duty of every revolutionary is to make revolution”, and graffiti mocking Franco’s regime. The Spanish students aimed to “unequivocally align themselves with the great French revolutionary movement” and sought to strengthen ties with Spanish workers in France, clearly intending their actions as a denunciation of Franco’s regime.⁶⁵ The occupation drew considerable attention and curiosity. “For a week now,” noted *Le Monde* on May 29, 1968, “families of Spaniards from Paris, with children in tow, have been coming here, somewhat surprised to find this ‘piece of revolutionary Spain’ in the heart of Paris”. Prominent French writers, filmmakers, and renowned Spanish intellectuals agreed in principle to join a “patronage committee” supporting the occupation.⁶⁶

The Argentinian pavilion also garnered significant public attention. The occupants, who condemned the military dictatorship’s grip on the institution, the deviation from its academic mission, and the abandonment of the management team that had fled during the early hours of the occupation, renamed the building the “Che Guevara Pavilion”.

⁶² Cf. KORNETIS Konstantinos, “Les premiers mètres carrés de territoire grec libéré”: la Fondation hellénique sous la dictature des colonels (1967–1974), in Maria Gravarí-Barbas (ed.), *La Fondation hellénique de la Cité internationale de Paris: lieu de vie, lieu de mémoire*, Paris, Éditions Kallimages/Fondation hellénique, 2015, p. 121–160.

⁶³ “La participation des étudiants grecs lors de l’agitation estudiantine à Paris”, note dated June 22, 1968 (Archives de la Préfecture de Police de Paris, FB57).

⁶⁴ “Motion”, leaflet no. 003814, May 22, 1968 (CHS, Fonds Mai-68).

⁶⁵ *Le Monde*, May 29, 1968.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

Their actions were supported by around fifty French, Spanish, and Latin American intellectuals, including Fernando Arrabal, Carlos Barral, Simone de Beauvoir, Julio Cortázar, Carlos Fuentes, Jean-Luc Godard, Gisèle Halimi, Michel Leiris, Nathalie Sarraute, Jean-Paul Sartre, Antonio Seguí, and Mario Vargas Llosa.⁶⁷

The political nature of these occupations was also evident in the violence sometimes directed at certain opponents of the movement, who were typically aligned with the political regimes of their countries of origin. For instance, at the Argentinian Pavilion, where the occupation did not have the support of the majority of residents, about thirty individuals were forcibly removed from the building.⁶⁸ At the *Maison du Portugal*, the director was held captive for a week before managing to escape.⁶⁹ Similarly, the director of the *Maison du Brésil* was “sequestered for six hours in his office and interrogated in a very harsh manner about his political activities”, while “the director’s secretariat and apartment were searched” and “the director’s personal correspondence was seized”.⁷⁰ Additionally, a resident who had compiled a list of the pavilion’s Communists to hand over to the police was “severely interrogated” in his room by members of the occupation committee, many of whom were from outside the *Maison*.⁷¹ The *Collège d’Espagne* was reportedly transformed into a “veritable ‘armed hotbed’,” allegedly storing “weapons of all kinds”⁷².

While each occupied pavilion at the CIUP developed its own distinct action and political-cultural programs, several joint meetings were also organized among them. In early June 1968, the occupation committees from the African, Argentinian, Spanish, Greek, Moroccan, and

⁶⁷ Tract no. 003828, May 28, 1968; Tract no. 003842, May 1968 (CHS, Fonds Mai-68).

⁶⁸ *Le Monde*, May 29, 1968.

⁶⁹ “La Cité internationale de l’Université de Paris, boulevard Jourdan (14e)”, n°15–70, report by the Direction des renseignements généraux et des jeunes, Préfecture de police de Paris, June 1970 (APP, GD57).

⁷⁰ Letter from Pierre Marthelot to Jean Basdevant, Director General of Cultural Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Paris, May 30, 1968 (AN, 20,090,013/22).

⁷¹ *Le Monde*, June 2, 1968.

⁷² “La Cité internationale de l’Université de Paris, boulevard Jourdan (14e)”, n°15–70, report by the Direction des renseignements généraux et des jeunes, Préfecture de police de Paris, June 1970 (APP, GD57).

Portuguese pavilions convened a debate on “the national and international causes of the occupations”.⁷³ On June 11, Pierre Marthelot, who kept the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and relevant embassies informed about the escalating situation at the “Cité en ébullition⁷⁴”, expressed his concern: “Given the current pace of events, it is not out of the question that an order to occupy the entire Cité may be issued in the near future⁷⁵”. On June 17, 1968, a major “Meeting of the Liberated Pavilions” of the CIUP was held at the *Maison Internationale*, attended by prominent figures such as Simone de Beauvoir, Marguerite Duras, Nathalie Sarraute, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Jorge Semprún.⁷⁶

Furthermore, solidarity meetings in support of expelled foreign students, including residents of the CIUP, were organized to unite the mobilized groups. Among the 765 foreigners arrested in Paris following the May and June 1968 demonstrations, 221 were students, 40 of whom faced ministerial expulsion orders.⁷⁷ This group included three residents of the CIUP who were detained at a banned demonstration site: two German students, aged 22 and 23, who were expelled on June 14 and 15, 1968, and a 20-year-old Argentinian student, expelled on June 26, 1968. A Danish student, arrested on June 11 and held at the Vincennes center, was fortunate; the director of the Danish Foundation intervened after the Danish Consul appealed to the Prefect.⁷⁸ On June 12, 1968, a meeting was held in the gardens of the CIUP to support the expelled students, organized by the action committees, the *Mouvement de soutien aux luttes du peuple*, and the *Mouvement du 22-Mars*.⁷⁹ Another meeting on June 28 protested “against the massive and arbitrary expulsions of

⁷³ Tract no. 003855, before June 3, 1968 (CHS, Fonds Mai-68).

⁷⁴ Letter from Pierre Marthelot to Raymond Poussard, Deputy Director of Cultural Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Paris, June 12, 1968 (AN, 20,090,013/22).

⁷⁵ Letter from Pierre Marthelot to Jean Basdevant, Director General of Cultural Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Paris, June 11, 1968 (AN, 20,090,013/22).

⁷⁶ Tract no. 003868, June 17, 1968 (CHS, Fonds Mai-68).

⁷⁷ “Étrangers frappés d’une mesure d’expulsion pour avoir pris part aux manifestations des mois de mai et juin 1968”, Note dated June 27, 1968 (Archives de la Préfecture de Police de Paris, F^B 57).

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ “Communiqué”, June 12, 1968, in “La Sorbonne par elle-même. Mai-Juin 1968, Documents rassemblés et présentés par Jean-Claude et Michelle Perrot, Madeleine Rebérioux, Jean Maitron”, *Le Mouvement social*, n°64, July-September 1968, p. 227.

our fellow students and foreign workers”, attended by Marguerite Duras, Christiane de Rochefort, and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, among others.⁸⁰

By mid-June 1968, the movement at the CIUP began to wane, reflecting a broader trend across France. The occupation of the pavilions on Boulevard Jourdan gradually ended, with the Brazil, Portugal, and Spain pavilions being the first to be vacated between June 12 and 15, 1968. These pavilions were reported to be “in a state close to devastation after systematic looting”, according to the general delegate who was involved in the process of abandonment.⁸¹ “Discreet contacts” were made with the occupiers to convey the “risk that law enforcement might enter the Cité and proceed to ‘clean up’ the occupied houses”.⁸² A representative of the President of the French Republic confirmed this, stating that “the director of the Cité covertly encouraged this departure, which was motivated by the fear of the extremists’ own excesses and the false rumors of an impending crackdown, which, in the minds of the Spanish, Portuguese, and Brazilians, was expected to mirror actions taken in their own countries”.⁸³

In other pavilions, normal resident life began to resume. The diverse dynamics—student, social, and political—that had initially converged to drive the movement at the CIUP gradually diverged. French and Francophone students most actively involved in the call for student co-management shifted to a power struggle with the CIUP’s administration to advance student participation in institutional governance, with negotiations continuing throughout the 1970s.⁸⁴ Meanwhile, politically engaged foreign students found the CIUP of the 1970s to be a fertile ground for continuing their anti-imperialist demands and struggles.

In the 1970s, the CIUP naturally became a focal point for debates and gatherings among the diverse cultural and political groups that emerged

⁸⁰ Tract no. 003874, June 28, 1968 (CHS, Fonds Mai-68).

⁸¹ Board of Directors of the Fondation nationale, minutes of June 19, 1968 (AN, 20,090,013/88).

⁸² Letter from Pierre Marthelot to Jean Basdevant, Director General of Cultural Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Paris, June 17, 1968 (AN, 20,090,013/22).

⁸³ “Note sur la situation de la Cité universitaire”, note from Sébastien Loste, chargé de mission at the Secrétariat général de la Présidence de la République, Paris, June 17, 1968 (AN, 640AP46).

⁸⁴ See Guillaume Tronchet, “La Cité en ébullition”, art. cité.

from the May 1968 movement. These included socialists, leftists, feminists, hippies, ecologists, homosexuals, protest artists, and others.⁸⁵ The leftist groups, particularly Trotskyists and Maoists from the Gauche prolétarienne, were especially active and “omnipresent”⁸⁶ at the CIUP. A prominent figure among them was the philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, a former resident, who occasionally returned to the CIUP. The influence of leftist movements extended beyond France, with the CIUP becoming a vibrant center for international leftists, including many from the Arab world. Toufic Hindi recalls that the CIUP was “the ideal place to forge links with Arab revolutionaries”.⁸⁷

As leftism, anti-authoritarianism, and anti-imperialism were deeply intertwined, many of these activists were engaged—sometimes independently—in various micro-struggles within the CIUP’s pavilions, reminiscent of the May 68 occupations. These pavilions became hotbeds of agitation, protest, and mobilization, serving either as a support base or battleground for political and geopolitical conflicts imported to Boulevard Jourdan with increased intensity following the May movement. Demonstrations, hunger strikes, brawls, occupations of premises, and administrative closures were common occurrences during this period. The pavilions saw a mix of political opponents from their countries of origin, residents, and undocumented immigrants, including several refugees.⁸⁸

The micro-struggles at the CIUP were particularly evident around the *Collège d’Espagne*, which, still under construction after May 1968, witnessed several attempted occupations. One such attempt in May 1969 aimed to protest “the brutal repression experienced by the Spanish university under the fascist dictatorship”.⁸⁹ Similarly, the *Maison du Canada* was occupied in October 1970 by the *Comité de Mobilisation des Québécois à Paris*, in support of the *Front de Libération du Québec* against the

⁸⁵ See Guillaume Tronchet, “La Cité en ébullition”, art. cité.

⁸⁶ Interview with Bernard Morel, resident of the Maison du Maroc (1969–1970), November 14, 2018, Paris.

⁸⁷ HINDI Toufic, *A third world war like no other. Stratégies pour confronter un djihadisme sans frontières*, Paris, Éditions du Panthéon, 2018.

⁸⁸ “There were a lot of political refugees in the pavilions: activists committed against repression in Morocco at the Maison du Maroc, Italian political refugees at the Maison de l’Italie, Vietnam War deserters at the Fondation des États-Unis, etc.” (Interview with Bernard Morel, November 14, 2018, Paris).

⁸⁹ *Le Monde*, May 26, 1969.

Canadian government.⁹⁰ At the *Maison de la Tunisie*, numerous demonstrations and hunger strikes occurred in February 1972 and May 1973, opposing the policies of Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba, who had been a resident of the CIUP in the mid-1920s.⁹¹ The *Maison de l'Iran* experienced frequent incidents and hunger strikes between 1970 and 1976, with notable support from intellectuals like Jean Genet,⁹² to draw attention to the repression and imprisonment of political opponents of the Shah's regime. The *Maison de l'Iran* was evacuated by police in July 1972 and permanently closed by the CIUP's management in August.⁹³ Since 1968, the *Maison d'Afrique*, which retained and formalized its name through the CIUP's Board of Directors, also faced occupations, staff kidnappings, and police interventions, culminating in its closure in 1972.

The *Maison du Maroc* occupied a distinctive position within this landscape of protest. Like its predecessors, it was a center of opposition to the political regime of its associated country. This was particularly evident given that François della Sudda, the Maison's director, had long been an opponent of King Hassan II. Della Sudda had also clandestinely housed militants from the *Union des Étudiants Marocains* on Boulevard Jourdan, including Hamid Barrada, whom he had smuggled out of Morocco in 1963 by concealing him in the trunk of his car.⁹⁴ Moreover, the *Maison du Maroc* served as a focal point for the evolving Arab militancy. According to Jocelyne Berdu, a resident from 1969 to 1973, member of the residents' committee and then an activist with the far-left organization Ila Al Amame founded by Abraham Serfaty, "We were the junction point for all the struggles and militants from the Arab countries (Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Palestine, etc.), around which the PSU, the Gauche Prolétarienne, the Maoists of the UJCML, and the

⁹⁰ *Le Monde*, October 20, 1970.

⁹¹ *Le Monde*, February 24, 1972; May 29, 1973.

⁹² REZVANI Serge, *Le tourbillon de ma vie*, Paris, Éditions Ecriture, 2015; see also REBOUR Valentin, *La politisation des étudiants et étudiantes iraniennes en France. Expériences, sociabilités, mobilisations (1948–1980)*, Master 2 de Sciences sociales thesis, ENS Lyon, 2019.

⁹³ *Le Monde*, May 5 1970; November 15 1971; February 17 1972; August 1^{er} 1972.

⁹⁴ Testimony of Hamid Barrada, quoted in BUTTIN Maurice, *Ben Barka, Hassan II, De Gaulle. Ce que je sais d'eux*, Paris, Karthala, 2010, p. 191.

Trotskyists also gathered. We were a place for debate where everyone came at least once a week”.⁹⁵

The *Maison du Maroc* was also instrumental in advancing the Palestinian cause in France. With the support of François della Sudda, Mahmoud Hamchari and Ezzedine Kalak, the first official representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in Paris, were secretly housed there. During “Black September” in 1970, when Jordan attacked the PLO, the Maison became a center for Palestinian aid. A French Office for Aid to the Palestinian Revolution was established on Boulevard Jourdan to coordinate “collections of money, medicines, and medical equipment in collaboration with the Palestinian Red Crescent”,⁹⁶ which also had its headquarters at the *Maison du Maroc*. This effort received backing from della Sudda, the residents’ committee—of which Jocelyne Berdu was a key member⁹⁷—the Maoist networks of the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (PCML) led by philosopher Gilbert Murry, and the PSU section of the CIUP.⁹⁸ For several weeks, the Palestinian flag was even displayed on the Maison’s façade, although it was later removed to avoid drawing excessive attention from Israeli intelligence services at a time when Hamchari and Kalak were negotiating for the PLO’s recognition by the French government.⁹⁹ Simultaneously, to raise awareness of Arab struggles, including the Palestinian cause, Hamchari and Kalak, along with Bahgat Elnadi and Adel Rifaat—Egyptian left-wing opponents of Nasser known by the pseudonym Mahmoud Hussein—published a magazine titled *Al-Massira* (“The March”). The magazine was edited and distributed by several of the Cité’s Arab residents linked to the Maoists

⁹⁵ Telephone interview from June 1^{er} 2020.

⁹⁶ “Bureau français d’aide à la révolution palestinienne, 1 bld Jourdan, 75 Paris 14^e “, 1970 (document forwarded by Bernard Morel).

⁹⁷ Telephone interview from June 1^{er} 2020.

⁹⁸ Testimony of François della Sudda (November 2003) quoted by Bernard Ravenel, “François della Sudda” (document forwarded by Bernard Morel); Interview with Bernard Morel, November 14, 2018, Paris.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.* More generally, see: HAJJAT Abdellali, “Les comités Palestine (1970–1972). Aux origines du soutien de la cause palestinienne en France”, *Revue d’études palestiniennes*, 2006, pp. 74–92.

of the Gauche Prolétarienne, such as Toufic Hindi, then a resident at the *Maison du Liban*.¹⁰⁰

The *Maison du Cambodge* witnessed some of the most severe violence, largely due to the importation of the civil conflict between the Khmer Rouge, allied with Prince Sihanouk, and the supporters of the Phnom Penh regime, which had been in power since the March 1970 coup d'état. The Maison's director, Sisowath Essaro, was aligned with the latter group. On May 4, 1970, a student supporting Prince Sihanouk was injured by a bottle; the next day, a Lebanese student was attacked with a sabre by a Cambodian resident. On September 7 of the same year, four residents of the *Maison du Cambodge* were injured, three of whom required hospitalization.¹⁰¹

The violence escalated further on March 18, 1971, during a meeting commemorating the anniversary of the Phnom Penh regime, when gunfire injured several residents, including an English student. By 1972, the atmosphere had worsened, with frequent death threats reported in the corridors.¹⁰² Khmer Rouge-affiliated residents who had been asked to leave refused to vacate, changed the locks on their rooms, and challenged the authority of the director. On January 7, 1973, an altercation escalated into armed conflict overnight, resulting in seven students being stabbed and a 24-year-old supporter of Prince Sihanouk being killed by a rifle shot fired at close range by another resident, who was the director's nephew. In the early morning, police arrested over 200 individuals, evacuated the pavilion, and subsequently closed it down. This incident underscored how "the Cité universitaire reflects the divisions of contested nations".¹⁰³ These repeated incidents and conflicts, which occasionally made headlines, raised concerns about the institution's condition as it neared its fiftieth anniversary. In June 1975, *Le Monde* queried whether the Cité had reached its "critical age", asking questions about its "problems, " "malaise," and even its "decline".¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ HINDI Toufic, *Une troisième guerre mondiale...*, *op. cit.* telephone interview, May 31 2020.

¹⁰¹ *Le Monde*, January 13, 1973.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ *Le Monde*, January 13, 1973.

¹⁰⁴ "Le déclin d'une œuvre universaliste", *Le Monde*, June 25, 1975.

CONCLUSION: THE CRISIS OF LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM

Far from being isolated incidents, the micro-struggles at the CIUP in 1968 were symptomatic of a broader institutional crisis, which deeply unsettled its foundations, rooted in the 1920s and 1930s. The international order reshaped by the Cold War and decolonization disrupted the delicate balance between French cultural imperialism and liberal internationalism that the CIUP had originally sought to maintain. Initially envisioned as a place to celebrate national identities—through its national pavilions and the promotion of cross-national encounters—the CIUP unwittingly became a platform for nationalist and anti-imperialist demands, hostile to the French-dominated international cooperation that, in line with France’s foreign and colonial policy, the CIUP had historically embodied.¹⁰⁵

The protests of 1968 exposed the internal contradictions that made this balance unsustainable. “International cooperation! As if such a thing were possible between oppressor and dominated peoples”, proclaimed the militants of the *Union des résidents progressistes* in the autumn of 1970, rejecting the interwar internationalist ideology, which, by “erasing class conflicts” and “uniting ‘elites’” handpicked by their embassies, sought to transform the CIUP into “a powerful tool of social integration and ideological unification between the French bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisies on a global scale.” They concluded with the rallying cry: “No to embassies at the Cité!”¹⁰⁶

Without endorsing this Marxist analysis, the general delegate or the CIUP, Pierre Marthelot, similarly raised the question during this period of whether the structures established nearly half a century earlier should be reconsidered, particularly the “ambiguities” of the 1920s that allowed for the formation of almost homogeneous national entities within the

¹⁰⁵ Cf. TRONCHET Guillaume, “La Cité universitaire: une joint-venture transnationale dans le Paris des années 1920 et 1930. Note de recherche”, in JAUMAIN Serge and VAN DEN DUNGEN Pierre (eds.), *Biermans-Lapôtre. Histoire d’un mécène et de sa fondation*, Brussels, Lannoo/Racine Editions, 2013, p. 85–100; “Diplomatie universitaire ou diplomatie culturelle? La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris entre deux rives (1920–1940)”, in KÉVONIAN Dzovinar et TRONCHET Guillaume (dir.), *La Babel étudiante...*, *op. cit.* p. 59–88.

¹⁰⁶ “Plateforme présentée par le secrétariat provisoire de l’Union des résidents progressistes”, Autumn 1970 (document forwarded by Bernard Morel).

CCIUPité, which were later brought into conflict by the “great ideological divides of the time”.¹⁰⁷ As a result, the houses of the CIUP were “regarded by the embassies concerned as quasi-annexes [...] or turned into hotbeds of anti-government activities directed against certain foreign governments”.¹⁰⁸

By the mid-1970s, the proposed solution was to increase the proportion of mixed nationalities in each house to 50%, since a house with insufficient diversity, such as the Cambodian house (5% non-Cambodian residents), “tends to become insular and form a national enclave”.¹⁰⁹ It is clear that the CIUP management did not know which direction to take. Without abandoning the institution’s overarching goals, but deviating from its founding principle—that of a “Youth League of Nations” where foreign students, housed in national pavilions, would feel “somewhat at home” while learning, “by visiting each other’s houses, to understand and respect the distinct characteristics of different nationalities”¹¹⁰—the CIUP entered a period of uncertainty regarding its future role and mission, a crisis that persisted until the late 1990s.

Conflicts of Interest The author has no conflicts of interest to declare that are relevant to the content of this chapter.

¹⁰⁷ “Rapport moral sur l’année 1970” (AN, 20,090,013/88).

¹⁰⁸ Office of the Board of Directors of the Fondation nationale, May 28, 1970 (AN, 20,090,013/88).

¹⁰⁹ Board of Directors of the Fondation nationale, June 2, 1971 (AN, 20,090,013/88).

¹¹⁰ André Honnorat, Comité de direction de la Fondation nationale, October 27, 1926 (AN, 16AJ 7031).

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CHAPTER 4

The Cité Universitaire de Paris as seen from Fascist Italy

Elisa Signori

The real reasons for Italy's interwar reservations about the French and international Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (CIUP) project are not difficult to determine. The ideology of fascism, rooted in a positive myth of war that represented a foundational, transformative force in the ideology of the movement, as well as the assertion of Italy's spiritual supremacy in the world and the claim to its imperial destiny, were guidelines that conflicted with the inspiring principles enunciated immediately after the First World War by the founders of the CIUP: pacifism, liberalism, and the cosmopolitan *ethos* of culture and science.¹

¹ LEMOINE B., *La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris*, Paris, Hervas 1990; ANBERT C., "Origines de la Cité", *Les Cahiers de la Cité internationale universitaire*, n°1, 1991; SÉRÉNI F., "La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (1925–1930). De la SDN à la construction de l'Europe", *Revue Relations internationales*, n° 72, 1992, pp. 399–407.

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Similarly, the mutual incompatibility of educational models that opposed Fascist Italy to the Parisian initiative is immediately evident: on the one hand, a selective system regulating access to secondary education from 1923 onwards in Italy, an ever-increasing programmatic tension toward totalitarian control, politicization, and, finally, the militarization of the young university elites; on the other, in France, the socially democratic spirit of a university open to all, a place for study but also for friendly sharing and the exchange of cultures and knowledge, fundamental elements advanced by Emile Deutsch de la Meurthe's philanthropic commitment.

Finally, the decisive confirmation of the impossibility of a cultural collaboration—in which the construction of an Italian pavilion at the CIUP could be coherently considered—can be seen in the field of political-diplomatic relations. The trajectory of relations between the two countries, far from linear or unequivocal in the 1920s and early 1930s, with alternating phases of rapprochement and frostiness—whether in the wake of fascist aggression in Ethiopia or the victory of the Front Populaire in France—traces a spiral of increasingly harsh conflict, culminating in the Francophobic campaign unleashed in Italy in 1938, a veritable point of no return. For all these reasons, Italy could only join the CIUP after the dramatic epilogue of the fascist experiment, and it was not until the mid-1950s that Italy, now a Republic, gave concrete expression to its participation in the construction of its “Maison”, inaugurated on January 25, 1958, symbolizing, in the eyes of many observers, a European and international cultural citizenship regained by post-Fascist Italy.²

However, if the focus is on Italy's resumption of university life and/or international relations immediately after the First World War, following the dynamics of the advent of fascism with its multiple facets, changes of direction, and successive evolutions, the apparent linearity of this story—impossibility in the 1920s–1930s, then evidence of an Italian presence in the CIUP in the 1950s—can be seen in a quite different light. Beyond any determinism, the CIUP project is in fact a mirror through which it is possible to observe, over a fifteen-year period—from 1920 to the mid-1930s—the constituent elements of a cultural, political and diplomatic confrontation between Italy and France that was not a given from the outset.

² ALBANESE G., *La Maison de l'Italie. Storia della residenza italiana alla Cité Universitaire di Parigi*, Milan, Angeli, 2004.

This essay sets out to reconstruct the various reasons for Italian resistance to the French and collective project of the CIUP during the interwar period: the contexts studied in this connection are as much those of Italian-French diplomatic relations as those of Italian cultural and university policy, in particular through examination of the documentation found in the collections of the Archivio storico del Ministero degli Affari esteri (Roma) and the Archivio centrale dello Stato, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione MPI (since 1931 Ministero dell'Educazione Nazionale, MEN). The theme of this paper is closely linked to the positions taken within the institutions of intellectual cooperation created in the context of the League of Nations (International Commission for Intellectual Cooperation and International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation), where Italian participation was represented only as formal and opportunistic, sometimes discordant with the aims of cultural internationalism. These sources are complemented by an examination of the opinion press, academic journals, and the student press.³

THE MYTH OF THE MEDIEVAL UNIVERSITY AND THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF STUDIES

The need for international openness, the reference to the medieval model of *the universitas* as a free community of student *nations*, and the evocation of the *peregrinatio academica*, which for centuries had mapped out a kind of unitary geography and sociology of knowledge in Europe, were the partly mythological components of a heritage shared by France and Italy, which boasted the world's oldest university institutions in Paris and Bologna, respectively. This medieval myth was a *leitmotif* not only in the history of the CIUP, but also in Italy. The memory of the more than 10,000 students who flocked to the University of Bologna from all over Europe as far back as the fourteenth century was often cited with nostalgia as an example of the circulation of people and knowledge that needed to be recreated. Before, during, and after the war, the positive contribution of foreign students in Italian universities was often emphasized. This need was advocated as early as 1913 by Carlo Francesco Ferraris, professor

³ This article is a translated and revised version of the following contribution: « La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris vue de l'Italie fasciste », in Dzovinar Kévonian et Guillaume Tronchet (ed.), *La Babel étudiante*, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2013, p. 127–142.

of administrative law and administrative science, but also, and above all, rector of the University of Padua. Between 1905 and 1911, Padua was one of the top 28 universities and institutes of higher learning in the Kingdom of Italy in terms of the number of foreign students enrolled and the number of degrees obtained.

Similarly, in 1914, Giorgio Del Vecchio, Professor of Philosophy of Law at Bologna, observed that foreign students should be treated with special consideration by facilitating their enrollment in courses, as was widely done in more advanced countries, by lightening existing standards, and by eliminating administrative obstacles. In this respect, he cited Germany as a model to be imitated: "The University of Berlin welcomes Bulgarian, Romanian, Serbian and Japanese students with a minimum of formalities [...] and they then return to their countries to spread German thought and influence."⁴

A few months later, war struck Europe, accelerating the debate on student mobility. Del Vecchio wrote that the ongoing war and Italy's choice of neutrality constituted a "*bona occasio*" to open university doors to young people from belligerent countries. Neutrality was in itself a justification for "offering a liberal welcome to researchers from all nations, so that we can continue here the work of science, broken elsewhere by the harsh necessity of arms."⁵ Del Vecchio's speech was widely acclaimed. The National Association of University Professors immediately adopted a similar resolution.⁶ The Corda Fratres Society, Italy's largest student association and itself part of an international network, submitted a request to the Minister of Public Education, Edoardo Dancò, for support, particularly for Belgian and Balkan colleagues.⁷ Italy's entry into the war did not extinguish interest in this issue, which had been clearly addressed for the first time by the university press in comparison with the situation in other

⁴ "Un'intervista col prof. Giorgio Del Vecchio sulla riforma universitaria e la Relazione Ceci", *L'Università italiana. Rivista dell'Istruzione Superiore*, a. XIII, n. 2-3, 1914, pp. 32-33. All quotations are my translations of the original Italian version.

⁵ DEL VECCHIO G., "Le Università italiane e gli studenti stranieri durante la guerra", *L'Università italiana. Rivista dell'Istruzione Superiore*, a. XIII, n.10, 1914, p.150.

⁶ DEL VECCHIO G., "Ancora sull'ammissione degli studenti stranieri nelle Università italiane", op. cit., p. 172.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 166. On the Corda Fratres, see MOLA A. A., *Corda Fratres. Storia di una associazione internazionale studentesca nell'età dei grandi conflitti 1898-1948*, Bologna, Clueb, 1999.

European countries. For the first time, this topic was linked to a project that we might call “cultural policy”.

These projects were taken up again at the end of the war, and Giovanni Gentile was a respected and pragmatic interpreter of them. In the school reform, law that bears his name, an ad hoc provision was introduced that completely exempted foreign students from paying university fees.⁸ Even though this benefit was halved two years later, it had the effect of attracting significant flows of students from abroad to Italian universities, a flow that grew steadily, particularly in the 1930s.⁹ The peak was reached in the 1933–1934 academic year, with 2,932 foreign students enrolling, equivalent to 5% of the student body in Italian universities. Thus, while awareness of the problem of internationalization of university studies was very high, it was seen essentially as a challenge to be met within Europe, with the aim of fostering intellectual migration toward Italian universities; a centripetal dynamic, not a centrifugal one.

The severe postwar economic and social crisis and the postwar political climate were influenced by nationalist mobilization and the instrumentalization of the “mutilated victory” discourse. These developments represented a veritable springboard for fascism, offering an unfavorable context for the resumption of study, advanced training, and research stays at foreign universities. Nevertheless, in 1923 and 1927, the specialized press, such as the magazine *L'Università italiana*, did not fail to express its positive appreciation of foreign student accommodation institutions, such as the *Maison de l'étudiant* in Brussels or the CIUP, underlining the pragmatic attention paid by the Belgian and French governments to the question of international university exchanges. From the Italian perspective, these opportunities for international confrontation were seen

⁸ Art. 54 R. D. 30 settembre 1923. For a comprehensive analysis of Giovanni Gentile's school reform, see now *La Riforma Gentile e la sua eredità*, ed. by Mattone A., Moretti M., Signori E., Bologna, il Mulino, 2023.

⁹ SIGNORI E., “Una peregrinatio academica in età contemporanea. Gli studenti ebrei stranieri nelle università italiane tra le due guerre”, *Annali di storia delle università italiane*, n°4, 2000, pp. 139–62. On these topics see SIGNORI E., Università. “Tra orizzonte nazionale e internazionale: 150 anni di migrazioni, ostracismi e scambio scientifico”, *Il Politico*, n. monografico, *L'Italia che cambia: 1861–1961*, vol.76, f.3, 2012, pp.267–285; SIGNORI E., “Intellectual migrations and elites' formation beyond the boundaries. Foreign students, Jews and non-Jews and Italian universities (1900–1940)” *Borders, migration and globalization. An interdisciplinary perspective*, ed. by Calabrò A. R., London—New York Routledge, 2021, pp.222–235.

as valuable assets in combating the discrediting of higher education, which had occurred in the postwar years and was linked to a utilitarian vision of university education.¹⁰

These objectives were reflected in the creation of the International Commission for Intellectual Cooperation (CICI) in 1922, and three years later in the founding in Paris of the International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation (IICI), under the direction of Julien Luchaire, who had already been appreciated before the war for the creation of the French Institute in Florence. The CIUP project was part of the same political and institutional framework, where Romain Rolland's aspirations for the reconstruction of "a European intellectual communion" and the utopian drive for an "international of culture and spirit"¹¹ converged, albeit not without some uncertainty. These aspirations were meant to do away forever with fratricidal war, together with the ambitions of a universalist vision of French civilization, and the hardline opposition to German *Kultur*.

However, these positive voices concerning international cultural exchange remained isolated since, within the Italian political and diplomatic *establishment*, an atmosphere prevailed that could best be described as "Italocentric" and fundamentally indifferent, even hostile to the aims of intellectual and scientific collaboration, an atmosphere that ignored languages and borders, ideological differences, and geopolitical balances of power.

Italy's representation at the ICCI was initially entrusted to Francesco Ruffini, a liberal jurist, former Minister of Public Instruction, and Senator. This initial phase could be interpreted as a direct endorsement of the objectives of understanding between peoples and defending freedom and the autonomy of culture; however, it was short-lived. With the advent of the fascist dictatorship, the government quickly imposed a politically aligned representation. Once dismissed, Ruffini was replaced by Alfredo Rocco. A theorist of the total integration of politics and culture into the

¹⁰ See "Sull'internazionalizzazione degli studi universitari", *L'Università italiana*, a. xxii, n. 7, 1923, pp. 131–132.

¹¹ See the review on Clarté: "L'internazionale dello spirito", *La Stampa*, 6–7 gen. 1920.

totalizing dimension of fascism, the Italian representative was at the opposite end of the spectrum from the perspective set out by the CICI.¹² Moreover, the initial project of both organizations was gradually modified by purely political and geopolitical considerations, as in the case with the boycott against Germany, where the choice of members—for example, Einstein—ended up reflecting ideological dynamics and official power coalitions.

This was also the case in the formal defense of an apolitical stance that translated into a non-commitment to the fundamental rights of intellectuals, notably pedagogical freedom. In short, when it comes to these cultural organizations, it is possible to endorse in part the assessment that Gaetano Salvemini, a democrat and anti-fascist, made of the League of Nations. Salvemini had followed the evolution of the League of Nations from its very beginnings, quickly understanding the risk that it might betray its initial ideals: “We must consider,” he wrote in 1923, “the institution of Geneva as the germ of a greater future. And we must protect, strengthen and develop this seed”.¹³ The danger from which it had to be protected was the “tactics of perfidious sabotage”¹⁴ practiced by militarist and nationalist governments, aided by the blindness of socialist countries everywhere. This would have resulted in a paradoxical situation where the League’s activities were shaped by nationalists, who never wanted it, and neglected by socialist and democratic internationalists, who should have supported it. In ICCI and IICI circles, Italy’s contribution primarily involved a jealous and systematic defense of its cultural and educational policy against potential European interference. Additionally, Italy carefully monitored internal balances, aiming to gain prestige or reduce the risk of supremacy from other nations.

In the more specific field of Italian-French confrontation, the 1920s saw a weakening in the influence of organizations which, before the war, had promoted friendship and cultural rapprochement between the “two Latin sisters”. This was exemplified by the Latin Youth League,

¹² GIUNTELLA M. C., *Cooperazione intellettuale ed educazione alla pace nell’Europa della Società delle Nazioni*, Padova, Cedam, 2001.

¹³ SALVEMINI G., “Sicurezza e Società delle Nazioni”, *Il Popolo*, 16–17 maggio 1923. See SALVEMINI G., *Dalla guerra mondiale alla dittatura (1916–1925)*, Milano, Feltrinelli, 2. ed., 1973, p. 707.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

founded by Julien Luchaire in Florence in 1916, with its own newspaper, *La Rivista delle Nazioni Latine*. It was also reflected in the Italy-France committees and their France-Italy counterparts, created in 1910 and headed by Luigi Luzzati, former President of the Council, and Stéphen Pichon, former French Foreign Minister, respectively.¹⁵ The Italian-French friendship linked to military collaboration within the Entente gradually weakened, even though Giovanni Gentile was still a member of the Cercle international des étudiants et des étudiantes des nations alliées et amies de France¹⁶ in 1920.

PREMISES AND PLANS FOR AN ITALIAN HOUSE

It is almost impossible to discuss the themes and events that marked Italian cultural policy between the two World Wars without encountering the name of Giovanni Gentile and taking the measure of the influence he exerted. Even after he stepped down from his role as minister and once the school reform had been launched, his commitment manifested itself elsewhere, always maintaining a central role and, at times, an intellectual dominance, which gradually became more debated and contested within the party and the fascist establishment. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that on the subject of international collaboration, and more specifically the CIUP, the only initiative for which sources survive is linked to a request from Giovanni Gentile.

At the beginning of 1928, Gentile asked Jérôme Carcopino (an academic and specialist in Roman history), with whom he was on friendly terms, to provide him with precise, detailed information on the project and its implementation. The reasons for Gentile's interest in the CIUP were probably manifold, personal as well as political and cultural, and certainly unrelated to the liberal and pacifist ideals that inspired the CIUP project. His adherence to fascism was in fact based on a historical-political and philosophical conception at odds with the liberalism inherited from the philosophy of the Enlightenment. According to Gentile, this agnostic,

¹⁵ Archivio Storico degli Affari Esteri (ASAE), f. Rappresentanze diplomatiche Francia 1860–1950, b. 163, f. France-Italie.

¹⁶ Letter from the Cercle international des étudiants et étudiantes des Nations alliées et amies de France to Giovanni Gentile, Paris, March 27, 1920. Fondazione Archivio Giovanni Gentile (FAG), Carteggi, b. Cercle international.

materialist, utilitarian, and confrontational individualism was to be overcome by the construction of the new, purely totalitarian state. The state was conceived as a dynamic, immanent reality founded on the superior political and religious unity of the nation. Within this framework, the fascist revolution was viewed as the historical protagonist of a great political and pedagogical experiment, picking up the torch of the legacy of the unfinished *Risorgimento* and confirming Italy as a collective consciousness, a third way between liberalism and communism. By providing the regime with an accomplished intellectual system that gave it cultural legitimacy, Gentile had grafted onto it intellectual dimensions that were alien not only to the various sectors of fascism, which had always been united by a contempt for culture, but also to the advocates of a more conservative nationalism.¹⁷ The Sicilian philosopher distanced himself from the idea of the nation as a naturalistic, anthropological, or even racial reality, taking over from Mazzini the spiritualist dimensions of a historical mission and of Italy's political and cultural primacy, projected into the world and into the future. From these premises, Gentile, as an authentic intellectual, clearly could not be the interpreter of a line of self-referential closure of the regime. On the contrary, he wanted and promoted a broad-based discussion on all fronts, which would enable Fascist Italy to make a name for itself abroad and represent a valued model in the history of European political and social experience in the twentieth century. It is in this spirit of international recognition of Fascist Italy that we must understand the former Minister of Public Instruction's interest in the CIUP, according to a logic free from any temptation of cultural autarky. These were the years, moreover, when Gentile began *the Enciclopedia Italiana*, a long-term cultural undertaking that projected itself toward international "debate", presenting itself, in his own words, as a kind of "great examination sustained by the thought and character of Italians before all civilized nations".¹⁸

We can perhaps add a more personal element to these general considerations. In October 1926, Gentile was following from a distance his son Federico's stay in Paris. Federico was then engaged in research on Blaise

¹⁷ TURI G., *Giovanni Gentile. Una biografia*, Firenze, Giunti, 1995, pp. 407–445; TARQUINI A., *Il Gentile dei fascisti: gentiliani e antigentiliani nel regime fascista*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2009.

¹⁸ GENTILE G., *Politica e cultura*, I, Firenze, Le Lettere, 1991, pp. 298–301.

Pascal¹⁹ and had been entrusted by his father to the care of long-time friend Giuseppe Prezzolini, head of the press section at IICI since 1925. Prezzolini offered Federico his help in finding accommodation first in a boarding house on rue de Vaugirard and subsequently in a hotel. “I have seen Federico several times in the library, where we both have the vice of going,” Prezzolini wrote to Gentile. “Your dear young man is not lost to sight. He leads his life well as a serious researcher and student [...]. Don’t worry about his permanence at the hotel. All students in Paris live like that, and there’s nothing wrong with it. It’s the most practical and economical thing to do. Trust him”.²⁰ In reality, alternatives did exist: the CIUP was becoming the alternative par excellence to anonymous student housing. Add to this the direct experience of Giovanni Gentile, who had been a student in his youth at the Normal School in Pisa (and by June 1928 its director), and we have a plausible picture of the reasons that prompted Gentile to ask Jérôme Carcopino about the CIUP.

To respond as fully as possible, Carcopino obtained a meeting with André Honnorat, who, pleased with his Italian colleague’s interest (they were both former Ministers of Public Instruction), detailed the project precisely from an economic and legal point of view, describing its qualities, achievements, and future prospects. Carcopino took this information on board and sent Gentile a French-language account of the conversation, the text of which is so detailed and precise that it seems to be more the result of a piece of writing controlled by his CIUP interlocutor.

In the account, Honnorat explains the checks-and-balances mechanism envisaged at the CIUP, which reserved ownership of the entire CIUP to the University of Paris while blocking *in perpetuo* its use for student residences, thus attempting to reconcile “the interests of the donor and the donee.” He also specified the types of intervention possible, with private financing or public investment, and indicated the sum of 50,000 francs as the minimum cost for a single room. With understandable pride, the text lists the pavilions already built by nine nations (England, Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Spain, the United States, Japan, Holland, and Sweden) for a total of 1,267 available rooms, and alludes to contacts already underway with Brazil. But above all, he tries to anticipate the objections

¹⁹ GENTILE F., *Pascal: saggio di interpretazione storica*, Bari, Laterza, 1927.

²⁰ Prezzolini a Gentile, Paris, 7 febbraio 1927, G. GENTILE, G. PREZZOLINI, *Carteggio 1908–1940*, Roma, Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2006, p. 186–7.

of his distant interlocutor and dispel the perplexities or mistrust he might have regarding the CIUP, asserting that “it conceals no idea of intellectual hegemony. It’s based on a fact. In Paris today, there are nearly 8,000 foreign students scattered across the faculties, establishments and schools of higher education. It’s as important for them as it is for French students that the less fortunate among them find a “Cité d’étudiants” (where diverse peoples are brought together—as in the lecture theaters or laboratories—but where each retains its own physiognomy and the mark of its homeland, without which there can be no fruitful intellectual work, and without which discouragement and bitterness risk embittering and poisoning the best minds”.²¹

Honnorat’s emphasis on highlighting the absence of any intent of cultural imperialism, but rather the desire to offer each country a chance for autonomous development and cultural exchange, is evident in more than one instance, for example, where he pays explicit tribute to Italy’s cultural specificity, observing that “it would be absurd to propose to an Italian who can, with good reason, pride himself on the oldest and highest culture, the CIUP as a means of initiating himself into ours. French friends of Italy should be allowed to hope that he will enter to get to know us better, and above all to represent his country in ours”.²²

Lastly, Honnorat refers to the British example, which, jealously guarding its autonomy, had combined the construction of its own house at the CIUP with the creation of a British Institute designed to disseminate British culture in France: in short, two complementary initiatives designed to neutralize any risk of French hegemony. Following this example, Italy, too, could conquer new areas of visibility. Carcopino added: “For my part, I would gladly welcome the appearance [...] of an *Istituto Italiano*, a home for high Italian culture in the heart of our Parisian university life”.²³

As mentioned above, this 1928 project had no follow up. Honnorat’s later attempts to interest the Minister of Public Instruction, Belluzzo, through the French Ambassador in Rome, Beaumarchais, and later through Dario Lupi and Madame de Jouvenel, were no more successful.

²¹ FAG, Jérôme Carcopino a Giovanni Gentile, 5 febbraio 1928.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

While the Italian government rejected every proposal, the CIUP Foundation felt it could not follow up on the *advances* made by Italian antifascists in exile in France. The conflict between Italy and France over the granting of political asylum to Italian exiles was too great for the acceptance of a possible donation from these circles (Francesco Saverio Nitti, ex-president of the Italian Council and in exile in Paris, had given a few signals, and there is evidence of financial availability on the part of Carlo Rosselli)²⁴ not to be understood in Italy as an ideological taking of sides and a clear denial of the apolitical premises of the global project. The only positive initiative was a private donation from the curator of the French national museums, Desarrois, to reserve a place in the CIUP for an Italian student.²⁵

BETWEEN CRITICISM AND EMULATION: THE OPINION OF FASCIST STUDENTS

From 1927 to 1928, the Fascist University Groups (GUF), strictly controlled in terms of discipline and ideological cohesion, became the instruments of a fascist conquest of the university designed to flush out opposition, combat the agnosticism of resistant students, and provide, according to PNF directives, for the political education and training of the country's future professional and managerial *elites*.²⁶ With this in mind, sport and welfare were the two complementary strategies pursued by the GUF to bring the student community together. Thus, the creation of appropriate structures to welcome and care for students (Student Houses) became crucial to consolidate the consensus. The experience of other foreign university centers, the CIUP in particular, became an important reference point and the object of a comparison of models. It is certainly no coincidence that the GUF secretariat's documents include copies of the information brochures distributed by the CIUP National Foundation, such as the special issue dedicated to the CIUP in September 1929, full of illustrations and drawings by *L'Animateur des Temps Nouveaux*. The issue contains several slogans that would irritate fascist ears, such as: "The Cité universitaire is the indispensable institution for training the elites of

²⁴ ALBANESE G., *op. cit.* p.76.

²⁵ ALBANESE G., *op. cit.* p. 28.

²⁶ LA ROVERE L., *Storia dei Guf*, Torino, Bollati Boringhieri, 2003, pp. 119–127.

democracy. The Cité universitaire is the most appropriate work for maintaining France's prestige", or "We are witnessing a unique phenomenon, of nations from all parts of the world spending large sums to settle their students in France. How can we fail to understand the magnitude of the predominant role we can play in the universe? We were predisposed to it by the influence of French genius over the centuries and by our geographical location. Now it's up to us to become and remain the spiritual center of the universe".²⁷

Fascist students therefore followed these experiences with curiosity, sometimes reading with annoyance the emphatic descriptions of the French press, which alternated between ritual reaffirmation of Italian primacy and cautious appreciation of foreign initiatives. If we look at *Libro e Moschetto*, the Milanese periodical that has become the official mouthpiece of the academic world, we have confirmation of the difficult balancing act practiced by students on this subject. In 1927, in response to an article on the CIUP by George Maybon, a Paris correspondent and student at the École des Sciences Politiques in Paris,²⁸ an issue of *Libro e Moschetto* offered a flattering panorama of the Italian regime's university system, to which foreigners flocked from all over the world. The article concluded emphatically that "Rome's tradition is not and will not be inferior to that of the City of Light".²⁹ However, the article carefully avoided mentioning the residential structures and assistance services which, in the context of this panorama, represented least brilliant aspect of the system. Only a few months earlier, in February 1927, Augusto Turati, secretary of the PNF, had painted a less than comforting picture of the situation.

An assessment was quickly made: out of 24 university centers, only four had a canteen; only one, Bari, could boast a Student House with 130 places, and in all the other universities, devoid of ad hoc structures, only private and denominational assistance initiatives were recorded, i.e., boarding schools, Catholic boarding schools, and reserved canteens, such as the one, for example, for Jewish students in Padua.³⁰ Maybon, for his part, celebrating the Latin friendship cemented on the battlefields of the

²⁷ Special issue of *L'Animateur des Temps Nouveaux*, September 27, 1929, pp. 22–23.

²⁸ MAYBON G., "L'Università di Parigi centro intellettuale e la città universitaria", *Libro e Moschetto*, 15 agosto 1927, p.1.

²⁹ MIGLIERINA L., "Le Università Italiane", *Libro e Moschetto*, October 3, 1927.

³⁰ "Le Opere assistenziali universitarie", *Libro e Moschetto*, 5 maggio 1927.

Great War, invited Italy not to isolate itself from this “great intellectual movement”, whose epicenter was represented by the CIUP. His appeal went unanswered, a silence that also signaled the indifference of fascist students toward the naïve expressions of self-satisfaction regarding French civilization and its “privileged role in the world”.

A more elaborate position was taken by Annibale Carena, secretary of the GUF and future young secretary of the Pavia Fascist Federation, who, in 1932, while reworking impressions of his travels and personal reflections, attributed a partially positive judgment to the CIUP. Carena supported outright the usefulness of an Italian presence and participation in the project, pointing to the development of structures designed to assist Italian students (in 1934, six Student Houses were up and running, with a further nine under construction); however, he did not give in to the ritual discourse of self-celebration. Commenting on and illustrating the evolution of the CIUP, he asserted that the creation of an Italian House would have the objective of grafting onto it “a nucleus of Fascist thought” as a response to the interest that Fascist Italy was arousing abroad. The Italian House would not serve to increase the flow of Italian students to Parisian universities, a flow that already existed and was a fact of life, but rather to create an ideal connecting center. In his opinion, there was no risk of distorting abroad the political identity that the students represented, for he wrote: “He who, as an Italian, goes abroad returns Italian twice over; he who goes as a fascist returns with a stronger faith and the pride of feeling himself to be the bearer of a doctrine [...] which has real international teaching virtues”. In this way, the CIUP project’s initiative in favor of the hegemony of French thought—to which, incidentally, Carena did not spare a few criticisms—would be reversed in favor of fascism, which, from Paris, would project itself into the world of student youth as a universal political model.³¹ This objective was enough to put the sarcasm about the CIUP’s “architectural audacities”—the eclectic style of the buildings, shaped like “boats or tanks, towers and barracks”, or even sandcastles—into the background. The position adopted by Carena, co-founder of Milan’s Institute for International Policy Studies (ISPI), was not an anomaly but reflected the keen interest of many young people of his generation in international horizons.

³¹ CARENA A., “La città universitaria di Parigi”, *Il Popolo d’Italia*, 20 maggio 1932.

In 1932, it may still have made sense to support Italy's European and Western vocation: the GUF sections dedicated to the League of Nations were still active and, in those same years, the GUF were themselves represented and active in European student organizations, such as the International University Federation (FUI), which was also part of the League of Nations movement. In this respect, it is interesting to note that the GUF's internal documentation, and above all the correspondence between the central leadership and local groups, bear witness to veiled disagreements precisely about the permanence of Italian representatives in these organizations.³² Some academics defended the appropriateness of Italian representation in these internationalist circles. Despite its skepticism on the issues of disarmament and pacifism, this Italian presence could prevent possible damage to the image of fascism, oppose the emergence of Italian student groups with anti-fascist leanings (as was feared in 1931),³³ contain the pan Germanic initiatives of German delegations, and, above all, keep the channels of dialogue open. The party hierarchies, on the contrary, gradually diminished their involvement in all institutions connected to the League of Nations and aimed for a disdainful and sectarian isolation.

When the general rule, which excluded politically connoted groups from the FUI, created a temporary halt to Italian participation, foreign colleagues mobilized to obtain an exemption, allowing the readmission of GUFs. However, the endorsement from the leadership of the GUF and PNF—both from Carlo Scorza and Achille Starace—waned, and this international observatory became off-limits for fascist students. The evolution of fascist foreign policy subsequently led to an ever more exclusive alignment with the student associations of the Third Reich. The multipolarity of the 1920s and early 1930s would be replaced by a selective and monotonous partnership, framed within the ideological affinity and political convergence between fascism and Nazism.

³² Archivio centrale dello Stato (ACS), Segreteria generale GUF, b. 3 and 22.

³³ Giuseppe Righetti a Carlo Scorza, segretario generale dei GUF, 7 marzo 1931; Carlo Scorza a Giuseppe Righetti, 16 marzo 1931, ACS, Segreteria generale GUF, b. 3.

ALTERNATIVE MODELS ADOPTED IN ITALY AND ABROAD

In what forms of university presence around the world and in which types of university towns did fascism instill its vision of science and culture, and what political-institutional and architectural forms were chosen as the framework and model for its ideal of a scientific community? Two different cases of intervention in this field explain the underlying logic and offer themselves as explanatory paradigms: on the international scene, the Casa Italiana near Columbia University and, in the national context, the construction of the Universitas Urbis in Rome.

The creation of the Casa Italiana in New York was contemporaneous with the CIUP project. It was born after World War I, on the initiative of a committee bringing together numerous personalities from New York's Italian-American community, and with the concrete help of the university. Having relocated to the upper part of Manhattan, Columbia University granted the land (at the corner of Amsterdam Avenue and 117th Street) free of charge. The construction of the building was made possible by a public subscription, contributed to by Americans sympathetic to Italy, such as John Aldreed and General Electric, but primarily by Italian-Americans from various professional backgrounds, including significant funding from building industry magnates Joseph and Michael Paterno and Antony Compagna. The Casa Italiana, inaugurated in the presence of Guglielmo Marconi on October 12, 1927, was hailed by the press as an "achievement befitting the new power of the Motherland".³⁴ However, its purpose was not as a residential establishment for students. Alongside the *Houses* of other nations, which had sprung up without an organic, unified plan alongside the old and prestigious Columbia University, it housed and occupied a variety of functions. It was a center for Italian studies, a meeting place for students and researchers, and a coordinating point for institutions and associations for cultural and economic promotion, such as the Dante Alighieri Society and the Italy-America Society.³⁵ Over the years, especially after the Great Depression and the ensuing financial difficulties, the Casa Italiana also assumed the functions of the university's Department of Italian Studies and, from 1929 to 1940

³⁴ "La casa dello studente a New York", *Libro e Moschetto*, 8 luglio 1927.

³⁵ FREZZA BIOCCHI D., "Propaganda fascista e comunità italiane in Usa: La Casa italiana della Columbia University", *Studi Storici*, n°4, 1970, pp. 661–697 and Prezzolini's reply, *Studi Storici*, n°2, 1971, pp. 396–412.

under the direction of Giuseppe Prezolini (who was already active, as we have seen, in Paris within the IICI) became a significant pole of Italian cultural policy in the United States.

What characterized the history of Casa Italiana from the outset was the syntony between fascism in power, determined to intensify its economic relations with the United States and legitimize its role before American public opinion, and an Italian immigration on the road to social integration and economic affirmation, strongly desirous of enhancing its origin and cultural identity and being freed from negative stereotypes of its backwardness and inferiority. Against this backdrop, for over ten years, under Prezolini's skilful direction, Casa Italiana exerted a remarkable influence on American society and in the Italian-American community as an instrument for transmitting messages, images, and values favoring a positive reception of fascism. Art and literature, cinema and language teaching, books and magazines were the elements of a skillful strategy which, by endorsing the equation between "Italianness" and fascism, lent credibility to the propaganda developed through the mobilization of diplomatic delegations, newspapers, and the Church, while collaborating in the marginalization of anti-fascist culture.

In France, most of the conditions that had favored the New York initiative were not present. Italian immigration had long been characterized by its temporary, seasonal nature, and was still far from the socio-economic ascendancy that would attract major donations: more manual workers than capitals. The CIUP project, with its pacifist dimension, left little room for the self-promotional strategies of fascism, which, with other tools and in other circles, could be pursued more incisively. Finally, in France there was a democratic public opinion critical of fascism and in solidarity with the anti-fascist opposition led abroad by organized groups of political exiles, with whom it was appropriate to deal with on grounds other than those of high culture and science. It was the sum of all these elements of difference that steered the regime toward non-participation in the CIUP, in contrast to the American project.

As for the construction of Rome's Cité Universitaire, inaugurated by Mussolini on October 31, 1935, during the Ethiopian crisis, this represented the compendium of the regime's ambitions. The project can be read as a synthetic expression of fascist ideas on the themes of science and the university, the relationship between culture and politics; above all, it

stands out as an exclusive model of a university-city.³⁶ We will not analyze it in detail here but summarize its fundamental choices.

First and foremost, the monumental structure hierarchizes the spaces and buildings according to a scheme which, according to Marcello Piacentini, the head of the overall project, was inspired by the idea of *the agorà*, the *forum*, and aimed to recreate the climate of Mediterranean antiquity. Conceived on a basilical plan with a transept oriented toward the rectorate and enriched by propylaea, the eleven buildings created for the faculties, clinics, and services are arranged in a set of rigid symmetries that preclude any concession to simplicity. A few isolated manifestations of architectural rationality are combined with a predominantly emphatic, antique-inspired rhetoric, which creates rectilinear perspectives in the avenues named *Libro e Moschetto* and *Battaglioni universitari*, alluding to the totalitarian overcoming of any distinction between politics and culture.

Support services and accommodation are confined to the periphery of the complex, in a modest student house with just 160 places—a small number compared to the 12,000 enrolled at the *Università della Sapienza* in 1935—and in a canteen equipped to provide 400 to 500 meals a day. The cost of the building represents less than 2% of the total cost of *the Urbis* and reflects the order of priority of the requirements under consideration: the quest for “Romanness” and traditionalist hyperbole take second place to the concrete needs of the student community. As Giuseppe Pagano writes: “All values shift, modest but necessary things become negligible, the superfluous is considered indispensable, the useful and the useless undergo a radical reversal of values and meanings”.³⁷

But the meaning given to the whole complex becomes clear when, following the artistic path punctuated by Sironi’s frescoes, the bas-reliefs of the Dioscuri, the monument to the war dead, the Littorio circle, and the University Militia barracks, with spaces for the armory and external areas for paramilitary exercises, parades and PNF liturgies, we arrive at the heart of the Cité Universitaire. An imposing bronze statue of Minerva by Arturo Martini stands on a red marble base, depicted as an archaic divinity, from which all reference to her character as protector of the

³⁶ “La città universitaria di Roma”, n. speciale di *Architettura*, Roma 1935.

³⁷ PAGANO G., “Città orizzontale”, *Casabella*, n°148, apr.1940.

arts and sciences, which characterized her in the Roman Pantheon, has disappeared, giving way to the physiognomy of an armed warrior god.

The free, pacifist, “horizontal” community of students from all over the world, united by a love of science and a commitment to study, expressed in the construction of heterogeneous buildings naturally spread across a space extending toward a park: the cité-jardin, has here been transformed into a distinctly martial, authoritarian, and hierarchical dimension. Describing the students’ morning training on Sundays, a commentator of the time wrote: “The university campus becomes a war zone. A few thousand youngsters from the GIL, the GUF and the University Battalion give a perfect example of what military training is all about. There are sharp orders, vibrant movements, bursts of fanfare, war songs”.³⁸ The university was transformed into a “Field of Mars”.

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Bibliography: for a complete list of my books and essays see academia.edu

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³⁸ SPANO N., “La città universitaria di Roma”, *Annali della Università d’Italia*, a.I. n.4, p. 405.

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The Cité universitaire de Paris during the war: International mobility between global constraints and local issues (1936–1944)

Dzovinar Kévonian

Between 1938 and 1944, the Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (CIUP) experienced a paradoxical phase in its history: a first period of construction had just concluded, with the opening of the *Maison internationale* (1936). This building symbolized the desire to territorialize and inscribe in community practices the pacifist potentials of a mobile academic elite, transcending the national identities juxtaposed in the 19 foundations of its East and West parks. By the late 1930s, the CIUP was home to nearly 3000 French and international students, researchers and artists. However, the outbreak of the Second World War abruptly halted international academic mobility, followed by the mobilization of young people for military service. In Europe in particular, defeat at the hands of

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the Germans was swift, and a long period of military occupation began in the spring of 1940. In France, the mass exodus of June 1940 quickly led to the collapse of the Republican regime and the proclamation of the new Vichy regime, dominated by the Marshal Pétain. By mid-June, Paris had been occupied and largely deserted.

The question lies in how the CIUP, a cosmopolitan and international place founded by the town councilors of the Third Republic and international patronage, was to weather the war between German military occupation, the ideology of the National Revolution and the anti-Semitism of the Vichy regime. This regime overturned national solidarity, replacing republican values with the triptych of Work—Family—Homeland. As Alya Aglan writes in *La France à l'envers*, “anything international became anti-national”.¹ Locally, a complex game of confrontation and connivance played out between the occupied and the occupiers. Added to this inversion of norms and values was an internal civil war, embedded in the duel between two legitimacies, one in Paris and the other dissident in London. On an international scale, the world press, particularly the Anglo-Saxon press, expressed its dismay at the “fall of Paris”. The new regime, authoritarian and reactionary, anti-liberal and xenophobic, claimed that every individual should be part of a “community” of family, work and nation, guaranteeing fundamental rights.

This particular period of the collapse of the international ideal thus leads us to understand the conditions of the CIUP’s “survival” up to 1944, and more broadly to measure the lasting inflections caused by the war in conceptions of international student and academic migration in the post-1945 world. The corpus of sources on which this study is based is made up of three main archival fonds: those of the Rectorat de l’Université de Paris concerning CIUP, those of the Fondation Nationale, which manages the CIUP and its various pavilions, deposited at the Archives nationales, as well as the archives of certain national houses.²

¹ Alya Aglan, *La France à l'envers. La guerre de Vichy (1940–1945)*, Paris, Gallimard, 2022, p. 9.

² Archives nationales, Paris (hereafter AN). Rectorat de Paris. Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (1918–1964), AJ16 7027 to 7044; CIUP, Fondation nationale (1896–2001), 20,090,013/1–1200; CIUP, Fondation nationale et maisons (1906–2022), 20,090,014/1–343. Relations with the Vichy regime, the issue of student health and the Aryanization of the Cité were discussed in depth in: Dzovinar Kévonian, “La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris dans la guerre: refuge, occupation et résistances (1938–1944)”, in D. Kévonian, G. Tronchet (dir.), *La Babel étudiante. La Cité internationale*

RISING CONFLICT AND ACADEMIC MOBILITY UNDER DURESS (1935–1940)

In February 1935, French philosopher Victor Basch, president of the Ligue des droits de l'homme (Human Rights League), was booed by Jeunesses patriotes students and Camelots during a lecture on “Les grands courants de l’art français contemporain” at the Fondation des Etats-Unis. Tear gas and police intervention punctuated his speech.³ A few months earlier, it was the internationalist jurist Georges Scelle, professor at the Faculty of Law in Paris, who was persuaded by the rector of the University of Paris to cancel the lecture he was due to give at the Deutsch de la Meurthe Foundation on the problem of reforming the League of Nations.⁴ Jean Giraud, director of the same foundation⁵ also called on the police to stop intimidation operations by residents affiliated to the Jeunesses patriotiques or Action Française at the *Maison des Provinces de France* armed with truncheons against those of his foundation: “Johès manus. It’s up to the police to ensure free passage on the public highway and to apprehend these armed and threatening fascists.”⁶

The CIUP resonated with the radicalism of a mobilized and fragmented youth. André Honnorat, first president and creator of the Fondation nationale de la CIUP, received death threats from a mysterious group of hoteliers, restaurateurs and shopkeepers who claimed to have been ruined by illicit competition from the CIUP against a backdrop of xenophobia: “We have decided to do away with you, pure and simple... We have had enough of the Staviskys and their ilk... The era of injustice is over, and society must be cleansed of the gangsters and pirates

universitaire de Paris, 1920–1950, Rennes, PUR, 2013, pp. 143–162. This article is a modified version of the quoted contribution.

³ “It’s a disgraceful spectacle given to foreigners in a foreign house,” he lamented at the time. ^{cf}Victor Basch, March 1 1935. AN, AJ16, 7033.

⁴ AN, AJ16, 7033. Jean Giraud to the Rector of the University of Paris, February 10, 1934.

⁵ Jean Giraud, a native of Saône-et-Loire (1882), is a graduate of the Ecole Normale Supérieure and an agrégé de lettres. An adjunct lecturer at the Sorbonne, he was the first director of the Émile and Louise Deutsch de la Meurthe Foundation.

⁶ AN, AJ16, 7033. Jean Giraud to André Honnorat, April 13, 1935.

who scour the public.⁷” In the Parc Est, the Collège d’Espagne was inaugurated in April 1935, to accommodate 150 Spanish and Ibero-American students. Its first director had just taken up his post. Angel Establier (1904–1976) was a chemist and secretary of the scientific relations section of the League of Nations’ International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation. His commitment to international academic relations and circulation was evident from the outset. For example, the College of Spain organized a student reception in honor of Rafael Altamira, a judge at the Permanent Court of International Justice in The Hague and professor of law at the University of Madrid, in the presence of Salvador de Madariaga (future founder of the College of Europe in Bruges) and a representative of the Rockefeller Foundation.⁸ A few months later, the Spanish Civil War broke out. The Collège d’Espagne became a meeting place for Spanish refugees and exiles in Paris. Establier welcomed students and intellectuals of all political persuasions, and succeeded in maintaining within the pavilion a space of tolerance and mutual respect even as the Spanish people sank into civil war.⁹ Philosopher Xavier Zubiri, biochemist Severo Ochoa (nephew of Spanish president Alvaro de Albomoz) and Francoist writer Pío Baroja were just a few of the many students. This determination to keep academia out of the political arena led to an attempt by the Republican ambassador to Paris, Luis Araquistáin, to dismiss him, which the French authorities prevented.

Against this backdrop of international tensions from 1935 onwards, student demand at the CIUP increased sharply. For the 1938–1939 academic year, the Fondation Deutsch de la Meurthe registered 300 male applications for the 100 places available, and 140 female applications for the 30 places still available in the Pierre and Marie Curie pavilion. Applications made directly to the Fondation nationale doubled between 1935 and December 1938,¹⁰ with a marked acceleration in the autumn of

⁷ AN, AJ16, 7033. Anonymous letter dated June 20, 1935, addressed to André Honnorat.

⁸ *French Revolution. Revue d’histoire contemporaine*, n°6, 1936, pp. 191–192.

⁹ *Bulletin de l’Alliance internationale des anciens de la Cité universitaire de Paris*, n°113, January 1989; Anna Maria Pedrerol i Pié, *El Mundo de Ángel Establier (1904–1976)*, Independently published, 2022.

¹⁰ AN, AJ16, 7031. Report on the operation of the work in 1938 and 1939; AN, AJ16, 7035. Boards of directors of the Fondation Deutsch de la Meurthe. Annual report, December 20, 1938.

1938.¹¹ The CIUP welcomed 2010 French students and, above all, 834 international students, 20% more than at the start of the 1937 academic year. International students now make up a third of residents.¹² The most represented nationalities were from Central and Eastern Europe and the United States. The reason for this is that, since 1935, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has entrusted the CIUP with the task of receiving foreign scholarship holders from the French government. The second reason was the increase in funding for scholarships for foreign students voted by the Popular Front government in 1936.¹³ To complete the picture, in December 1938 the Fondation nationale signed an agreement with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which delegated to it the payment of foreign scholarship holders from the French government.¹⁴ This agreement marks the Foundation's recognition at national level as an institutional partner in France's international diplomacy, and gives it an additional visibility effect with international partners. It also provides a wider pool of foreign students from which to select the "best" future Francophile executives for admission to the CIUP.¹⁵ As Patrick Ferté reminds us, welcoming foreign students serves the national interest, investing in what he calls "intellectual allies".¹⁶

¹¹ From 525 to 1,059.

¹² The nationalities represented are, in descending order: United States, Yugoslavia, Switzerland, Greece, Luxembourg, Egypt, Holland, Romania, Syria, China, Denmark, Turkey, Canada, Japan, Argentine Republic, Poland, Belgium. Report on the operation of the organization in 1938. Specialties are mainly law, medicine, science, ahead of literature and pharmacy.

¹³ Tronchet Guillaume, "Quality rather than quantity". Le tournant élitiste de l'accueil des étudiants étrangers en France dans les années 1930", in Marianne Amar, Nancy L. Green (dir.), *Migrations d'élites. Une histoire-monde XVIe-XXIe siècle*, Tours, Presses universitaires François-Rabelais, 2022, pp. 189–206.

¹⁴ Decision of the Board of Directors on December 26, 1938.

¹⁵ AN, AJ16, 7031. National Foundation, financial report, period 1940–1943.

¹⁶ FERTÉ P., BARRERA C. (dir.), *Migrations internationales et universités refuges (xvi-xx siècles)*, Toulouse, Presses universitaires du Mirail, 2009, p. 14. See also in the same volume: CABANIS A., "Le flux d'étudiants étrangers et les aléas de la politique internationale de la France", pp. 177–190. For context: KARADY V., "Student mobility and Western Universities, Patterns of Unequal exchange in the European Academic Market (1880–1939)", C. CHARLE, P. WAGNER, J. SCHRIEWER (eds.), *Transnational Intellectuals Networks, Forms of Academic Knowledge and the Search for Cultural Identities*, Frankfurt/New York, Campus Verlag, 2004, pp. 361–399; P. HARTMUTRÜDIGER and N. TIKHONOV (eds.), *Universitäten als Brücken in Europa/Les Universités des Ponts à travers l'Europe*,

However, international tensions and the economic crisis affected the CIUP, as did the presence of Austrian, Czech, German-Israeli and Spanish refugee students, torn between the impossibility of returning home, the French administration's insistence on extending residence permits and financial difficulties. No statistical information on refugee students is recorded in the moral reports to the CIUP's Board of Directors for 1938 and 1939. However, Jean Giraud, who heads the Deutsch Foundation, insists on the need to obtain exceptional administrative arrangements from the rectorate for these refugee students.¹⁷ This was the thrust of the correspondence between Gustave Roussy (Rector of the University of Paris), André Honnorat and Jean Branet (General Secretary of the Fondation nationale de la CIUP), in January 1939. André Honnorat wrote that, anxious to bring real relief to refugees, it was his duty to "bend the rules to the necessities of the hour",¹⁸ He insisted once again in October 1939,¹⁹ and made repeated representations to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and National Education, so that these students could benefit from exceptional aid enabling them to survive financially.²⁰ The refugee question was not a new concern for André Honnorat, who was one of the founders of the Comité national de secours aux réfugiés allemands victimes de l'antisémitisme (National Committee for the Relief of German Refugees Victims of Anti-Semitism), which was specifically concerned with the placement of refugee scholars. Vicki Caron's study of the reception of these Jewish refugees highlights both the forms and

Frankfurt, Peter Lang, 2003; KARADY V., "La migration internationale d'étudiants en Europe, 1890–1940", *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, no. 142, December 2002, pp. 47–60; Scott-Smith Giles, Tournès Ludovic, (ed.) *Global Exchanges. Scholarships and Transnational Circulations in the Modern World*, Berghan Books, 2017; Matthieu Gillabert, "Paris la souricière? L'organisation de la mobilité étudiante dans la capitale pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale", *European Journal of International Migration*, vol. 37, 2021, pp. 277–302.

¹⁷ AN, AJ16, 7035. Deutsch de la Meurthe Foundation. Annual report, December 20, 1938.

¹⁸ The Service d'entraide sociale created at the Cité universitaire was not enough. AN, AJ16, 7033. Student refugees welcomed at the Cité universitaire, 1939. André Honnorat to Jean Zay, Minister of National Education, January 20, 1939.

¹⁹ AN, AJ16, 7033. André Honnorat to Gustave Roussy, October 16, 1939.

²⁰ AN, AJ16, 7033. La Cité internationale during the war, refugee agreements and staff mobilization.

the ambiguities of André Honnorat's commitment.²¹ However, refugee students themselves do not appear in the minutes of 1938 and 1939: it is the Service d'entraide sociale de la CIUP that deals with the financial and material problems of exiled students.

Finally, the reality of financial needs is no less important, particularly for the Fondation Nationale, which fears and fights the hypothesis of a general evacuation of the CIUP. This would deprive it of the resources generated by student rents, and therefore of any operating profit. This fear was all the greater when the President of the French Council, Édouard Daladier, ratified the Ministry of Defense's plans to requisition the CIUP in the event of war, in order to set up a hospital for the Armed Forces Health Service.²² Honnorat and Branet tried to have the CIUP recognized as a "lieu de Genève", a neutral territory with diplomatic extritoriality in the heart of Paris, to enable international student life to continue.²³ This failed. Their attempts to reconcile the proposed military takeover with keeping French and international students on the site were unsuccessful.²⁴ They did, however, manage to obtain delegated responsibility for the organization of passive defense, thereby controlling the measures adopted.

From autumn 1938 onwards, the CIUP and student life were transformed: deposits of sand were stored on the floors of the upper rooms of the student pavilions, shovels were distributed to everyone, fire extinguishers and pump buckets were distributed throughout the houses, and the buildings were camouflaged with the installation of blue lamps in the common areas of the pavilions. The windows of the students' rooms are obscured with paint, blue paper, louvers or black canvas. Shelters were set up in the cellars of the Maison internationale, and 1500 meters of shelter trenches were dug in the CIUP's West Park. Lastly, guarantees were taken

²¹ Vicki Caron, *L'asile incertain. La crise des réfugiés juifs en France, 1933–1942*, Paris, Tallandier, 2008, p. 46, 147 and 340. In 1938, for example, André Honnorat felt that it was dangerous to welcome too many German Israelites to France, because of the resentment this could generate among unemployed French intellectuals.

²² Decision of December 4, 1937. AN, AJ16, 7033. Directeur du Service de santé des armées to André Honnorat, December 5, 1937.

²³ Quoted by KELLER A., *La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris face à la montée de l'Etat nazi et à la guerre: un idéal en question (1937–1945)*, Master's thesis, Université Paris X, 2005, typed, p. 47.

²⁴ AN, AJ16, 7033. André Honnorat to Jean Zay, December 16, 1937; André Honnorat and Jean Branet to Édouard Daladier, December 27, 1938.

out for the supply of fuel oil and coal, notably with the *Compagnie des pétroles Jupiter*, whose director Jean Branet had been since the 1920s.²⁵

The fear of a complete closure of the CIUP was reinforced by the preventive evacuation of many foreign foundations at the end of summer 1938, at the time of the Munich crisis. In Honnorat's eyes, this threatened to jeopardize the start of the academic year in November 1938. Moreover, during 1939, he tried to convince the directors of the foundations not to close their houses in the event of mobilization in their own country. At the Danish House, for example, Helge Wamberg, Press and Cultural Attaché at the Danish Legation in Paris, refused Honnorat's request at the Board meeting in April 1939. He decided to evacuate Danish students from France.²⁶

When war broke out, most of the directors of foreign foundations, like the national authorities on which they depended, urged their nationals to return home or not to return to Paris for the start of the academic year in November 1939. As soon as general mobilization was announced in France on September 1, 1939, houses were closed and requisitioned: on September 3, the *Fondations Deutsch de la Meurthe* and *Biermans-Lapôte* (a Belgian-Luxembourg foundation)²⁷ were occupied and turned into a hospital, a dormitory was set up at the *Maison des Etudiants Canadiens*, and a complementary hospital was set up at the *Fondation Argentine*. The *Fondation de l'Institut national agronomique* was also made available to the French army. The personnel of an anti-aircraft battery set up nearby on the Charléty stadium were to be housed there.²⁸ Despite this state of affairs, in autumn 1939 the *Fondation Nationale* planned to keep two houses open—the *Maison des Provinces de France* and the *Maison de l'Indochine*—as well as the *Foyer International des Etudiantes* in the *Quartier Latin*, only for students authorized to attend

²⁵ Société des pétroles Jupiter was formed in 1922 by an alliance between the company run by Émile and Henry Deutsch de la Meurthe and Royal Dutch Shell.

²⁶ AN, AJ16, 7038. Board of Directors of the Danish Foundation, April 28, 1939.

²⁷ For the Belgian and Luxembourg foundations, all the students left in the two months preceding the mobilization. AN, AJ16, 7037. Report by Josse Staquet, Board of Directors, December 12, 1944.

²⁸ AN, 20,090,013/166. Note from the administrative secretary general of the *Fondation nationale*, M. Pehuet, November 21, 1949; AN, AJ16, 7030. Finances of the *Fondation nationale* for the war period. Report on the operation of the Foundation in 1940–1941.

classes and lectures, in accordance with the conditions laid down by the University of Paris. Rector Gustave Roussy agreed, and instructed the deans of the various Paris faculties to issue special certificates for French or international students wishing to apply for admission to the CIUP for the 1939–1940 academic year.²⁹ In the end, only the Maison des Provinces de France welcomed students. 171 residents, 42% of whom were in voluntary or forced international mobility.

The war brought about the closure of the foundations and the temporary transfer of supervisory authority to the Fondation nationale for a number of them. At the Board meeting of February 5, 1940, the Foundation set up a crisis management organization, concentrating financial powers in the hands of two men, André Honnorat and Jean Branet, with two objectives: to preserve the CIUP's material interests and its moral interests by ensuring the protection of young people. The CIUP then changed its mission and made a commitment. Its participation in the national effort took the form of hosting former French residents on leave at the Maison des Provinces de France,³⁰ and Czechoslovakian volunteers at the American Foundation.³¹ From May 12, 1940, the Dutch College and then the Maison des Provinces de France opened their doors to the refugees who flocked to Paris fleeing the advancing German army. Nearly 200 fugitive students and teachers from the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and northern France found refuge at the CIUP. In both cases, however, the CIUP succeeded in taking targeted action in favor of the academic world.³²

When the Germans entered the CIUP on June 19, 1940, the buildings were deserted in the rush to escape. Only a few directors remained in Paris. Otto Hermann, the director of the Danish Foundation, played a key role here, single-handedly hiding the archives, valuables and library

²⁹ AN, AJ16, 7033. Agreement on students at the start of the 1939 academic year. Jean Coulet to Gustave Roussy, October 6, 1939.

³⁰ AN, AJ16, 7039. Board of Directors of the United States Foundation, January 20 and April 20, 1940. Report on the operation of the Foundation from January to September 1940.

³¹ AN, AJ16, 7033. Circular to directors of Cité Universitaire foundations, November 22, 1939.

³² AN, AJ16, 7033. André Honnorat, May 13, 1940.

books of the many foundations and houses in the Parc Est neighborhood.³³ After André Honnorat's failure to obtain from Albert Sarraut, Minister of National Education, the provision of university centers in the south of France to relocate the work of welcoming students, conservatory measures were adopted to protect the estate.³⁴ Jules Coulet, General Delegate (in office since April 1933 and officially until May 1945), left Paris with part of the secretariat for the free zone. He was in charge of transferring bank accounts and providing scholarships for international students, most of whom had been sent back to the provinces. André Honnorat, Jean Branet, David David-Weill and André Goldet, all members of the Board of Directors of the Fondation Nationale, fled Paris in a hurry.

GERMAN OCCUPATION AND THE VICHY REGIME: ACADEMIC MOBILITY BETWEEN RESISTANCE AND CLANDESTINITY

In the summer of 1940, the CIUP was requisitioned by the German army. The estate was transformed into a maneuvering ground, with norias of trucks and tanks. An anti-aircraft battery was installed on top of the Fondation Deutsch de la Meurthe's campanile, student rooms were turned into guardhouses, dressing rooms into ammunition depots, and staff were checked and registered. However, a number of student residences managed to retain their autonomy: the United States Pavilion remained independent until the outbreak of war in December 1941, while the Collège d'Espagne, the Maison des Etudiants Suédois, the Maison Suisse and the Maison du Japon remained independent until the winter of 1942. The National Foundation managed to retain control of the administrative and medical pavilions.³⁵ For the rest, the CIUP was transformed into barracks, and access to the estate was subject to passes. Interventions with Karl Epting, Otto Abetz's loyal collaborator and former head of the

³³ AN, AJ16, 7037. Report by Josse Staquet, *op. cit.*

³⁴ AJ16, 7031. Board of Directors, May 18, 1940; AN, AJ16, 7031. Fondation nationale, Board of Directors, 1945. La Cité universitaire since June 1940.

³⁵ AN, AJ16, 7033. Jean Coulet to Dr. Epting, August 31, 1940. Karl Epting to Gustave Roussy, September 18, 1940.

Paris section of the German Academic Exchange Office, who headed the German Institute in Paris, had no effect.³⁶

A second phase began in 1942.³⁷ Foundations that remained unoccupied were also invested, despite André Honnorat's repeated urging of Jérôme Carcopino, Secretary of State for National Education.³⁸ In the end, only the Swedish Student House managed to remain unoccupied between 1940 and 1944. The military presence caused considerable damage to the pavilions in the east and west parks.³⁹ Destruction and deterioration of the pavilions varied, however, depending on the length and type of occupation. There was little damage to pavilions that were only lightly occupied (Japan House), or that only housed women from the auxiliary services (United States Foundation), or an officers' mess (Danish Foundation). But the majority of the houses received a succession of troops, often beyond their normal capacity.⁴⁰ It was Josse Staquet, director of the Fondation Biermans-Lapôtre, who successfully filed the first claim for compensation for requisitions with the Préfecture de la Seine in 1941. This success enabled all the CIUP's foundations to obtain substantial compensation from 1943 onwards.⁴¹ It was based on one argument: the dual legal independence of the foundations themselves from the CIUP, and of the Fondation nationale from the French state. At a time when mobility and academic freedom were subject to the dual

³⁶ In October 1940, Jean Giraud urged Gustave Roussy to partially liberate the Cité: "With the start of the new academic year, a lot of homeless students turn up every day at the Fondation Deutsch or the Fondation nationale to find lodgings," he explains. AN, AJ16, 7033. Jean Giraud to Recteur de l'Université de Paris, October 3, 1940.

³⁷ AN, AJ16, 7033. Correspondence in February–March 1942 with Jérôme Carcopino, Gilbert Gidel and Jean Verrier, chief of staff to the Secretary of State for National Education. Jean Verrier to André Honnorat, February 6, 1942; André Honnorat to Jérôme Carcopino, February 4, 1942.

³⁸ AN, AJ16, 7033. Note addressed to the Préfecture de la Seine by the Paris Kommandantur, April 20, 1942.

³⁹ Details of destruction: AN, AJ16, 7028. Statistical information sheet for East and West parks, 1 May 1943.

⁴⁰ AN, AJ16, 7033. Report on damage to the Cité Universitaire estate and on the condition of the buildings, sent to Rector Gidel, March 28 and May 5, 1942.

⁴¹ AN, 20,090,013/169. Total indemnities received amount to 10,000,627 francs for the Collège franco-britannique, the Maison des étudiants arméniens, the Maison des étudiants canadiens, the Fondation agronomique, the Résidence André de Gouveia, the Fondation hellénique, the Fondation Deutsch de la Meurthe and the Maison de Monaco. André Honnorat to Rector Gidel, August 6, 1943.

constraints of Nazi occupation and the Vichy regime, the CIUP asserted its private identity and partial extraterritoriality. As Auguste Desclos, deputy delegate general of the Fondation nationale, emphasized in 1941: “The Cité universitaire is not a creation of the State”. Its founders are individuals, its pavilions are autonomous and managed by their deeds of foundation, and they have their own resources. The CIUP’s *raison d’être* is not to offer more comfortable student accommodation than the garnis of the Latin Quarter. It is a “cultural work of worldwide scope”, a national and international school of civic application.⁴²

The German occupation of the CIUP came to a definitive end on August 23, 1944. It ended with the looting of the Maison internationale and the administrative building, which were shot at and machine-gunned, as well as the Fondation Belgo-Luxembourgeoise, where grenades started a fire. For several days, the buildings were thoroughly looted, both by the Germans and by the civilian staff they had taken into their service.⁴³ Fighting with FFI resistance fighters who had taken up positions in Parc Montsouris resulted in grenades being thrown, machine-gun salvos and anti-tank cannon fire. The facades of Boulevard Jourdan still bear the scars today.

During this period of occupation, the German threat was reflected in 1943 and 1944 by increasing Gestapo surveillance and arrests of staff members, as the CIUP was the scene of anti-German attacks, particularly in autumn 1942.⁴⁴ The resistance action of Jeanne Thomas, André Honnorat’s secretary at the Fondation Nationale, made the CIUP a rallying point for international academic resistance. Supporting the Czechoslovak resistance movement, she succeeded in obtaining false university registrations and scholarships for international students who had joined the resistance. Her contact was Czech communist Milos Nekvasil (1910–2001). Trained in Moscow at the International Leninist School, he joined the International Brigades in Spain, as an active member of the clandestine Immigrant Labor Organization (MOI). Interned in 1939 after Franco’s victory, he managed to escape and joined the Resistance in Paris. In 1942, thanks to Jeanne Thomas, he obtained a student

⁴² AN, AJ16, 7041. Auguste Desclos, “Du rôle de la Cité universitaire dans la formation de la jeunesse d’après-guerre”, October 1941.

⁴³ AN, AJ16, 7031. The Cité Universitaire since June 1940.

⁴⁴ Henri Michel, *Paris résistant*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1982, p. 168.

registration in sociology and an employee certificate at the CIUP.⁴⁵ This network also included Milos Nekvasil and Maître André Bossin, a member of the Palais de Justice Resistance group, who organized attacks and sabotage.⁴⁶ Lectures given by André Mazon (1881–1967), President of the Institut d'études slaves and Professor at the Collège de France, provided a forum for clandestine meetings and exchanges between Czechoslovak resistance circles and Jeanne Thomas.⁴⁷ She narrowly escaped the Gestapo when they came to CIUP to arrest her. Less fortunate was M. Collard, the Maison d'Argentine bursar, who was arrested and imprisoned in Fresnes prison, near Paris. Another Foundation secretary, Mlle Neyssel, was deported to Germany. The director of the Maison de l'Indochine, Roger Bauduin de Belleval, a Chartist graduate of the Ecole Normale Supérieure and a journalist on colonial issues, who quickly joined the Resistance, was shot by the Germans in July 1944.⁴⁸

Officially, the CIUP's activities focused on helping and supporting French and foreign university students⁴⁹: letter-writing support and the regular dispatch of book parcels to 350 former residents imprisoned in stalags and oflags, food parcels for former Polish, Czech and Yugoslav residents still in Paris, the provision of a heated work room in the administrative building, and occasional meetings. In the name of student preventive medicine and the fight against tuberculosis, the Service médical benefited from the support of the Vichy regime, particularly from 1942

⁴⁵ Milos Nekvasil, "Témoignage sur la résistance tchécoslovaque en France pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale", *Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps*, vol. 31, 1993, pp. 47–56. At the same time, his wife took refuge in the Foyer des étudiantes in the Latin Quarter.

⁴⁶ AN, 72AJ 8/27. Note by André Bossin on the Palais de Justice group in Paris and liaison with the Czechoslovak resistance, September 5, 1949. Liora Israël, "La résistance dans les milieux judiciaires. Collective action and professional identities in wartime", *Genèses*, n°45, 2001/4, pp. 45–68.

⁴⁷ Graceffa Agnès, "De l'entraide universitaire sous l'Occupation: la correspondance de Marc Bloch avec André Mazon (décembre 1940—juillet 1941)", *Revue historique*, vol. 674, 2015, pp. 383–412.

⁴⁸ *A la mémoire de Roger Bauduin de Belleval, directeur de la maison de l'Indochine, héros de la résistance fusillé par les Allemands le 13 juillet 1944 à Nantua et des anciens résidents de la maison de l'Indochine morts pour la France*, Paris, 1946. AN, 20,090,013/141; AN, AJ16, 7031. Fondation nationale, moral report for 1944.

⁴⁹ HOCHARD C., "Étudiants et lycéens dans la guerre et l'occupation", J.-P. LEGOIS, A. MONCHABLON, R. MORDER, *Cent ans de mouvements étudiants*, Paris, Syllepse, 2007, pp. 59–69.

onwards. André Honnorat himself was a leading figure in interwar health policy,⁵⁰ who had been arguing since 1930 for the introduction of medical surveillance at the CIUP, using the argument of the establishment's prestige and the "shame" that France would represent if it proved incapable of ensuring the health of international students.⁵¹ At the same time, this service at the CIUP was used to hide students "for political and racial reasons", with the two doctors in charge producing numerous certificates of overeating, or to remove students from the German Compulsory Labor Service. To escape the Gestapo's enquiries, one of them, Dr. Lacourbe, went underground in 1944.⁵²

In its relations with the Vichy regime, the CIUP mobilized a capital of sympathy or protection by valorizing part of its identity and its missions compatible with the ideology of the National Revolution: the dream of a student community, hygienism and moral and physical regeneration, national influence and a tool of France's international policy. Things are actually more ambivalent. André Honnorat was one of the few senators to abstain on July 10, 1940, when Marshal Pétain was given full powers, and the fight against international cosmopolitanism was one of the creeds of the new regime. The new regime's anti-Semitic policies had a direct impact on the CIUP. The Aryanization of the Banque des Intérêts Privés of the Deutsch de la Meurthe family, patrons of the CIUP's first foundation, began in the autumn of 1940.⁵³ David David-Weill, a member of the board of directors and a major donor to the CIUP, heads the largest French family bank of international scope, Banque Lazard.⁵⁴ The Fondation nationale holds shares and funds in this bank. He was stripped of his nationality and fled to Portugal in the autumn of 1940. Staff identified as

⁵⁰ AN, 20,090,013/286. André Honnorat to M. Gas, Director of Assistance and Hygiene, March 3, 1930.

⁵¹ President since 1925 of the Comité national de défense contre la tuberculose, member of the assembly and then the board of directors of the Institut Pasteur. Guillaume Tronchet, *André Honnorat. Un visionnaire en politique*, Paris, Hémisphères/Maisonneuve & Larose, 2020.

⁵² AN, AJ16, 7031. Fondation nationale, moral report for 1944.

⁵³ Jean-Marc Dreyfus, *Pillages sur ordonnances. Aryanisation et restitution des banques en France, 1940–1953*, Paris, Fayard, 2003, pp. 204–207.

⁵⁴ David David-Weill (1871–1952). A banker and philanthropist, he is known for his donations of works of art to French and foreign museums, universities and libraries. DEROUCEMENT G., *Lazard Frères: banquiers des deux mondes, 1840–1939*, Paris, Fayard, 2011.

Jewish at the National Foundation were laid off in the autumn of 1940. Such was the case of archivist and historian Camille Bloch (1865–1949), to whom André Honnorat had entrusted the design of the CIUP library, opened in 1937.⁵⁵ Finally, the economic Aryanization law of July 1941 directly affected the Fondation Deutsch de la Meurthe as a “Jewish association”, due to the presence on its board of directors of members of the Deutsch de la Meurthe family.

This did not prevent the Fondation nationale from also benefiting from the regime’s protection, notably after André Honnorat’s personal meeting with Marshal Pétain in December 1941, and from mobilizing the international academic networks inherited from the interwar period.⁵⁶ The most illuminating example is the Foyer international des étudiantes du Quartier latin, which, as mentioned above, remained active throughout the war and the Occupation. The Foyer is the heir to the work founded in 1906 by Grace Whitney Hoff (*Student Hostel* of the Christian Union of Anglo-American Girls). It became an international hostel for female students in 1928. In May 1936, a deed of gift transferred the work to the University of Paris, which appointed the Fondation nationale of the CIUP as its trustee.⁵⁷ Since 1920, it has been directed by Sarah Watson (1885–1959), a history teacher. An American from South Carolina, she came to Paris with American troops in June 1918. She is assisted by Marcelle Fournier.⁵⁸

By 1940, the Foyer was home to over a hundred international students and a university restaurant that prepared nearly 700 meals a day. Sarah Watson decided to stay on. A tug-of-war soon ensued with the Student Department of the Vichy Youth Secretariat, which intended to control the Foyer, arguing in particular that it had a mandate to manage the capital’s university restaurants. In December 1941, the United States’

⁵⁵ Camille Bloch, *La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris*, Paris, Conciliation internationale, 1930.

⁵⁶ AN, AJ16, 7033. Occupation of the Cité, 1940–1944. André Honnorat to Jérôme Carcopino, February 4, 1942.

⁵⁷ AN, 20,090,013/123. Deed of donation dated May 6, 1936 to the University of Paris.

⁵⁸ AN, 20090013/123. ^{er}Robert Garric’s tribute to Sarah Watson on the occasion of her death, July 1 1959. Her archives are deposited at the South Carolina Library (Sarah Watson Papers, 1861–1967). Whitney Walton, *Internationalism, National Identities, and Study Abroad: France and the United States, 1890–1970*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2010.

entry into the war was seized as an opportunity by the government. Sarah Watson was given an ultimatum to leave the management team, and an internal investigation into Marcelle Fournier⁵⁹ led to a takeover of the Foyer. The active mobilization of André Honnorat and Auguste Desclos, who met personally with the Rector of the University of Paris, Gilbert Gidel, thwarted the attempt and affirmed the pre-eminence of the authority of the University of Paris over the ambitions of the Secrétariat à la Jeunesse.⁶⁰ A few weeks later, a new attempt to entrap the Foyer's management by fabricating false alcohol delivery certificates failed again.

In February 1942, the German Military Commission announced the occupation of the Foyer des étudiantes, and in September 1942, Sarah Watson was arrested and interned at Vittel. It was then through the Centre universitaire d'études hongroises in Paris, thanks to Auguste Desclos's personal links with Professor F. Grimm, the legal advisor to the German embassy in Paris⁶¹ and, finally, through the direct intervention of the rector with the Hungarian consul general in Paris⁶² that the Foyer escaped closure and its director was able to regain her freedom. Since 1933, Leopold (Lipot) Molnos-Müller has directed the Centre d'études hongroises, which provides material support for Hungarian students living in France⁶³. Through him, Karl Epting was asked to intervene, both of them having worked closely with Sarah Watson in the 1930s in welcoming German and Hungarian students. Molnos was also directly involved in the unsuccessful 1929 project to found a Hungarian pavilion at the CIUP. Thus, Molnos took it upon himself to draw up a circumscribed list of all female students from Axis countries who had stayed at the Foyer between 1934 and 1940, to warn Karl Epting who also assured him of his personal support, and to have letters written by German and

⁵⁹ We know from Milos Nekvasil's testimony that Marcelle Fournier and Jeanne Thomas were closely linked by their clandestine activities and their proximity to Czech resistance circles.

⁶⁰ AN, 20,090,013/123. André Honnorat to Recteur Gidel, December 15, 1941; Auguste Desclos to P. de Chevigny, December 23 and 30, 1941.

⁶¹ AN, 20,090,013/123. Mr. Binder-Kotrba, December 7, 1942.

⁶² LE CALLOC'H B., "Léopold Molnos, pionnier des relations culturelles franco-hongroises", *Association des anciens élèves de l'INALCO, Le Bulletin*, October 1998, pp. 81-88.

⁶³ AN, 20,090,013/123. Auguste Desclos to Professor F. Grimm, November 12, 1942.

Japanese students.⁶⁴ All this led to a favorable resolution. In 1943 and 1944, Honnorat and Desclos reinforced the Fondation Nationale's direct protection of the Foyer des étudiantes, relying firmly on the deed of donation of 1936 and the support of the Paris rectorate.

It can be seen, therefore, that the discourse on the CIUP's international ideal was replaced in the period under consideration by a legalistic discourse based on the founding acts of the foreign houses and of the Fondation nationale itself vis-à-vis the political authorities. International student mobility was obviously severely affected by the global conflict. However, the academic networks of the interwar period, whether in Axis or Allied countries, worked to protect the CIUP and the Foyer des étudiantes in the Latin Quarter. What's more, a number of these international academic networks coincided with a mobility of involvement in the European resistance to Nazism. By understanding the CIUP as a complex social space, we can avoid prejudging the unity of view of the actors who make it up, and highlight the tensions that run through it. In this respect, the period of the war and the Vichy regime is a revealing "moment". This period reveals the fragility of international academic mobility in the face of dictatorships and global conflict. It also shows that transnational academic networks and long-term interpersonal links, such as private law foundations, are resources in their own right in times of peril.

Conflict of Interest The author has no conflicts of interest to declare that are relevant to the content of this chapter.

⁶⁴ AN, 20,090,013/123. Léopold Molnos to Sarah Watson, February 25, 1942; note of October 28, 1942 on the Foyer's German, Austrian and Hungarian students (364 in all); note of November 14 concerning all Axis students.

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The end of the war and the American presence at the Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (1944–1950)

Elisa Capdevila

From 1944, the date of its liberation, to 1950, the Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris (CIUP) embarked on a process of reconstruction and return to civilian life. Although liberated from German occupying troops, the CIUP was not immediately returned to its original purpose, as it was initially taken over by the American army. Paradoxically, the return to civilian and student life that the CIUP's managers had hoped for was both slowed down and supported by the United States' involvement in this end-of-war phase. After housing its troops at the end of 1944, the U.S. Army sent student soldiers to the CIUP to await demobilization, whose very status symbolized the slow conversion of the CIUP. This end of the war was also supported by the United States Foundation, which from 1946 encouraged the return of American students to Paris.

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The history of the American presence¹ at the CIUP must be understood in conjunction with the rich historiography of American “expatriation” to Paris. The American students who joined the CIUP at the time of the Liberation were part of a long history that established Paris as a major training center for the American elite, and whose appeal was reinforced in the interwar period by the arrival of writers from the Lost Generation, avant-garde artists and numerous black American musicians and dancers. The enduring presence of Americans, particularly artists and intellectuals who often came to Paris as students before and after the Second World War, was the subject of numerous cultural representations that perpetuated an American myth of Paris;² the City of Light thus occupies a singular place in the history of American arts, which was challenged in the Cold War decades by the advent of American art, concomitant with the worldwide deployment of American *soft power*. Far from the central districts—from Montparnasse to Saint-Germain-des-Prés—where the “new expatriates” flocked from 1946 onwards, the CIUP has escaped the studies devoted to this renewal of the American presence in Paris. Yet it is an integral part of a history whose diversity and complexity has been demonstrated by numerous studies in recent decades.

These are part of a vast historiographical trend attentive to circulations on an international scale, which has renewed, in the field of cultural history, the study of Americanization—conceived, not as a simple diffusion of American productions or models, but as the product of exchanges, involving individuals and institutions, originating in the United States but also in host countries.³ The attention paid to the phenomena of cultural

¹ For convenience, the term “American” refers to the United States. This article is a modified and translated version of: “Sortie de guerre et présence américaine à la Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (1944–1950)”, in D. Kévonian, G. Tronchet (dir.), *La Babel étudiante. La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris, 1920–1950*, Rennes, PUR, 2013, p. 143–162.

² These include the works of the Lost Generation and, in the immediate post-war period, Vincente Minnelli’s 1951 musical *An American in Paris*. On this subject, see Gerald Kennedy, *Imagining Paris: Exile, Writing, and American Identity*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1993 and Vanessa Schwartz, *It’s so French! Hollywood, Paris and the making of cosmopolitan culture*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2007.

³ See, for example, Ludovic Tournès, *Américanisation. Une histoire mondiale (XVIIIe–XXIe siècle)*, Paris, Fayard, 2020 and Victoria De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America’s Advance Through Twentieth-century Europe*, Cambridge (Mass.), Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005. We have chosen to cite just a few of the most important works, mainly on Americans in Europe or, more specifically, in Paris. Given the vast bibliography

transfers and artistic exchanges has also led to a decompartmentalization of American art history; encouraged also on the French side by the reappraisal of the dynamism of the post-war Parisian art scene, recent studies have shed light on the trajectories of expatriates, who until then had remained on the margins of a history previously approached from an essentially national angle.⁴

At the crossroads of social history, cultural history and art history, a number of studies have highlighted the diversity of the American presence in Paris, with particular emphasis on minorities—women, homosexuals and black Americans (following the pioneering studies of Michel Fabre and Tyler Stovall⁵)—and the importance, in individual trajectories, of the Parisian sojourn as a moment of formation and distancing from the American homeland. They have also highlighted the political dimension of this expatriation, and raised the question of the role of expatriates in the Americanization process.⁶ These studies are linked to a broader reflection on American influence in Europe and the world, and on the contacts between Americans and foreign hosts generated by individual mobility and the

in this field, it is impossible to provide an exhaustive overview in the context of this article.

⁴ See Wanda Corn, *The Great American Thing: Modern Art and National Identity, 1915–1935*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1999. Several exhibitions have been devoted to Americans in Paris; for example: Sophie Lévy (dir.), *Paris, capitale de l'Amérique: l'avant-garde américaine à Paris, 1918–1939*, Giverny, Museum of American Art, A. Biro, 2003; Lynn Gumpert and Debra Bricker Balken (dir.), *Americans in Paris. Artists Working in Postwar France, 1946–1962*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 2022; *United States of abstraction: American artists in France, 1946–1964*, Musée d'arts de Nantes-Musée Fabre, Montpellier, Paris, Beaux-Arts Editions, 2021.

⁵ Michel Fabre, *La Rive noire: de Harlem à la Seine*, Paris, Lieu commun, 1985 and Tyler Stovall, *Paris noir: African Americans in the city of light*, Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1996. Several books have been devoted to black American musicians and artists, including: Ludovic Tournès, *New Orleans sur Seine: histoire du jazz en France*, Paris, Fayard, 1999; Theresa Leininger-Müller, *New Negro Artists in Paris: African American Painters and Sculptors in the City of Light, 1922–1934*, New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 2001. On women, and the role of Paris in individual careers, see Alice Kaplan, *Three American Women in Paris. Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy, Angela Davies, Susan Sontag*, Paris, Gallimard, 2012.

⁶ Notably Brooke L. Blower, *Becoming Americans in Paris. Transatlantic Politics and Culture between the World Wars*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2011.

deployment abroad of American institutions (state and non-state) in the context of the Liberation and the Cold War.⁷

Among these many “Americans in Paris”, students appear to be a major category, in full expansion after the Second World War, and yet still little studied as such—except through certain places or through individual itineraries.⁸ On the bangs of Paris, the CIUP appears to be an ideal observation post from which to study these “Americans of Paris” and, more broadly, the American presence in the capital, at a critical moment in the history of the CIUP, but also in the history of the American presence in Paris, and more broadly on an international scale, as it played out on military, political, and cultural levels.

To this end, we have consulted institutional sources from the CIUP’s rich holdings at Paris,⁹ which shed light on the issues at stake in the return of Americans to the CIUP, for the directors of the CIUP and the Fondation des États-Unis on the one hand, and the authorities, both French and American, on the other. These sources are supplemented by the testimony of John Breon, an American soldier-student, whose correspondence, particularly extensive for the 1944–1946 period, is preserved in the archives of the Beineke Library at Yale.¹⁰ His letters go some way to filling the gap left by the absence of residents in the institutional archives; they provide an insight into the experience of one of them, describing life at the CIUP from the inside during the difficult years of reconstruction, and offer an individual point of view that complements the general view of the CIUP’s operations.

A reading of these archives reveals the difficulties of the return to civilian life for this international student city, and the tensions between the players involved in this reconstruction process aimed at reviving the CIUP’s internationalist project. Behind the apparent consensus of

⁷ On the war and the Liberation see in particular Mary Louise Roberts, *What Soldiers do—Sex and the American GI in World War II France*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2013.

⁸ See in particular: Nelcy Delanoë, *Le Raspail Vert. The American Center in Paris, 1934–1994*, Paris, Seghers, 1994.

⁹ Archives du Rectorat de Paris, CIUP (AJ16 7033, 7039, 7049) and Archives de la CIUP, Fondation nationale et archives des maisons rattachées (20090013 and 20090014), deposited at the Archives nationales (AN).

¹⁰ John Breon Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

a return to civilian life and to the CIUP's primary mission—meetings and exchanges between students of different nationalities—there are also much more national issues at stake, crucial for the two countries concerned here, in terms of *soft power*: between promoting French culture to the soldiers of the Liberation and defending and spreading an American model of prosperity, the reconstruction of the CIUP bears the marks of the transition from a time of war to a time of peace and renewed prosperity, but also from a world war to a new Cold War.

AMERICANS IN THE CIUP: A DIFFICULT END TO THE WAR (1944–1946)

The United States has been an integral part of the CIUP's history from the outset. The first designers of the CIUP drew inspiration from the American campus model in defining their initial project¹¹ and it was a donation from American billionaire John D. Rockefeller in 1929 that enabled the construction of the Maison Internationale, the central building of the CIUP.¹² This influence, both ideological and financial, remained strong after the Second World War. In 1949, during budget discussions with the French government, the CIUP's directors recalled the exceptional gesture of the American philanthropist to encourage the government to become more involved: they pointed out that this donation of 3.5 million dollars (or one and a half billion francs in 1949) had enabled the creation of a house, a veritable “grand ‘club’ of the Cité U¹³”, including a library, a theater, a reception hall, a swimming pool and a restaurant. A second donation from American philanthropist Homer Gage financed the construction of the Fondation des États-Unis¹⁴ in 1927.

Inaugurated in April 1930, it was primarily intended for American students pursuing higher education, as well as for overseas professors and

¹¹ On this subject, see Lemoine Bertrand, *La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris*, Paris, Hervas, 1990, pp. 29–31.

¹² AN 20090013, art. 35. See the general delegation's activity reports for 1929 and 1930.

¹³ AN, AJ16 7033, Note sur les questions d'ordre budgétaire relatives à la fondation nationale de la Cité universitaire, April 8, 1949.

¹⁴ AN, AJ167039. Donation dated April 9, 1927. See in particular the contract preserved in the archives of the Fondation des États-Unis.

researchers visiting the French capital. It also welcomed French students in a proportion equivalent to the number of American students accommodated in the French foundations. This early American investment in the CIUP is indicative of the influence acquired by the United States in cultural relations, before the Cold War and through American philanthropy; it also bears witness to the singular place of Paris in American culture and the attraction exerted on the American elite by the City of Light, whose role as a cultural capital on an international scale was reinforced by the support of American patrons for artists¹⁵ and the capital's cultural institutions.

The Arrival of the Americans in 1944: A New Military Occupation of the CIUP

At the Liberation, however, the presence of the Americans exacerbated the difficulties encountered by the CIUP in rebuilding itself. The challenge for the directors was to return the CIUP to its original vocation: welcoming students rather than housing armed troops. In their eyes, this mission was of the utmost importance: it represented a real duty to a generation of students who had had to leave the CIUP because of the war, some of whom had just returned from the maquis or the camps. Aware of the failure that the war had represented for the CIUP, Deputy Delegate General Auguste Desclos and President André Honnorat set themselves the goal of returning the CIUP to the students, and thus re-establishing, perhaps redeeming, an ideal that had been close to failure.¹⁶

The plan initially presented by the American authorities was in line with their wishes, as they envisaged establishing an army study center in Paris. The plan was for the CIUP to house the *GI's* attending this center. The transition would be easy for the CIUP, which would thus be able to move from war to peace while helping the Allies, with the Americans also undertaking to carry out the most urgent work to restore the occupied foundations and houses. Studied from September to November 1944, this project gave rise to fairly extensive negotiations, which soon became

¹⁵ Many Parisian avant-garde artists owed their success to American support, from the Impressionists to Matisse and Picasso. On this subject see Bénédicte Joyeux-Prunel, *Les avant-gardes artistiques (1848–1918): une histoire transnationale*, Paris, Folio Histoire, 2016.

¹⁶ See Dzovinar Kévonian's contribution in this volume.

complicated. In the end, the project was abandoned in the face of the necessities of war: as hostilities did not cease as quickly as expected, the American army had to house a greater number of soldiers than it had originally envisaged. For their part, the CIUP authorities refused to postpone the creation of the study center, for fear of compromising the reception of students at the start of the 1945 academic year, which remained their primary objective.¹⁷

The CIUP was finally occupied by the American army. At first, the American military presence was limited: in August 1944, only a few units and the DCA headquarters occupied the CIUP. In November 1944, several buildings were requisitioned for executive schools (the International House, the United States Foundation, the Belgian Foundation and the Franco-British College¹⁸). Gradually, other units followed, and by December 1944, the entire CIUP was occupied by American troops, for a total of some 6600 men.¹⁹ This occupation lasted until September 1945, and entailed payment by the Allies of a requisition indemnity (as had previously been the case with the Germans) and reimbursement for work undertaken at their request to restore the buildings.

The attitude of the new occupants is hard to pin down, as reports and letters from the CIUP remain rather laconic on the subject. Relations between the U.S. military authorities and the City's leaders appeared to be fairly tense, stumbling over the question of compensation payments (an issue that remained unresolved at the end of the 1940s²⁰). The amicable tone of the initial negotiations was abandoned, although this did not

¹⁷ On these negotiations and the American requisition, see the activity reports of the Fondation de la Cité Universitaire and the claims file in the CTU archives. AN, 20090013, art. 35 and 171.

¹⁸ AN, 20090013, art. 171, Requisition orders dated December 17 and November 7, 1944, signed by Lieutenant-Colonel Hendricks.

¹⁹ AN, 20090013, art. 171, Note entitled "La Cité universitaire depuis juin 1940", dated summer 1944. In the same file, see the undated note entitled "Les différentes phases d'occupation de la Cité universitaire pendant la guerre".

²⁰ Between 1945 and 1947, the valuation of the indemnity owed by the Americans was disputed. The discussion centered on the valuation of the work carried out at the occupier's request, the costs of which were borne by the occupier; they were in fact covered by the French state, which was then reimbursed by the United States under the lend-lease law. According to a letter from the intendance des réquisitions, dated October 27, 1947, the United States had to pay 12,445,102 francs to the CIUP as compensation for deprivation of use. AN, AJ16 7033.

mean that relations had completely deteriorated. Letters from the American army, which in September–November 1944 presented the image of a benevolent liberation army, sensitive to the CIUP's civil and pacifist aims, gradually took on a more administrative tone. However, only one complaint is recorded in the archives: it was lodged by the director of the Dutch College, who violently denounced the American occupation, which he considered worse than the previous one.²¹

Over and above the damage caused—which corresponded to a short-term occupation by visiting troops²²—the situation was of great concern to the CIUP authorities, as it ran counter to their mission and perpetuated the period of war, which they would have liked to see come to an end as quickly as possible. Letters from the company's directors bear witness to their concerns. As much as, if not more than, the material consequences, it was the moral aspect of the situation that worried them. In a letter to André Honnorat and Jean Branet dated November 9, 1944, Auguste Desclos, deputy delegate general of the CIUP national foundation, stressed the material damage that could be caused by the American High Command's new plan to house some 600 furloughed workers in unoccupied houses, by doubling the number of beds in the *Maison des provinces de France*. For the CIUP, he said, this would be “a second catastrophe²³”, both morally and materially. In a letter dated November 29, President Honnorat stated that the American occupation, for purely

²¹ The director complained of theft of furniture by the Americans. The Dutch College had been occupied during the war by the German General Staff. See letters from the Director of the *Collège néerlandais* to the Rector of the University of Paris, December 6, 1945, and to the Chief Accountant of the *Fondation nationale de la Cité universitaire*, July 4, 1949. AN, 20090013, art. 171.

²² A letter dated December 8, for example, refers to damage caused by the passage of troops and the comings and goings of trucks on the west islet. A U.S. Army memorandum dated March 14, 1945, reminds troops not to damage equipment (unused furniture should be stored under cover).

²³ He writes: “As much as it would be in the interest of the *Cité Universitaire*, the University of Paris and France to have an American university center operating here, it would be regrettable to see successive batches of furloughed students. From a moral point of view, there would be no benefit for us or for the country. From a material point of view, the presence of permissionnaires from fighting troops made up of rather rough men who would be here without any supervision, with the sole aim of having fun in their own way, and taking turns from one week to the next, could only lead to great disorder and considerable damage in the *Cité*. It would be a second catastrophe for us.” AN, AJ16 7039, Letter from Desclos to Honnorat and Branet, November 9, 1944.

military purposes, no longer offered any of the “moral and material advantages²⁴” initially hoped for. The disappointment of these leaders, who had believed in the promises of a rapid return to civilian life, is palpable, as the American army laconically replied that it had itself gambled on a more rapid victory.²⁵

*The American “Second Occupation”: The U.S. Army Study Center
(1945–1946)*

In August 1945, the main foundations were finally evacuated, putting an end to the military occupation, but not to the presence of the American army at the CIUP, which had set up a training center for its students there in April. By its very nature, this American “second occupation” was completely different from the first, and marked a genuine transition from the era of war to that of peace. It involved only two buildings, the United States Foundation and the House of Japan, whose premises were made available to the U.S. Army Study Center from April 1945. Officially requisitioned from September 13, 1944 to March 25, 1946²⁶, these two houses were in fact occupied by student soldiers until April 12, under a private arrangement between the American authorities and the CIUP. They were not completely vacated until July 1946, in time for the start of the 1946–1947 academic year.

This occupation, which was limited and gentler than the previous one, marked the beginning of the return to civilian life. The mentality of these students, ex-GIs awaiting demobilization, was very different from that of their predecessors. Born in 1923, John Breon was one of these veterans, held back in France by the war’s end and offered training by the US Army pending their return home. Stationed in Germany until October 1945, he arrived in Paris under an agreement between the U.S. Army and COFBA

²⁴ AN, AJ16 7039, Letter from André Honnorat to René Capitant, November 29, 1944.

²⁵ According to André Honnorat’s letter of November 29, 1944, this was the reply received by Auguste Desclos, who had come to relay the disappointment of CIUP leaders to the American military authorities. In 1946, Rector André Lirondelle spoke of the “delicate period of American presence” that followed the years of German occupation. AN, 20090013, art. 35, Report of the Board of Directors, May 21, 1946.

²⁶ Initially, they were only requisitioned for a brief period from September 15, 1945 to November 1, 1946.

(le Comité Français de Bienvenue aux Armées alliées), which financed the project. From November to December 1945, he took courses at IDHEC (Institut Des Hautes Etudes Cinématographiques) and French civilization at the Sorbonne. Initially based in a hotel in the Montparnasse district, he was offered a position at the CIUP at the end of November 1945. He stayed there until the summer of 1946, when he returned to the United States.

The letters he sent to his mother recount his first impressions of the city, which amazed him, his classes and the CIUP. They express the pride of this former soldier turned student, who was surrounded by future doctors, professors, musicians and artists of the world, and attended classes at the prestigious Sorbonne University. The program he followed was indicative of a cultural policy which, under the guise of exchanges between allies, also aimed to promote the image of the host country, in a revived *soft power* perspective. The program's primary objective, although it combined theoretical courses and practical initiation—and for John Breon led to the production of a documentary for COFBA—was neither professional nor academic: it was first and foremost to introduce these young Americans to French culture, and in particular to cinema, considered to be one of its jewels.

In his case, the training paid off handsomely. At first, John Breon was delighted with what he learned. He chose to take advantage of the opportunity to extend his studies, and enrolled in the Sorbonne's literature program for the second half of the academic year (January to June 1946).²⁷ His correspondence bears witness to this young American intellectual's interest in Parisian cultural life. From the moment of his arrival, he assiduously frequented the capital's cultural landmarks, notably the Louvre and the Opéra—about which he spoke to his mother with a shared sense of familiarity. This stay was also an opportunity for him to meet fellow expatriates: he soon came into contact with Gertrude Stein, who had remained in France during the war and with whom he became close.²⁸ Little by little, he got to know a whole cosmopolitan, avant-garde world. While his career path is singular in this respect, it nevertheless

²⁷ He was awarded a 4,000-franc scholarship.

²⁸ He met her while on leave in Paris, between October 16 and 18, 1945 before joining the study program. He later explained to his mother that he had received her help to enroll at the Sorbonne; his subsequent correspondence records regular meetings with Gertrude Stein, as well as with Alice B. Toklas, Stein's companion.

confirms the attraction of the French capital for this generation of veterans inspired by the myth of the Lost Generation.

THE RETURN OF AMERICAN STUDENTS TO THE UNITED STATES FOUNDATION WITHIN THE CIUP: FROM THE SECOND WORLD WAR TO THE COLD WAR (1946–1950)

American Students Return to the United States Foundation

Despite rationing, the American students who stayed at the Fondation des États-Unis in the post-war years found relatively privileged living and studying conditions, compared to those experienced by their compatriots who crowded into the dilapidated hotels of the Latin Quarter.²⁹ In John Breon's early letters, the CIUP thus appears in a particularly positive light, as much for the relative comfort it offered as for the international atmosphere that prevailed there.

After initially sharing a room with another American student, in March 1946 he obtained a single room, a real luxury at the time. Despite restrictions on heating and hot water,³⁰ he was delighted with the comfort of his room and the atmosphere of the Foundation, every detail of which he appreciated. Here's how he described it to his mother:

The sounds of the place: a subway across the street and at regular intervals the [sound] of the train going to and from Paris—we're on the edge of the city here -; in the hall, the music of a string quartet rehearsing, Conservatory boys practicing, an occasional trumpet, they're rehearsing, discussions, endless discussions about music, art, literature; the bell of the handcars in the street; the [noise] of the horns; the cry of the woman

²⁹ For more specific examples, please refer to our book. Elisa Capdevila, *Des Américains à Paris. Artistes et bohèmes dans la France de l'après-guerre*, Paris, Armand Colin, 2017.

³⁰ In December 1946, heating and hot water could only be used once a day. The use of hot water was then limited to Saturdays and Sundays (according to a letter from March 1946). John Breon complained little about these inconveniences, pointing out that the temperature in his room remained quite bearable as long as he kept the windows closed, and that he could always use the showers at the International House, the Belgian building or the Columbia Club Red Cross, on days when there was no hot water at the Foundation. See letters of December 9, 1945 and March 29, 1946, John Breon Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

selling hot chestnuts across the street; the sound of water in the showers; the maids vacuuming; it's superb. The friends here are really nice³¹ ...

He also emphasized the international spirit of the CIUP, to which he seemed particularly sensitive: he sent his parents postcards representing the different pavilions that made up the CIUP, after having duly visited each of them³², and said he enjoyed meeting foreign students. Unlike the first, this American "second occupation", in which John Breon took part, was perfectly in keeping with the CIUP's internationalist ideal of encounters and exchanges between nations.

His letters also corroborate the Foundation's moral reports, which praised the living conditions offered to the residents. In 1947, the Board of Directors emphasized that the students, the vast majority of whom were American,³³ seemed both happy and serious: "The house is heated morning and evening, hot water is given on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings, and all this certainly contributes to this atmosphere of contentment³⁴". The report also noted the resumption of social and cultural life, on the initiative of the Students' Committee: in particular, Saturday evening dances and Sunday afternoon tea dances were organized. Every evening, students gathered in the Woolley lounge to listen to music, an activity supported by the Foundation, which had set up two music studios in basement rooms. The library was open again, every day from 5 to 11 pm, and a lecture series was to be organized next term by the Committee. The resumption of seemingly normal activities on a university campus symbolized for the Foundation's leaders, as well as for soldiers-turned-students like John Breon, the return to normal life and the end of the war.

However, this return to civilian life was not without its difficulties, either for the Foundation or for its residents. The Foundation was faced with major difficulties. While its situation was to some extent less worrying than that of other houses (in 1946, it received an additional donation of \$5000 from the widow of patron Homer Gage, and also

³¹ Letter dated December 6, 1945, John Breon Papers.

³² Letters dated January 2 and 5, 1946. It describes the Japanese and British pavilions he visited. John Breon Papers.

³³ The Foundation housed 155 male and 158 female students, including 108 Americans.

³⁴ AN, AJ16 7039, Rapport moral du conseil d'administration, December 19, 1947.

benefited from material donations from the U.S. army³⁵), like other houses and foundations, it encountered major financial problems.³⁶ Its directors,³⁷ seeking to cope with the most urgent repairs,³⁸ encouraged the return of American students. In 1946, they began recruiting students from universities across the Atlantic. Following a visit by Mrs. Lowrie, the wife of the Foundation's director, several Midwestern universities promised to send students wishing to come to France for the start of the 1946–1947 academic year.³⁹ The Institute of International Education also undertook to promote stays at the CIUP among American students.⁴⁰

The Wooley scholarships, offered by the Foundation and intended for American students only, were reinstated in 1947.⁴¹ Six students received this aid, worth 1000 francs for 1947–1948, then four the following year. In 1950, the arrival of the first Fulbright students, benefiting from an American government grant of 1300 to 1400 francs, marked a real return to peace. Fifty places were reserved for them for the month of orientation

³⁵ In exchange for these donations (consisting of office and kitchen equipment as well as records, musical instruments and sports equipment), the US Foundation paid 300,000 francs to the American Army Relief—a price well below the actual value of the donated goods. See the inventory dated April 25, 1946 and the letter to the French authorities dated October 10, 1947, AN, 20090014, art. 95. On Mrs. Gage's donation, see the documents relating to the management of the Foundation. AN, AJ16 7040.

³⁶ In a letter to the rector of the University of Paris, the Foundation's treasurer, Bernard S. Carter, mentions "heavy payments in excess of 4,000,000 francs to refurbish the Fondation des États-Unis (central heating, paintwork, etc.)." AN, AJ16 7040, Letter dated October 24, 1946. On war-related damage, see also the files by foundation in the CIUP archives. AN, 20090013, art. 167.

³⁷ The Foundation's directors were Donald Lowrie (from October 1945 to August 1947) and Donald King (from August 1947 to June 1953).

³⁸ In particular, the Foundation decided to increase room rental prices, in line with the increases charged by other homes. AN, AJ16 7039, Report of the Board of Directors, meeting of July 24, 1946.

³⁹ See in particular the report of the Board of Directors, meeting of July 24, 1946. It is mentioned that several Midwestern universities "are considering sending their Junior Year students to Paris starting in 1947–1948".

⁴⁰ The 1946 report states, "Dr. Duggan and the Institute of International Education continue to take a keen interest in the United States Foundation and are prepared to direct as many American students to it as possible."

⁴¹ Decision taken by the 1947 Board of Directors (meeting of July 18). AN, AJ16 7039.

(in October) and twenty-five single rooms were offered to them for the academic year. In the end, ten would benefit from this offer.

American students, who numbered 131 in 1946–1947 (11.7% of the total foreign student body⁴²), formed the largest foreign community at the CIUP: supported by various scholarship programs,⁴³ they nevertheless represented only a small proportion of the American students who returned to Paris.

John Breon's letters also reveal the difficulties faced by these American students, who were nonetheless privileged in many ways. In addition to government scholarships and access to the CIUP, they had access to the resources of American expatriates, which were not insignificant in a context of rationing—access to the Army's PX store and recourse to the black market, which John Breon mentions several times. This comfortable situation made Breon aware of his country's economic superiority, but it also led him to question the validity of a model whose essentially materialistic aim he regretted.⁴⁴

⁴² In July 1946, just as John Breon was leaving Paris, the United States Foundation welcomed 148 students, both French and foreign. American residents at CIUP numbered 172 for 1946–1947, 206 and 207 in subsequent years. Not all stayed at the Fondation des États-Unis (which welcomed a total of 368 students in 1948–1949). On each occasion, they represented between 13 and 15% of the foreign student body. According to CIUP statistics, CAN 20090013, art. 507.

⁴³ There is no way of knowing whether and how many veterans benefiting from the GI Bill (a grant offered to former soldiers to facilitate their return to civilian life and covering, in particular, education costs) stayed at CIUP. However, the amount of this grant is mentioned in the minutes of the Board of Directors to prove that the increase in rent, refused by the students, was bearable by most American residents. We can therefore assume that the Foundation was expecting some of them. See the report of the Board of Directors, meeting of November 24, 1946. AN, AJ16 7039.

⁴⁴ This was the subject of a long letter to his mother on December 9. He wrote: "You say America is the only place—that we're young—this world here is old—that they expect us to feed and clothe and educate them—mother. I've seen and lived in both worlds. Americans are poverty stricken, in comparison. Of course, cars, refrigerators and all that—but our industrialism is tearing into the few fine, decent things America has—this is all too long to go into now, of course. But, Mother dearest, the old world, and the people here are rich,—in something Americans never can have. ... The French, mother, are not represented by the typical whores and thieves who the average American soldier seems capable—only capable—and desirous of finding. It's a tragedy—but the first place soldiers head in Paris is to Pigalle. ... America is rapidly becoming a nation without friends thru it's GIs and its "leaders"". Letter of December 9, 1945. John Breon Papers.

*The United States Foundation and the Revival of Cultural Life
at the CIUP: American Soft Power?*

The Fondation des États-Unis played an important role in revitalizing the cultural and social life of the CIUP, thanks to the advantages it enjoyed over other residences, limited though they may be. In addition to the provision of equipment, particularly for music, the Foundation's directors paid close attention to the well-being of their tenants, in keeping with the attitude that prevailed on campuses across the Atlantic, where freedom and community life were combined under adult supervision. For example, the director organized parties in his apartment, during which he entertained students, ensuring that they felt at home at the Foundation.

The U.S. Foundation also supported the creation of a music club at the CIUP (one of the first clubs to resume activities after the war). Inaugurated before the war, it was aimed at all those interested in music: musicians, composers, professionals and amateurs, or simply listeners.⁴⁵ While the management of the Maison internationale provided considerable assistance by lending its salons, the United States Foundation assumed responsibility for the project. From December 1949 onwards, the Foundation's cultural fund was used to pay one of the Foundation's residents, who was responsible for organizing musical activities for the entire CIUP, including recorded music auditions (held daily from 8.30 pm to 11 pm) and concerts given by CIUP students. The Foundation also made available to the Club its material resources—rooms, studios and a record library of over 600 titles, inherited from a 1938 Carnegie donation. From March 1949 onwards, the Foundation's Student Committee assumed responsibility for concert organization costs (such as the printing of advertising brochures). In November 1950, the Foundation's Music Club became the music section of the International Cultural Center, but remained on the premises of the United States Foundation.

American participation in the cultural life of the CIUP nevertheless respected the freedom and international spirit of the CIUP. The musical programs, for example, did not favor any particular style of music, but remained highly varied. The only evidence of the arrival of American mass culture at the CIUP is the gala organized in the first half of 1949,

⁴⁵ On the creation of this club, see in particular the "note sur le club musical de la Cité universitaire" of November 6, 1950. AN, 20090013, art. 443.

whose importance in terms of *soft power* is clear from the archives. The moral report on the event praises the success of the Yale Glee Club and, above all, the distribution of “coca-cola, iced chocolate and doughnuts, so popular with Americans, [which] delighted and appeased the international appetites of fifty nationalities, in the garden in the afternoon and in the evening at the grand ball⁴⁶”. In 1949, the Student Committee decided to emphasize typically American holidays such as Thanksgiving and Halloween, and the report explains that these created a “spirit of sincere camaraderie⁴⁷” between residents of different nationalities.

Certain details betray the emerging Cold War climate, and the Foundation’s directors’ desire, if not to promote American culture, at least to defend it more strongly. At a time when the United States was beginning to define a cultural policy for foreign countries (under the aegis of the USIA), the United States Foundation appeared as a showcase for the American model, in this case in the field of education, taking up the promise of the then burgeoning American universities of an education based in part on the liberal arts, rich in cultural and sporting activities and emancipating for the individual. This image of comfort and well-being, with which *colleges* were associated in popular American representations,⁴⁸ was emphasized by the Foundation’s directors; it was also underlined by a Belgian daily newspaper that came to report on the American students at the CIUP.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ AN, AJ16 7039, Rapport moral du conseil d’administration, séance du 28 juin 1949.

⁴⁷ AN, AJ16 7039, *Rapport moral du conseil d’administration*, séance du 14 décembre 1949.

⁴⁸ See, for example, the cover of the *Saturday Evening Post* dated October 5, 1946, signed by Norman Rockwell and devoted to the arrival of veterans in American universities. <https://prints.nrm.org/detail/260979/rockwell-willie-gillis-in-college-1946> [accessed March 19, 2023].

⁴⁹ Jolyref R., “Par-delà l’Atlantique, Les étudiants américains retrouvent New York à Paris”, *Le Peuple*, Brussels, November 22, 1946 (preserved in the Foundation’s archives, AN, AJ16 7040). The article is highly laudatory, and at times resembles a veritable advertising brochure. Here’s how the American pavilion is described: “Such an important building (at least for Paris) would not house Americans if it were not comfortable. Central heating, bathroom. On each floor, studios for artists, laundry and ironing services, which ensure that every student always wears clean shirts and keeps a crease in his pants. Nothing is missing. Alongside the British and Dutch pavilions, the United States pavilion is the only one to welcome both young men and women. This particularity has earned it a certain renown among the 2,500 students housed in the Cité Universitaire. Its huge hall is also very famous in the “city of students”, and many of them [*sic*] come to spend comfortable

From 1949 onwards, documentaries on loan from the American Embassy were shown, and it was decided that the cultural delegate of the Student Committee (elected in 1950) should preferably be of American nationality.⁵⁰ Above all, the Foundation discreetly sought to respond to accusations of racism that could be leveled at American society.⁵¹ The 1950 moral report thus mentions that a conference was organized on the theme of the Black in American culture, presented by Mr. Butchor, a “black professor”, and that a concert was given by two “black” students, scholarship holders of the Foundation and the American government.⁵² By promoting cultural exchange—the eclecticism of its program was proof of this—and tolerance and equality between residents, men and women, Americans and foreigners, whites and blacks, the U.S. Foundation was also working to disseminate the image of a culturally rich and tolerant America, in line with U.S. Cold War objectives, without taking part in an official propaganda effort.

John Breon’s itinerary nevertheless reveals the limits of these efforts. While he appreciated the comforts and social life of the CIUP during his first stay, with hindsight these appeared to him to be the mark of a spiritual poverty, that of a “shanty life”⁵³ remaining on the bangs of the city-center. Returning to Paris in 1949 to complete his studies, he

hours in armchairs that have no equal in the whole city. I’m going to work, “I’m going to play with the Americans” are phrases often heard in certain pavilions deprived of rocking chairs and feminine silhouettes. The American pavilion represents, in the eyes of the Cité’s inhabitants, the aristocratic place where everyone aspires to be housed.” (translation by the author).

⁵⁰ The president must also be American and the vice-president French.

⁵¹ These criticisms were exploited by Communist propaganda in the 1950s, and their impact was heightened by the rise of the civil rights movement in the United States.

⁵² The students were John Riley, “black singer” and Woolley Scholar, and Amelia Myers, “black pianist” and Fulbright Scholar.

⁵³ Shortly before his departure, he expressed his annoyance with life at the Cité Universitaire, which he described as “too inconvenient, out of town”. The tone is very different from that of his first letters. “I simply detest Cité, [...] all the half-witted, uninspired nonsense that goes with dormitory living—life in a dormitory is only one step above a barracks...”. Letter, May 23, 1946, John Breon Papers. During this stay, however, he took advantage of Parisian cultural life, visiting the theater and the museum on a fairly regular basis. At the same time, in 1950, the Foundation’s Board of Directors noted that the increase in income was due to the growing number of short stays by students, most of whom were only in France for a short time or, for those who stayed longer, preferred to live in Paris. See the report of the Board of Directors, 1950. AN, AJ16 7039.

decided not to go back, wanting to stay in the city, where things were happening—for someone who was no longer a student soldier and had his finger on the pulse of the capital's cultural scene.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author has no conflicts of interest to declare that are relevant to the content of this chapter.

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Maghreb at the Cité internationale universitaire de Paris: A political and social history (1925–2011)

Guillaume Denglos and Pierre Vermeren

The history of North Africans at the Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (CIUP) was marked by a high degree of politicization. From nationalism to leftism, many students from the three countries of French North Africa were trained in political activism in Paris, from the early 1920s to independence, and then until the 1980s, within the framework of cooperation. This history is rooted in the colonial sphere, then in that of increasingly open opposition to the authoritarian nationalist regimes in place in the early 1960s. The Houses of Morocco and Tunisia, and the aborted project to create a House of Algeria, illustrate this close relationship between student migration on both sides of the Mediterranean Sea. State control, the training of elites and political protest by students who

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had acquired the means to assert themselves against the authorities in the French capital are all intertwined. This article is based on numerous unpublished archives held by the Archives nationales, the Archives diplomatiques de Nantes and La Courneuve, and the Archives of the Préfecture de police de Paris. It follows on from Violette Matuszewski's pioneering study of North African students in the CIUP.¹

PARIS, CAPITAL OF NORTH AFRICAN NATIONALISM: THE IMPOSSIBLE CREATION OF A NORTH AFRICAN PAVILION (1925–1940)

The question of building a pavilion for North African students, and more generally of housing students from the colonies, arose as early as the second half of the 1920s. As early as 1925, the founder of the CIUP, former minister André Honnorat, was not averse to building a house specifically for North Africans, but he soon came up against the refusal of the Residents General Lucien Saint (Tunisia) and Théodore Steeg (Morocco), as well as the Governors General of Algeria, Pierre Bordes and then Jules Cardes. On September 13, 1928, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced to André Honnorat that Théodore Steeg, “had decided to contribute to the fitting out of a certain number of rooms in the CIUP, and that a credit of 200,000 francs had been earmarked for this purpose in the Cherifian budget”. However, “it is not the intention of the general residence to advocate the construction of a North African house. Indeed, it would be feared that students from our various possessions would meet there and acquire, to our detriment, a feeling of Muslim solidarity which, until now, they have lacked. To occupy the rooms reserved for Morocco, Mr. Steeg intends to designate, in principle, French students, and exceptionally only Muslim students²”. In the

¹ MATUSZEWSKI Violette, *La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris et ses relations avec le Maghreb. Succès et échecs. 1925–1970*, Master 2 dissertation, under the supervision of Didier Musiedlak, Université Paris 10, 2014. See also BOUAZIZ Mostafa, DENGLOS Guillaume, *La Maison du Maroc à la Cité U. Lieu de mémoires des étudiants marocains à Paris*, Paris, Riveneuve, 2022. This article is a modified and translated version of: “Le Maghreb à la Cité internationale universitaire de Paris. Une histoire politique et sociale (1925–2011) », in D. Kévonian, G. Tronchet (dir.), *Le Campus-Monde. La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris, 1920–années 2000*, Rennes, PUR, 2022, pp. 121–142.

² Archives catalog : Dossier pavillon du Maroc (AN, AJ16/7043).

short term, the colonial authorities in Morocco and Algeria preferred to finance a few rooms, sometimes with the help of companies such as the Banque d'État du Maroc. This position was maintained throughout the 1930s, despite André Honnorat's attempts, notably with Marshal Lyautey (first Resident General in Morocco and a key figure in colonial France), Lucien Saint (Resident General in Rabat from 1929 to 1933) and financial delegations from Algeria.³ To expand the CIUP, André Honnorat was more successful in his relations with countries in North and Latin America, Europe and the Far East (Japan...). For the French colonies, only Indochina built a pavilion in 1930.

The letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recalling Théodore Steeg's position sets the scene for the problem posed by the arrival in the second half of the 1920s of the first generation, the so-called pioneer generation,⁴ of Maghrebi students in the French capital. Notwithstanding the presence of Habib Bourguiba, who stayed in room n°114 of the Fondation Deutsch de la Meurthe in 1925–1926,⁵ the relative absence of the “Maghreb” at the CIUP between the wars was also due to the small number of students and their potential danger to the colonial authorities (in addition to the fact that Algeria was French national territory at the time). There were around 130 Tunisian students in France in 1933, and around 300 at the end of the 1930s.⁶ Algerians and Moroccans were even less numerous. There were barely 37 Algerian students in 1932.⁷ As for the Moroccans, only a dozen or so managed to pass the baccalauréat at the end of the 1920s, and left to pursue their university studies in the French capital. Bourguiba's example is nonetheless symbolic, as it embodies the trajectory of these students who came to learn French culture in order to better combat the colonial power. Often trained in

³ See André Honnorat's correspondence with Lyautey and Lucien Saint. Archives catalog number (AN, 20090013/ 213).

⁴ VERMEREN Pierre, *La formation des élites par l'enseignement supérieur au Maroc et en Tunisie*, history PhD dissertation University of Paris VIII, 2000.

⁵ Bourguiba was also accompanied by a handful of his compatriots at the Cité universitaire (BESSIS Sophie and BELHASSEN Souhayr, *Bourguiba*, ed. Tunis, Elyzad, 2012, pp. 60–62).

⁶ VERMEREN Pierre, *La formation des élites marocaines et tunisiennes. Des nationalistes aux islamistes (1929-2000)*, Paris, La Découverte, 2002, p. 83.

⁷ EZZERELLI Kaïs, “Les étudiants à l'école de la politique”, in *Générations. Un siècle d'histoire culturelle des Maghrébins en France*, Paris, Gallimard, Génériques/ CNHI, 2009, p. 95.

the schools of the colonial power, these young people formed the first cadres of a nationalist movement that aimed for unity. Their numerical weakness was compensated for by strong politicization and the formation of very dynamic associations, such as the Association des étudiants musulmans nord-africains (AEMNA).⁸

Indeed, during the interwar period, Paris was undeniably *the* capital of North African nationalism.⁹ It was in this city that North African students and workers mingled, organized, and politicized in relative freedom of movement. AEMNA was the matrix for the political and cultural demands of the young North African elite. In the words of Charles-Robert Ageron, this association was home to the “gotha of Maghreb nationalism¹⁰”. The creation of the magazine *Maghreb* in Paris in 1932,¹¹ on the initiative of lawyer Robert-Jean Longuet¹² and young nationalist students Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani, Ahmed Balafrej, Omar Abdeljalil and Habib Thameur, embodied the national and pan-Maghrebian stance of anti-colonial demands. Nevertheless, the repression of nationalist movements in Morocco and Algeria in 1937, and in Tunisia the following year, as well as the outbreak of the Second World War, temporarily broke this momentum and the access of Maghrebi students to Metropolitan France.

THE CREATION OF MAISONS DU MAROC AND TUNISIE: CONTROL THROUGH HOUSING (1945–1953)

Everything changed at the Liberation. At the start of the 1945–1946 academic year,¹³ the CIUP welcomed 120 Algerian students (including five girls), 55 Tunisians (including ten girls) and 50 Moroccans (including ten girls). These figures seem low compared with the 3134 students

⁸ AGERON Charles-Robert, “L’Association des étudiants musulmans nord-africains en France durant l’entre-deux guerres. Contribution à l’étude des nationalismes maghrébins”, *Revue française d’histoire d’Outre-mer*, t. LXXX, n° 258–259, 1983.

⁹ GOEBEL Michel, *Paris, capital of the Third World. Comment est née la révolution anticoloniale (1919–1939)*, Paris, La Découverte, 2017.

¹⁰ AGERON Charles-Robert, *op. cit.* 1983, p. 27.

¹¹ DENGLOS Guillaume, *La revue Maghreb. Une publication franco-marocaine engagée (1932–1936)*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 2015.

¹² Son of Socialist MP Jean Longuet, he is also the great-grandson of Karl Marx.

¹³ “Statistics on residents from the French Union”. Archives number catalog: AN, AJ16/7031.

housed in the entire campus along the Boulevard Jourdan. However, if we look at the number of “colonial” students (323), North Africans account for two-thirds of the total. This significant increase forced the authorities to react. Indeed, no one has forgotten that it was in Paris that the cadres of the nationalist political parties that directly challenged French authority on the ground, now calling for independence, were formed: Parti du peuple algérien (1937), Parti du Néo-Destour (1938), Parti de l’Istiqlal (1943), Parti démocratique de l’indépendance (1946), Mouvement pour le triomphe des libertés démocratiques (1946)... Faced with the housing crisis in post-war Paris, hotels and hostels served as a diversion for North Africans who couldn’t find a place at the CIUP. The AEMNA headquarters at 115 boulevard Saint-Michel housed a hostel with a meeting room and restaurant at a reasonable price. The hostel closed in November 1947, but the canteen continued to operate thanks to a subsidy from the Office de Tunisie.¹⁴ In the autumn of 1945, a Moroccan Foyer was set up at 21 rue Serpente, “probably with nationalist funds or provided by Moroccan shopkeepers sympathetic to the *Istiqlal*”¹⁵. To counter this nationalist influence, in October 1946 the Rabat authorities acquired a hotel at 26 rue Bonaparte, not far from Lyautey’s former apartment! Converted into a hostel, the hotel was intended for both French Moroccans and Moroccans. The latter, who were predominantly pro-independence, outnumbered the former. Tension between the two groups continued to grow as a result of the political crisis between Resident General Alphonse Juin and Sultan Sidi Mohamed Ben Youssef. Both in Tunis and Rabat, colonial administrations decided to take the lead in improving control of this population from 1946–1947. In October 1946, France’s Resident General in Tunisia, General Charles Mast, and his Director of Public Instruction, Henri Gaston, took steps to set up a “Tunisian student centre”. In Morocco, General Alphonse Juin, Resident General since May 1947, instructed his Director of Public Instruction Roger Thabault on November 26 to “aim for the most urgent achievements” by insisting “on the rapid start-up of a Moroccan pavilion at the Cité Universitaire in Paris” and to “at least quadruple the sum

¹⁴ VERMEREN Pierre, *La formation des élites par l’enseignement supérieur...*, op. cit. p. 357.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 357–358.

devoted last year to Muslim students, and increase the rate of scholarships (obviously low) as well as their number¹⁶”.

The choice of architects, Jean Sebag for the Maison de la Tunisie, and Albert Laprade¹⁷ for the Maison du Maroc, is not insignificant. Both have made careers for themselves thanks to their links with residential circles. Among others, Albert Laprade was the architect chosen by Lyautey to design the General Residence building in Rabat in 1918. He also built the Musée des Colonies,¹⁸ as well as the Moroccan and Tunisian pavilions for the Colonial Exhibition in the Bois de Vincennes in 1931. Laprade also knew the CIUP well. He had already built the Maison de Cuba “Abreu de Grancher” in 1933, and after the war he led the construction of the Maison des étudiants d’Outre-mer (Lucien Paye). As for Jean Sebag, he was a close friend of Bernard Zherfuss, chief architect for the Tunisian government. Born in 1909 in Tunis to a Tunisian Jewish family, Jean Sebag was involved in the construction of a Muslim sanctuary in Sidi Bou-Saïd, as well as the creation of 120 housing units in Hussein-Dey, Algeria.¹⁹ As a member of the Mouvement Moderne, he also had several housing projects underway in the Paris region (notably in Boulogne-Billancourt), when he was commissioned to draw up plans for the Maison de la Tunisie at the CIUP. Backed by this political will, the construction process for the two pavilions was successfully completed. Following the commitment of the French authorities in Tunisia and Morocco to the Académie de Paris and the Fondation nationale de la Cité universitaire, the Maison de la Tunisie was donated on July 9, 1948, and the Maison du Maroc on July 7, 1949.²⁰ Building permits were issued in 1951. However, the Maison du Maroc was delayed.

¹⁶ Letter from General Juin to the Director of Public Instruction, November 26, 1947 (Archives diplomatiques de Nantes, 1 MA 30/5).

¹⁷ CULOT Maurice and LAMBRICHS Anne, *Albert Laprade. Architecte, jardinier, urbaniste, dessinateur, serviteur du patrimoine*, Paris, Norma Éditions, 2007.

¹⁸ Located near the Porte Dorée, the building now houses the Musée national de l’histoire de l’immigration.

¹⁹ Archives number catalog: AN, AJ/52/1278, dossier d’élèves; Cité de l’architecture et du patrimoine, fonds dossiers d’œuvres de la direction de l’Architecture et de l’Urbanisme (DAU), 133 ifa, DAU-0-SEBJE; “Agence de l’architecte Jean Sebag, avenue Marceau à Paris”, *Architecture d’aujourd’hui*, n° 58, 1955, pp. 96–97.

²⁰ The donation is a legal arrangement guaranteeing the unity of ownership for the benefit of the Universities of Paris, while allowing the country concerned to enjoy the house and operate it with full responsibility.

In addition to the building financed by the general residence, the contractor Jean Walter obtained authorization from General Juin to build a pavilion with 92 additional rooms. Jean Walter was no stranger to the colonial authorities. In 1925, he detected a large vein of zinc and lead some twenty kilometers from Oujda, in a place called Zellidja. This mining find made his fortune. He founded the Société anonyme minière de Zellidja.²¹ Wishing to do charitable work, he created the “Zellidja scholarships” in 1938, followed by the “Fondation nationale des bourses Zellidja” in November 1945. The aim was to enable young people aged 17 to 19 to make one to three solo trips to a foreign country to study a research topic.²² The conditions set by Jean Walter for the construction of his pavilion irritated the Fondation nationale and the rector Jean Sarrailh.²³ In fact, in January 1950, Jean Walter specified that the building was intended solely for Zellidja scholarship holders and French students from Morocco, with no interference from students from metropolitan France.²⁴ ... These conditions are in total contradiction with the “brasage” rule, which obliges each house to mix the nationalities of its residents according to a quota defined by the CIUP.²⁵ On the other hand, the Fondation Nationale wanted the “Pavillon Zellidja” to be twinned with the Maison du Maroc. A compromise was finally reached at the Fondation nationale de la CIUP board meeting on July 2, 1951. The two buildings were linked by a gallery. Administratively, Pavillon Walter was handed over free of charge to the Cherifian State, to be subsequently returned to the University of Paris. The Laprade firm is commissioned to design the “Moroccan ensemble”.

The architecture of the Maison de la Tunisie is above all functional and modern. Nothing in the façade recalls the traditional architecture of

²¹ DUBOIS Jean, “Le créateur des mines de Zellidja”, in *Hommages à Jean Walter*, Paris, Association des lauréats Zellidja, 1957, p. 16. Archives number catalog: (AN 20090013/1174). In 1929, this company became the “Société nouvelle des mines de Zellidja”.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 8–9. See also PASSAVANT Éric, “Réformer les lycées français de l’extérieur”, *Cahiers de la recherche sur l’éducation et les savoirs* [En ligne], 9 | 2010, online October 01, 2012.

²³ “Walter Pavilion” file. Archives number catalog (AN, AJ16/7043).

²⁴ Letter from L. Bardury to Mr. L. Pehuet (administrative secretary general), January 27, 1950 (AN, 20090013/1176).

²⁵ Note from Jean Toutée to Raoul Dautry, M. Pehuet and the secretariat of the Fondation nationale, January 31, 1950 (AN, 20090013/1176).

the Regency. The building comprises two unequal wings opening onto an inner courtyard, which has been laid out as a patio planted with trees and shrubs. The Foundation houses a cafeteria, a library, a reading room and a meeting room with a stage. Each of the 126 rooms has an individual toilet, while each floor has its own sanitary facilities (showers and WCs) and a kitchen.²⁶ The furniture designed by Charlotte Perriand and the interior decoration blend modernity with reinvented Arab-Berber tradition. The rooms and communal areas are fitted with carpets made by Tunisian craftsmen. Painters Ben Abdallah and Boucherle²⁷ have also been commissioned to decorate various murals.

At the Maison du Maroc, classicism prevails, with a traditional touch recalling the aesthetics of the country of origin. A monumental door and green tiles are reminiscent of Moroccan architecture, but without falling into the neo-Moorish style of the interwar period then in vogue in the Cherifian Empire. A six-storey tower connects the main building to a gallery, which in turn connects to the Fondation Zellidja building. Like the Maison de la Tunisie, the Moroccan pavilion is equipped with common services on each floor (showers, toilets, kitchens) and a meeting room capable of accommodating around 100 people. A cafeteria completes the facilities available to residents.

While the situation is improving for Moroccans and Tunisians, Algerian students continue to live in often precarious conditions. Being “legally French like the others, they do not benefit from a national pavilion at the CIUP, nor a reserved hotel²⁸”. In November 1953, they grouped together to form the Union des étudiants algériens de Paris (UEAP), and took the opportunity to draw up a charter of demands:

1°) Pre-salary or generalized scholarship; 2°) Algerian pavilion at the Cité universitaire; 3°) Free annual trip; 4°) Guaranteed outlets in Algeria.²⁹

²⁶ “Synthèse sur la Maison de la Tunisie à la Cité universitaire de Paris”, *L’Oblique*, pp. 2–4.

²⁷ “Maison de la Tunisie à la Cité universitaire de Paris. Jean Sebag, architecte”, *L’architecture aujourd’hui*, n°47, April–May 1953, pp. 62–68.

²⁸ PERVILLE Guy, *Les étudiants algériens de l’université française 1880–1962*, Paris, Éditions du CNRS, 1984, p. 51.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

In February 1955, the UEAP carried out a survey on housing for Algerian students. Out of 100, only 10 were now housed at the CIUP in various pavilions, 22 in student community houses (such as the Jean Zay residence in Antony) and 68 in hotel rooms or private homes.³⁰ While the Moroccan and Tunisian pavilions were completed, the problem remained for the Algerians on the eve of the war of independence.

THE NATIONALIST MOMENT (1953-MID-1960S)

The image of a modern Morocco and Tunisia conveyed by the architecture does little to mask the deep malaise shaking the region. The opening of the Tunisian pavilion on April 15, 1953, and that of the Moroccan pavilion on October 15, 1953, took place at a time when the political situation in the protectorates was explosive. The arrival in Tunis of Resident General Jean de Hautecloque in January 1952, followed by the assassination of trade unionist Ferhat Hached in December of the same year, triggered a cycle of violence that did not end until 1955. In Morocco, the forceful deposition and exile to Corsica, then Madagascar, of Sultan Sidi Mohamed Ben Youssef on August 20, 1953, by the Resident General Augustin Guillaume and a comradeship of leading figures around the civil controller Philippe Boniface, also ushered in a period of serious unrest, with attacks and police repression inextricably intertwined. The directors of the two pavilions were appointed directly by the general residence. In March 1953, Eugène Tardieu, Inspecteur de l'Instruction Publique, was appointed first Director of the Tunisian House on the initiative of Resident General Jean de Hautecloque. For the Maison du Maroc, Resident General Augustin Guillaume decided to "entrust the management of the Moroccan pavilion at the Cité Universitaire to Jean Arnaud, former director of Télévision and Radio Maroc, a particularly delicate task at a time when it is essential to bring back to France young minds led astray by the mirages of nationalism³¹".

At the same time, student organizations in the Maghreb were in the throes of restructuring. AEMNA, now AEMNAF in France, was losing ground to new organizations. The pan-Maghreb ideal, still alive

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Letter from the Minister of National Education to the Rector of the Academies of Paris, December 3, 1952 (AN, AJ16/7043).

at the end of the war, definitely lost ground to national patriotism. As early as 1951, Moroccan students submitted a request for authorization to create a National Union of Moroccan Students³² (UNEM), which was refused on the recommendation of General Juin. It was not until 1954 that a Union des étudiants marocains de Paris was formed. The Union générale des étudiants tunisiens (UGET) was founded in Paris in July 1953, followed two years later by the Union générale des étudiants musulmans algériens (UGEMA). Faced with these competitors, AEMNAF disappeared in 1956, just as Morocco and Tunisia were gaining their independence.

At the start of the 1953–1954 academic year, there were 148 Algerian residents (including 19 girls), 154 Moroccans (including 15 girls) and 212 Tunisians (including 28 girls). This population remained under close surveillance. But this doesn't stop some from playing cat-and-mouse with police officers from the Renseignements Généraux, whose mission is to inform the government about movements that could jeopardize state security. One police officer, for example, notes with disappointment that it "is possible" that the nationalist medical student Meddah Abdelaziz "has been harbored clandestinely by fellow students staying at the Maison du Maroc in the Cité Universitaire, no effective control having yet been exercised over the occupants of this building³³". Indeed, it was not uncommon for *Hizb*³⁴ militants living in the Maison du Maroc, such as Ezzedine Laraki, future Minister of Education, and Mohamed Mehdi Abdeljalil, "to be very active in North African student circles in the Cité Universitaire and the Latin Quarter, promoting the nationalist theories advocated by the Istiqlal³⁵". On July 15, 1954, a police commissioner and two inspectors carried out a search of the bedroom of medical student Ahmed Snoussi, under a rogatory commission issued by an examining

³² UNEM was finally founded when Morocco gained independence in 1956.

³³ Note dated November 21, 1953 (Archives de la Préfecture de police de Paris, HA 23).

³⁴ The "party", in this case the Istiqlal.

³⁵ Note dated November 21, 1953 (Archives de la Préfecture de police de Paris, HA 23).

magistrate in Casablanca. Suspected of arms trafficking, he was eventually released,³⁶ the police having mistaken him for his brother...

However, the police did note “the presence of various inscriptions inside the Maison du Maroc on the kerbs, ‘Vive le Maroc libre’” (Long live free Morocco). Shortly before leaving his post as director of the Maison du Maroc in 1955, Jean Arnaud confided to his successor Yves Renouard that “psychologically and morally, the situation is more delicate. In October 53, I inherited [...] some sixty students [...] marked by communist and nationalist propaganda, and this hypothec has hampered my action. After having had vast cultural projects, I had to resign myself to a semi-immobilism³⁷”... Despite his predecessor’s difficulties, and with the support of the Fondation nationale, Yves Renouard, a medieval historian teaching at the Sorbonne, managed to avoid an explosion of the Maison, by focusing on cultural activities and actively helping residents to succeed in their studies (creation of a library well-stocked with scientific works...).³⁸ The return of the Sultan from exile on November 16, 1955, and the country’s independence, also helped to calm tempers.

As soon as the Regency gained independence, the new Tunisian authorities tried to regain control of the company from the French authorities. On September 23, 1957, the Tunisian embassy submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs “a request to modify the statutes, and in particular article 3 of the deed of donation, under which Tunisian and French students born or resident in Tunisia³⁹ may be admitted without distinction”. The Tunisian embassy also contests the fact that the director is of French nationality. The lack of Tunisian academics capable of running the Maison at the time is one of the reasons why the first Tunisian director was not appointed until 1962.⁴⁰ At the Maison du Maroc, it wasn’t until

³⁶ Report by the police commissioner of the Parc-Montsouris and Petit Montrouge districts on the search carried out by the Sureté nationale at the Cité universitaire (Maison du Maroc), July 20, 1954 (Archives de la Préfecture de police de Paris, HA 23).

³⁷ Letter from Jean Arnaud to Yves Renouard, June 16, 1955 (AN, AB/XIX/43332, fonds Renouard).

³⁸ See Yves Renouard’s handwritten correspondence for 1955 and 1958 (AN, AB/XIX/43332, Renouard fonds).

³⁹ Letter from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the Minister of National Education, September 23, 1957 (AN, AJ16/7044).

⁴⁰ File on the appointment of Mohamed Talbi as director of the Maison de la Tunisie, October 1962 (AN, 20090013/ 1196).

1964! On the other hand, the issue of co-education was not a topical one at the Tunisian pavilion (as it was at most of the CIUP's houses before 1968).⁴¹ The director was firmly opposed to admitting female students, fearing "unfortunate promiscuity with our young men"⁴². From the end of the 1950s, the Maison de la Tunisie became a stronghold of the Bourguibian authorities, and remained so for decades. Shortly after the Bizerte crisis, during which the French army clashed with Tunisian troops for control of the naval base between July 19 and 23, 1961, the Maison de la Tunisie fell victim to an explosive attack: a device was thrown against the glass façade of the meeting room on August 14, 1961. Various rooms in the basement, on the first floor and on the first two floors were damaged by shards of glass.⁴³

This attack also echoes the context of the Algerian war. The creation of an Algerian pavilion at the CIUP had been on the table since 1954, at the initiative of the General Government of Algeria.⁴⁴ On April 8, 1955, a conference was held at the Ministry of National Education to examine the project. The outcome of the discussions was a rejection. The deteriorating security situation in Algeria played a key role in this decision.⁴⁵ In the absence of documents on the political activities of Algerian students at the CIUP during the War of Independence, it is very difficult to determine their degree of militancy. Were they supporters of the Front de libération nationale (FLN)? The Algerian National Movement (MNA)? It's likely that Moroccan and Tunisian residents showed strong solidarity with their Algerian "brothers".

In May 1956, to the astonishment of far-right students from the Cercle Fustel de Coulanges, leaflets in favor of Algerian independence "were abundantly distributed" in the CIUP "and the police were called in only when the distribution was completed"⁴⁶. More generally, the number of

⁴¹ BLANC Brigitte, *La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris. De la Cité-jardin à la cité-monde*, Paris, Lieux-dits éditions, 2017, pp. 305–307.

⁴² Letter from the Director of the Maison de la Tunisie to the Tunisian Secretary of State for National Education, November 4, 1957 (AN, 20090013/1197).

⁴³ "Synthèse sur la Maison de la Tunisie à la Cité universitaire de Paris", *L'Oblique*, p. 4 and consult the file "Attentat Maison de la Tunisie août 1961" (AN 20090013/1196).

⁴⁴ MATUSZEWSKI Violette, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Cercle Fustel de Coulanges, Paris, June 18, 1956 (AN, AJ16/7033).

Algerian students in France has been rising steadily since the early 1950s. However, as early as 1956, UGEMA decided to disperse its militants to other countries. From the start of the 1957–58 academic year, 33 scholarship holders decided to continue their studies outside France. The arrest of UGEMA's General Secretary on November 12, 1957, in Montpellier, and the holding of its third congress behind closed doors in the Paris region, from December 23 to 26, 1957, confirmed the organization's proximity to the FLN. However, UGEMA was dissolved on January 28, 1958, while the university section of the FLN's French federation was subjected to a major wave of arrests until 1959.⁴⁷ The intensity of the Algerian war in Paris (raids on Algerians, settling of accounts between the FLN and the MNA, the October 17, 1961 events, the Charonne subway tragedy, etc.) played an additional role in North African student militancy until 1962, before Maghreb solidarity collided with the rivalry between the regimes of Ben Bella and Hassan II in 1963. Once independence was achieved, the CIUP became the scene, to varying degrees, of the rise of leftist student protests against the new authoritarian regimes.

1968 AND THE 1970S: THE DIVERGENT PATHS OF THE “MAGHREB” AT THE CIUP

The May 1968 movement had contrasting repercussions on the CIUP.⁴⁸ While some residences were clearly affected by the takeover by left-wing residents or by a rent strike (Hellenic Foundation, Collège d'Espagne, Maison de l'Italie, Andrea de Gouveia Foundation, Maison de l'Outre-mer, Argentine Foundation...), other residences remained calm, even hostile to protest movements against Gaullist rule (Maison des étudiants arméniens, Fondation Biermans-Lapôtre, Maison du Mexique, Maison des étudiants canadiens, Fondation des États-Unis...). The same contrast can be applied to the houses in Morocco and Tunisia. While the former played a key role in the history of May 1968 at the CIUP, the latter has not budged. At the same time, negotiations for the creation of a Maison

⁴⁷ PERVILLÉ Guy, *op. cit.* pp. 172–174.

⁴⁸ For a complete overview of the events of May 1968 at the Cité universitaire, we refer to a first-rate source: Préfecture de Police, Direction des Renseignements généraux et des jeux, “La Cité internationale de l'Université de Paris”, June 1970 (Archives de la Préfecture de Police de Paris, GD 57).

de l'Algérie, although well advanced, failed due to the vagaries of cooperation between France and its former colony, independent for barely six years.

Shortly after taking office, Pierre Marthelot, General Delegate of the CIUP, decided to relaunch the project to build a *Maison de l'Algérie* in December 1966. The Algerian ambassador to France, Rhéda Malek, was aware of the project from the outset. At its meeting on September 27, 1967, the Board of Directors of the *Fondation nationale de la CIUP* endorsed the decision to build a pavilion for Algerian students. An agreement in principle with Algerian diplomats seemed to be taking shape. On March 11, 1968, two months before the student revolt, an important meeting took place between the *Fondation nationale*, the French ministry of Foreign Affairs, the "France-Algérie" association and the Algerian Embassy, with the aim of "examining how we are going to proceed in order to find the promoter and the funds". The minutes⁴⁹ of the discussions between the representatives of the four entities suggest that the process of building the *Maison de l'Algérie* is well underway.

Pierre Marthelot is confident. He told the Secretary of Embassy for Cultural Affairs, M. Benstaali, that the land at 48 boulevard Jourdan could accommodate a 150-room building for Algerian students. As for the promoter of the future house, the *Délégué général* proposes three solutions to the Algerian authorities. The house could be managed either by the Algerian government, by an existing association, or by an entity created for the purpose. Mr. Benstaali points out that "particular consideration should be given to the solution of creating an ad hoc association which could include, for example, the Algerian government, the French government, a 'France-Algeria' association, perhaps also Algeria, France, etc.". The *Délégué général* estimates the cost at 7 to 10 million francs. Work could start during the 1970–1971 academic year. For his part, Mr. Poussard, deputy director of cultural relations at the Quai d'Orsay, "feels it is important to point out that the creation of a house at the CIUP does not mean the creation of a hostel for all nationals of the country in question arriving in Paris. It is simply a residence, study, and leisure centre for Algerian students attending university or higher education courses in Paris". A technical report is sent to Mr. Benstaali, who confirms his government's interest in the project. He promised to send

⁴⁹ "Meeting for the creation of a *Maison de l'Algérie*", Monday March 11, 1968, file "Projet de maison de l'Algérie" (AN, 20010243/15).

“a report on the present meeting to Algiers shortly” and to answer questions concerning the promoter, the method of financing and the choice of architect.⁵⁰

Despite optimism on all sides, two events put an end to the project. Firstly, the chosen site was occupied by temporary buildings run by the École normale supérieure de jeunes filles. The move was scheduled for 1968–1969. But the timetable was called into question by the Ministry of Education’s decision to temporarily assign the building intended for the École normale supérieure to a teaching unit for dental surgery students, hence the postponement of the Maison de l’Algérie⁵¹. This setback was compounded by the decision of Edgar Faure, Minister of Education, not to increase the number of students at the CIUP.⁵² Despite protests from the CIUP’s authorities, the project was abandoned in July 1969 on France’s initiative. A quick look at the difficult context of cooperation between the two countries at the end of the 1960s gives an idea of the underlying reasons that prompted the French government to halt the project. Although an agreement was reached on December 27, 1968 to regulate the emigration of Algerians to France, this did not mean that relations between Algiers and Paris had returned to normal. Algeria’s alignment with Eastern European countries, the Third World rhetoric of Houari Boumediene’s regime, the departure of General de Gaulle in 1969, restrictions on the entry of Algerian workers into France and trade taxes⁵³ certainly weighed on the final decision-making process. The creation of a Maison de l’Algérie became a recurring issue, regularly brought up again and again, without ever coming to fruition.

As far as the House of Morocco is concerned, the 1968 revolt was clearly a tipping point.⁵⁴ All the ingredients were in place for an explosion of protest against the Hassanian regime. The dismantling of an alleged

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ See “Divers projets de création de maisons (1924–1995), Projet d’une maison de l’Algérie, note” (AN, 20090013/1199). See also MATUSZEWSKI Violette, *op. cit.* p. 96.

⁵² MATUSZEWSKI Violette, *op. cit.*, pp. 95–97.

⁵³ VAÏSSE Maurice, *La grandeur. Politique étrangère du général de Gaulle*, ed. Paris, CNRS, 2013, pp. 460–473, and ARIHIR Mustapha, *Les relations extérieures franco-algériennes à l’épreuve de la reconnaissance. De 1962 à nos jours. Analyse de la coopération et de la réconciliation*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 2015, pp. 100–103.

⁵⁴ BOUAZIZ Mostafa, DENGLOS Guillaume, *La Maison du Maroc à la Cité U. Lieux de mémoire des étudiants marocains à Paris*, Paris, Riveneuve, 2022, pp. 137–160.

plot by the Union nationale des forces populaires (UNFP) in 1963, the popular riots in Casablanca in March 1965, the kidnapping of Mehdi Ben Barka in the middle of Paris in October 1965, and the repression imposed by General Mohamed Oufkir on the Moroccan left, could only radicalize the students. Inside the Maison, Abdelmalek El-Ghoul, the first Moroccan director appointed in 1964, tried to impose a moral order on the residents (refusal of female visitors, no compromise with the demands of students close to the UNEM...). Although El-Ghoul's successor, Omar Senoussi, managed "in accordance with the instructions of his government"⁵⁵, to keep his establishment more or less under control, the house appeared to be in a state of virtual dissidence from 1966 onwards. As noted by the Renseignements généraux, "planned to house 300 students, a third of whom were foreigners, the residence was almost entirely occupied by Moroccan nationals. However, as the management refrained from exercising strict control over residents, illegal immigrants found refuge there".

The May 1968 crisis served as a detonator, while the situation in the house was tense.⁵⁶ The Moroccan-born director was ousted by the residents. In June 1968, on the initiative of the Fondation Nationale, he was temporarily replaced by François Della Sudda. Della Sudda was an important figure. A former teacher, anti-colonialist activist and member of the Parti Socialiste Unifié (PSU), Della Sudda was an expert of Morocco and Algeria.⁵⁷ Throughout his term of office, he supported the political demands of Moroccan students hostile to the Hassan regime, even if this meant coming into conflict with Délégué Général Pierre Marthelot. Generally speaking, until it was hit by the attempted coups d'Etat in Skhirat in July 1971 and the "Boeing" in August 1972, the Hassan regime was unable to control its opponents in France satisfactorily. The "regime of exception" (1965–1970), then the multiparty facade advocated by the government, prevented it from selecting the most loyal students.

⁵⁵ Préfecture de Police, Direction des Renseignements généraux et des jeux, "La Cité internationale de l'Université de Paris", June 1970, pp. 56–57 (Archives de la Préfecture de Police de Paris, GD 57).

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 56–57.

⁵⁷ <https://www.europe-solidaire.org/spip.php?article41902>.

This was not the case in Tunisia, where the Parti socialiste destourien (PSD),⁵⁸ the only authorized political structure, and the “national organizations”,⁵⁹ provided the closest supervision of society from the early 1960s onwards.⁶⁰ This context explains why, unlike Moroccan residents, Tunisians stayed out of student unrest. Of the 140 students at the school, 90% are Tunisian nationals, the majority of whom receive grants from the Tunisian government and the French government’s technical cooperation program. The authority of director Abdelaziz Ghacham, a medical doctor preparing for the agrégation, is, according to the Renseignements généraux, almost absolute. To be admitted as a resident, you have to show your credentials. The “residents, all of whom support President Bourguiba’s Destour regime, are members of the Union générale des étudiants tunisiens (UGET), whose headquarters are on rue de Monsigny in the II^e arrondissement⁶¹”. Under these conditions, it is easy to understand why “the events of May–June 1968 had no impact on the behavior of the house’s residents. As they were all subject to strict political screening by the Tunisian authorities, they remained cautiously neutral. On the other hand, the authority exercised by the director does not authorize disorder of any kind”. Unlike the Maison du Maroc, “no illegal immigrants have been able to find refuge in this foundation⁶²”.

Two years after the events of May 1968, several houses are still in a state of virtual secession, including the Collège d’Espagne, the Fondation Argentine, the Maison de l’Afrique and, of course, the Maison du Maroc. According to the CIUP’s General Delegate, the latter “continues to live outside the common rules”. What’s more, “the Maison lives from day to day in a situation whose political frenzy cannot disguise its seriousness⁶³”. The years 1970–1975 marked the height of dissidence at the Maison du Maroc. The residents’ committee was controlled by the UNEM, and the

⁵⁸ This was the new name of Néo-Destour from October 1964.

⁵⁹ For students, UGET became the only authorized union.

⁶⁰ CHOUIKHA Larbi and GOBE Éric, *Histoire de la Tunisie depuis l’indépendance*, Paris, La Découverte, 2015, pp. 20–21.

⁶¹ Préfecture de Police, Direction des Renseignements généraux et des jeux, “La Cité internationale de l’Université de Paris”, June 1970, pp. 70–71 (Archives de la Préfecture de Police de Paris, GD 57).

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Rapport moral sur l’année 1970 presented by Délégué général M. Laurent (Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, DG RCSRT/111).

conference room served as a meeting place for a number of repressed organizations in the kingdom, such as the March 23 Movement and *Ilal Amam* (Forward!). Residents occupied the building in early 1970 to protest against the house arrest of UNEM activist Hamid Barrada by the French police.⁶⁴ Faced with the threat of the Maison becoming part of the Fondation Nationale and the Moroccan embassy returning to the board of directors, a hunger strike was called in June 1970, under the slogan “Assassins of Ben Barka, you will not enter. No to the return of the embassy⁶⁵ !” Following these demonstrations, a precarious *status quo* was established. Faced with this situation, the Fondation Nationale decided in June 1970 to close the establishment on July 15. However, “this measure, which the administration wanted to be salutary, already had a double effect: it provoked violent reactions from the residents, and embarrassed the Cherifian authorities. They feared that, by taking over the running of the house, they would soon find themselves in trouble with the revolutionary elements.⁶⁶ The closure was finally cancelled. Four years later, faced with fresh threats from the National Foundation to close the lecture hall and, above all, the Maison, a hunger strike lasting over 36 days took place in August–September 1974. Although the event received considerable media coverage, it did not prevent the closure of the conference room, a veritable “Agora” for the left-wing opposition in exile, for almost seven years.⁶⁷ While the Maison du Maroc remained a hotbed of protest throughout the 1970s, the Moroccan university was gradually brought into line. When the UNEM was re-authorized in 1978, a new generation of Islamists gradually took control in the 1980s.⁶⁸

Meanwhile, the Maison de la Tunisie seemed much quieter. It was briefly occupied on two occasions. On the night of February 22 to 23, 1972, around a hundred students from outside the country attempted

⁶⁴ Hamid Barrada had been placed under house arrest shortly before a visit by King Hassan II to President Georges Pompidou. French authorities feared he would disrupt the monarch’s stay in Paris.

⁶⁵ Photograph of the façade of the Moroccan pavilion overlooking Boulevard Jourdan (AN, 20090013/ 1176).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Interview with Mostafa Bouaziz, professor of contemporary history at Hassan II University in Casablanca and witness to the event.

⁶⁸ VERMEREN Pierre, *Histoire du Maroc depuis l’indépendance*, Paris, La Découverte, 2006, pp. 59–60.

to occupy the house to protest against President Bourguiba's social and security policies. They were finally expelled by the police at three in the morning.⁶⁹ At the beginning of 1974, a hunger strike by left-wing Tunisian students who had taken possession of the living room was halted "calmly, without us [the management of the house] needing to resort to the police⁷⁰". Nevertheless, the contrast with the Maison du Maroc is significant. At no time did the Tunisian pavilion and its predominantly Destourian residents' committee enter into effective dissidence with the power of *Mujahid Al-Akbar*.⁷¹

THE BREAK WITH THE PAST IN THE 1980S: THE EMERGENCE OF NEW, LESS POLITICIZED ELITES

To weaken their left-wing opposition, in the mid-1970s the Maghreb regimes initiated new educational and university policies centered on Arabization, the dismantling of humanities courses and social and religious conservatism. The re-Islamization of southern Mediterranean societies contributed to the weakening of the Left, and gave way to a new generation of less politicized students. In addition, the end of educational cooperation agreements with France, in favor of Arabized teachers, reshuffled the deck when it came to attracting young academics. As the Quai d'Orsay's General Directorate for Cultural, Scientific and Technical Relations noted in 1989, the problem posed by the situation of Maghreb students in France "has three essential characteristics: the size of the student body involved, the inadequacy of the resources of those not receiving French government grants, and the declining standard of students⁷²". While the sons and daughters of the French-speaking elite continue to be trained in French schools and lycées (this is particularly true in Morocco), the gaps are widening irreparably with the majority of students graduating from Arabized public schools.

⁶⁹ "Pneumatique to M. Bourcier, Agence France Presse" (AN, 20090013/ 1198).

⁷⁰ Letter from director A. Frad to Pierre Marthelot, May 7, 1974 (AN, 20090013/ 1198).

⁷¹ The "supreme fighter". This has been Bourguiba's nickname since the late 1930s in Neo-Destour circles.

⁷² Note "Moroccan students in France", July 7, 1989 (Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, DGRCS/104).

The new Maghrebi generations arriving at the CIUP from the 1990s onwards have less and less in common with the protesting students of previous decades. These structural trends are combined with attempts to regain control of the Moroccan pavilion. The latter was threatened with closure by the Fondation nationale de la CIUP, due to its chronic indebtedness since 1975. In June 1980, a veritable ultimatum was sent to the Moroccan authorities to pay off 900,000 francs in unpaid bills. The Moroccan authorities' decision to renovate the house marked the beginning of a new chapter. The building was "Moroccanized" in terms of "tradition and modernism" by Hassan II and his appointed decorator André Paccard, with the addition of, among other things, an Andalusian *patio*, a *hamam*, a prayer room and a lounge decorated with zelliges.⁷³ The re-inauguration on October 6, 1982, in the presence of the Crown Prince (now King Mohammed VI) and the Minister of Education responsible for Arabization, Ezzedine Laraki, symbolically marked the end of "leftist dissidence", but certainly not the end of the institution's cultural dynamism during the 1980s. Although the elected residents' committees were still left-leaning for several years, the Islamists became the majority in 1995 and remained so until the end of the 1990s. At the same time, a "squat crisis" broke out during the winter of 1995–1996, and again between 2001 and 2002. The eviction of the squatters by the police and a new renovation of the house between 2002 and 2008 confirmed the "normalization" of a place with a rebellious past.

The Maison de la Tunisie was also expanded in 1984. In 1989, a conflict broke out between Tahar Manoubi, the director, and the residents' committee. The latter was visibly unhappy with the new administration's desire to put an end to certain privileges in the pavilion. The committee sent "a black file on the director of the Maison de la Tunisie" to President Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali in person. Isolated, the director was immediately dismissed⁷⁴ ... Until the renovation of the late 2000s and the 2011 revolution, this building remained one of the most controlled houses in the CIUP.⁷⁵ Since the Arab Spring, marked by the fall of the Ben Ali regime, the Maison de la Tunisie appears to be in the midst of a

⁷³ "Inauguration by the Crown Prince of the Maison du Maroc in Paris", article in the newspaper *Le Matin*, October 6, 1982 (AN, 20090013/1177).

⁷⁴ Tahar Manoubi" file (AN, 20090013/1196).

⁷⁵ Interviews with former residents from the 1990s and 2000s.

cultural revival. As for the Maison du Maroc, the demonstrations of the February 20th Movement in 2011 had no impact on the running of the establishment or the residents' committee.

CONCLUSION

The four generations of Maghrebi students who have passed through the CIUP have been deeply affected by the political ups and downs of their countries. The Moroccan and Tunisian pavilions were, each in their own way, receptacles for the political and social tensions of their respective societies. From the pioneering generation of the interwar years, marked by nationalism, to the struggle for independence, leftist protest and the crisis of the Arabized education system, they have all left their mark on the CIUP. The Moroccan and Tunisian houses were home to a significant number of the elite who, after their studies, rose to important positions in the political, economic and cultural spheres. From the Tunisian Nouredine Hached⁷⁶ to the Moroccan writer Tahar Benjelloun, an inventory would not suffice to show the extent of the executives of the Maghreb states who passed through the CIUP.

Conflicts of Interest The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare that are relevant to the content of this chapter.

⁷⁶ Tunisian ambassador and politician. He is the son of trade unionist Ferhat Hached, assassinated in December 1952 by the far-right colonial organization "La main rouge".

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Going West: Indochinese Students and the Shaping of Identities at the Maison des Étudiants de l'Indochine, late 1920s-early 1970s

Sara Legrandjacques

The S.A.M.I.P.I.C. is (...) keen to help found a house for Indochinese students within the Cité Universitaire de Paris. The house, of which a photograph of the model is attached, will have 100 rooms. It has been designed to provide our young compatriots with the health, physical, moral and intellectual conditions they rarely find, due to their modest student resources and the promiscuity of the Latin Quarter. In this kind of League of Nations, our compatriots will be treated on an equal footing

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Migration in the Twentieth Century*, Palgrave Studies in Migration
History, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-81766-3_8

with the nationals of the above-mentioned nations. They would forge solid friendships that would later be strengthened by the bonds of confraternity.¹

In June 1928, Lư Văn Lang, as vice-president of the Société pour l'amélioration morale, intellectuelle et physique des Indigènes de Cochinchine (SAMIPIC), sent a letter to various associations in French Indochina.² In it, he promoted a lottery organized throughout the colony from Saigon, the urban center in the south of the Indochinese peninsula where SAMIPIC's offices were located. While part of the proceeds was used to finance the company's activities, the vast majority was earmarked for the construction of a university residence, not in the colony but in Paris, in the newly-built Cité Universitaire (CIUP) on boulevard Jourdan, in the fourteenth arrondissement.

Promoted here by a colonized elite from Southeast Asia, from 1927 onwards this project was supported by the French public authorities, assisted by colonial entrepreneurs active on the initiative committee. The Governor General of Indochina and the Governor of Cochinchina acted as intermediaries in the colony. All seemed united by the same objective: to improve the living conditions of Indochinese students in metropolitan France. Begun at the turn of the twentieth century, these imperial student migrations gained in intensity following the First World War. They were accompanied by the formation of student groups, some of which were dedicated to welcoming new arrivals, but which could also play a part in politicizing diploma candidates. This is the angle from which the metropolitan presence of Indochinese students has been analyzed by French and English-speaking historians. As early as the 1970s, Daniel Hémery included students in academic mobility in his study of the political radicalization of the Vietnamese diaspora between 1926 and 1939,³ as did Michael Goebel more recently in his work on Paris and

¹ Archives nationales (AN), 20090014/19: Letter from the vice-president of SAMIPIC, June 15, 1928.

² French Indochina, or Union Indochinoise since 1887, comprised five territories: one colony, Cochinchina, and four protectorates: Tonkin and Annam, previously part of the Annam Empire, Cambodia and Laos.

³ Daniel Hémery, "Du patriotisme au marxisme: l'immigration vietnamienne en France de 1926 à 1939", *Le Mouvement social*, n°90, 1975, pp. 3–54.

anti-colonialism.⁴ Scott McConnell, for his part, offers the first monograph entirely dedicated to students of French colonial Asia, retaining this political angle and concentrating, as David Pomfret did later, on the Vietnamese.⁵ On the other hand, current works tend to integrate the other communities that made up French Indochina, and increasingly link intellectual and political training of a youth aware of the stakes of colonialism, not limited to the Parisian capital.⁶ While studies on the reception of foreign students focus more on colonized populations,⁷ Jehnie I. Reis chose Paris and the CUP in 1930 to highlight the tensions between a “French idealism” of collaboration with the Indochinese, carried mainly by former Governor General Albert Sarraut since the 1910s,⁸ and the counterpoint rise of anti-colonialism and communism.⁹

⁴ Michael Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis. Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015.

⁵ Scott McConnell, *Leftward Journey: The Education of Vietnamese Students in France 1919–1939*, New Brunswick, Transaction Publishers, 1989; David M. Pomfret, “Colonial Circulations”: Vietnamese Youth, Travel, and Empire, 1919–1940”, in JOBS, Richard I., POMFRET, David M. (eds.), *Transnational Histories of Youth in the Twentieth Century*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, pp. 115–143.

⁶ See our work, in particular: “Voies étudiantes. Pour une histoire globale des mobilités étudiantes en Asie coloniale (Indochine française-Inde britannique, années 1850-années 1940, PhD thesis in contemporary history, Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, 2021, as well as Charles Keith, *Subjects and Sojourners. A History of Indochinese in France*, Oakland, University of California Press, 2024. On anti-colonialism and student surveillance, among other things, on a metropolitan scale: Vincent Bollenot, “Maintenir l’ordre impérial en métropole. Le service de contrôle et d’assistance en France des indigènes des colonies (1915–1945)”, PhD thesis in contemporary history, Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, 2022.

⁷ See in particular: Caroline Barrera, *Étudiants d’ailleurs. Histoire des étudiants étrangers, coloniaux et français de l’étranger de la Faculté de droit de Toulouse (XIX^e siècle-1944)*, Toulouse, IFR Toulouse 1, 2007; Pierre Moulinier, *Les étudiants étrangers à Paris au XIX^e siècle. Migration et formation des élites*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2011; dossier “Accueillir l’étudiant-e étranger-ère”, *Traverse. Revue d’histoire*, 1, 2018; Yamina Bettahar (ed.), *Universités et grandes écoles. Circulations internationales étudiantes et scientifiques d’hier à aujourd’hui*, Nancy, PUN - Éditions universitaires de Lorraine, 2020.

⁸ On these issues, in addition to Daniel Hémerly’s article cited above, see: Agathe Larche-Goscha, “La voie étroite des réformes coloniales et la” collaboration franco-annamite “(1917–1928)”, *Revue française d’histoire d’outre-mer*, tome 82, n°309, 1995, pp. 387–420.

⁹ Jehnie I. Reis, “L’identité indochinoise en question: Idéalisme français et dissidences à la Cité Universitaire de Paris dans l’entre-deux-guerres”, *Migrance*, n°39, 2012, pp. 7–19.

While Luru Van Lang's letter emphasizes the CIUP's international audience, placing Asians, Europeans and North Americans on an equal footing, recent historiography has focused more on the tensions between national and colonial identities among students from French Indochina during the interwar period. This article completes and deepens these reflections by placing the Maison des étudiants de l'Indochine (MEI) at the heart of its subject. The MEI is seen as both a tool and a stage for complex and antagonistic identity constructs over the long term, from the birth of the project in 1926–1927 to its name change to “Maison des étudiants de l'Asie de Sud-Est” in 1972. In so doing, we question the relevance of a World War II-induced rupture, underpinned by earlier work focusing on the interwar period, and highlight the changes and continuities at work in the era of decolonization and the Cold War. Questions of naming are by no means anecdotal, since the use of the term “Indochina students” from the late 1920s onwards underpins a broadening of the public recruited, not necessarily colonized but colonial in the broadest sense.

In order to offer a political and social history of the MEI, this chapter looks at all the players involved in its operation, and focuses on the capacity for action—or *agency*—of the residents themselves, and its limits. To this end, the archives of the CIUP available at the Archives nationales de Paris are invaluable, in particular the cartons dedicated to the Maison des étudiants de l'Indochine and then de l'Asie du Sud-Est (20090013/1042–1043; 20090014/19–21) and the residents' admission files (20090013/591); they are occasionally supplemented by the archival collections of the Académie de Paris, which include files on the Maisons of the CIUP (AJ/16/7042). These sources are characterized by their diversity, combining organizational decrees, notarial deeds, local and imperial correspondence, board of directors' reports, promotional documents, and press articles. The holdings of the General Government of Indochina, scattered between the Archives nationales d'outre-mer (ANOM) and center n°1 of the Archives nationales du Vietnam in Hanoi, complete these sources by taking the colony's side, as the colonial authorities also produced documentation on the MEI. Last but not least, the archives of surveillance in mainland France, in particular those of the Service d'assistance et de contrôle des indigènes (CAI), also kept in Aix-en-Provence in the SLOTFOM collection, are crucial to understanding the political tensions associated with the Indochinese residence.

An imperial project, the MEI was born of a tangle of players with varied interests. Since its inauguration in 1930, it has welcomed both colonized and French students, while becoming a forum for the expression of both imperialist and anti-imperialist ideas. The interruption of its activities during the 1939–1945 war did not affect its mission of welcoming students in the immediate post-war period. However, the emergence of a Cambodian residence altered the trajectories of some students, while the MEI outlived the French colonial empire, the last witness to an imperialism that was struggling to give way to national and regional logics.¹⁰

THE MEI: AN IMPERIAL GENESIS, 1926–1930

The years 1926–1927 were the starting point for the foundation of a *Maison des étudiants de l'Indochine* at the CIUP. This project was born against a backdrop of increasing international student mobility since the end of the Great War,¹¹ including individuals arriving from the colonies. Although it is difficult to provide precise and regular statistics, there were 98 Indochinese students at the University of Paris alone in 1927, compared with 45 three years earlier.¹² In 1930, the surveillance services counted 289 Indochinese students in France, including 130 in Paris, which far outstripped the next largest host cities, Bordeaux, Toulouse and Montpellier, with 31, 30 and 28 university recruits respectively.¹³ Against this backdrop of widespread growth, the question of how to accommodate Indochinese recruits arose: in Indochina, for example, the

¹⁰ This article is partly based on the translation and revision of Sara Legrandjacques, « L'Asie à la Cité internationale universitaire de Paris depuis 1950 », Dzovinar Kévonian and Guillaume Tronchet (ed), *Le Campus-monde*, édité par Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2022, pp. 167–184.

¹¹ On this subject, see in particular: Victor Karady, “La migration internationale d'étudiants en Europe, 1880–1940”, *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, n°145, 5/2002, pp. 46–60; Pierre Moulinier, *Les étudiants étrangers... op.cit.*

¹² Scott McConnell, *Leftward Journey... op.cit.* pp. 52–53.

¹³ Archives nationales d'outre-mer (ANOM), SLOTFOM, III/28: *Récapitulation générale des élèves et étudiants indochinois, 1930–1931*. For an analysis of the geographical distribution of students, see: Sara Legrandjacques, “Voies étudiantes... *op.cit.*”, pp. 514–515.

families of educational migrants sometimes alerted the colonial authorities to the difficult living conditions of their descendants.¹⁴ However, it was from the French capital that the Association mutuelle des Indochinois (AMI), created in November 1920 and receiving government subsidies,¹⁵ approached the Minister of Public Instruction, Édouard Daladier, in 1926 on these issues and presented him with its plans for the development of an “Indochinese house¹⁶”.

A few months later, the imperial recovery of the project was launched: an initiative committee was formed at ministerial instigation in the summer of 1927. This time, the Minister of Colonies, Léon Perrier, in agreement with André Honnorat, president of the CUP national foundation, and the Governor General of Indochina, Alexandre Varenne, appointed a French entrepreneur, Auguste-Raphaël Fontaine, to head the committee. Fontaine had founded and managed the Société des Distilleries de l’Indochine, based in Hanoi since 1901. Fontaine’s appointment confirms the economic stakes involved in colonization, even in its educational aspects, while at the same time attesting to the desire to place the pavilion in the hands of a potential manager and financier rather than a politician. Seven other members supported him in his task: five were French, all from the world of colonial entrepreneurship, and they were joined by the Saint-Cyrien native of Cochinchina, Đỗ Hữu Chan, and two representatives of the General Association of Indochinese Students (AGEI), Trần Văn Độc and Đỗ Đức Ho.¹⁷ From this point onwards, a desire for collaboration between colonizers and colonized was visible, echoing the associationist policy advocated since the 1910s. This collaboration was nonetheless asymmetrical, both in quantitative terms and in terms of the representation of the peninsula’s local populations: the minority Indochinese members of the initiative committee were all Vietnamese, depriving Cambodians and Laotians of a voice.

¹⁴ See the individual files of scholarship holders held in the Indochina General Government collection at ANOM.

¹⁵ AN, AJ/16/7042: Courrier du ministre de l’Instruction publique, January 20, 1926.

¹⁶ AN, AJ/16/7042: Courrier du directeur de l’Enseignement supérieur, conseiller d’État, pour le ministre de l’Instruction publique, au recteur de l’académie de Paris, January 20, 1926.

¹⁷ AN, 20090014/19: Letter from A.R. Fontaine to M. Branet, secretary of the Cité universitaire de Paris at the Sorbonne, August 3, 1927.

The summer and autumn of 1927 were devoted to drafting the deed of gift that would give birth to the MEI. Support and interest from the Indochinese diaspora in mainland France continued to grow. Between September 19 and 23, 1927, the first Congress of Indochinese students in France was an opportunity to express the wish for a House for the most disadvantaged:

Voeu n° 9 - Considering that the creation of an Indochinese House within the Cité Universitaire in Paris is of high social importance, that this House is of real help to poor Indochinese students who are currently condemned to being unable to receive higher education in France, that these compatriots must be helped, that only they should be allowed to benefit from the advantages of the Cité Universitaire, the Congress declares that the students who are in France have a duty not to go there –[sic] to make room for the comrades who have remained in Indochina for lack of means to come to the Metropole and stay there, asks the government to grant them suitable scholarships while admitting them to the Cité Universitaire to the exclusion of all others.¹⁸

However, the committee's ultimate objectives, as set out in the founding deed of October 14, 1927, were quite different. A building with around a hundred rooms was to be built within three years for "all Annamite, Cambodian and Laotian students, regularly enrolled in one of the faculties of the University of Paris, or studying in Paris for higher education of any kind whatsoever, it being understood that this expression will be interpreted in its broadest sense. (...)" but also "all French students born in Indochina or belonging to a family domiciled in Indochina and meeting the same conditions".¹⁹ If places remain vacant, "Indochinese professors, scholars and academics coming to Paris to do complementary work and research" and, as a last resort, "French students designated by the Fondation nationale pour le développement de la Cité universitaire and preferably chosen from among those doing studies on Indochina" can also be accepted.²⁰ In short, the voice of Indochinese students already in

¹⁸ ANOM, Gouvernement général de l'Indochine (GGI), dossier 51527: Courrier du Congrès des étudiants indochinois au GGI, December 12, 1927.

¹⁹ AN, 20090014/19: Notarized deed for the founding of the Maison des étudiants de l'Indochine, October 14, 1927.

Ibid.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

France was not really heard. Above all, it's a desire to mix and thus create links between the French and Indochinese that shines through here.

Validated by the Rector, construction was officially launched on July 11, 1928, following a groundbreaking ceremony. Fund-raising had begun at the end of the previous year, revealing the same imperial mix as well as the colony's geo-economic reality. The project was financed by a call for subscriptions throughout the French colonial empire. By December 1927, 786,700 francs had been raised, and by April 1928 the figure had risen to over 940,000 francs.²¹ By this date, 106 individuals and companies had donated money. Colonial entrepreneurship once again dominated, with some forty firms, most of them based in Indochina, such as Société des charbonnages de Ninh-Binh.²² More than 80% of individual subscriptions were made by French people, but a few Indochinese—exclusively Vietnamese—made their own, generally more modest, financial contribution. The economic domination exercised by the French should not, therefore, mask the investment of the colonized elite. In Cochinchina, SAMIPIC donated over 2,000,000 francs. It brought together around a hundred patron-members, all men from Cochinchina, who multiplied initiatives such as promotional mailings and the organization of evenings and lotteries relayed in the colonial press²³ in order to raise a substantial sum.

A desire for Franco-Indochinese collaboration was evident from the very beginning of the project, and the MEI was also an opportunity to showcase and promote it in a variety of ways. The official ceremonies, first in 1928 and then in 1930 for the inauguration, were attended by both French and Indochinese personalities. In 1928, Fontaine, Honnorat, Varenne, Perrier, Charlety, rector of the Paris academy, and Trần Văn Độc were among the speakers. The young emperor of Annam, Bảo Đại, himself educated in France, attended the event and signed the minutes launching the work.²⁴

²¹ AN, 20090014/19: List of subscriptions for the foundation of a house for Indochinese students in Paris, 1928.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ See for example: "La Kermesse de Rachgia", *L'Écho annamite*, May 4, 1942.

²⁴ Speeches and photographs are available in: Comité de la maison de l'Indochine (1928) *La Maison des Etudiants de l'Indochine: à la cité universitaire de Paris*, Paris, Comité de la maison de l'Indochine, 1928.

What's more, the architecture of the pavilion, designed by Pierre Martin and Maurice Vieu, is nothing less than a representation of this alliance between France and its Southeast Asian possession. Western and Asian elements mingle, as in the upturned roof edges. The garden, meanwhile, is "pleasantly arranged in the Asian style"²⁵. The interior design was not left to chance either: the banquet hall was inspired by Vietnamese palaces, while a painting by Lê Phổ, an Indochinese artist trained at the Indochinese and Parisian Écoles des Beaux-Arts, adorned the walls of the ping-pong room.²⁶

(ANTI-)IMPERIALIST USES, 1930–1939

The student residence that opened its doors on boulevard Jourdan in 1930 thus took on a strong imperial, if not imperialist, dimension. It was to be a meeting place for France and Indochina, through the intermediary of its occupants. Under no circumstances was it to be likened to a pavilion reserved for colonized South-East Asians, and its recruitment mixed French citizens and colonized subjects from the very first months of operation (Table 8.1). What's more, in 1930–1931, six French students from mainland France were recommended by the Fondation Nationale and welcomed at the MEI. The recruitment of residents erased the demographic imbalance typical of exploitative colonies, in which a minority exploited a numerically majority indigenous population. Indeed, while Indochinese recruits were more numerous between 1930 and 1933, a turning point was visible in the following year. Between 1934 and 1936, the proportion of Indochinese residents fell, and by 1935–1936, they accounted for just one-third of boarders. This French takeover of the MEI's rooms was all the more surprising under the leadership of Roger Bauduin de Belleval, whose appointment as head of the pavilion in 1932 was to help make the MEI more popular with Indochinese students. The effects of the Great Depression, less favorable to distant study stays and the granting of financial support, and the reforms affecting

²⁵ Extract from articles published at the time of the MEI's inauguration quoted in: Brigitte Blanc, Philippe Ayrault, *La Maison des étudiants de l'Asie du Sud-Est*, study published by the Île de France region, 2015, p. 12. On the architecture of the house, see also: Jehnie I. Reis, "L'identité indochinoise en question... art.cit.", p. 12.

²⁶ Brigitte Blanc, Philippe Ayrault, *La Maison des étudiants de l'Asie du Sud-Est...*, *op.cit.*, pp. 7–12.

Table 8.1 Origins of MEI residents, 1930–1936²⁹

	<i>1930–1931</i>	<i>1931–1932</i>	<i>1932–1933</i>	<i>1934–1935</i>	<i>1935–1936</i>
Indochinese residents	51	67	74	47	36
French residents	45	39	33	64	71
Total	96	106	107	111	107

higher education in Hanoi, with the organization of full-fledged medical and law schools, are hypotheses to be taken into account. At the same time, the frequent delays in payment denounced by the board of directors may work to the disadvantage of individuals from Southeast Asia.²⁷ In July 1935, MEI management and André Honnorat called for a “reorganization of assistance measures for Indochinese students²⁸”.

However, the admittedly patchy statistics compiled by the Maison’s administration also reveal the weakness of applications for admission until the last years of the 1930s (Table 8.2): the imbalance seems to be due not only to a lack of willingness to accept colonized people—or to favoritism towards French candidates—but also to weak demand on the part of the Indochinese themselves. While French applications were constant, albeit more numerous in the early months of each academic year, no Indochinese applications were received in December 1935, January 1937 or May 1937. It wasn’t until January 1938 that the number of applications equaled—or even exceeded, as in May and October 1938—those from non-Indochinese students. In this context, financial constraints must be taken into account, but perhaps also the avoidance strategies of an institution deeply marked by the colonial and imperial fact, already confirmed by the archives for the years 1930–1932.

Sharing rooms at the MEI with Europeans in a rarely balanced way, Indochinese students came primarily from the Vietnamese provinces of the peninsula. When MEI’s first director, Lévêque, drew up a list of

²⁷ AN, AJ/16/7042: Comptes rendus de conseil d’administration, 1936–1937.

²⁸ AN, AJ/16/7042: Compte rendu, July 1935.

²⁹ Table based on data available in: AN, AJ/16/7042. These data are incomplete. When data were available for several months of the same year, we systematically chose the earliest month in the academic year.

Table 8.2 Applications for admission to MEL, 1934–1938³⁰

	1933–1934	1934–1935	1935–1936	1936–1937	1937–1938	1938–1939	1939–1940
By Indochinese students	5	2	6	9	9	29	17
by non-Indochinese students	19	1	33	50	6	30	13
Total	24	3	39	59	15	59	30

³⁰ Table compiled from data available in: AN, AJ/16/7042 and based on the addition of all available statistics for each academic year. No complete monthly statistics are available.

residents in May 1931, it was not only the presence of 36 Frenchmen that was noteworthy, but also the predominance of Vietnamese surnames among the colonized recruits.³¹ No Cambodian or Laotian surnames appear, while one Indian is designated by the name Mariadafsou.

In this context, it remains difficult to determine the extent to which students from French Indochina voluntarily shunned the pavilion that was, at least in part, intended for them. As early as 1928, the MEI was the target of anti-imperialist criticism and action. Reticence was expressed in the student press: the *Journal des étudiants annamites* targeted the president of the AGEI, Trần Văn Đốc, for his participation in the MEI organizing committee. His speech at the laying of the foundation stone was reproduced in the newspaper's columns, followed by an open letter by two resigned AGEI members, Huỳnh Văn Phong, until then vice-president of the association, and Phan Văn Chánh, bearing a triple accusation:

Before you, compatriots, **we accuse** the President of the A.G.E.I. of having failed in his duty as an Annamite and as a representative of our students.

We accuse him of using the voice of all the students to spout flattery for his own benefit.

We accuse him of violating Article II of the A.G.E.I. bylaws by using the Association's Bulletin to propagandize for a political party.³²

The collaborationist attitude of Trần and his entourage was denounced. The MEI residence embodied this pro-French attitude, while the broader aim was to mobilize Annamite youth, whom the two letter-writers were trying to rally to anti-colonialism. In this way, the MEI crystallized the political divisions of the Vietnamese community in France in the late 1920s. The radicalization of some of its members is clear when Huỳnh and Phan declared:

Annamite youth want to have a clear attitude towards France.

³¹ AN, AJ/16/7042: List of residents. It should be noted that a study of the geographical origins of the residents is now possible thanks to the declassification of the files, kept at the Archives nationales in Pierrefitte-sur-Seine for several years, following the ANR Global Youth project led by Guillaume Tronchet: <https://anr.fr/Project-ANR-17-CE28-0005>.

³² ANOM, SLOTFOM, V/1: *Journal des étudiants annamites*, n°11, October 15, 1928, p. 17.

Annamite youth has little understanding of Franco-Annamite collaboration as long as Annam remains under the yoke of French colonialism. They reject with disgust the constitutionalist doctrine, utopian, childish, unworthy of a balanced mind, a doctrine of concessions, of half-measures, of the appearance of progress which lulls the Annamite people into dangerous illusions in order to fatten the intellectual bourgeoisie which has formed under the aegis of the Bui Quang Chiêu from *l'Impartial* interview.³³

Two years later, the inauguration of the Indochinese pavilion confirmed this radicalization, corresponding to a peak in anti-colonial agitation in a context of tensions that went beyond the question of welcoming students. The repression of the Yên Bái mutiny on February 10, 1930, led to political mobilization in Paris, taking advantage of official and public events such as the ceremony organized at the CIUP on March 22, 1930. Despite preventive checks and arrests by the French authorities, sometimes even inside the MEI,³⁴ far-left demonstrators gathered near the building. Above all, the ceremony itself was disrupted, as *La Presse coloniale* reported in an article dated March 26, 1930:

After Messrs A.-R. Fontaine, (...), Branet, Charlety, Barraud, Minister of Public Instruction, and Piétri, Minister of the Colonies, had spoken, Mr. Nguyen Van Bau, boarder at the Maison, was about to begin his speech, when two of his compatriots, seated in the room, stood up and shouted loudly: 'Don't listen to this traitor; he has no right to speak in our name'. Then, to the astonishment of those present, they projected a number of leaflets calling for the release (*sic*) of the indigenous people recently sentenced following the savage rebellion at Yen-Bay, and of all political prisoners in Indochina.³⁵

³³ *Ibid.* Bui Quang Chiêu was one of the founders of the Constitutionalist Party in 1923. This party supported the implementation of reforms within the framework of Franco-Annamite collaboration, supported at the time by the French left. The aim was to move gradually towards autonomy, along the lines of the British *dominions*. The party was particularly active in mainland France from 1925–1926.

³⁴ During the ceremony, five students were arrested inside the MEI and nine outside: ANOM, SLOFOM, III/16: Manifestation des étudiants indochinois à l'inauguration de la Maison des Étudiants Indochinois, 1930.

³⁵ Georges Boussenet, "C'en est assez!", *La Presse Coloniale*, March 26, 1930, n.p.

The immediate arrest of the declaimers, who were taken to the police station, did not put an end to the political and identity-related tensions surrounding the MEI.³⁶ Its first months of activity were troubled by tenacious anti-colonial mobilization, underlining the radicalization of members of the Vietnamese diaspora and, by extension, the division of this community. In the spring of 1930, the AGEI began boycotting the new residence, with the aim of luring new arrivals to Paris away from the rooms on boulevard Jourdan.³⁷ By early April 1930, 15 new arrivals in metropolitan France had withdrawn their applications to the MEI.³⁸ The communist and anti-colonialist press in mainland France, whether French, Indochinese or associated with other territories of the empire such as Tunisia,³⁹ relayed the criticisms already mentioned of the colonial and collaborationist nature of the Maison. Support extended beyond the student world itself: on March 24, 1930, Indochinese sailors based in Marseille wished to congratulate the organizers of the March 22 actions at the CIUP.⁴⁰

Paradoxical as it may seem if we bear in mind its initial objectives, it was also within the MEI that tensions were expressed. As early as 1930, it was not only students who were won over by—or indifferent to—collaboration with the French colonial power that were enrolled. In April, some eighteen boarders, including a Laotian, submitted a petition in defense of the Yên Bái convicts⁴¹. At the end of the year, divisions among the pavilion's occupants were expressed in the election of the residents' committee. There were two opposing lists: the first was presented as the "official list" and led by Nguyễn Văn Bau, regularly denounced by

³⁶ The event was reported in the French press, and not without a political stance. See: Jehnie I. Reis, "L'identité indochinoise en question... *op.cit.*

³⁷ ANOM, SLOTFOM III/16: Désiré's report, April 4, 1930.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ ANOM, SLOTFOM, III/16: Copy of articles from *Le Cri du Peuple* and *La Voix de Tunisie*.

⁴⁰ ANOM, SLOTFOM, III/16: Courrier du délégué du service de contrôle et d'assistance en France des Indigènes au directeur des Affaires politiques du ministère des Colonies, March 25, 1930.

⁴¹ ANOM, SLOTFOM, III/16: Courrier du résident supérieur au Tonkin, July 24, 1930.

his opponents as an “anti-Annamite, excluded from the milieu of patriotic students⁴²”; the second, known as the “youth list”, strongly criticized Nguyễn Văn Bau’s position and ultimately won the most votes. The spy reporting on this electoral campaign to the French surveillance services on December 17, 1930 states that “in Annamite circles it is said that the failure of the official list is due (*sic*) to the presence of NGUYEN VAN BAU at its head, this native being accused of loyalty to France⁴³”.

These remarks confirm the presence of residents with anti-colonialist ideas within the very walls of the MEI. Communism was spreading: in March–April 1931, incidents against director Lévecque attested to this, notably when some students sang *the Internationale* as he passed.⁴⁴ The sanctions taken by the management seem insufficient, even if they might extend beyond the walls of the CIUP. In addition to sneaking into residents’ rooms to break up gatherings deemed dubious,⁴⁵ Lévecque warned the parents of rebellious students and collaborated with the Sûreté and Préfecture de Police. Despite this, he was unable to prevent the young people he welcomed from taking part in political meetings, usually held in the Latin Quarter. While the change of director calmed the situation, revolutionary students continued to be welcomed at the MEI: on February 12, 1932, ten were under surveillance because they were communists or sympathizers.⁴⁶ However, no documentation is available for the rest of the decade.

A SLOW REBIRTH OF IDENTITY, 1945–1972

Although the Second World War interrupted MEI’s hospitality activities, they resumed in the immediate post-war period, despite a particularly turbulent geopolitical context in Southeast Asia. In March 1945, the French had lost political and administrative control of Indochina

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ ANOM, SLOTFOM, III/16: Désiré’s report, December 17, 1930.

⁴⁴ ANOM, SLOTFOM, III/16: Note dated April 23, 1931.

⁴⁵ These untimely irruptions were accompanied by the redistribution of rooms in order to avoid contacts deemed bad. They concerned not only colonized students, but also Frenchmen from Indochina, such as Grenès, who was “under the influence” of Lan. André Lan was himself a Frenchman from Indochina, studying law at the École libre de sciences politiques: Anom, Slotfom, III/16: Note of April 23, 1931.

⁴⁶ ANOM, SLOTFOM, III/16: Désiré’s report, February 12, 1932.

following a Japanese coup. The defeat of the Japanese a few months later led Communist leader Hồ Chí Minh to proclaim Vietnam's independence on September 2, 1945, although this was not recognized by the French, who wished to reassert their presence on the peninsula. Tensions were also palpable in Laos, where anti-colonial activists were supported by neighboring Vietminh forces, while King Norodom Sihanouk maneuvered cautiously to bring negotiations for Cambodian independence to a successful conclusion.

In Paris, the MEI seemed to pay little heed to this ongoing decolonization. The High Commission for Indochina, successor to the Government General, financed its activities. It continued to welcome Cambodians, such as Say Maw and Sévy Luu Theug, who arrived in October 1946, as well as Vietnamese and Laotians, more numerous than in the interwar period. Recent access to residents' admission files for the whole of the CIUP should make it possible to clarify profiles and trajectories by measuring, on the one hand, the weight of the French and, on the other, the precise origin of the Vietnamese, probably belonging to South Vietnam still closely associated with France. From 1949 onwards, when the Indochina war had already been raging for three years, the associated states of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, attached to the French Union, a federal organization inherited from the French colonial empire, also became providers of funds.

At first, the MEI seemed to support France's desire to maintain its presence and influence in Southeast Asia, in contrast to the assertion of national identities and sovereignty in former colonies. However, a foundation project emanating from the Kingdom of Cambodia shook this dynamic. Already mooted by King Norodom in 1948, it took shape two years later. The creation of the *Maison du Cambodge* (MCAM) was announced in the decree of February 1 1950, presented by the President of the Khmer Council of Ministers:

(...) Article 1. - Her Royal Highness Princess Ping Penang Yukanthor, Vice-President of the Assembly of the French Union in Versailles (France), is appointed by the Royal Government of Cambodia to represent it in France in all operations relating to the construction, fitting out and furnishing of a *Maison du Cambodge* at the Cité Universitaire de Paris, and in particular to notarize, on behalf of this Government, the deed of gift to the Cité Universitaire de Paris of a sum of six million francs, to be

paid to the Fondation Nationale of this Cité, and intended to constitute a reserve and working capital fund for the purposes set out above.⁴⁷

Although the mention of the French Union referred to the political ties between the two countries, this new project remained more Cambodian than French:

Which [Princess Ping Peang Yukanthor], after declaring that Cambodia wishes to be associated with the work of intellectual and moral rapprochement between the young elites of all nations pursued by the Cité Universitaire de Paris and to provide students whose parents live in Cambodia with the means to pursue their studies in Paris, has (*sic*) decided to have a student house with one hundred and fifty rooms built on the grounds of the Cité Universitaire de Paris and equipped.⁴⁸

The foundation had a national character: the board of directors was to be chaired by a “Khmer personality appointed by His Majesty the King of Cambodia or his delegate”, and the French members were to be joined by “three Cambodian personalities⁴⁹” also appointed by the sovereign. The chosen architecture, designed by Frenchman Alfred Audoul, blended neoclassical Western elements with references to Khmer heritage and culture, such as the statues of the monkey god Anuman framing the exterior staircase.⁵⁰

The MCAM was inaugurated in 1957 and led to a veritable Khmer desertion of the MEI, even though Cambodia had become an independent state in November 1953. The story of Phalcun Samair bears witness to this: born in Phnom Penh on April 3, 1932, he first attended the Lycée Sisowath in the Cambodian capital, before moving on to the Lycée Descartes in Paris, where he obtained the mathematics *baccalauréat*.⁵¹ In 1951, he decided to pursue his medical studies in Paris and applied to

⁴⁷ AN, 20090014/40: “Founding Act, February 1^{er} 1950”.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* On the origins of MCAM, see also: Michel Chai Sirivuddh, *La Maison du Cambodge*, Paris, Saint Honoré Éditions, 2016, pp. 13–41.

⁵⁰ “Découvrir la Maison du Cambodge”, *Cité internationale universitaire de Paris*, website: <https://www.ciup.fr/presentation-de-la-maison-du-cambodge/>, accessed February 27, 2023.

⁵¹ AN, 20090013/591: Phalcun Samair.

the MEI, which accepted his application in October. He left the pavilion in July 1952 and returned in October 1953, before leaving again in 1956. However, for his third university stay in Paris, starting in October 1957, he chose to join the newly inaugurated MCAM. From that date onwards, although in theory “Cambodian, French and other nationals”⁵² had access to the Foundation, 85% of places were *de facto* reserved for Khmer residents, admitted on the recommendation of the Royal Ambassador of Cambodia. Available statistics do not mention the presence of young people from other territories of the former French Indochina. In addition to the diplomatic relations underpinning this foundation, which resulted in several official visits by the Khmer head of state Norodom Sihanouk in 1964 and 1967, the Cambodian state also wanted to be present and visible on the international scene, since the director of the MCAM was also Cambodia’s permanent delegate to UNESCO.

From the 1950s onwards, as the CIUP entered its second phase of expansion, the Cambodian split increased the opportunities available to certain South-East Asian residents. In 1952, Vietnamese student Tinh, enrolled at the Faculty of Science in Paris, was housed at the Maison des étudiants arméniens.⁵³ However, neither the definitive and official disappearance of French Indochina in 1954 following the Geneva Accords, nor the Khmer foundation that became a reality three years later, led to a change in the name of the MEI, an anachronistic vestige of French Asia. The first discussions on this subject did not take place until May 1968. On November 6, 1969, the name “Maison des étudiants du Laos et du Vietnam” was adopted. The admission of twenty Vietnamese and sixteen Laotians among the 44 new recruits⁵⁴ reinforced this “bi-state”, less unitary approach. In addition, internal tensions between the two communities complicated the running of the Maison, for example in terms of room allocation and the organization of cultural activities. These tensions can be explained by a tendency on the part of certain members of the administration to promote Vietnamese residents, which was quickly countered: in January 1970, two members of the MEI Board of Directors had to be replaced. Until then, all board members had been French. While

⁵² AN, carton 20090014/40: Founding deed.

⁵³ AN, 20090013/591: Tinh.

⁵⁴ The remainder of the incoming workforce is made up of eight French nationals: AN, 20090014/20: Conseil d’administration du 6 novembre 1969.

some of them thought it “perhaps opportune to call on a Vietnamese after having made contact with the ambassador, Phạm Đăng Lâm, who was in charge of the Consulate General⁵⁵”, others were radically opposed, pointing out “the antinomy between Laotians and Vietnamese” but also “the threats hanging over South Vietnam”, engaged with the United States in a long war against Communist North Vietnam. In the end, two Frenchmen, the ethnologist of Southeast Asia Condominas and Prefect Aurillac, joined the MEI administrative team.

In contrast to the promotion of national identities, it was still French influence in Asia—albeit more diplomatic than political—that seemed to motivate the existence of the Lao-Vietnamese pavilion. Geopolitical realignments in Southeast Asia made a thorough reorganization of the residency’s operations essential, especially as traditional support is drying up. Economic partnerships, previously linked to a strong French entrepreneurial presence on the Indochinese peninsula, were tending to disappear. The Quai d’Orsay was refusing to lend its support, and subsidies from the Vietnamese and Laotian governments were dwindling. Against this backdrop, the administration opted for continuity, by maintaining French governance. The MEI was attached to the Fondation nationale de la Cité universitaire and remained distant from its national Asian counterparts, the MCAM and the Maisons du Japon and de l’Inde:

However, I would make it a condition that the French character of the House be more clearly asserted; as the current title of the House can be misleading and lead people to believe that it is a binational House, I would prefer that the House henceforth take the name of “Université de Paris - Maison française de l’Asie du Sud-Est.”⁵⁶

This positioning did not prevent students staying at the Maison from promoting and defending a national and political identity, in this case communist: during the Vietnamese cultural week organized from June 23 to 29, 1969, a Vietnamese national flag was hung in front of the main hall. Its removal, demanded on June 27 by the director of the Fondation nationale, was opposed by residents, while the closing ceremony

⁵⁵ AN, 20090014/20: Board meeting of January 15, 1970.

⁵⁶ AN, 20090014/20: Board meeting of June 2, 1970.

was disrupted by far-left militants, this time French and North African, exclaiming “tam-tam Hồ Chí Minh⁵⁷”, or “vive Hồ Chí Minh”.

Even so, the degree of politicization of the residents of the Maison des étudiants du Laos et du Vietnam remains difficult to grasp in the archives. The debate between greater regionalism—around Southeast Asia—and the maintenance of a Vietnamese-Laotian specificity⁵⁸ continued into the early 1970s. The name “Maison des étudiants de l’Asie du Sud-Est” (MEASE) was finally adopted in 1972, when a dozen Southeast Asian students from countries other than Laos and Vietnam joined the new arrivals. Four reasons were given:

- a) the previous name gave rise to an unfortunate “psychological shock” for most Vietnamese and Laotian students.
- b) far too long, it was reduced in practice to “Maison du Laos et du Vietnam”, which is precisely the name that had been abandoned earlier.
- c) the name “Southeast Asia” is the closest to the original name (Maison des Étudiants de l’Indochine).
- d) students from all the countries of Southeast Asia now come under this House, as a result of the intermingling that has taken place.⁵⁹

In 1971–1972, out of 145 residents, only 74 were Asian nationals, including 37 Vietnamese and 27 Laotians.⁶⁰

CONCLUSION: AN IMPOSSIBLE REGIONAL IDENTITY?

At the turn of the 1990s, the Maison des étudiants de l’Asie du Sud-Est was the setting for a number of scenes in Régis Wargnier’s film *Indochine*, recounting the adventures of a French family specializing in the colonial rubber plantation between 1930 and 1954, seemingly as a nod to the residence’s colonial past. However, the Asian-inspired architecture and decoration of the pavilion, whose grand salon was renovated

⁵⁷ AN, 20090014/20: Board meeting of November 6, 1969.

⁵⁸ In 1970–1971, only Vietnamese, Laotian and French students were admitted. On June 22, 1971, the proposed name “Maison des étudiants français, lao et vietnamiens” was presented to the Board of Directors: AN, 20090014/20: Conseil d’administration du 22 juin 1971.

⁵⁹ AN, 20090014/20: Board meeting of January 13, 1972.

⁶⁰ AN, 20090014/20: Boards of Directors, 1972.

in 2014, should not mask the deeper erosion of its Indochinese identity since the 1970s. The opening of the pavilion to a more varied public, including Thais, Chinese, Koreans and people from other continents, has been accompanied by the disappearance of Vietnamese and Laotian residents. From 29 in 1977–1978, almost three years after the reunification of Vietnam in April 1975, they dropped to 14 in 1982–1983, before being completely absent from the Maison's rooms by the end of the 1980s. Finally, at the end of the twentieth century, the MEASE seemed to be Asian in name only, with a majority of French nationals among the new admissions, a far cry from the internationalism dreamed of by the vice-president of SAMIPIC in 1928.

The 1970s also marked a turning point for the *Maison des étudiants du Cambodge*. It closed its doors in 1973 for some thirty years, following clashes between different groups of Khmer students that echoed the civil war that had been raging in Cambodia since 1967, culminating in the Khmer Rouge regime in 1975. Its rehabilitation at the beginning of the twenty-first century could now provide the basis for a sociological and socio-historical study of its new residents.

In short, the history of the *Maison des étudiants de l'Indochine* reflects the political, geopolitical, and cultural entanglements that characterized the Southeast Asian peninsula from the interwar period to the final decades of the Cold War. It underlines how the reception of foreign students constitutes a political lever and tool, both for the host country and for the country of origin, including students from (former) colonial possessions, still little considered by historians of education and international relations. These degree candidates must be seen as central players in the structuring of these university residences, participating in their smooth running—or their dysfunction—in the midst of other individuals and organizations.

From the 1970s onwards, this imperial dynamic gave way to a broader regional approach, not hesitating to go beyond the very borders of South-East Asia with the arrival of East Asian students, both Chinese and Korean. The latter have become a major target of the CIUP's attractiveness policy, confirming that the history of the Asian presence on boulevard Jourdan is as fluid as it is diverse and complex, and thus continues to be written at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Conflicts of Interest The author has no conflicts of interest to declare that are relevant to the content of this chapter.

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From the Maison de la France d’Outre-mer to the Résidence Lucien Paye or How an Empire Unravels: From the French Union to Cooperation

Françoise Blum

It is not a question of building an administrative monument, but of constructing a vast home where students destined to become the executives of our greater France will be welcomed in an environment of material and moral comfort worthy of them.¹

In recent years, the history of African students around the world has been enriched by a number of valuable new studies. These include a recent issue of the journal *Diasporas*, Pedro Monaville’s work on

¹ Paul Coste-Floret, Minister for Overseas France, Laying the foundation stone for the Pavillon de la France d’Outre-mer, AN, 20090014/221.

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Congolese students in the world² and Burleigh Hendricksson's work on transnational student activism.³ We hope to contribute to this history of African students by approaching it from the specific angle of their place of residence in Paris. The "little story" we'll be discussing here, that of the Maison de la France d'Outre-mer (FOM) at the Cité universitaire de Paris (CIUP), now the Résidence Lucien Paye, can be seen as an excellent observatory of a "bigger story". Through the history of this House and the study of the conditions of its foundation, its statutes, its residents, the composition of its Board of Directors, and the events that have marked its existence, the end of an Empire and the renegotiation of ties between France and its former African colonies can be seen at a micro-level, but in a very concrete way. We can also read about the ups and downs of the student movement, from its rise to prominence in the 1950s–1960s through to the heyday of 1968, leading to a number of gains followed by a return to control by the institutional powers that be. This resumption of power was both a "backlash" in the early 1970s and, in the very specific case of the FOM, the liquidation of a post-colonial situation, as well as the introduction of an unequal policy of cooperation. This is also the story of "university diplomacy", as Guillaume Tronchet puts it, when it joins the mainstream of diplomacy.⁴

As with all CIUP buildings, there are archives at.⁵ However, they are somewhat sparse, due to a number of factors: one concerns the serious management problems experienced by the house and, at times, the total disorder that reigned in its administration, making the preservation of archives very uncertain; the other factor relates more to global events, as we cannot really be surprised by the absence of documents concerning the

² Monaville Pedro, *Students of the world: global 1968 and decolonization in the Congo*, Durham and London, Duke University, 2022.

³ Hendricksson Burleigh, *Decolonizing 1968: Transnational Student Activism in Tunis, Paris and Dakar*, Cornell University Press, 2022.

⁴ TRONCHET Guillaume, "Diplomatie universitaire ou diplomatie culturelle? La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris entre deux rives", in KÉVONIAN Dzovinar and TRONCHET Guillaume (eds.), *La Babel étudiante. La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (1920–1950)*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2013, pp. 59–88; TRONCHET Guillaume, *Savoirs en diplomatie. Une histoire sociale et transnationale de la politique universitaire internationale de la France (années 1880–années 1930)*, thesis in contemporary history, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, 2014.

⁵ Archives nationales, Archives de la Cité universitaire, Résidence Lucien Paye (AN, 20090014/221-239).

hot months of 1968. At the time, we had other things to think about than rigorous administration. However, these “archival gaps” do not in any way prevent us from understanding the transformations of the Maison de la FOM since its creation, and following the broad outlines of its evolution, as well as constructing an account of the events that took place there. This is the purpose of the following lines.⁶

THE ORIGINS: TRAINING MANAGERS FOR “THE GREATEST FRANCE”

The birth certificate of the Maison de la FOM was the proposal made on November 14 1946 by the Education Department of the Ministry of Overseas France⁷ to build a pavilion for overseas France at the CIUP, and to allocate a twenty million francs credit from the FIDES budget (Fonds d'Investissement pour le Développement Economique et Social des Territoires d'Outre-mer) for studies on the project. The minister in office at the time, the socialist Marius Moutet, approved this proposal, which had nothing to do with chance. In 1946, the Empire became the French Union,⁸ and the former subjects became citizens.⁹ In the same year, the FIDES was created to finance two successive plans. Of course, no development policy can do without an education policy. In 1946, education in

⁶ This article is a modified and translated version of: “De la Maison de la France d'Outre-mer à la Résidence Lucien Paye ou comment un empire se défait», in D. Kévo-nian, G. Tronchet (dir.), *Le Campus-Monde. La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris, 1945-années 2000*, Rennes, PUR, 2022, p. 143–166.

⁷ In 1946, the Ministry of Overseas France replaced the Ministry of Colonies. Marius Moutet was the first Minister for Overseas France.

⁸ The French Union was created by the Constitution of September 1946 in the following terms: “France forms with the overseas peoples a Union based on equality of rights and duties, without distinction of race or religion. The French Union is composed of nations and peoples who pool or coordinate their resources and efforts to develop their respective civilizations, increase their well-being and ensure their security. Faithful to its traditional mission, France intends to lead the peoples for whom it has assumed responsibility to the freedom to administer themselves and to manage their own affairs democratically, rejecting any system of colonization based on arbitrariness, it guarantees to all equal access to public functions and the individual or collective exercise of the rights and freedoms proclaimed or confirmed above.”

⁹ Lamine Gueye Act of May 7, 1946. For the content of this new citizenship, see: COOPER Frederick, *Français et Africains? Être citoyen au temps de la décolonisation*, French ed. Paris, Payot, 2014.

France's African colonies was brought into line with that of metropolitan France.

Up until the Second World War, a very Malthusian attitude prevailed in education policy in the colonies, whose elites were to serve essentially as auxiliaries to the French, without ever acquiring a high level of education, which was reserved for nationals of metropolitan France. The war, and the new international order it spawned, changed all this, and metropolitan France set out to make up for its considerable backwardness. In 1950, when the Institut des Hautes Études was founded in Dakar, there were still no universities in France's African territories, and only a few privileged students went on to study in metropolitan France.¹⁰ In 1946, the only way to pursue higher education was to enroll in an institution in mainland France. This was when the problem of housing arose. There was as yet no specialized organization to guide students from sub-Saharan Africa or point them in the right direction for housing. The Office des étudiants d'Outre-mer (OEOM)—which became the Office de coopération et d'accueil universitaire (OCAU) in 1962¹¹—was only created in 1955. The decision to set up a Maison d'Outre-mer at the CIUP reflected a certain realism in the face of a new situation that called for emergency solutions, as well as a policy of prestige and metropolitan influence among the future executives of "la plus grande France".

On April 8, 1947, André Honnorat, President of the Fondation nationale de la CIUP, awarded the Ministry of Education a plot of land within the CIUP itself, for the planned construction.¹² On April 15, the FIDES steering committee allocated the requested credit.¹³ On June 16, the Minister called on Albert Laprade, chief architect of the national palaces, to erect the pavilion. Not unimportantly, Albert Laprade had colonial experience. In Morocco, he was Henri Prost's assistant to Lyautey, and in this capacity had worked in Casablanca. He was also architect and project manager for the Palais de la Porte Dorée, built for

¹⁰ The first university in the French African empire was founded in Dakar in 1957.

¹¹ On OEOM-OCAU, see GUIMONT Fabienne, *Les Étudiants africains en France (1955–1965)*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1998.

¹² "Convention portant donation à l'université de Paris et création de la Maison de la France d'Outre-mer. Acte notarié d'acceptation de la donation par l'université de Paris", January 1949 (AN, 20090014/221).

¹³ Letter from Colonial Governor Félix Martine to Monsieur le Ministre de la France d'Outre-mer, Paris, March 5, 1949 (AN, 20090014/221).

the 1931 colonial exhibition. The Palais de la Porte Dorée undoubtedly shares a strong family resemblance with the Maison de la FOM.

The process leading to the creation of the Maison de la FOM continues. In November 1948, the Minister for Overseas France, Paul Coste-Floret, after obtaining the agreement of the University of Paris and the Fondation nationale de la CIUP, decided to create a propaganda committee and a board of directors for the future house. These two bodies are responsible for raising the necessary funds from the French overseas territories and carrying out the construction. A Governor of Overseas France, Félix Martine, was seconded as General Secretary of the Propaganda Committee and Board of Directors. Félix Martine, appointed Secretary General of the Government of Madagascar, was replaced in March 1951 by Governor Raoul Angammare, who was himself appointed Governor of New Caledonia a few months later, and in turn replaced by Union Française advisor André Bougenot (November 1951). Nevertheless, it was Félix Martine who did most of the work, with the first students arriving in October 1951.

The members of the steering committee, the propaganda committee and the board of directors are of particular interest here. Here we have a true snapshot of overseas France, with a hint of national education, at the time of the genesis of a new world: that of the French Union. The steering committee of the¹⁴ propaganda committee includes a majority of representatives from the Ministry of Overseas France (Paul Coste-Floret, Minister; Carcassonne, his Chief of Staff; Félix Martine, former Governor; Robert Delavignette, Governor and Director of Political Affairs at the Ministry; Georges Gaston, Inspector General of Education and Youth at the Ministry of Education), representatives of the Ministry of Education (Yvon Delbos, Minister; Jean Sarrailh, Rector of the Paris Academy), as well as Edwin Poilay, General Manager of the Bank of West Africa, Louis Lorient, President of the Financial Section of the Council of State, and Marie-Hélène Lefaucheur, Advisor to the French Union. In addition to the aforementioned Martine, Sarrailh, Carcassonne and Delavignette, the company's Board of Directors included Louis-Paul Aujoulat (former Under-Secretary and Secretary of State for Overseas France), Marcel de Coppet (Governor General of the Colonies, who was Governor of Madagascar during the 1947 insurrection), Pierre Donzelot (Director General

¹⁴ "Comité de propagande pour la création de la Maison de la France d'Outre-mer" (AN, 20090014/221).

of Higher Education at the Ministry of National Education), André Postel Vinay (Director of the Caisse Centrale de Coopération Économique), and finally two personalities from the CIUP, André Lirondelle (General Delegate) and Raoul Dautry, former Minister of Reconstruction and Urban Planning, who succeeded André Honnorat as President of the Fondation Nationale in early 1948. Last but not least, Léopold Sedar Senghor, Member of Parliament—and former resident of the CIUP—is the only African in this pleiad of administrators.¹⁵ It should be noted that this cohabitation between Éducation nationale and France d’Outre-mer was more or less forced: the two ministries did not always coexist peacefully, especially at a time when it was necessary to build school and university structures in Africa that obeyed the standards of Éducation nationale, standards that were sometimes far removed from those of France d’Outre-mer and its improvised civil servants-teachers.¹⁶

Under the leadership of Governor Martine, the propaganda committee had no trouble raising the funds needed to build the Maison de la France d’Outre-mer. Donations from the territories as of November 1^{er} 1950 break down as follows¹⁷ (Fig. 9.1):

The funds raised—from both private and institutional donors—enabled the Maison to be built and refurbished. On March 12, 1949, a deed of gift was signed to the University of Paris for the building, its furnishings and future equipment, to be managed and financed by a foundation entitled “Université de Paris—Maison de la France d’Outre-mer”.¹⁸ The purpose of the foundation is to “enable the various associated states and territories of overseas France to associate their students with the work of

¹⁵ List of members of the Board of Directors (*Ibid.*).

¹⁶ The account given by Rector Capelle, in charge of reorganizing education in the colonies of sub-Saharan Africa, is edifying in this respect. His setbacks with the institutions of overseas France and a ministry that was piling up obstacles in his path towards greater equality forced him to resign, although he did return a few years later (see Jean CAPELLE, *L’Éducation en Afrique noire à la veille des indépendances*, Paris, Karthala, 1990).

¹⁷ Letter from Governor Martine to members of the FOM Board of Directors, Paris, December 1^{er} 1950 (AN, 20090014/221). On the same date, the territories also pledged additional sums: AEF (23,500,000 fr.); New Caledonia (3,000,000 fr.); Oceania (1,063,000 fr.); St Pierre et Miquelon (700,000 fr.).

¹⁸ “Convention portant donation à l’université de Paris et création de la Maison de la France d’Outre-mer”, January 1949 (AN, 20090014/221).

Source of donations	Amounts (in francs)
French West Africa	150,000,000
French Equatorial Africa	14,000,000
Cameroon	12,000,000
Madagascar	37,500,000
Oceania	1,937,000
New Caledonia	3,000,000
Saint-Pierre and Miquelon	800,000
Total	219,237,000

Fig. 9.1 Donations to the Maison de la France d’Outre-mer (1950)

moral rapprochement between the elite of youth of all origins and disciplines pursued by the CIUP”.¹⁹ In so doing, the Maison maintained its autonomy from the Fondation nationale de la CIUP, to which it was not attached. And on June 22, 1949, Paul Coste-Floret sealed the stone containing the lead tube which itself contained the deed of donation.

Once the house was built, Martine took care of the furnishings, as well as decorating it with works of art and tapestries. Today, you can still admire the walls of the main reception room covered with Aubusson tapestries, based on cartoons by the painter Roger Bezombes—most of whose work was marked by exoticism—and which “evoke the life and past of the TOM” in a naively mythical way. Two bas-reliefs for the façade were also commissioned, along with two life-size bronze statues and a stone statue. Three murals²⁰ and two paintings completed the ensemble. The Maison had a library²⁰ and a cafeteria.

In October 1951, the Maison de la FOM welcomed its first occupants. Applicants were selected on the basis of their academic record, in accordance with the general regulations of the CIUP, i.e. graduate level, age not exceeding 30, and up to 35 by special dispensation. The choice of applicants rests primarily with the Director, with the approval of the Board of Directors. A restrictive clause is also included: “In order to ensure that each country receives its fair share, and to classify applicants’ applications in an order that reflects the value of their studies, no one other than young people admitted to attend a Paris grande école may, in principle, be accepted at the present foundation without having completed an

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Unfortunately, we haven’t been able to find the list of books ordered.

internship at a regional university”.²¹ However, this clause was not always respected. La Maison has 249 beds, with single or double rooms, as well as three studios for young families, which is hardly superfluous given that the age of marriage in sub-Saharan Africa was earlier than in France, and that African students were generally older than their French counterparts. Places are allocated according to the funding obtained from the territories, which thus have “founded beds” in *proportion to* the sums invested, although this does not rule out their nationals being accommodated in other houses of the CIUP. In any case, the CIUP is committed to housing as many students from overseas France as there are places available in the Maison de la FOM, i.e. almost 240²² (Fig. 9.2).

All that remained was to choose the director of the Maison, which gave rise to an interesting debate in the Board of Directors, in which the French Overseas Territories/National Education divide mentioned above was again present. As the director was to be “appointed by the Rector of the University Council on the proposal of the Board of Directors, with the consent of the Minister of Overseas France”,²³ the debate that began in the spring of 1951 focused on whether the director should have a knowledge of overseas France or be an academic. Senghor, for example, was

Territories	Number of beds
French West Africa	100
French Equatorial Africa	15
Cameroon	27
Madagascar	57
Togo	5
Oceania	3
Upper Volta	1
New Caledonia	3
India, Mauritania, Sudan, Senegal, Niger, Guinea, Middle Congo, Gabon, Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon	7
École nationale de la France d'outre-mer (ENFOM) and École nationale supérieure d'agriculture tropicale (ENSAT)	22
Total	240

Fig. 9.2 Capacity of the Maison de la France d’Outre-mer (1951)

²¹ Articles of association (YEAR, 20090014/223).

²² Note (AN, 20090014/222).

²³ Articles of association (YEAR, 20090014/223).

in favor of an academic. He stresses “the fact that the task of the future director will be very delicate, especially on the psychological level. The students are young and turbulent, and most of them come from overseas, which is going through a growth crisis”. In his view, the colonial experience can either help or hinder the future director. Rector Sarrailh naturally concurred, explaining: “I have the impression that students from overseas France, when they are not under the direction of an academic or former academic, think that they are always looking at a civil servant who deals with the police”.²⁴ In the end, the lucky man was Georges Gaston, agrégé in Spanish, former lycée principal, former director of public education in Tunisia and Inspector General for Education and Youth at the Ministry of Overseas France.

The Maison is ready for business. From 1951 to the end of the 1970s, it was to undergo a series of ups and downs, linked to residents’ protests, the end of the French African Empire and African independence. Although 1960 was the year of independence, it did not mean immediate and abrupt change in many areas. At the Maison de l’Afrique, the beds founded by the territories would henceforth be those of the States (except for New Caledonia, Polynesia and Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon), and in 1968 the residents would demand to have an African director, whose authority would be just as contested as that of his French predecessor.

CHALLENGES

The first disputes arose very soon after the creation of the company. In 1953, opposition to the director grew around two issues.²⁵ The first was a challenge to the legitimacy of the residents’ committee, which was said to be under the tutelage of Director Gaston; the second was the exclusion of a resident on the grounds of an undue female visit. The two “causes” were soon combined in the demands, and agitation grew at the Maison de la FOM, all the more so as it was grafted onto already existing demonstrations at the Pavillon des Etudiants arméniens.²⁶ An impromptu general assembly was held during a film club session on March 13, 1953, which led the director to expel the leaders: Charles Carrère, Bounaima

²⁴ Board meeting of April 10, 1951 (AN, 20090014/227/1).

²⁵ AN, 20090014/239.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

Nourou, Papa Gallo Thiam and Babacar Niang. On March 23, a new general assembly decided to cease all activities at the house, and to strike against rent and the cafeteria.²⁷ A demonstration in support of the residents of the Maison de la FOM brings together 400 to 500 students at the CIUP. The Communist Party also supports the action in the columns of *L'Humanité*, all the more so as Papa Gallo Thiam is French high jump champion, and a Communist student leaflet takes offense:

From the end of last year, acts of arbitrariness were committed by Messrs Gaston and Masson directors of FOM and Indochina - colonial pavilions - alone topped by supervisory committees comprising parliamentarians, colonial administration personalities, overseas capitalists, committees intended to make a political choice among residents.²⁸

In the end, after a great deal of negotiation and intervention, the director gave in on everything. The excluded residents—who had never left the premises—were reinstated. A new residents' committee was elected, including a board composed precisely by the protesters, and life resumed its ordinary course. This first movement was important because it heralded later forms of action and demands. The African students were protesting against arbitrariness and a mode of governance specific to the colonial pavilions. The question of women's visits is not, *a priori*, very political, but if we consider that it was precisely the question of co-education in university dormitories that was to form the basis of the March 22nd movement in Nanterre University fifteen years later, we can consider this question to be anything but insignificant: isn't the private sphere political? As for the methods of action—rent strikes and cafeteria boycotts—they would be used extensively thereafter.

A new case arose two years later, highlighting other aspects of life for overseas students. In December 1955, it concerned a restaurant at the CIUP. The residents of the Maison de la FOM demanded that the restaurant in the Parc Ouest of the CIUP be made accessible to overseas students,²⁹ whether or not they were residents of the CIUP, and consequently refused to show their resident card at the entrance to the

²⁷ Note on the March 23 demonstration (*Ibid.*).

²⁸ AN, 20090014/239.

²⁹ Communiqué to Park West residents in the form of an open letter to AIRCUP (AN, 20090014/239).

restaurant. The restaurant was then closed by Rector Marchaud, General Delegate of the Fondation Nationale. In addition to delegates from the Maison de la FOM, a committee was set up to make demands for the restaurant, including representatives of the Association des étudiants d'origine malgache (AEOM)³⁰ and the Fédération des étudiants d'Afrique noire en France (FEANF).³¹ The affair escalated: a committee from the other pavilions of the CIUP objected to what would be a privilege granted to overseas France, and the president of the International Association of Residents of the CIUP (AIRCUP), Jean Charlot, wrote to Senghor asking him to intervene in favor of a relaxation of entry controls, in order, he said, not to aggravate an affair that could provoke racist reactions to the "racism" of overseas students.³² We don't know whether Senghor intervened, but it's quite possible, given the future president of Senegal's concern for teaching and education. In 1958, Gabonese Senator Luc Durand-Réville, also a member of the Maison de la FOM Board of Directors, wrote to André François-Poncet, President of the Fondation nationale de la CIUP, to denounce the "anti-white discrimination" at the entrance to the restaurant.³³ This would seem to indicate that the African students have more or less won their case.

Beyond the CIUP, the early 1950s saw African students in France rapidly organize and politicize their demands. Their numbers grew rapidly

³⁰ On AEOM until 1960, see RAJONAH Faranirina, "Être étudiant en métropole à l'avènement de l'indépendance: l'association des étudiants d'origine malgache de 1947 à 1960", *Afrika Zamani*, n°13 et 14, 2005–2006, p. 1–22.

³¹ There are several histories of FEANF written by former members and/or presidents of the association: DIANÉ CHARLES, *La FEANF et les grandes heures du mouvement syndical étudiant noir*, Paris, Chaka, 1971; DIENG Amady Aly, *Les premiers pas de la Fédération des étudiants d'Afrique noire en France. De l'union française à Bandung (1950–1955)*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2003; *Les Grands combats de la FEANF. De Bandung aux indépendances*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2009; TRAORÉ Sékou, *La Fédération des étudiants d'Afrique noire en France*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1985. See also BLUM Françoise, "L'indépendance sera révolutionnaire ou ne sera pas: étudiants africains en France contre l'ordre colonial", *Cahiers d'histoire: revue d'histoire critique*, n°126, January–March 2015, pp. 119–138; on FEANF after 1960, see BLUM Françoise, "Ce que les indépendances firent à la FEANF: des étudiants en diaspora face à leurs États", in BLUM Françoise, GUIDI Pierre and RILLON Ophélie (dir.), *Étudiants africains en mouvements: contribution à une histoire des années 68*, Publications de la Sorbonne, 2016.

³² Letter dated November 28, 1955 (AN, 20090014/239).

³³ Letter from Durand-Réville to the Minister of Education, January 4, 1958 (YEAR 20090014/239).

in the 1950s, and accelerated thereafter,³⁴ although the break with independence was not a factor. Loneliness, disorientation, specific problems in terms of housing and other facilities soon led them to organize themselves into two associations: the Association des étudiants d'origine malgache (AEOM) for Malagasy students, and the Fédération des étudiants d'Afrique noire en France (FEANF) for other Africans. Both were initially very corporatist in their early years, but became more radical and took the lead in demanding total and unconditional independence. The FEANF staff, moderate in the first three years, shifted their positions in a Marxist and revolutionary direction. Many of its members were linked to the Communist Party or belonged to the "Language Group". The CIUP's African residents belonged to the Section des Provinces de France, based at the Maison of the same name. The rise in demands at the Maison de la FOM corresponded to a much more general rise in demands from African students, and their opposition to all forms of reformism, as well as to all forms of colonial paternalism. We don't have a list of the FEANF's members, but if we consider only the executive committee, i.e. its governing body, we find many people who stayed at the CIUP: Abdoul Bâ, Babacar Niang, Ousmane Camara, Amady Aly Dieng, Mamadou Barry, Louis Koffi Amega, Bassirou Barry, Assane Bâ, Habib Thiam, Cheikh Bâ, Magatte Thiam, Mamadou Sarr, Emmanuel Ngassa, El Caba Touré, Jean-Jacques Ekindi,³⁵ and a few other ordinary militants such as the future president of Senegal, Abdou Diouf. In his history of the FEANF, the Guinean Charles Diané recounts how, in 1959, he led a major rent strike at the FOM's headquarters, which lasted six months,³⁶ to protest against a rent increase.

³⁴ In 1949, according to Administrator Monod's report, there were 500 African students and pupils on scholarship and around 500 not on scholarship. By 1950, the figure given in the Monod report had already doubled to just over 2000 students. By 1952–1953, there were 4000 students (including 1320 with scholarships), 6000 in 1958 (including 2634 with scholarships), and 8000 in 1960 (17% girls, 13% married students, 44% with scholarships).

³⁵ On the trajectories of these students see: BLUM Françoise, *Trajectoires militantes et (re)conversions: à propos de la FEANF: que sont-ils/elles devenues?*, mémoire d'habilitation à diriger des recherches, École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2016. Most of them went on to excel in the highest political and/or administrative positions.

³⁶ DIANÉ Charles, *La FEANF...*, *op. cit.* p. 158–159. Diané does not specify the date, but this strike took place after the creation of the PAI (African Independence Party) and before independence. It was probably in 1959.

In a way, FEANF has always considered itself at home at the Maison de la FOM, as well as in the other Mecca for African students in Paris: 69 boulevard Poniatowski ("Ponia"), a building belonging to the West African States. These two places are the "African houses" of Paris, even more so than the hostels of the various territories, whose national character does not necessarily suit young men and women who want to be pan-African. The former president of FEANF, Ousmane Camara, described the Maison de la FOM as "Ponia" in a very picturesque way, which somewhat corroborates the words of the directors, albeit without the indignant tone:

Room 238, which I later shared with Amady Aly Dieng, became a veritable place of pilgrimage for former students, as it was not only a dormitory for "illegal" students (including Papa Gallo Thiam³⁷, French high jump champion at the time, and a student at the Ecole des Arts et Métiers, who set up shop with his easel, and Birane Wane, whom the events of May 1958 turned into a "refugee"), but also during the day, a club where Henri Lopès, Abdou Diouf, Amady Aly Dieng, Raymond Charlier and his wife Tatiana, Roland Depret, all three friends of Papa Gallo Thiam³⁸, rub shoulders in joyful disorder. When, the following year, in 1959, I was granted a single room, it was Abdou Diouf who took my place in room 238, perpetuating "the tradition".

The FOM pavilion, the maison de l'AOF ON boulevard Poniatowski in the 12^e arrondissement and the Jean Zay university residence in Antony (near Paris) form the triangle of what could be called "Little Senegal". Alongside the students who are regularly allocated rooms, there's an army of illegal immigrants with occupations that are more or less open to scrutiny. In the basement of the FOM, a Senegalese clandestine restaurant serves "tiébou dieune" and "mafé" that have nothing to envy their counterparts prepared in Senegal³⁹."

Charles Diané describes a form of partition:

³⁷ As we have seen, Papa Gallo Thiam was a resident, but if Ousmane Camara is to be believed, he remained more or less in hiding in the Cité.

³⁸ And PCF members.

³⁹ CAMARA Ousmane, *Mémoires d'un juge africain: itinéraire d'un homme libre*, Paris, Karthala, pp. 43–44.

In fact, the Cité Internationale and the Pavillon de la France d'Outre-mer at 47 boulevard Jourdan have become practically the drop-off point for all those who, having completed their undergraduate studies in Dakar, are automatically oriented towards France. On the other side of the Paris ring road, the Maison d'Afrique on boulevard Poniatowski at the Porte Dorée is the domain of the movement's hardliners, those who take part in all the petitions, demonstrations and marches. It's also the real stronghold of the PAI⁴⁰. Here, the title of glory is the experience acquired in the battles of the Latin Quarter; over there, on Boulevard Jourdan, you settle in with the halo acquired in the field, even in Africa.⁴¹

After independence in 1960, incidents, demonstrations and movements of all kinds continued, and increased in intensity, with several cases of occupation and sequestration of personnel. Struggle strategies thus became more radical, in line with a general trend in social movements, where the occupation of premises (factories, high schools, offices, etc.) became a recurrent practice in the 1960s, culminating in 1968. In this respect, African students were part of the general (dis)order. In 1962, for example, the residents declared war on the new director Jean Vialatte de Pémillé, who had taken up his post in November 1961, and formulated a whole series of demands deemed unacceptable, including co-management. At the head of the movement were the aforementioned FEANF men Magatte Thiam, Mamadou Sarr and others.⁴² Following police intervention, the residents were evicted. It was also from this movement in 1962 that the Maison closed its doors in the summer.

Rent strikes, building occupations and police intervention were all commonplace in the 1960s and 1970s. While independence had little to do with the students' modes of action, it did have other effects. Embassies sided with residents against the management at,⁴³ demanding

⁴⁰ The Parti africain de l'indépendance (PAI) is a Marxist party founded in Thiès (Senegal) in 1957 by student Majhemout Diop. Most of the FEANF staff are PAI.

⁴¹ DIANÉ Charles, *op. cit.* p. 156.

⁴² Incidents of August 1962 (YEAR, 20090014/239).

⁴³ For example: letter from the ambassador of Madagascar to the director "convinced that such incidents could have been avoided" (August 17, 1962) or letter from the ambassador of Senegal requesting the reinstatement of an expelled student (May 8, 1974). Following this letter, Maurice Valigny appealed to Léopold Sédar Senghor against the embassy, letter dated May 24 1974 (AN, 20090014/239).

accountability not without contradictions, since the states they represented were themselves taking retaliatory measures against their own students in France, all the more so when, from 1967 onwards, the latter systematically occupied their embassies.⁴⁴ The African states unquestionably considered that it was up to them to police a House where they had “founded beds”, and not to the management linked to the French administration. National solidarity works, but it doesn’t when it comes to taking away a student’s scholarship. In the case of La CIUP, the embassies tend to take the side of their students who, moreover, do not hesitate to call on them,⁴⁵ even though they dispute the legitimacy of the powers that be in Africa.

In May 68, the pavilion was the first to be occupied in the CIUP. The occupation was preceded by a number of incidents. On May 16, a poster calling for a General Assembly was torn down by the pavilion direction. This led to a heated exchange between the secretary of the Residents’ Committee and the Maison’s bursar, who allegedly said: “You have no right to discuss anything. Your relationship with the management is that of tenants and landlords, which means it’s a commercial relationship, except that there are no profits”. A little later, the bursar is said to have confirmed these remarks, adding: “In any case, I’m at home here in France, and in good French that means what it means”.⁴⁶ If the remarks in question were indeed made, they are not only racist, but perfectly absurd, since it is the African states that rent the beds in the house, and there is no commercial relationship whatsoever mentioned by the bursar, and if there is a commercial relationship, it is between the states and their students. Nevertheless, these words did not go unanswered. The students held a general assembly on the same day, and drew up a list of demands. In addition to the demand for the bursar’s departure, and a few other circumstantial demands concerning the day-to-day running of the Maison, the most important was undoubtedly that of co-management, which had already been formulated during previous demonstrations. The General Meeting immediately decided to occupy the building.

⁴⁴ See BLUM Françoise, “Ce que les indépendances firent à la FEANF”, art. cit.

⁴⁵ For example: Letter from the FOM Residents’ Committee, August 4, 1962 (AN, 20090014/239).

⁴⁶ May 68 fund from the Centre d’histoire sociale des mondes contemporains—CC1801_P1CHS_2-Mai-68-11_0008.

We don't know exactly when it will come to an end, nor exactly how it was carried out, i.e. who was actively involved and what activities were organized. Nevertheless, the residents did obtain a share in the management of the Maison, a new name—Maison de l'Afrique—and the appointment of an African director, the Dahomean Damien Agboton, who would in turn be taken to task a few months later. But their satisfaction was short-lived. The following leaflet is proof of this:

Down with the neo-colonial administration of the Maison d'Afrique.

On May 16, 1968, the African residents and students, with the help of their comrades at the CIUP, threw down the colonialist director and his clique and demanded a new status for the Maison corresponding to the reality of independence. Among other things, the African students and residents demanded a "statute" to enable greater student participation in the management of their Maison; a more genuine representation of those who finance the management of the Maison, demanding in particular a parity presence at all levels, right up to the board of directors. After lengthy negotiations with the administration, in view of the still neo-colonial structure of African states, the students finally obtained only a change of name for the Maison, which became "Maison d'Afrique": "The presence of an African director, the co-management system, is absolutely bogus; in fact, in the co-management system proposed by the administration, the director could never be outvoted, because in the event of conflict with the director and the others, it's the board of directors who decide, which contains 6 residents out of 27 members, and in the event of a tie, the director, chairman of the management committee, decides as a last resort. In fact, in the area of Maison management, this was a simulacrum of a change of pot without any change in content. That's why the Board, conscious of its mission and following a decision by a general meeting of residents, decided not to co-manage. The new director, of African origin, was none other than a product of colonial administration and French reaction, reactionary in spirit and practice, and characterized by obvious incapacity and ignorance in the management of the Maison".⁴⁷ Maurice Valigny, who would later head the company from 1972 onwards, describes the situation as follows:

⁴⁷ AN, 20090014/239.

Reputed to be ungovernable, anarchic and dirty, it was here that one of the last French directors, Monsieur de Pémille, owed his salvation in May '68 to his prudent retreat. The French authorities thought they were acting wisely when they gave these young, hot-blooded, insurgent blacks a black director, Doctor Agboton, a Dahomean. After the euphoria of his enthronement, more difficult days followed which, after fights, brawls, blows and wounds, ended with the ousting of the principal by rectoral authority.⁴⁸

Incompetence or ignorance, we don't know, but the Dahomean Damien Agboton had a hard time managing a house that was constantly at war with him. The problems he had to face from 1968 to 1972 were of various kinds: difficulty in obtaining payment of sums due from the African states; difficulty in obtaining payment of royalties from residents; constant opposition from residents who criticized his authoritarianism and mismanagement; choice of an inappropriate accounting agent to whom he demanded explanations (malfeasance or negligence, we don't know⁴⁹). The accounting officer in question had, moreover, apparently been chosen by Damien Agboton without following CIUP rules, i.e. validation by the Board of Directors.⁵⁰ It is likely that the year 1968 allowed for many irregularities.

One year after Mai 68, on October 10, 1969, the residents once again drafted a motion in which they denounced Agboton's "nepotistic and regionalist"⁵¹ administration and the disastrous material state of the Maison. They reiterated their unsatisfied demands of 1968, and consequently announced their intention to occupy the administrative premises. A few days later, Damien Agboton informed Pierre Marthelot, general delegate of the CIUP, of the hostility he was encountering, as well as the hard-line actions carried out by the residents: a "commando of individuals" had apparently seized the admission files in his office on October 22, and the members of the commando had threatened to break the windows of his apartment that evening.⁵² These were not the only threats

⁴⁸ About a reconstruction trial (AN, 20090014/229).

⁴⁹ Amégan case, 1969–1971 (AN, 20090014).

⁵⁰ Letter from Marthelot to Agboton, March 19, 1971 (*Ibid.*).

⁵¹ Motion by Maison d'Afrique residents, November 10, 1969 (AN, 20090014/239).

⁵² Letter from Agboton to Pierre Marthelot, October 23, 1969 (AN, 20090014).

he received. A rather anecdotal letter addressed to him on February 14, 1970:

Mr. Director, you swore to lose me. But me too, if you'll allow me, I swear to lose you. "To souls well born, value does not wait for the number of years" (Corneille). I honor you for everything you organize, but let me say out loud that this is not the right way. Always against you. Shachac Oyabisi.⁵³

CIUP MANAGEMENT TAKES CONTROL

Marthelot's letters to Agboton were generally unfriendly, and unlikely to give Agboton much confidence in the future. The situation continued to deteriorate until 1972, when the CIUP, through its General Delegate, took matters into its own hands. In April 1972, Agboton was dismissed, but this did not prevent him from continuing to take certain measures to "protect" the money of African states. On April 14, 1972, Agboton sent a letter to all the embassies of bed-holding countries, telling them that he had opened an account in his own name for the purpose of safeguarding the money owed by the States,⁵⁴ given the threats hanging over the House (i.e. the loss of its autonomy and its attachment to the National Foundation), it was to this account that the States should pay their dues.⁵⁵ Some of them, such as Côte d'Ivoire,⁵⁶ will indeed do so. Agboton understood perfectly well what was going on: the very poor management of the FOM, then in a serious deficit situation and in a catastrophic state of repair (according to the students themselves), was an opportunity for the Fondation nationale de la CIUP. Indeed, in the post-1968 years, the latter had embarked on a general reform aimed at taking many of the houses in hand, with a view to depoliticizing and "francizing" them by replacing foreign directors with French ones. In 1973, in an open letter, some directors denounced the reform of the CIUP and

⁵³ AN, 20090014/239.

⁵⁴ Letters dated March 29, 1972 (AN, 20090014/227/1).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

the veritable “pogrom” against foreigners.⁵⁷ The political context was all the more favorable in that a new French policy of cooperation was underway with African countries, designed to replace the inter-state relations instituted by the Franco-African Community (which had replaced the French Union in 1958⁵⁸). At the same time, borders were to be closed to African nationals, who had hitherto been able to move freely from one area to another with no formalities other than the possession of an identity card.⁵⁹ This became a reality in the mid-1970s, when the cooperation and settlement agreements between France and its former sub-Saharan colonies were renegotiated.

It was in this spirit that the Maison de la FOM, which more or less officially became the Maison de l'Afrique after 1968, was taken in hand by the general delegate of the CIUP, Pierre Marthelot. Agboton was sacked, the residents-occupants of the Maison were evicted by the Republican Security Companies (CRS) on August 7, 1972, and the house was closed indefinitely. A court-appointed administrator was put in charge of liquidating the Maison's liabilities, not without difficulty either, since Agboton had not managed the business rigorously and had not been able to return all the relevant documents.⁶⁰ A project manager, who would later become director of the Maison, was appointed to restore the premises: he was the left-wing Gaullist and director of the Association culturelle et sportive des étudiants malgaches et africains (ACSEMA)⁶¹ Maurice Valigny. The articles of association are revised and a rider added to the deed of gift. Here's

⁵⁷ Letter of resignation from two directors' representatives [Rogado Dias and Arpiarian] following the reform without warning and discussion of the Articles of Association, Paris, October 15, 1973 (AN, 20090014/227/2 and AN, 20090014/239).

⁵⁸ The “yes” vote in the September 1958 referendum meant Community membership for the African territories. The “no” vote meant immediate independence. Only Guinea voted “no”. But the Community never really existed. It remained in place via cooperation agreements and various conventions signed between African states and France.

⁵⁹ There was also freedom of establishment and work, thanks to the conventions signed. These had not been signed by all of France's African partners, but the French government, and in particular the African Affairs Secretariat at the Élysée Palace, did not wish to make any distinction between the various countries. This freedom of movement and establishment was obviously reciprocal, thus safeguarding French interests in Africa.

⁶⁰ To the President of the Paris Tribunal de Grande Instance, Henri Gondre, Judicial Administrator to the Paris Tribunal de Grande Instance.

⁶¹ ACSEMA was one of the associations set up to ensure the successful integration of African students, but also to compete with the influence of FEANF.

how Maurice Valigny described the place as he found it when he took up his post:

A dirty, foul-smelling ghetto, overrun by widely differentiated vermin, modern facilities... in 1951, already marked at the time by a conception of prestige more than comfort, prematurely aged by the absence of any maintenance. The sanitary facilities were rare and in an incredible state of disrepair; the premises were dark, filthy and used against all common sense, with astonishing shortcomings. The girls' showers have no doors, the mattresses are partly punctured, the washbasins are unsealed, and the electrical installations are rich in short-circuits. The list goes on. Add to this, after the August eviction, the short but very devastating existence of an anarchic micro-society, more or less influenced by a curious so-called "action" committee, to which the last representative of legal authority handed over his keys.⁶²

In a letter to Pierre Marthelot, Valigny also mentions:

A visit to the rooms gives a very clear idea of the tenants' state of mind. They were occupying a kind of fortress, organized as best they could to last and resist. On the walls, slogans, maps, leaflets and dioramas of an often clumsy and curiously primitive kind. From the FEANF, the jar with a hundred holes⁶³, plugged by associated hands with, attached as an instrument of progress and civilization, a magnificent machine pistol⁶⁴...

The refurbishment, financed in particular by the French Ministry of Education, lasted until October 4, 1973, when the house was once again able to accept its first hand-picked residents. In the meantime, contacts had been made with the embassies of countries holding beds.⁶⁵ The most significant development, introduced in an amendment to the deed of donation,⁶⁶ was the creation of an advisory committee, which now

⁶² Maurice Valigny, Board meeting of March 20, 1973 (AN, 20090014/227/1).

⁶³ The hundred-hole jar, emblem of King Ghezo of Dahomey, became the FEANF emblem. It was accompanied by the following maxim: "If all the sons of the kingdom came together and plugged the holes in the pierced jar, the kingdom would be saved".

⁶⁴ Letter from Valigny to Pierre Marthelot, September 4, 1972 (AN, 20090014/223).

⁶⁵ Board meeting of June 21, 1973 (AN, 20090014/227/1).

⁶⁶ Draft amendment to the deed of donation to the University of Paris by the Maison de la France d'Outre-mer, which became the Maison d'Afrique: "A consultative and

includes representatives of the embassies. In fact, no trace of a meeting of this committee was found after September 1975, which suggests that it fell into a dormant state, and that the reform had borne the fruit the CIUP's administrators had aspired to, i.e. the sidelining of the States, and the end of their power over the house. This is not an isolated event. The evolution was the same within OEOM, now OCAU, where representatives of the new countries were excluded from the Board of Directors and thus from the management of their students' files.⁶⁷

As a symbol of this new direction, the house was renamed, at Pierre Marthelot's suggestion, "Résidence Lucien Paye", after the former Minister of Education and diplomat posted to North Africa and Senegal. Pierre Marthelot himself had an academic career in Tunisia, and cannot but have crossed paths with Lucien Paye. It was also important to avoid "names that could create illusions about the purely national aspect of the Houses, which they do not have by statute (Maison de l'Afrique)".⁶⁸ Names and statutes are now in unison. Perhaps even more important is the role now assigned to the Fonds d'aide à la coopération (FAC).⁶⁹ In exchange for its subsidies, the FAC will now have beds reserved for its own scholarship holders, i.e. French government scholarship holders, to the detriment of scholarship holders from African states, at a time when we are witnessing an exponential increase in scholarships awarded by states and an equally exponential decrease in FAC⁷⁰ scholarships.

On January 30, 1974, the situation at the Maison de l'Afrique was as follows: out of 230 residents, 22 were of non-African nationality, and there were a total of 34 nationalities, including 101 college scholarship holders (83 boys, 8 girls, 5 couples) and 113 national scholarship holders (97 boys, 8 girls, 4 couples). In addition, there were eight students

advisory committee is also set up, comprising, in addition to the members of the Board of Directors, representatives of the founding States or Territories of beds at the Maison d'Afrique. The Advisory and Steering Committee is kept informed of the progress of the Maison d'Afrique, and is empowered to make wishes and suggestions concerning its operation. It meets at least once a year, convened by the Chairman of the Board", September 20, 1972 (AN, 20090014/223).

⁶⁷ Fabienne Guimont, *op. cit.*

⁶⁸ Presentation by Pierre Marthelot, Advisory Committee, July 19, 1973 (AN, 20090014/229).

⁶⁹ FAC was created in 1959. It replaced FIDES to help finance projects under cooperation agreements.

⁷⁰ OCAU statistics (Archives nationales. Fonds OCAU).

admitted under the French quota and eight students admitted outside the quota.⁷¹ Two observations can be made from these figures. Firstly, it must be borne in mind that they are very low: in 1967/1968, students from sub-Saharan Africa represented just 3.65% of all students housed at the CIUP. In 1973/1974, they represented 5.68% and 6.40% in 1977/1978. These figures include students from English- and Portuguese-speaking Africa, who are not admitted to the *Maison d'Afrique*, but whose numbers are also increasing.⁷² Moreover, the proportion of girls is lower than for the CIUP as a whole. This is due to the considerable delay in girls' education during the colonial period, a delay that the new states are striving to make up for. These are the characteristics of the FOM population: very much a minority and very much male. No sufficiently global figures allow us to establish disciplinary specificities, assuming there are any.⁷³

What's more, the proportion of FAC scholarship holders continued to grow, to the detriment of national scholarship holders. As early as June 1974, following further incidents at the *Maison*, the Ministry of Cooperation considered the idea of housing only FAC scholarship holders there.⁷⁴ By the start of the 1974–1975 academic year, FAC already had 170 beds, and requests from embassies could not be met, even though defaulters had been contacted and accounts cleared. Moreover, embassies were informed of the possibility of accommodating their scholarship holders in other houses by signing agreements.⁷⁵ A commission now decides on admissions, and a certificate of pre-registration in a higher education establishment will be required to apply to the CIUP.⁷⁶ The CIUP's

⁷¹ Board of Directors' meeting of February 6, 1974, Appendix 2.

⁷² OCAU Dossier, Management (AN, 19780596/46).

⁷³ Among all African students in France during the 60s and 70s, disciplinary specificities (i.e. disciplinary differences from French students) tended to disappear. In terms of gender, in 1960 only 17% of African students in higher education were girls. By way of comparison, in 1966–1967, female students represented 45.1% of all students (we have no figures for 1960).

⁷⁴ Letter from the Minister of Cooperation to the Director of OCAU, Paris, June 14, 1974 (AN, 20090014/229).

⁷⁵ Letter from Pierre Marthelot to the Ambassador of Upper Volta, Paris, September 5, 1974 (AN, 20090014/229).

⁷⁶ Applications for university enrolment must now also be submitted to the Ministry of Cooperation, via the OCAU. The following documents are required for enrolment at *Cité Universitaire*: readmission application form; results of the last two academic years;

desire to encourage the mixing of students of different nationalities in its pavilions was strongly asserted, even if the reality did not live up to the administrators' expectations. As late as 1977, the Tunisia pavilion and the Résidence Lucien Paye ranked last in terms of student mixing, with a rate of 17%. The need for brewing was used as a pretext to raise the fees to the same level as in the other houses. The increase was also justified by the desire to stop African residents looking like "welfare recipients".⁷⁷ In 1973, fees for single rooms were raised from 190 to 250 francs, and for double rooms from 160 to 195 francs per bed. It was also decided that unpaid rents would be deducted directly from students' scholarships, a practice made easy by OCAU's management.

Despite these changes, the management of Valigny is not going to be a smooth ride. A housekeeper was guilty of complicity with the residents and of mismanagement, and had to be replaced,⁷⁸ but whether or not the housekeeper was to blame, the damage had been done and the house was once again financially weakened.

The unrest didn't cease with the takeover of the home, either. As early as May 1974, a conflict broke out between management and residents, who occupied the premises and kidnapped staff to make themselves heard.⁷⁹ A police commissioner, the delegate general, and the administrative secretary general of the CIUP, who had come to negotiate, were in turn kidnapped. The protesters demanded the reinstatement of an expelled Senegalese student and the right to participate in the Board of Directors. It was the intervention of the police that freed the "prisoners" and dislodged the occupiers, some of whom were—briefly—taken into custody.⁸⁰ Former Gabonese Senator Durand-Réville, a member of the Board of Directors of the Résidence Lucien Paye and Chairman of

certificate of enrolment or pre-registration at a university in the Paris académie; scholarship certificate (as only scholarship students are now admitted); medical certificate for admission (Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting of February 5, 1975, AN, 20090014/229).

⁷⁷ Presentation by Pierre Marthelot, Advisory Committee, July 19, 1973 (AN, 20090014/229).

⁷⁸ It was a certain Madame Lacroix, a senior administrator at the Résidence Paye, seconded from the French Ministry of Education. She felt that the house rules were too strict. She was also accused of unpaid bills (Report by Pierre Marthelot on the management of Madame Lacroix, addressed to the office of the Rector of the Paris Academy, May 13, 1975, AN, 20090014/227/1).

⁷⁹ Directors' Conference, May 28, 1974 (AN, 20090014/227/1).

⁸⁰ AN, 20090014/223.

the Conseil économique et social (Economic and Social Council) essentializes the attitude of the residents. It's true that young people have to be young, but there is, in his opinion, a "problem specific to the house and which derives from African nature: African students have a very sure intuition, in the event of conflict, of which side is stronger. More than anyone else, they are sensitive to authority. If they feel that the party in front of them is prepared to give in, no positive outcome can be expected".⁸¹ The endemic unrest that persisted throughout 1974 was blamed on the influence of a French troublemaker who was a member of the AJS. Valigny gives a highly disillusioned account of his disappointments with the Maison d'Afrique, adding:

I could feel an omnipresent conductor. I quickly spotted him. In this African world, he was a white man, affiliated to a Trotskyist group. He arrived at the Residence empty-handed, escorted by four athletic Africans carrying his luggage. I really saw that incredible scene. Afterwards, watching him and his escort, I often thought of that Germanic character, Hans the Pied Piper. For it was drowning that he was leading them. In fact, I was often incensed by these de facto attacks on African dignity. And I was the colonialist⁸²!

Durand-Reville, Valigny... These are just a few quotations that bear witness to a more general fact: comments on events at the Maison de la FOM-Résidence Lucien Paye, often refer to a mode of explanation linked to a specific African psychology—childish if we are to believe the allegory of the Pied Piper—and, of course, forged in the mold of the most widely shared prejudices.⁸³ The house is reputed to be ungovernable, even though the turmoil that reigns there is the general fact of ultra-politicized years. In 1976, a major crisis known as the "bedspread affair"⁸⁴ shook the house once again. The director had withheld sums from the deposits, according to him, for damage to the bedspreads. This provoked an outcry, with residents claiming that bedspreads are flammable and therefore dangerous. The house is once again occupied.

⁸¹ Letter to Maurice Valigny (AN, 200914/223).

⁸² Valigny, "Avant qu'un échec ne devient définitif" (AN, 20090014/239).

⁸³ Even if Maurice Valigny doesn't have the self-righteousness of a Durand-Réville, and has shown great respect for his residents in other circumstances.

⁸⁴ "Top-of-the-bed case" (AN, 20090014/239).

House staff go on strike to protest against “insults, assaults, sequestration of part of the staff, etc.” The residents retorted that it was the director himself who had forced the staff to strike. The staff then published a statement accusing the residents alone.

What was new in 1976, however, were the retaliatory measures, which were part of a general trend in immigration policies. FAC scholarships were withdrawn and, above all, four residents were expelled from France. Students had already been expelled, either by the French government for disturbing the peace or similar reasons, or at the request of African governments. These expulsions made African students cautious, as they refrained from demonstrating on the public highway, and reserved their movements for their own spaces, the territories they felt belonged to them: embassies and... Maison d’Afrique. But for the first time, in 1976, Lucien Paye residents were evicted because of their activities within a Maison that was no longer quite Maison d’Afrique. This was one of the many manifestations of a restrictive and repressive policy towards immigrants, whether students or workers. The leaflets defending students were more general in their defense of immigrants. Nationals of the former French overseas territories, after having been citizens and then foreigners, became immigrants.

We’ll stop here, because the second half of the 1970s ushered in a new era, the fundamentals of which are still in place: an era of timid cooperation policies, a highly restrictive visa policy, an era in which the great France gave way to a frigid withdrawal into the hexagon. What presided over the construction of the FOM pavilion, which was an affirmation of grandeur and a desire to transform an Empire into a supranational entity, is well and truly dead. The Empire may have lived on, but so did the bonds it created. There is no longer any preferential policy towards France’s former African territories, even though there are still more or less business-like and unequal relationships. The 1960s were a kind of *no-man’s-land* between imperial policy and cooperative policy. As for the students who passed through the Maison de la FOM-Résidence Lucien Paye, many of them had a national destiny. In some cases, they were able to make the most of their dual culture—that of their country and that acquired in France at the time of the single parties and authoritarian regimes in Africa—and within a house they considered, after all, as their own, crystallizing their political affects in their opposition to colonial dynamics and to the various directors of the pavilion. They waged their struggle, at a time of one-party rule and authoritarian regimes in Africa,

in a country whose culture and language they had acquired in a school set up by colonization, and in a place they considered, after all, their own.

The Maison de la FOM was probably no more troubled than any other, although more or less racist remarks from the administration sometimes made African students a special case. The conflicts of the world were also played out at the CIUP, as these foreign students in diaspora lived and still live in a double temporality: that of France on the one hand—and in our case it was the 1968s—and that of their countries on the other. Hopes were soon followed by disillusionment.

Conflict of Interest The author has no conflicts of interest to declare that are relevant to the content of this chapter.

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A Portuguese Pavilion at the Cité internationale universitaire de Paris: Between the Republic, Patronage and Protest (1924–1974)

Victor Pereira

On January 20, 1960, the Portuguese Minister of National Education, Francisco de Paula Leite Pinto, wrote to thank the President of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (FCG), José de Azeredo Perdigão, for his initiative in enriching “the Cité Universitaire de Paris with a Portuguese residence. This is a subject that was studied many years ago by the *Instituto de Alta Cultura*¹ (then known as the *Junta de Educação*

¹ Institute of High Culture.

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*Nacional*²) but never materialized due to budgetary deficiencies”.³ These few lines, written by one of the key players in the educational and scientific policies of the Portuguese *Estado Novo* dictatorship (1933–1974), reveal that the desire for a Portuguese presence within the Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris (CIUP) goes back to the very beginnings of the enterprise, during the 1920s. They do not, however, mention the project carried out earlier by one of the main opponents of the dictatorship, Afonso Costa. They also fail to mention the role played by Leite Pinto himself, then a young lecturer at the Sorbonne’s Portuguese Institute, in thwarting an initiative he considered ill-advised at the time. In short, these few lines represent a rewriting of history, a process to which André Honnorat was no stranger, quick to reformulate the origins and objectives of the CIUP according to circumstances and his own interests.

From the early 1920s onwards, a number of Portuguese players with different interests and visions wanted to build a Portuguese house at the CIUP. But until 1967, when the Maison des Étudiants Portugais opened, these initiatives ended in failure, or in far less ambitious achievements. It wasn’t until France and Portugal clashed over a Diana the Huntress sculpted by Jean-Antoine Houdon and other works of art collected by a wealthy oil tycoon of Armenian origin that a Portuguese house was built.

This contribution traces the history of the Maison des Étudiants Portugais up to 1974, the date of the Carnation Revolution that ushered in democracy in Portugal, paying close attention to failures and trials and error, and seeking to capture the viewpoints of the various players involved, be they politicians, diplomats, academics or residents. Built to contribute to “Luso-French cultural relations and intellectual exchanges”,⁴ the early years of this university residence were turbulent: an occupation in May–June 1968, protests in the anti-authoritarian mood of the “1968s” and the anti-fascist and anti-colonialist mobilizations led by Portuguese political exiles in France, and tensions between the FCG and the CIUP National Foundation that went so far as to call into question the commitment of the wealthy Portuguese institution.

² National Education Junta.

³ F. de Paula Leite Pinto, to FCG President José de Azeredo Perdigão, January 20, 1960, Arquivo do Instituto Camões (now AIC), 390/24.

⁴ *Ibid.*

THE FIRST FAILURES OF A PORTUGUESE PAVILION AT THE CIUPS

In the spirit of its founders, the CIUP should welcome first and foremost the countries that supported France during the Great War. The CIUP must contribute to the formation of a new world dominated by liberal democracies and founded on peace, collective security, understanding between peoples and collaboration between elites. It is first and foremost about the friendships and alliances that enabled France to win the war.⁵ It's hardly surprising, then, that Portugal was among the first countries to consider building a pavilion, and that the project's promoter was Afonso Costa, a former law professor in Coimbra and then Lisbon, the leading political figure in the Portuguese Republican movement and a key player in Portugal's entry into the conflict in 1916. After the end of the war, Afonso Costa moved to Paris. From March 1919, he was Portugal's representative at the Peace Conference and a regular participant in the activities of the League of Nations. In March 1926, he was even elected President of the League's General Assembly. In both France and Switzerland, he rubbed shoulders with the leading figures who shared the values of pacifism and the spirit of Geneva that guided André Honnorat. In the early 1920s, with the support of Paul Appell and Ernest Martinenche, he became involved in a project to build a *Maison du Portugal* at the CIUP: Portugal had to play a full part in the League of Nations (LoN) and assert itself in the concert of European nations. Erecting a pavilion at the CIUP, this "youth LoN",⁶ was a foreign policy imperative for Costa, and in line with the sacrifices Portugal had made by entering the Great War, to demonstrate the regeneration of the country that the Republicans had been undertaking since 1910.

In March 1926, the Portuguese ambassador in Paris stated that "possession of the land within the 'Cité Universitaire' for the construction of the *Maison Portugaise* is already assured. The future pavilion will

⁵ See Guillaume Tronchet, "Diplomatie universitaire ou diplomatie culturelle? La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris entre deux rives (1920–1940)", in Dzovinar Kévonian & Guillaume Tronchet (eds.), *La Babel étudiante. La cité internationale universitaire de Paris (1920–1950)*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2013, pp. 59–88.

⁶ Frank Sereni, "Quelques réflexions sur les sociabilités étudiantes à la Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (années 1920–1950)", in D. Kévonian & G. Tronchet (dir.), *La Babel étudiante*, *op. cit.* pp. 117–126.

occupy an area of 1,074 square meters and will overlook the ‘boulevard’ Jourdan”.⁷ But a few days later, a military coup overthrew the parliamentary republic. The soldiers who took power had one thing in common: they wanted to put an end to the political hegemony of the Democratic Party, of which Afonso Costa continued to be one of the leading figures, despite his move to France. Somewhat paradoxically, it was in the unstable, indefinite context of the early years of the military dictatorship—which culminated in António de Oliveira Salazar’s seizure of power in 1932—that a new player appeared, initiating contacts with the CIUP’s leaders. In 1929, the Portuguese government founded the *Junta de Educação Nacional* (*National Education Junta*), materializing an aspiration that several republican intellectuals and politicians had cherished.⁸ Indeed, for the Portuguese republicans, strongly influenced by their French counterparts, Portugal could only recover the ground it had lost on other European countries and found a democracy based on free men with the development of education and science.⁹ Higher education played a decisive role in this project. For republicans, it is essential that academics become true researchers, rather than mere teachers who merely repeat knowledge produced by others, usually abroad. In order to stimulate scientific activity, which was virtually non-existent at the time, several Republican politicians had attempted to create institutions to fund and guide research. However, the chronic instability of the First Republic prevented these initiatives from materializing. It was therefore under the military dictatorship that the organization was created. The two main driving forces behind JEN were two medical researchers, Celestino da Costa and Luís Simões Raposo.¹⁰ One of JEN’s missions is to grant scholarships to young researchers so that they can carry out their doctorate abroad or follow courses there, benefiting from facilities that do not exist in Portugal and the guidance of renowned researchers. The institution favors students who, on their return to Portugal, will be able to initiate

⁷ “A casa portuguesa na cité universitaire”, *Diário de Notícias*, March 19, 1926.

⁸ On the Junta de Educação Nacional, see Quintino Manuel Junqueira Lopes, *A Junta de Educação Nacional (1929–1936). Traços de europeização na investigação científica em Portugal*, PhD thesis, Universidade de Évora, 2017.

⁹ Maria Fernanda Rollo, Maria Inês Queiroz & Tiago Brandão, “Pensar e mandar fazer ciência. Princípios e pressupostos da criação da Junta de Educação Nacional na génese da política de organização científica do Estado Novo”, *Ler história*, n°61, 2011, pp. 105–145.

¹⁰ Quintino Manuel Junqueira Lopes, *A Junta de... op. cit.*

new research, pass on up-to-date knowledge and join the research centers that JEN supports or even creates. Between 1929 and 1936, JEN financed the international stays of 148 students and researchers, mainly in France and Germany.¹¹ Correspondence sent to JEN's Secretary General, Luís Simões Raposo, by some of these Paris-based fellows highlights the difficulties they faced in finding accommodation and living with the resources allocated to them. One of the first scholarship holders sent abroad by JEN was Francisco Paula de Leite Pinto, who arrived in Paris at the end of October 1929 to study at the Sorbonne and astrophysics at the Meudon Observatory. In the very first letter he sent to Simões Raposo from Paris, he warned: "Don't send to Paris a scholarship holder who is visiting Paris for the first time, and don't send anyone after September".¹² In fact, all the accommodation in the Latin Quarter is occupied by French and foreign students. In one day he visited 53 hotels and 6 guesthouses. The difficulties of finding accommodation—common at the time, and one of the legitimizations of the founders of the CIUP¹³—affected other JEN scholarship holders in Paris, who were sometimes forced to move to the suburbs.

In January 1931, Celestino da Costa, vice-president of JEN, visited France and met André Honnorat who, failing the construction of a Portuguese pavilion or a Luso-Brazilian pavilion, offered to finance a chambre du Portugal within the Maison des Provinces de France (MPF) currently under construction. This suggestion was accepted by JEN, and from November 1933 onwards, the "chambre du Portugal" welcomed a scholarship holder—but no female scholarship holder, as the MPF did not accept female students—from JEN.¹⁴ On the other hand, the project to build a Portuguese pavilion seems to have been definitively buried. In 1932, Leite Pinto, who the previous year had become the first Portuguese lecturer at the Sorbonne, dissuaded the JEN from such an undertaking, calling into question Honnorat's altruism. Assuming that JEN would

¹¹ *Idem*, p. 49.

¹² Francisco Paula de Leite Pinto to Luis Simões Raposo, November 5, 1929, AIC, 1345/5.

¹³ Nicolas Manidakis, "'La Cité universitaire tue le Quartier latin' : enjeux sociaux et urbains d'une ville étudiante (années 1920–1930)", in D. Kévonian, G. Tronchet (dir.), *La Babel étudiante...*, *op. cit.* pp. 89–99.

¹⁴ Until 1940, this room was occupied by three JEN fellows: Manuel Zaluar-Nunes, mathematician, Manuel Tavares Chicó, art historian, and Orlando Ribeiro, geographer.

never be able to send more than 30 scholarship holders to Paris each year, and that a pavilion needed at least 200 rooms to be profitable, Leite Pinto concluded that the considerable investment by a “nation that doesn’t even have elementary school” would be equivalent to financing “a pavilion for the French”. Leite Pinto, who, as we saw in the introduction, would later make a career within the *Estado Novo*, favored a nationalist perspective and mocked the principles defended by Honnorat: a “work of human solidarity, [of] spiritual communion between nations”. What’s more, in his view, residents were forced to endure “a semi-boarding regime incompatible with the mentality of the majority of Parisian higher education establishments”. Among JEN scholarship holders, most of whom are over 25, few will agree to return “to the Cité at the sound of the bell. Even if we had our own pavilion, there would be Portuguese who would rather stay in the Latin Quarter than go to Porte d’Orléans”.¹⁵ Leite Pinto became JEN General Secretary after the sudden death of Luís Simões Raposo in 1934. His negative opinion certainly contributed to the idea of a Portuguese pavilion at the CIUP being shelved. In the context of the formation and strengthening of the nationalist *Estado Novo* dictatorship, suspicious of foreign influences considered subversive, the sending of scholarship holders to France, particularly in the context of the Front Populaire, was considered politically dangerous.

A UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE IS WORTH A DIANE DE HOUDON

The project to build a Portuguese pavilion at the CIUP was revived at the end of the 1950s, with players who seemed totally unaware of the projects of the 1920s and 1930s. In 1959, the fledgling Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, created three years earlier, offered to provide the University of Paris with a hall of residence built at the CIUP, and to ensure its upkeep. This initiative was part of the complex legacy of Calouste Gulbenkian, who died in Lisbon in 1955.¹⁶ An Armenian born in the Ottoman Empire in 1869, Calouste Gulbenkian made his fortune

¹⁵ F. de Paula Leite Pinto to Luís Simões Raposo, May 4, 1932, AIC, 1345/5.

¹⁶ António Barreto (ed.), *Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian. Cinquante anos (1956–2006)*, Lisboa, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 2006.

in oil and became one of the world's leading art collectors.¹⁷ Although he became an English citizen, he lived in France in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1942, Calouste Gulbenkian moved to Lisbon, taking advantage of the country's neutrality and tax advantages, while keeping his private Parisian hotel, which housed part of his art collection, including a Diane chasseresse by Jean-Antoine Houdon acquired from the Hermitage Museum in 1930. Before his death, together with his Portuguese lawyer, José de Azeredo Perdigão, he drew up a will providing for the creation of a foundation bearing his name and based in Portugal. This foundation, headed by Azeredo Perdigão with the support of a majority Portuguese board of directors, was to support art, science, education and charity. Among the many problems that arose after Gulbenkian's death was that of the works of art remaining in France, which the foundation wanted to bring together in a museum in Lisbon. However, the French Museums Authority refused to allow the departure of certain works, considered to be priceless treasures. Negotiations lasted until 1959. In the face of French resistance, José Azeredo Perdigão agreed to transform Calouste Gulbenkian's private hotel into a cultural center and to build a university residence at the CIUP.¹⁸ An initial deed of gift was signed by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation on October 6, 1960. The Foundation undertook "to build a student residence with around 100 rooms within the Cité Universitaire de Paris, to provide it with all the furniture and equipment necessary for its operation (...) and to set up a working capital fund and a reserve fund for the benefit of this residence".¹⁹ The Maison des étudiants portugais (MEP)—as it is officially known—finally opened its doors on October 16, 1967. The delay was caused by a dispute between the Fondation nationale de la CIUP and the Préfecture de la Seine, which considered that the Portuguese residence was too close to

¹⁷ Jonathan Conlin, *Mr Five per cent. The many lives of Calouste Gulbenkian, the world's richest man*, London, Profile Books, 2019.

¹⁸ Marcello Mathias, *Correspondência Marcello Mathias/Salazar (1947–1968)*, Lisboa, Difel, 1984, pp. 632–633.

¹⁹ Minutes of the Paris University Council, November 28, 1960, Archives nationales (now AN), AJ/16/7044.

the ring road currently under construction.²⁰ It was officially inaugurated on November 20, in the presence of numerous French and Portuguese personalities. At an FCG Board meeting on July 25, 1967, Francisco Leite Pinto (who, after serving as Minister of Education from 1955 to 1961, became Rector of the Technical University of Lisbon from 1963 to 1966, before joining the FCG Board in 1967) expressed concern that the inauguration might be disrupted by an “unpleasant demonstration of a political nature”. In his opinion, the Foundation must take into account “the delicacy and complexity of the problems that may arise with regard, in general, to the attitude of the several dozen Portuguese students who, for political reasons, are today exiled in France and who, situated in their majority in the political camp of the extreme left, constitute a strong opposition movement to the Portuguese regime”. He strongly recommends careful selection of residents to “avoid the introduction of undesirable disruptive elements, or even agitators”.²¹ To ensure the docility of residents, the Board of Directors decided to give priority to FCG scholarship holders, students and/or artists who depended on subsidies granted to them by Portuguese institutions and who, for the most part, were destined to return to Portugal. The latter must have both “moral and scientific qualities”,²² morality being understood as synonymous with political docility. All residents are required to sign a document stating that they have read the internal regulations and agree to abide by them. This document is inspired by the apolitical values advocated by the CIUP’s founders, and is in line with the “formal prohibition on residents engaging in political activities at the Cité”²³: “whatever their personal

²⁰ Loïc Vadelorge, “Emprises sur la ville. Les relations entre la Cité universitaire, Paris et Gentilly (1945–1985)”, in D. Kévonian, G. Tronchet (dir.), *Le Campus-monde : La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris de 1945 aux années 2000*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2022, pp. 39–52.

²¹ FCG Board of Directors, July 25 1967, Arquivo da Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian (now AFCG), FCG PRES 1170.

²² J. de Azeredo Perdigão to J. Veríssimo Serrão, Director of the Portuguese Cultural Center in Paris, April 26, 1968, AFCG, FCG PRES 1170.

²³ Guillaume Tronchet, “‘La Cité en ébullition’. Jeunesse étudiante et action collective à la Cité internationale universitaire de Paris, de 1945 aux années 1968: contestations, mobilisations et circulations”, in D. Kévonian & G. Tronchet (dir.), *Le Campus-monde...*, *op. cit.* pp. 71–120.

opinions, residents must refrain from any individual or collective action or demonstration of a political nature”.²⁴

These fears, expressed by Leite Pinto and shared by the other members of the Board of Directors, stemmed from the boiling point of the student movement in Lisbon and Coimbra from 1962 onwards. Protesting against the lack of freedom that prevented them from organizing autonomously, students multiplied their forms of action: meetings, hunger strikes, occupations of university premises.²⁵ These movements were systematically repressed by the authorities. Several students were arrested and expelled from university. Dozens of students went into exile in France, Switzerland, Belgium, England and Eastern Europe²⁶ to pursue their studies, continue their fight against the dictatorship and avoid their military obligations at a time when colonial wars had broken out from 1961 onwards. During the 1960s, Portuguese exile in France underwent a process of radicalization. Many students in France joined Maoist movements, challenging the Salazarist dictatorship, the colonial wars initiated in 1961, and the Portuguese Communist Party, accused of revisionism.

THE (RELATIVE) CALM BEFORE THE STORM

In November 1967, the House of Portuguese Students, directed by Eduardo Rogado Dias, was home to 56 Portuguese and 66 international students, researchers and artists on scholarships from the FCG or other Portuguese institutions such as the *Instituto de Alta Cultura* (Institute of High Culture) or the *Junta de Energia Nuclear* (Nuclear Energy Board). Although the inauguration was not disrupted, a few days before it took place, the General Delegate reported “the start of a fire, certainly caused by a malevolent act (...) outside the House of Portuguese Students”.²⁷ However, the residence’s first few months seem

²⁴ House rules for Portuguese students, AFCG, PRES 05814.

²⁵ On the student movement in 1962–1974: Alvaro Garrido, *Movimento estudantil e crise do Estado Novo. Coimbra 1962*, Coimbra, Minerva, 1996; Miguel Cardina, *A Tradição da Contestação. Resistência Estudantil em Coimbra no Marcelismo*, Coimbra, Angelus Novus, 2008; Guya Accornero, *The Revolution before the Revolution. Late authoritarianism and student protest in Portugal*, New York/Oxford, Berghahn, 2016.

²⁶ Victor Pereira, “Les luttes des insoumis, réfractaires et déserteurs en France”, *Hommes & Migrations*, n°1330, 2020, pp. 99–104.

²⁷ Report from the the General Delegate of the CIUP, November 10, 1967, AN, 20090013/1094.

rather calm, if we are to believe the regular reports sent by its director to José Azeredo Perdigão. After just a few weeks of operation, the director is delighted with the behavior of the residents and their “perfect respect for the discipline imposed (which, incidentally, is the most rigorous in the Cité Universitaire)”.²⁸ Eduardo Rogado Dias is also in favor of relaxing certain rules, notably those concerning freedom of visit between male and female residents, whose spaces are strictly separated. While the Residents’ Committee—elected at the beginning of 1968—formulated this with, in his words, “the greatest correction and wisdom”, the director defends that “the most prudent and pedagogically correct attitude would be to anticipate events, allowing what should really be allowed, given the circumstances, thus retaining absolute control of the situation”.²⁹ This flexibility was prompted by the mobilizations that had taken place in Antony in 1965, in Nanterre in 1967, and by the demands expressed in several houses of the CIUP.³⁰ In his first reports, Rogado Dias also expressed his support for residents’ cultural activities. He supported residents’ initiatives to organize concerts and lectures. However, within a few months of its opening, the residence did not enjoy a good reputation among students opposed to the regime. On May 1^{er} 1968, one of them described it to his parents as “a refuge for the worst kind of pides [Portuguese political police agents], from whom only the director and secretary escape”. According to this student, “an unbearable concentration camp regime reigns there, which in less than two months of existence was already known within the University of Paris, under the name of ‘the student barracks’”.³¹

However, the MEP has not remained aloof from the mobilizations that have been multiplying within the CIUP since the beginning of 1968.³² Protests were brewing at CIUP. The issue of non-mixed residences and

²⁸ Report from the Director of MEP to the President of FCG, January 10, 1968, AFCG, PRES 05814.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ G. Tronchet, “La cité..., *op. cit.*”

³¹ José Manuel Zaluar Nunes to José Basílio, May 1^{er} 1968, Instituto dos Arquivos Nacionais/Torre do Tombo (now IAN/TT), Arquivo da PIDE/DGS, SC12377 CI (2), NT 7650.

³² Matthieu Gillabert “‘Cité en lutte!’ Transferts culturels et réappropriations des révoltes à la cité internationale”, *Matériaux pour l’histoire de notre temps*, n°127–128, 2018, pp. 36–45; G. Tronchet, “‘Cité..., *op. cit.*”

the authorizations that young women had to request to host boys was raised. Some students also denounce the authoritarianism of the directors and demand to be involved in the management of the residences. These demands were combined with denunciations of American imperialism in Vietnam and dictatorships in Southern Europe and Latin America. For example, on April 24, 1968, several dozen students gathered at the Maison des Étudiants Portugais to demand “the unification of the city’s regulations on the liberal regime of circulation, assembly and association instituted in some pavilions”.³³ According to the Portuguese Embassy in France, informed by historian Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão, director of the Portuguese cultural center created by the FCG in Paris, some of these students took advantage of the opportunity to “shout against the Portuguese political regime and the Gulbenkian Foundation”.³⁴ They then moved on to the U.S. pavilion, which they invaded after smashing the windows. Among the “troublemakers”,³⁵ according to Veríssimo Serrão, was the president of the MEP’s “residents’ committee”, João Manuel Fiadeiro Santos Marques, a former communist activist who, from 1967 onwards, became close to the Maoist militants of the Portuguese Marxist-Leninist Committee. Santos Marques joined several committees forming within the CIUP: the Comité de Liaison Anti-Impérialiste (CLAI) and the Comité de Liaison Inter-Pavillons (CLIP).³⁶

On May 2, 1968, José Manuel Fiadeiro Santos Marques passed on to the Director of the MEP the results of a consultation carried out with just over half the male and female residents: 97% of female residents questioned (out of 29) and 90% of male and female residents (out of 59) wanted free movement within the residence, identical for both sexes. Faced with the demands expressed since the beginning of 1968, as exemplified by the actions of Pierre Marthelot, General Delegate of the CIUP, the FCG tried to take the lead in limiting the protests, following the advice of Rogado Dias. The first meeting of the MEP Board of Directors was convened on May 3, 1968, just as the occupation of the Sorbonne was beginning. It was chaired by the Portuguese ambassador to Paris,

³³ “Des étudiants forcent les portes du pavillon américain”, *Le Monde*, April 26, 1968.

³⁴ Chargé d’affaire of the Portuguese Embassy in Paris, to the Portuguese Minister of Foreign Affairs, April 25, 1968, Arquivo Histórico-Diplomático (henceforth AHD), PEA 521.

³⁵ *Idem*.

³⁶ M. Gillabert “Cité en lutte..., *op. cit.* p. 39.

Marcelo Mathias, who had played an important role in the creation of the Maison, and included among its members the Portuguese consul in Paris. The Board of Directors abolishes article 28 of the internal regulations, which separated the areas devoted to male and female residents. From now on, residents may welcome other people into their rooms between 1 and 11 pm. However, visitors must identify themselves to the concierge or janitor, and residents receiving guests must collect them from the lobby.

When the events of May broke out, many students from the CIUP in general, and from the Maison des Étudiants Portugais in particular, were already mobilized. However, it would be wrong to conclude that this was the case for all MEP residents. Many remain carefully aloof from all mobilizations and claim to be continuing their studies without a hitch.³⁷

**“TODAY, MAY 22, 1968, WE REVOLUTIONARY
WORKERS AND STUDENTS DECLARE THIS HOUSE
THE FIRST FREE TERRITORY OF PORTUGAL”**

On the morning of May 23, 1968, Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão, sent a telex to FCG headquarters in Lisbon, informing them that the MEP “was occupied yesterday evening at 7.30 pm by 40 so-called French, Spanish and Portuguese students and a few workers. A large majority of residents wanted to react, but the invaders blocked the secure entrance door to the terrace and cut off the telephone. Rogado Dias and his family are locked in their apartment”.³⁸ According to Vasco de Castro, one of the members of the Portuguese section of the Workers-Students Action Committee (Comité d’action travailleurs-étudiants), which formed at Censier University on May 16, 1968,³⁹ the idea of occupying the Maison des étudiants portugais had its origins in the occupation of the Collège d’Espagne on

³⁷ Interview with Armando Machado, Lisbon, August 6, 2020.

³⁸ Telex from Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão to the President of the FCG, May 23, 1968, AFCEG, PRES 1170. Fernando Pereira Marques, one of the occupants of the Portuguese Students’ House, claims that it was not the occupants who cut the telephone wires. See Fernando Pereira Marques, *A praia sob a calçada. Maio de 68 e a ‘geração de 60’*, Lisboa, Ancora editora, 2005.

³⁹ Jacques Baynac, *Mai retrouvé. Contribution à l’histoire du mouvement révolutionnaire du 3 mai au 16 juin 1968*, Paris, Robert Laffont, 1978, p. 143.

May 18. Two Spanish teachers encouraged him to follow suit.⁴⁰ Although the House is owned by the FCG and therefore not directly dependent on the Portuguese state, the symbolism seems strong.⁴¹ On May 22, several members of the Portuguese section of the Workers-Students Action Committee entered the MEP, declaring that they were occupying it. Although they counted on some support among the residents, and the director of the house was unable to oppose them (and seemed to have expected this occupation, as suggested by the correspondence he had exchanged with the foundation in the preceding hours), some international residents resisted, and the occupiers had to seek help in other houses. They took control of the residence in the evening and quickly sought to identify any spies, as the residence had a reputation, as we have seen, for being a den of political police informers. The very next day, two residents—a Portuguese and a German—were evicted on suspicion of spying on their comrades. The Occupation Committee quickly issued a leaflet:

Comrades,

Workers occupy factories and workplaces. Students occupy universities, high schools and student residences. As part of this struggle, on May 22 the Sorbonne's workers-students liaison committee occupied the Maison des étudiants portugais de la cité universitaire. This house, until now a residence for the privileged, is now open to all workers and students, and is now called: Maison des travailleurs et étudiants portugais (House of Portuguese workers and students). For the purposes of conviviality, information and free discussion of all problems (...). Open day and night.⁴²

A general meeting attended by some residents, occupants and a few Portuguese exiles living in Paris was held on May 23. The occupation of the house seems to count on the support of only a minority of residents. Despite his activism in the preceding months, Santos Marques

⁴⁰ Vasco de Castro. *Discordante e indocumentado. Conversas com Mário Beja Santos*, (unpublished), 2013, p. 262.

⁴¹ On the reactions of Portuguese living in France to the events of May-June 1968: Victor Pereira, "Les Portugais en France pendant mai-juin 1968", *Revista de História das Ideias*, vol.38, 2020, pp. 269–305.

⁴² Tract [undated], IAN/TT, Arquivo da PIDE/DGS, SC 10254 CI (2), NT 7591.

initially “tried to delay”⁴³ the occupation, but ended up showing solidarity with the members of the occupation committee from the Sorbonne, without however taking a very active part in the occupation. Most of the residents—especially those from Portugal, who had received scholarships from the FCG and other institutions—were afraid to take part in the occupation, either out of conviction or with a view to their future return home. They fear being arrested and/or losing their scholarships. In the days preceding the occupations of other residences, Eduardo Rogado Dias had “maintained a dialogue with the residents to create a sense of responsibility”⁴⁴: he invited them not to mobilize. During the first days of the occupation, Rogado Dias remained in the residence, confining himself to his apartments to avoid any damage. The director of the Paris cultural center even urged residents opposed to the occupation not to leave the premises: “Residents must stay and defend the Maison des étudiants portugais (...). Abandonment of the House of Portuguese Students by the residents present would mean victory for the invaders”.⁴⁵ However, Rogado Dias ended up surreptitiously leaving the residence on May 31, having waited several days in vain for any police intervention. Other residents ended up leaving the house and staying in hotels.

Most of the occupants have long-standing militant experience. Indeed, several of them were active in the student movements that took place in Portugal from 1962 onwards. In France, many of these former students became involved in movements and associations that rejected both the Salazarist dictatorship and the PCP. In these associations—such as the Ligue portugaise de l’enseignement et de la culture populaire or the Club franco-portugais de la jeunesse—they try to politicize immigrant workers through conferences, concerts and plays.⁴⁶ Most of the occupiers are linked to Maoist movements, but also to groups that advocate armed struggle and take their cue from Cuba, such as the

⁴³ Interrogation of João Manuel Fiadeiro Santos Marques, February 8, 1969, IAN-TT, Arquivo da PIDE/DGS, SC GT 733, NT 1428, pasta 1.

⁴⁴ Telex from J. Veríssimo Serrão to FCG President, May 21, 1968, AFCG, PRES 1170.

⁴⁵ Telex from J. Veríssimo Serrão to FCG President, May 23, 1968, AFCG, PRES 1170.

⁴⁶ V. Pereira, *Les exilés politiques portugais en France*. Master’s thesis, University of Rouen, 2000.

Liga d'União e de Acção Revolucionária (League of Union and Revolutionary Action—LUAR).⁴⁷ One movement seems to be absent: the PCP and the student organization it dominated at the time, the União dos Estudantes Portugueses em França (Union of Portuguese Students in France, UEPF). Like many of their French comrades, Portuguese communists were destabilized by the May–June 1968 movements. The absence of PCP militants was not only due to prejudice against student action. Several of them were living clandestinely in France, such as PCP secretary-general Álvaro Cunhal.⁴⁸ For the Portuguese Communists, the MEP was also considered an unsafe place, as residents were suspected of informing the Portuguese political police. The party's priority of fighting the dictatorship and safeguarding its clandestine apparatus in France, considered essential for coordinating militant action in Portugal and abroad, partly explains the absence of PCP members. Nevertheless, the occupants targeted both the Portuguese dictatorship and the PCP. The names given to the rooms in the Portuguese house reveal the occupiers' influences: Marx and Engels room, Che Guevara room, but also Bento Gonçalves room, former general secretary of the PCP, a figure recuperated by Maoist militants who claimed to be reforming the real Communist Party and thus implicitly criticizing Álvaro Cunhal for betraying the party and the workers' movement. The graffiti found on the walls at the end of the occupation also attest to the ideological diversity of the occupants, as well as the presence of French, Spanish and Brazilian individuals. The slogans, symbols of the liberation of speech during May–June '68, are both those found in other places of protest—such as the Sorbonne or the Odéon—but also refer to the struggles waged against South European and Latin American dictatorships. In many graffiti, the emphasis is on the use of violence to bring down capitalism, in line with the aspirations of the Maoist and leftist movements formed in exile. These slogans also criticize the PCP's alleged “wait-and-see” attitude, which, according to these movements, is reduced to sterile opposition to the dictatorship.

During the 21 days of occupation, several general assemblies punctuated the life of the Maison de étudiants et des travailleurs portugais.

⁴⁷ Fernando Pereira Marques, *Uma nova concepção de luta. Materiais para a história da LUAR e da resistência armada em Portugal*, Lisboa, Tinta-da-China, 2016.

⁴⁸ V. Pereira, “Álvaro Cunhal em Paris: internacionalismo, exílio e emigração”, in José Neves (ed.), *Álvaro Cunhal. Política, História e Estética*, Lisboa, Tinta-da-China, 2013, pp. 67–78.

A draft statute advocating co-management of the residence is proposed, and several committees oversee the occupants' activities: a political and cultural agitation committee, a management, hygiene and supplies committee, a student-worker action committee, a security committee and a coordination committee. The occupants' aim was to support student and worker struggles, and to act as an intermediary between students and Portuguese workers, some of whom were frightened by events they likened to a civil war.⁴⁹ The house was also intended to be an open space, and a number of cultural initiatives were proposed. Luís Cília, exiled in France since 1964, gave a concert.⁵⁰ One of the occupants, Fernando Pereira Marques, remembers the cinema sessions organized by Carlos Saboga, including the screening of Frédéric Rossif's film *Mourir à Madrid*. The theater, which several occupants had been practicing in France for several months, was also present. The first performance in France of the play *Le chant du fantoche lusitanien*, by the famous playwright Peter Weiss, is said to have taken place during the occupation. As was the case at the Sorbonne and the Odéon, numerous debates were organized. On May 28, for example, the theme was "Prospects for revolution in Portugal? Bourgeois democracy or popular democracy? National uprising or people's war?"⁵¹ Here again, there was implicit criticism of the strategy developed by the PCP since Álvaro Cunhal's escape from prison in 1960.⁵² While not completely rejecting the use of violence, Cunhal argued that the dictatorship would fall following a "national uprising", which would only be possible after long and patient work with the popular masses. The Maoist movements and the LUAR, on the other hand, advocate immediate recourse to armed struggle.

⁴⁹ V. Pereira, "Les Portugais en France pendant mai-juin 1968", *Revista de História das Ideias*, vol.38, 2020, pp. 269–305.

⁵⁰ Ana Aranha, Carlos Ademar (eds.), *Memórias do exílio*, Lisboa, Parsifal, 2018, pp. 125–142.

⁵¹ Fernando Pereira Marques, *A praia...*, *op. cit.* p. 125.

⁵² José Pacheco Pereira, *Álvaro Cunhal. Uma biografia política*. vol.4. *O secretário-geral*, Lisboa, Temas e debates, 2015.

WITHDRAWALS AND REPRESSIONS

On June 12, the Occupy Committee announced its withdrawal from the MEP. A leaflet claimed that its aims had been achieved, in particular “to attack and openly confront, through this coup de main, the fascist or militarist regimes reigning in the countries of origin of these pavilions”, “to demolish the political espionage networks and fascist nuclei, and to expel the agents provocateurs and police who had set up shop in this housing estate with the complicity of the administrations”. From then on, the committee considered that maintaining the occupations would only constitute “an act of political wait-and-see, of oratorical self-defense fully foreseen and framed within the overall strategy of the Gaullist counter-revolution”. The struggle must continue elsewhere: “militants will be more useful on other fronts and must move on to higher forms of organization and struggle”.⁵³ In the days that followed, other houses were emptied of their occupants, sometimes after discreet negotiations with CIUP officials, who feared that other occupants might take advantage of a moment’s latency. As Guillaume Tronchet notes, occupants from countries ruled by dictatorships probably fear police intervention, arrest and possible eviction.⁵⁴

After the occupants left, normalcy did not return immediately. On June 14, an assembly of the residents of the Maison des étudiants portugais brought together 50 people (a third of all tenants). A large majority voted in favor of a motion calling for the establishment of “co-management bodies with at least equal representation (students, administration) as a first step, and which could go as far as the self-management of the House of Portuguese Students by the students”.⁵⁵ However, Eduardo Rogado Dias quickly resumed his duties to prevent these co-management or self-management projects from developing. Without a hitch, the house was closed on July 15 for renovation work.

While the occupation was still taking place, repression was in the offing. As early as May 25, Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão advised the FCG President that “until the responsibility of each scholarship holder in the

⁵³ “To Remaining Comrades” leaflet, June 12, 1968, IAN/TT, A Arquivo da PIDE/DGS, SC 10254 CI(2), NT 7591.

⁵⁴ G. Tronchet, “Cité en ébullition...”, *op. cit.* p. 106.

⁵⁵ Resolution of the residents of the House of Portuguese Students in general assembly, June 14, 1968, AN, 20090013/1094.

condemnable occupation (...) is clarified (...) nothing should be decided with regard to scholarship renewal applications. The problem of the selection of residents, including scholarship holders, must be firmly addressed if the Foundation wishes the House of Portuguese Students not to suffer further provocations in the future”.⁵⁶ In the days that followed, he wrote notes on each of the foundation’s scholarship holders, distinguishing between those who opposed the occupation and those who did not, or even collaborated with it. The latter, in his opinion, should have their grants not renewed or even cut off as soon as possible. As for Rogado Dias, he reports to the Prefecture of Police the names of “15 of the 30 members of the occupation committee”.⁵⁷ In the following weeks and months, several of the occupants were evicted or placed under house arrest. Some of the occupiers, such as Carlos Saboga, José Barrias and Manuel Areias, feared deportation to Portugal and left for Italy. Contrary to its reputation among Portuguese political exiles, the PIDE had very few sources of information about what was happening in France in May–June 1968. A letter sent by a Portuguese theology student to a parish priest in Braga on July 10, 1968, in which he describes the events of May–June, the occupation of the Sorbonne and that of the MEP. In this letter, intercepted by the political police, the student gave the names of many of the occupiers, enabling the PIDE to issue arrest warrants. In the months that followed, some of the individuals mentioned in the letter were arrested and interrogated when they returned to Portugal.

A SIMMERING CONFLICT BETWEEN THE CIUP NATIONAL FOUNDATION AND THE CALOUSTE GULBENKIAN FOUNDATION

Throughout the occupation, Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão harshly criticized the management of the National Foundation, and in particular Pierre Marthelot, who, in his opinion, had “acted in a rather dubious manner”, even “cowardly”.⁵⁸ Verissimo Serrão would have liked the police to intervene to stop the occupation immediately and imprison those responsible for the damage. The events of May–June 1968 severely damaged relations between the CIUP National Foundation and the FCG. The wave

⁵⁶ J. Veríssimo Serrão to FCG President, May 27, 1968, AFCG, FCG PRES 1170.

⁵⁷ J. Veríssimo Serrão to FCG President, June 8, 1968, AFCG, FCG PRES 1170.

⁵⁸ J. Veríssimo Serrão to FCG President, June 5, 1968, AFCG, FCG PRES 1170.

of occupation prompted Pierre Marthelot to push for changes that the FCG, like other governments and foreign foundations, resisted. In particular, he wanted to rebalance the Board of Directors, which had been chosen by the FCG, and introduce co-management within the MEP. These two objectives were put forward as early as June 6 in a memo from the National Foundation. Drawing conclusions from the occupations and protests, this document argues that “a means must be found to ensure that there are no more direct interventions by foreign embassies or governments in the houses of the CIUP. The political surveillance of residents, the intervention of outside political police forces, cannot be supported under any circumstances by residents, and moreover pose many problems when these interventions occur in a French university campus”.⁵⁹ In the months that followed, Pierre Marthelot tried to change the composition of the Board of Directors of the *Maison des Étudiants Portugais*, which, “with a few exceptions, was made up exclusively of members of the Gulbenkian Foundation for the Portuguese, and even the French, part”.⁶⁰ In the first letter he sent to Azeredo Perdigão after the occupation, after regretting the damage and praising the “coolness and skill of Mr. Rogado Dias”, Marthelot proposed changes to the MEP Board of Directors, believing that “sufficient space had not been kept in the French section for independent university personalities, as is normally the case in other boards”.⁶¹ Marthelot proposed inviting two French academics to the Board of Directors: Raymond Cantel, then Dean of the Faculty of Letters at Poitiers, and Andrée Mansuy, Senior Lecturer at the University of Vincennes, who, for Marthelot, ensured the presence of a “female personality”⁶² in a house that housed female residents. These two academics, more specialists in Brazil than Portugal and therefore less dependent on the FCG to fund their research, replaced Robert Gulbenkian and the FCG’s legal advisor, who were not academics. Marthelot hopes to depoliticize the Board of Directors—although Mathias and the Portuguese Consul in Paris are still members—and reduce the number of members too closely linked to the Foundation.

⁵⁹ Note on the “situation at the Cité universitaire on June 6 [1968]”, AN, 20090013/513.

⁶⁰ P. Marthelot to the Rector of the University of Paris, September 11, 1968, AN, 20090013/1094.

⁶¹ P. Marthelot to the President of the FCG, July 25, 1968, AN, 20090013/1094

⁶² P. Marthelot to the President of the FCG, January 15, 1969, AN, 20090013/1094

Marthelot also wanted the FCG to introduce the principle of co-management within the *Maison des étudiants portugais*. In the aforementioned memo of June 6, 1968, it is stated that “in the houses, we can only envisage a large place for co-determination formulas which remain to be defined. We must also take into account the changes made to the notion of neutrality, which must be replaced by that of freedom of expression, subject to precautions to be taken to maintain public order and respect for consciences”.⁶³ However, as far as FCG officials and Rogado Dias are concerned, the residents do not want any further changes: the concessions on visiting rights and freedom of movement within the *Maison* granted at the beginning of May are quite sufficient. In their view, the occupation was not the result of residents’ aspirations: the occupiers were for the most part strangers to the CIUP, and their actions were part and parcel of the events of May–June 1968. This rhetoric enabled the FCG to refuse any change and to conceal the fact that it was, in Paris, one of the symbols of the dictatorship. The FCG—both in Lisbon and Paris—thus disapproved of the reforms initiated by Marthelot at the end of 1968 and the co-management practices in line with the Rivero report. For the start of the 1968/1969 academic year, residents were carefully selected: those who had collaborated with the occupation or not opposed it vigorously enough were not allowed to stay. The director of the MEP also ensured that the residents’ committee was made up of loyal members. As a result, the MEP experienced little turbulence during the 1968–1969 academic year. The following academic year, however, saw the outbreak of numerous tensions. The resident committee elected in the autumn resigned in February 1970, refusing to “endorse a semblance of democracy and dialogue that does not exist in reality”.⁶⁴ This resignation enabled a French student to present himself as the “sole elected representative of the residents of the Portuguese students’ house”⁶⁵ and, supported by a few residents, to challenge the director’s “repressive and

⁶³ Note on the “situation at the Cité universitaire on June 6 [1968]”, AN, 20090013/513.

⁶⁴ Ex-comité des résidents de la *Maison des étudiants portugais* au conseil de gestion de la CIUP, March 2, 1970, AN, 20090013/1094.

⁶⁵ Jacques Lhomet to the CIUP management board, March 2, 1970, AN, 20090013/1094.

policing methods”.⁶⁶ These tenants called for student participation in the house’s Board of Directors and Admissions Committee, and for greater freedom of movement and visiting rights within the house, in terms that Rogado Dias considered disrespectful. During this conflict, Rogado Dias also regretted that the National Foundation did not support him, thus undermining his authority. In February 1970, in barely veiled terms, Azeredo Perdigão threatened to stop funding the home. Indeed, beyond his demands and protests, in February 1970 the residents’ committee invited Pierre Jalée to give a lecture on imperialism in Africa and Portugal’s role. In a telegram sent to Marthelot, Azeredo Perdigão considered it “inadmissible that a residence for Portuguese students abroad maintained by a Portuguese foundation officially declared to be of general public utility, with all its inherent advantages, should be transformed into a place for political propaganda against Portugal. (...) If, however, the management of the CIUP cannot prevent the MEP from being transformed into an instrument for attacking Portuguese policy in any of its aspects, the foundation will be obliged to review the *modus vivendi* which currently governs its relations with the Cité internationale”.⁶⁷ Azeredo Perdigão saw this invitation as a provocation, all the more so since in June 1969 the CIUP National Foundation had not prevented the holding of a “week on Portugal and the liberation struggles in Guinea, Angola and Mozambique”, which included film screenings, a round-table discussion with representatives of the PAIGC, MPLA, FRELIMO, Gérard Chaliand, Basil Davidson and Jean Mettas, and a performance of Peter Weiss’s play “Le chant du fantôme lusitanien”.

After the exclusion of student protesters, calm seemed to return to the MEP by the end of 1970. For example, after the assassination of PAIGC leader Amílcar Cabral on January 20, 1973, there were no protests at the MEP. Instead, a meeting was held at the Maison de la Tunisie to “denounce the barbaric and bloodthirsty methods skillfully devised by the imperialists and all reactionaries against the leaders and militants of patriotic and revolutionary organizations”.⁶⁸ This lull also contrasted with

⁶⁶ Demands of the residents’ assembly of the Portuguese Students’ House on March 16, 1970, AN, 20090013/1094.

⁶⁷ Telegram from José Azeredo Perdigão to Pierre Marthelot, February 12, 1970, AN, 20090013/1094.

⁶⁸ Flyer “Grand meeting Thursday, 25 in homage to Amílcar Cabral assassinated on 20-1-1973”, Fundação Mário Soares; Arquivo Amílcar Cabral, Pasta 07200.174.008.

the strong radicalization of student mobilizations in Portugal, but also within Portuguese exile in France. However, the young Portuguese exiles seemed to be moving away from a place they considered out of their depth, preferring the living and working environments of the hundreds of thousands of Portuguese immigrants residing in France at the time, whom they were seeking to politicize and mobilize.⁶⁹

In his report on the 1975–1976 academic year, Eduardo Rogado Dias congratulates himself: “Once again this year, our house has disproved the rule that any political incident in a country necessarily has immediate repercussions in that country’s representative house at the CIUP. The coup d’état [crossed out and replaced by ‘Revolution’] in Portugal on April 25 1974, and the political crises that followed until November 1975, with its successive shifts to the left and to the right, did not provoke any turbulent reaction among the residents of the house; and the wisdom of the principal parties concerned definitely rebuffed the usual attempts from outside”.⁷⁰ However, the MEP did not remain completely aloof from the events in Portugal, which were widely echoed in France.⁷¹ On December 5, 1974, at the MEP, officers from the Armed Forces Movement organized a debate on the political and economic situation in Portugal, attended by around 200 students. According to the Renseignements Généraux, “differences of opinion arose between the military and certain young Portuguese leftists present in the room, who apparently did not appreciate the policy of austerity and rigor advocated by the speakers”.⁷² Nevertheless, in the weeks following April 25 1974, many young Portuguese exiles returned to Portugal, now free to return to their homeland⁷³ and, for many, eager to take part in the Revolution taking place there. From this perspective, the calm of the MEP is easily explained. It’s a far cry from the theaters invested by the actors with the most militant capital.

⁶⁹ V. Pereira, “Portugais en lutte. Une mobilisation paradoxale”, *Plein droit*, n°100, 2014, pp. 40–44.

⁷⁰ Activity report, House of Portuguese Students, 1975–1976, AN, 20090013/1094.

⁷¹ V. Pereira, “Quel 25 avril pour les émigrés? The Portuguese state and migrants in France during the Carnation Revolution”, *Migrance*, n°43, 2014, pp. 43–55.

⁷² Note from the Renseignements Généraux, December 16, 1974, AN 19880312/18.

⁷³ However, draft dodgers, draft resisters and deserters had to regularize their situation with the military authorities. V. Pereira, “La révolution des Œillets et (le début de) la fin de l’exil”, in *Exils. Témoignages d’exilés et de déserteurs portugais*, Paris, Chandeigne, 2024, pp. 155–172.

The Carnation Revolution also saw a gradual improvement in relations between the CIUP National Foundation and the FCG. Since June 1970, to prevent the National Foundation from taking control of MEP affairs, Azeredo Perdigão stopped convening meetings of the Board of Directors, much to Pierre Marthelot's dismay. In July 1973, the latter regretted this absence, which "prevents normal consultation between the founding and French authorities at this level". The General Delegate went further, suggesting that the composition of the Board of Directors be reformulated: Azeredo Perdigão would take over as Chairman from Marcello Mathias (who was no longer Portugal's ambassador in Paris, but had become a director of the FCG, responsible for its international department). Marthelot reiterates his argument formulated in 1968: this modification "would in particular avoid the ambiguity that certain malicious observers do not fail to use by considering this house as a dependency of the embassy, which it is in no way".⁷⁴ This proposal seemed to displease Azeredo Perdigão, who curtly replied to the delegate general. However, after the revolution, which caused turbulence within the FCG and notably the departure of Marcelo Mathias from its Board of Directors, Azeredo Perdigão agreed to add an amendment to the deed of gift, modifying the composition of the Board of Directors in order to "depoliticize" it.⁷⁵ The Board is now chaired by Azeredo Perdigão rather than Marcello Mathias. Members appointed by the FCG should preferably be academics. And in addition to the Rector, the President of the CIUP National Foundation and the General Delegate, two French personalities are appointed by the Board of Directors of the National Foundation. From now on, Portuguese and French will sit equally on the Board of Directors. Lastly, the amendment specifies that the *Maison des étudiants* will henceforth be known as the "résidence André de Gouveia—Fondation Calouste Gulbenkian". Wishing to remove references to countries and give preference to names of individuals who had "honored their country and humanity",⁷⁶ Marthelot asked the foundation to propose a new name for the house. Azeredo Perdigão chose the name of André de Gouveia, a Portuguese humanist of the 16^e century, who had studied at the Collège Sainte-Barbe in Paris under his uncle's rule, whom he

⁷⁴ P. Marthelot to FCG President, July 24, 1973, AN, 20090013/1094.

⁷⁵ FCG President to P. Marthelot, October 4, 1974, AN, 20090013/1094.

⁷⁶ P. Marthelot to FCG President, September 10, 1974, AN, 20090013/1094.

succeeded before becoming rector of the University of Paris. This choice would undoubtedly have pleased André Honnorat, who multiplied references to the Middle Ages and placed the CIUP in the long history of a Parisian university that welcomed students and teachers from all over Europe.⁷⁷ With this choice, Azeredo Perdigão also signified the end of the Portuguese Empire (the decolonizations took place in 1974–1975) and emphasized Portugal's integration into Europe, the new horizon of Portuguese foreign policy.⁷⁸

Conflict of Interest The author has no conflicts of interest to declare that are relevant to the content of this chapter.

⁷⁷ G. Tronchet, “Diplomatie universitaire...”, *op. cit.*

⁷⁸ Y. Léonard, *Histoire de la nation portugaise*, Paris, Tallandier, 2022; V. Pereira, *C'est le peuple qui commande. La révolution des Œillets (1974–1976)*, Bordeaux, Éditions du Détour, 2023.

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The Maison du Brésil During the Long'68: Between the Internationalism of University Networks and the Authoritarian Nationalism of the Military

Angélica Müller

The main objective of this chapter is to present how the events of 1968 and the occupation of the Maison du Brésil by Brazilian diplomatic agents, both civilian and military, were perceived, and to analyze the consequences of this occupation on the operation of the Maison. To do this, I will first briefly review the trajectory of the building's construction project during the 1950s, carried out at the time of the “second wave”¹ of building construction in the Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (CIUP). At this stage, Brazil had a markedly developmentalist

¹ Dzovinar Kévonian, Guillaume Tronchet (dir.), *Le Campus-Monde. La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris de 1945 aux années 2000*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2022.

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national policy, whose principles in the field of cultural diplomacy shared the importance of the CIUP's internationalist proposal. I analyze the first years of the House's operation up to the beginning of the military dictatorship in 1964, when the government began to ignore the statutes that governed it (as well as those of the CIUP) and to monitor its residents. The militaristic logic based on the doctrine of national security came to govern Brazilian policy at all levels. The result was that, coupled with the Brazilian events of 1968 and the events in France, the military government realized that maintaining the *Casa da Brasil* on French soil did more to discredit the country than actually bring any beneficial results for its image, and eventually legally disengaged itself from its links with the *Casa*.

The article is the result of extensive ongoing primary and secondary source research conducted in France and Brazil as part of the GlobalYouth Project² and of the CNPq/Faperj projects.³ The documents and their respective archives will be listed as the sources are cited. Theoretically, this work is part of the tradition of studies investigating international cultural relations on the one hand, and socio-cultural history⁴ on the other. This socio-cultural history meets an intellectual history that is no longer conceived solely as a "history of ideas", although it understands that the ideas that form the construction of national cultural identities are operated in a process of international circulation.⁵ These ideas are concretized through the constitution of networks, demonstrating the importance of understanding the actors/operators and their activities for the construction of an institutional history that is also diplomatic.

² *A Global Youth in the Making: the 200,000 Residents of the Cité internationale universitaire in 20th-Century Paris*, Project GlobalYouth, financed by the French National Research Agency, Institut d'histoire moderne et contemporaine (University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, Ecole normale supérieure ENS-PSL, CNRS), lead by Guillaume Tronchet, ANR-17-CE28-0005, 2017–2022. This article is a translated and revised version of: Angélica Muller, « La Maison du Brésil pendant les "années 1968" », in Dzovinar Kévonian and Guillaume Tronchet (ed), *Le Campus-monde, op. cit.*, p. 185–198.

³ La Maison du Brésil en France: espace transnational de circulation socioculturelle (1959–1979)", under the direction of Angélica Muller.

⁴ Robert Frank (ed.), *Pour l'histoire des relations internationales*, Paris, PUF, 2012; Christophe Charle. *Homo historicus: reflexões sobre a história, os historiadores e as ciências sociais*, Porto Alegre/Rio de Janeiro, Editora da UFRGS, Editora FGV, 2018.

⁵ Anne-Marie Thiesse, *La création des identités nationales*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1999.

THE MAISON PROJECT AND ITS EARLY YEARS

As soon as the CIUP was created in the 1920s, the Brazilian government—then renowned for its diplomatic tradition, despite a minor role in the cultural and educational sector—was interested in the idea of building a home for Brazilian students in Paris.⁶ On the one hand, the idea was in line with fashionable modernism, where Brazil sought to reflect on its identity, underlining its specificity within the post-war international concertation. On the other hand, it helped to incorporate French culture into Brazil—through long-term intellectual and cultural affinities—thus reinforcing the initial imperial ambition of French⁷ academic diplomacy. In 1926, Georges Dumas, a medical doctor and recognized conduit of French cultural relations to Latin American countries, invited Antônio Austragésilo, a doctor, member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters and then federal deputy, to hold several lectures at the Sorbonne, the Salpêtrière university hospital and to visit the CIUP. On his return to Brazil, Austragésilo presented to the Chamber of Deputies, on July 13 of the same year, a project for the creation, in Paris, of the *Maison de l'étudiant brésilien*.⁸ In 1928, the Brazilian ambassador, Luis Martins de Souza Dantas, visited André Honnorat, one of the founders of the CIUP, to ask him to reserve a plot of land for Brazil on the “hill of Montsouris”. The visit took place in the company of Paulo Carneiro, then a doctoral student on a Brazilian state scholarship in chemistry at the Sorbonne, who would go on to become a researcher at the Pasteur Institute in Paris and Brazil's permanent delegate to UNESCO. The climate of political instability, aggravated by the economic crisis caused by the crash of the New York Stock Exchange, led to the episode known in Brazilian history as the “Revolution of 1930”. This led to the formation of a new government and paralyzed negotiations on the construction of the House.

The idea of having a home for students in France may be welcomed by a large part of the Brazilian elite who send their children to European universities, as there is little university provision in the country at the time.

⁶ SALIM Inez Machado, *1959–2009: 50 anos da Casa do Brasil, 82 anos de história*. Personal archive.

⁷ TRONCHET Guillaume, *Savoirs en diplomatie. A social and transnational history of France's international university policy (1870s - 1930s)*, PhD thesis in History, University of Paris 1, 2014.

⁸ *Le Figaro*, 12/08/1926; Diário do Congresso Nacional, 13 de julho de 1926.

Brazil has a late university tradition, even when compared with its South American neighbors.⁹ The 1930s and 1940s saw the creation of the first universities in Brazil. And the French influence can be seen in the missions of teachers who played a leading role in the creation of the National Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Brazil in Rio de Janeiro, as well as in the constitution of the University of São Paulo. However, as historian Juliette Dumont has pointed out, exchanges between university students were not given any particular attention in Brazil.¹⁰

In the post-war period, with the aim of increasing its lost prestige, since the United States already predominated in many areas of relations with the countries of the continent, France began negotiating a cultural cooperation agreement with Brazil in 1946, which was signed in 1948.¹¹ At the same time, in 1947, diplomatic negotiations between Brazil and France for the construction of the Brazilian building in the CIUP began.¹² It was only in the 1950s, with the expansion of universities and the creation of bodies regulating higher education in the country, that the project to build a Maison du Brésil (MB) in France was revived. Thus, in 1952, the “Commission for the construction of the Brazilian Pavilion at the Cité Universitaire de Paris” was created within the Brazilian Institute of Education, Science, and Culture, an agency of

⁹ The university tradition in Spanish America is mixed, with universities opening in Peru and Mexico in the sixteenth century, and in Argentina in the early seventeenth century. The first faculty to open in Brazil, a medical school, dates back to the early nineteenth century, when the Portuguese court was transferred to the country in 1808.

¹⁰ “Interest in academic exchanges and what they can contribute to Brazil’s influence was the subject of a project formulated and forwarded to the Intellectual Cooperation Division by Brazil’s Casa do Estudante (CEB) in 1941. The aim was to “offer students from Brazilian universities the opportunity to be represented abroad in a truly expressive way”, with an “adequate and rigorous individual selection process, in effect, to constitute delegations capable of cooperating extensively in the consolidation of Brazil’s relations with nations throughout the continent”. However, this project was never put into practice. in DUMONT Juliette, *De la coopération intellectuelle à la diplomatie culturelle: Les voies/x de l’Argentine, du Brésil et du Chili (1919–1946)*, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle - Paris 3, Thèse de doctorat, 2013, p. 636–37.

¹¹ For more information on French cultural diplomacy under the IV^e Republic and the various cultural cooperation agreements signed, see: Hugo Rogélio Suppo, “A “máquina diplomática cultural” da Quarta República Francesa no Brasil (1946–1958)”, *Meridiano*, vol. 17, 2016. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.20889/M47c17004>.

¹² Telegram 484, August 8, 1947. Archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Nantes).

the Ministry of Foreign Relations, also known as Itamaraty. Chaired by Ana Amélia de Queiroz Carneiro de Mendonça,¹³ poet and translator, who a few years earlier had attempted to establish the first student houses outside Brazil and within the country, this commission met for three years and counted on the support of the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC).¹⁴

On June 11, 1954, Ambassador Caio de Mello Franco and Jean Sarrailh, Rector of the Paris Academy, signed the deed of gift to the University of Paris of the building to be constructed.¹⁵ Some of the conditions stipulated in the deed of gift are important for understanding the regulations that are to guide the operation of the pavilion. Registered as “Université de Paris, Maison du Brésil”, it would be administered by the University of Paris¹⁶ and managed by a 10-member board of directors, including: the Brazilian ambassador to Paris, or his delegate; the rector of the Académie de Paris, president of the CIUP; the CIUP’s general delegate; four Brazilian personalities proposed by the ambassador to the rector of the Académie de Paris; and two French personalities proposed by the CIUP board of directors to the rector of the Académie de Paris. The management of the House would remain in the hands of a director appointed by the Rector of the Paris Academy, proposed by the Board of Directors of the Maison du Brésil.¹⁷

The design for the building was sketched out by Brazilian modernist architect Lucio Costa (who, along with Oscar Niemeyer, would participate in the construction of the capital Brasília in the following years). In July 1954, the contract between the Brazilian government and Le Corbusier’s studio was signed, and in July 1955, the first stone of the house was laid, in which Paulo Carneiro deposited the deed of gift signed

¹³ Ana Amélia, in the 1930s-40 s, was president of the Brazilian Student House.

¹⁴ SALIM Inez Machado, *Discours 50 ans Maison du Brésil*, *op. cit.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ According to the agreement drawn up for the national foundation on July 25, 1925.

¹⁷ Brazilian Embassy Archives, n. 606/542.93 (85).

the previous year.¹⁸ Between the choice of land and the start of construction, 27 years passed. More than just Paulo Carneiro's importance as a promoter of Franco-Brazilian academic relations, the deed also shows the profile that was desired for the house's occupants: high-level students able to travel around the world and representing their country. More than a pavilion for Brazilian students, the House should be a monument representing the relationship between Brazil and France, a shared heritage, a historical monument as qualified by the city of Paris.¹⁹

At the beginning of 1959, the administrative organization of the Maison du Brésil was set in motion: in February, Professor Péricles Madureira de Pinho—the MEC official who oversaw the construction of the pavilion—was appointed Director, and the House was inaugurated on July 18, the day after the first meeting of the Board of Directors. It was during this meeting that the House's internal regulations were approved, which years later would be perceived by residents as “a drastic device”²⁰: closing of the Maison at 01:30 (residents arriving after this time must present their resident card to the janitor, who will inform the director later); rooms are forbidden to be left after 9 a.m., to allow access to the cleaning staff; the elevator is blocked at 5 pm, serving only the 4^e and 5^e floors reserved for women (men and couples living on the lower floors must use the stairs); it is forbidden to put up posters on the building's walls without the director's permission; and, among other rules, visits to the building lobby are restricted to 11 pm. In its early years, the Maison played an important role in representing Brazil in Paris: “the Maison lived its first years with all the splendor it could enjoy: all the national authorities and artists passing through Paris visited it, and it was thus that the Maison received President Juscelino Kubitschek in person, and presented concerts by Vinicius de Moraes”.²¹

¹⁸ SALIM Inez Machado, *Discours 50 ans Maison du Brésil*, *op. cit.* In a separate article, I explore in greater depth the trajectory of the Maison's construction, showing the work of the Capes, the National Historic and Artistic Heritage Service and Itamaraty, and highlighting the intermediation between Lucio Costa's initial project and the one built by Corbusier. Angélica Müller, “The Maison du Brésil at the Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris: a project towards national development and internationalism”, *Espacio, tiempo y educación* (forthcoming), 2023.

¹⁹ Recognized in 1985. <https://www.ciup.fr/presentation-de-la-maison-du-bresil/>

²⁰ Brazilian Embassy Archives, n. 606/542.93 (85).

²¹ SALIM Inez Machado, *Discours 50 ans Maison du Brésil*, *op. cit.*

Internally, a number of problems arose, starting with the building itself, whose fittings and furnishings had not been completed by the time of opening. The planned budget was insufficient, leading to problems with payments, which also arose from the MEC's difficulty in transmitting the expected amounts. At the Board of Directors' meeting of February 2, 1960,²² the first meeting since the building's inauguration, Director Célia Neves Lazzarotto reported on the disciplinary problems encountered with the residents, which she attributed to their "heterogeneity". As a result, it was proposed that from now on, the Maison should only receive students who had already completed an undergraduate degree (with an exception for doctors and artists whose work is recognized) "whose maturity would facilitate the maintenance of discipline". Most councillors found the proposal radical and chose to approve a new rule for resident admission: all must now hold a higher education degree and submit a concrete study plan. The Board also questioned the House Director's ability to select applications that had not been recommended, and as such, all applications from Brazilian candidates had to be initially approved by the *Coordenação de aperfeiçoamento de pessoal de nível superior* (Higher Education Staff Development Coordination or CAPES). Only after the files had been analyzed would the Director make decisions based on the CIUP's criteria, and pass them on to the Maison's Board of Directors for review if necessary.

After four successive directors in its first four years,²³ Luis Lisanti Filho, Professor of History at the University of São Paulo, who had been a pupil of Fernand Braudel and held a teaching post at the École Pratique des Hautes Études (VI^e section), was appointed in July 1963. The decision to appoint Lisanti pleased the great French historian: "This appointment will thus create one more link between the École and Brazilian academics, at a time when, moreover, we are ready to make a considerable effort towards rapprochement and collaboration with the whole of South America".²⁴ It seems that the CIUP is seen as an important part of the VI^e section's approach and collaboration with the academic world in South

²² Archives of the Brazilian Embassy, Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Maison du Brésil de la Cité universitaire de Paris, February 2, 1960.

²³ They are Péricles Madureira de Pinho, Célia Neves Lazzarotto, Leônidas Sobrinho Porto and Américo Jacobina Lacombe.

²⁴ Archives F. Braudel, Correspondance Braudel MS 8510 (72), Dossier Lisanti Filho Luis. Letter 26, July 15, 1963, from Fernand Braudel to M. Almir de Castro.

America. The career of Ruggiero Romano, Director of the Maison d'Italie since 1957, and Director of Studies at the VI^e section of the EPHE, a specialist in Spanish America, helps us to understand. As Maurice Aymard and Roberto Giacone have shown,²⁵ more than just providing financial support for researchers at the start of their careers—which contributed to the professionalization process of these players—they acted as mediators between two worlds, for the benefit of students who could find a place to study in Paris, extending a network of contacts that was not limited to the national walls of the houses. Through the processes of cultural exchange, typical of the figure of the passeur—of his “double men”²⁶—we can think of the strategic importance of the position of director of a maison for the expansion of academic links between France and South America, or precisely between France and Brazil.

“THE MECCA OF COMMUNISM”: THE MAISON DU BRÉSIL AS SEEN BY MILITARY GOVERNMENTS

On April 1st 1964, Brazil experienced a coup d'état organized by civilians and soldiers, who overthrew President João Goulart (1961–1964). The military dictatorship lasted 21 years. Anti-corruption rhetoric combined with anti-communist rhetoric, very present in Brazilian society since the 1920s and revived in 1959 with the success of the Cuban revolution, served as the ideological pillars of the government's overthrow. One of the military's ideological axes was to neutralize and eliminate so-called “communist” opponents or those linked to “leftist” and “subversive” ideas. It was no coincidence that one of the first acts undertaken by the putschists was to set fire to the headquarters of the National Union of Students in Rio de Janeiro. The UNE, the only organization representing students at national level, was known during the João Goulart government for defending fundamental reforms [“reformas de base”],²⁷ and in

²⁵ AYMARD Maurice, GACONE Roberto (dir.), *En souvenir de Ruggiero Romano, actes de la journée d'études (Maison de l'Italie - Paris, May 28, 2015)*, Paris, Cahiers de l'Hôtel de Galliffet, 2017.

²⁶ CHARLE Christophe, “Les temps des hommes doubles”, *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, vol. 39/1, 1992, p. 73–85.

²⁷ The *reformas de base* were the name given by President Goulart's team to the set of structural reforms proposed for the Brazilian state in the educational, fiscal, political and agrarian fields.

particular for university reform. The UNE became illegal, but this did not prevent it from playing an important role in opposition to the dictatorship during the 1960s.

After trade unions and rural workers' organizations, academic institutions were the targets of repressive actions.²⁸ It is estimated that between twenty and thirty thousand people were arrested in the first few days after the coup, including many professors, renowned academics, and students. Universities were invaded, several rectors deposed, teachers dismissed or retired, and numerous administrative investigations launched against professors and students. Once the new government was installed, there was a radical change in its cadres and ideological orientation, as evidenced by the speech of the new Minister of Education, a former rector of the Federal University of Paraná, to which Flávio Suplicy de Lacerda testifies: "clean up" the Ministry to "disinfect the institutions responsible for training young people by eliminating any element of communism".²⁹

It was against this backdrop that on June 8, 1964, the director of the Maison du Brésil received a decision from the Minister of Education to dismiss him and appoint Francisco Martins, a professor at the Federal University of Ceará, in his place. The news did not seem to satisfy Luís Lisanti, who mobilized to keep his position, by activating his network. Fernand Braudel intervened on behalf of his former student, and even wrote to Castelo Branco, Brazil's new president, asking for Lisanti's extension in office: "I ask you with all the more confidence as I had the pleasure of knowing you personally, having given several lectures in 1947 at the [Military School of] Praia Vermelha."³⁰

For his part, the CIUP's Delegate General, Robert Garric, met the Brazilian Embassy's Chargé d'Affaires, Raul de Vincenzi, to enquire about Lisanti's dismissal: indeed, the CIUP's management had not been informed of this decision. On this occasion, he asked for Lisanti's continuance as director, in the name of the excellence of his work after all the troubles that had marked the mandates of the four previous directors.³¹ As this "visit" was not enough, Garric prepared a scathing document for

²⁸ MOTTA Rodrigo Patto Sá, *As universidades e o regime militar*, Rio de Janeiro, Zahar, 2014. p. 23.

²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 33.

³⁰ Archives F. Braudel, Correspondance Braudel MS 8510 (72), Dossier Lisanti Filho Luis. Letter 30, May 19, 1964, from Fernand Braudel to Castelo Branco.

³¹ Brazilian Embassy Archives, 542.93 (85) de 15 de junho de 1964.

the attention of the embassy. In this document, the Delegate General reminded the Brazilian authorities of certain important points in the signed agreement concerning the management of the Maison, and in particular the point mentioning that it is the Rector of the University of Paris alone who can appoint directors in the Maisons which are an integral part of the University of Paris, and that it is up to the Board of Directors of the Maison du Brésil to propose one or more names for new directors. He concludes: "For his part, Minister Chenot, President of the CIUP, would be happy to personally discuss all the problems that may arise in the administration of the Maison du Brésil with your Ambassador, once he has taken up his post".³² The Ministry of External Relations forwarded the Garric document to the Ministry of Education and Culture, which was forced to cancel the appointment of the new director and retain Luis Lisanti as head of the House. Ministry officials then realized that, apart from budgetary issues and the selection of residents, the Maison did not fall under the authority of the Brazilian Ministry.

So, under the pretext of investigating the problems encountered by the Brazilian houses abroad (as there was also one in Madrid), the government set up a working group within CAPES. The group suggested to the President of the Republic that a new decree be passed, transferring responsibility for the Houses to the Ministry of Foreign Relations and leaving CAPES in charge only of selecting scholarship holders. These suggestions were endorsed in decree no. 56728 of August 16, 1965, which also stipulated that "the Maisons du Brésil will be directed, as provided for in the established agreements, by a director appointed by the Brazilian ambassador in their respective countries, on the indication of the Minister of External Relations with a triple list prepared by a supervisory commission". This commission, comprising two members of the MEC and two members of the MRE, will be chaired by the Chairman of the CAPES Board.

In Brazil, resistance to the regime is growing: students, as well as intellectuals and artists, have formed a front to resist the increasingly authoritarian regime. As a result, the state's surveillance apparatus increased, including abroad. While between 1965 and 1967, the life of the Maison du Brésil did not seem to be affected by this surveillance, the military's suspicion of the House and its potentially "subversive" elements

³² Arquivo Nacional, BR_DFANBSB_AAJ_IPM_0236_d. Letter from Robert Garric to the Chargé d'Affaires of the Brazilian Embassy, June 17, 1964.

gradually increased. Thus, during 1967, correspondence between the military authorities concerning the circulation of “suspects”³³ multiplied, as well as on the surveillance of government institutions and the criteria adopted for the exercise of their functions. Concerned about the “veritable propaganda organized with the aim of distorting the truth of events occurring in Brazil” from abroad, the National Security Council sent a request to the Ministry of Education’s Security and Information Division (DSI) to receive lists of candidates’ names, prior to the granting of aid, in order to avoid in future “the paradox of the Brazilian government financially supporting elements who go abroad to denigrate their homeland”.³⁴

On May 18, 1967, the head of the National Security Council requested a report from the DSI of the Ministry of Foreign Relations on the Maison du Brésil following the receipt of “unflattering information” about the House’s activities. Accordingly, a report containing full details of its organization and objectives is requested: who currently runs it, whether there is a diplomatic official and, most importantly, whether the House promotes meetings of a political nature.³⁵ Surveillance of the House increased in proportion to the resistance movements that were growing in Brazil and abroad, and reaching their peak.

THE YEAR 1968

The protest organized by the student movement in Brazil grew strongly and exploded in March 1968 with the death of a high-school student killed by the army in Rio de Janeiro. The death of Edson Luís provoked large-scale demonstrations across the country, and the students seemed to win the support of a middle class and part of the press that had supported the coup d’état. While the army was very concerned about the scale of the anti-government demonstrations taking place across the country, the events of May 68 in France only amplified this concern.

On April 24, the Residents’ Committee held a meeting with the Director of the Maison du Brésil to draw up a cultural program for

³³ Arquivo Nacional, Ofício n.033-1S/2144/67. Em 21.6.1967.

³⁴ Arquivo Nacional, BR_DFANBSB_N8_0_PSN_EST_0301_d0001de0001. Ofício n 031-1S /2142/67.

³⁵ Arquivo Nacional, BR_DFANBSB_N8_0_PSN_EST_0301_d0001de0001. Ofício n 019-1S/1104/67.

the following month and to discuss the liberalization of the visiting regime in preparation for these events.³⁶ On the 26th, Lisanti convened an emergency meeting at the embassy to discuss the problem of the free movement of men and women between residences. During the meeting, Lisanti declares that “the student movements at Nanterre and other universities are having a profound effect on the City”. He votes in favor of freedom of movement, justifying this by the fact that he cannot isolate the Maison du Brésil from the French academic world. Another issue raised by the Director during the meeting is worth highlighting: the “poor recruitment” of scholarship holders, whose level has dropped significantly. He attributed this to recruitment carried out “in a precarious model”, as well as to the (international) context with the emergence of the student crisis. He suggests “the institution of a compulsory psycho-physical examination, which would enable a more precise selection of scholarship holders.” Ambassador Carlos Chagas then addressed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, raising the issue of the low level of recruitment of scholarship holders, with a view to improving the selection process carried out by CAPES.

At an assembly on May 22, 1968, the residents of the Maison du Brésil, in line with the proposals of the student movement, adopted co-management as their mode of community life. The subject of co-management, a watchword among French leftists in this period, as well as the question of freedoms (freedom of expression and political freedoms) would be at the heart of discussions and actions in the years to come between the residents, the Maison du Brésil management and the CIUP. On the other hand, the question of co-management was considered “the fundamental problem” of the House and was the subject of discussions between the Ministry of Foreign Relations and the Ministry of Education and Culture; and above all, it was at the heart of the military’s concerns, as this proposal contradicted its project of “controlling state interventionism”.

On May 29, the Maison du Brésil, like other pavilions in the CIUP such as those for Morocco, Argentina, and Portugal, was occupied. The occupants were people from outside the House, most of them foreign: Spanish, Portuguese, Latin Americans, and only two or three French. According to the various documents, the number of participants varied

³⁶ Archives Nationales, 20,090,014/33. Meeting of the Residents’ Committee with the Director of the Maison du Brésil, April 24, 1968.

widely, from 30 to 100 people.³⁷ The aim of the occupation committees was to support the French revolutionary movement, and also to protest against the regimes in place in the Houses' respective countries. The case of Brazil was no exception: with portraits and thoughts of Lenin, Mao Tse-Tung, Fidel Castro and the "great leader" Che Guevara, the red flag was hoisted at 3 a.m. in the director's residence to show the opening of a new era: freedom of opinion and political commitment for Brazilians and Latin Americans studying and working in France. The occupying committee's leaflet clearly stated the intention: "a group of Brazilian revolutionaries, with the support of their French comrades and those of other nationalities, have liberated the Maison du Brésil from the lackey administration of President Costa e Silva's military dictatorship".³⁸

The difference, according to the newspaper *Le Monde*,³⁹ is that the occupation was not a peaceful one, and even the Brazilian and French students who supported and participated in the protest movements in Parisian universities were molested in the Maison. The worst happened when a student who was openly opposed to the movement and who claimed to be drawing up a list of communist residents to hand over to the police was locked in his room and interrogated at length, as the newspaper reports. This was Dr. Gilberto Mauricio Pradez de Faria, who was advised by the embassy to return to Brazil. It was the Brazilian embassy, itself close to the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Cultural Relations Directorate, which reported the event: "the doctor [...] was forced to sign a paper declaring him an 'anti-communist agent in the pay of the Brazilian government', as well as a receipt for a sum of money extorted from him to help the revolutionary struggle".⁴⁰

The same fate befell the House manager on the evening of May 30. After having his entire House searched, he was questioned about his situation vis-à-vis the Brazilian government. Luis Lisanti was evicted from his home the following day. Shaken by the event, Lisanti wrote a letter to the Brazilian embassy recounting the events. However, he insisted on showing that the facts were directly linked to the events in Paris, making

³⁷ Brazilian Embassy Archives, Director's Report to the Brazilian Embassy.

³⁸ CHS Archives, 003,839. CC1801_P1CHS_2-Mai68-11 p. 59.

³⁹ *Le Monde* newspaper, June 2-3, 1968.

⁴⁰ Brazilian Embassy archives, telegrama confidencial expedido em 04 de junho de 1968.

the Maison a kind of “victim” rather than an “agent” of the student mobilizations, thus minimizing the role of Brazilian students in this effervescence. Reaffirming the ebullient French student context has a twofold advantage: it removes the focus from the Brazilian students and presents the Maison du Brésil as a passive agent, even if the military sectors of the regime no longer view this “space” in a positive light. The House was liberated on June 12, when Lisanti began to establish the material losses, proposing that residents and officials report their stolen goods. Although most of the residents did not respond to her appeal, the director filed a legal complaint.⁴¹ As the situation at the CIUP was still uncertain, Lisanti accepted the delegate general’s suggestion that he temporarily run the Maison, as he had done with other pavilions that had also been invaded (such as those in Spain and Portugal).⁴²

In August, Luis Lisanti decided to resign from his position. In September 1968, the Board of Directors approved his resignation and proposed José Alves Guimarães, Director of the Belo Horizonte School of Fine Arts and a man close to the regime, as his successor. At this board meeting, the possibility of making the Maison du Brésil a residence for couples only is raised. Lisanti opposed this suggestion, demonstrating that the Maison had not been designed to accommodate residents of both sexes. Above all, he sensed that this idea, far from corresponding to the French movement on this issue, could diminish the possibility of having militant residents undetected by the regime. The year 1968 ended in Brazil with an Institutional Act (IA) enacted by the military government that made the regime more repressive. AI-5, which, among other measures, provided for the trial of political crimes by military tribunals and the suspension of *habeas corpus* in all cases of crimes against national security, ushered in the harshest period of the dictatorship’s repression, not only with the dismissal of a new batch of professors, but also with the extermination of its opponents, including several students and teachers.⁴³

However, it was also at this time that the military government began to reform the university through authoritarian modernization: university

⁴¹ National Archives, 20,090,014/30. Minutes, June 14, 1968.

⁴² Archives nationales, 20,090,014/30. Carta de Luís Lisanti ao Embaixador do Brasil em Paris, em 25 de junho de 1968.

⁴³ For further information on the dictatorship’s relationship with universities see, MÜLLER Angélica, “Violações de direitos humanos na universidade”, in *Brasil, Relatório da Comissão Nacional da Verdade*, tomo 2, dezembro de 2014, p. 265–298.

expansion, increased student numbers and, above all, the strengthening and development of graduate courses were the modernizing facets of the regime. On the other hand, the military extended its area of surveillance by creating “security and information agencies” in each federal university, which were to report all information on the faculties and their students to the National Information Service (SNI),⁴⁴ an organization directly linked to the President of the Republic. If in Brazil the military was stepping up its surveillance of opponents, how was it to control Brazilians on French soil? This had become a major challenge for the government. Dissidents advocating ideas opposed to the regime were extremely closely watched, if not exterminated. The libertarian winds of May 68 blowing across the Atlantic haunted Brazilian leaders. For their part, exiles began to use various channels to denounce the dictatorship, making the Maison du Brésil not only a place for disseminating this information, but also a shelter for many illegal immigrants.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE EVENTS OF 1968

In April 1969, the new director of the Maison du Brésil sent a report to the air force surveillance service, describing the situation at the CIUP following the events of the previous year: the forces of law and order were forbidden to enter the CIUP, political regrouping was free, whatever the sensibility; the right to enter and transit freely through the pavilions was guaranteed; freedom to express opinions and put up posters was guaranteed, and freedom to visit the rooms was guaranteed. He explains: “Even with the measures taken to restore order, these conflict with the legitimate interests of the Nation which subsidizes the Maison, with the interests of the residents and with the authority of the director”.⁴⁵ Documents from the secret services of the Brazilian armed forces exaggerated the lack of control, the “concession of the most absurd freedoms” and “the generalization of promiscuity between the sexes inside the House” nominally

⁴⁴ Under the dictatorship, the National Information System (SISNI) was developed, designating all the bodies intended to produce information for the benefit of the country's security and development policy. At its apex was the National Information Service (SNI); at ministerial level, the Security and Information Divisions (DSI); then in the main autarchies (including universities), the Security and Information Councils (ASI). All these bodies report to the SNI, which in turn reports to the President of the Republic and his military junta.

⁴⁵ Arquivo Nacional, BR_DFANBSB_AAJ_IPM_0187_d. A casa do Brasil em Paris e as condições de seu funcionamento, em 25 de abril de 1969.

denouncing “suspicious” elements.⁴⁶ Reports presenting their vision of French political life and the De Gaulle administration, which “played the socialist a lot”,⁴⁷ show, first of all, a Brazilian military worldview guided by authoritarian political culture and anti-communism:

"It's not surprising, then, that the students of the Red Guards and Black Flag reign at the Cité Universitaire, and this explains why the police can't intervene because they're part of the government. (...) The armed forces, while maintaining the philosophy of non-intervention, are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with senior management. To compensate for the facilities granted to the Reds and Blacks (anarchists), the military ministries (over there headquarters) no longer include attachés representing so-called socialist countries on their trips. On an almost daily basis, newspapers and magazines carried articles on the "malaise of the armed forces with the French economic situation". Although the "President" is considered "omniscient" thanks to the support of his arms, we forget that it was he who found the means to suppress the May movement. Continuing with this contempt, of everything and everyone, and the growing discontent of all and especially the armed forces, perhaps nothing will happen when Germany again asks for help from the French generals stationed there."⁴⁸

For the military attaché closely observing events in the CIUP, the outcome was clear: the Maison du Brésil, which had become the Maison de la France, had to be closed. Its director has little or no authority over it or its occupants. Because of the actions that took place there, the existence of the Maison du Brésil did more to damage than improve Brazil's image. Finally, it costs the Brazilian government far too much economically (\$50,000 a year), “for the prestige of Paris as a Mecca of education (and student subversion).“ The attaché concludes: “We believe this should have been closed by now, since May 1968. When we are called upon, we advise Ambassador Bilac Pinto to do so” (He didn't).⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Arquivo Nacional, BR_DFANBSB_AAJ_IPM_0236_d. EME - Adido do Exército a Embaixada do Brasil na França. PB 24/69-S/2.1.

⁴⁷ Arquivo Nacional, Informação N. 020 /1A2/EMA5R, 07 de maio de 1969; ref Of n. 033/69-GP, de 31 de março de 1969.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Arquivo Nacional, INFORMAÇÃO N. 020 /1A2/EMA5R, 07 de maio de 1969; ref Of n. 033/69-GP, de 31 de março de 1969.

The Air Force and Navy Command files, drawn up during 1969 and 1970, contain numerous detailed documents on the founding of the pavilion, lists of students, letters from directors, legislation, opinions, press clippings from Brazil and France, follow-up on the question of the implementation of co-management, and lengthy analyses of the situation, written by civilians and military personnel. This clearly shows the military surveillance of this regime and the divergence from the protest movements in France and the lack of authoritarian response from the French government.

This statement becomes even truer when crossed with the diagnosis of the Minister-Counsellor, Chargé d'Affaires, Civil Member of Itamaraty, who wrote a long report on the state of the Maison du Brésil for the Minister of Foreign Relations. In his conclusions, despite noting the weak influence of Brazil on the life of the House, he attempted to present the positive aspects of keeping it open: "In fact, the Maison du Brésil renders important services to Brazilian culture, the welcome it offers [...] to our compatriots who travel to Paris in search of broadening their knowledge and experience, in terms of science, technology, literature and the arts at university level".⁵⁰

In 1970, spurred on by the International Bureau,⁵¹ residents of the House began a strike against rising rents that lasted several months. With the new co-management statute not yet in place, and under pressure from the military over the "negative" image the Maison du Brésil was spreading, the embassy negotiated a revision of the Maison du Brésil statute with the CIUP to ensure that the Brazilian government withdrew from the institution. On July 22, 1971, the Brazilian ambassador to France, General Aurelio de Lyra Tavares, together with Rector Robert Mallet, signed a deed amending the initial donation from the Brazilian government. In this deed, the composition of the Maison's Board of Directors was reduced from ten to six members, with the elimination of four Brazilian members—the only remaining Brazilian member being a representative of the Embassy—and the Ambassador withdrew as Chairman of the Board. Above all, the "Maison du Brésil" is officially renamed the "Fondation Franco-Brésilienne".

⁵⁰ Brazilian Embassy Archives, 542.93(85)1969/13.

⁵¹ Brazilian Embassy Archives, 542.93(85). Everyone on rent strike. In: Carta do diretor da MB ao embaixador Bilac Pinto em 04 de março de 1970.

As a result of these changes to the statutes, the Brazilian government ceased to send directors on official missions and to provide for the needs of the House. However, the Brazilian government's involvement did not cease on this date: CAPES remained in charge of receiving and selecting Brazilian applicants, which enabled a certain "triage" of candidates, and the military did not cease to "accompany the activities" developed at the MB, as the reports show. Partly a Maison attached to the Fondation nationale of the CIUP and partly a Maison nationale, the direction of the Maison du Brésil was entrusted to French personalities: CNRS researcher Michel Rémi Ferlus until 1975, then French geographer Jean Piwnik until 1991, when negotiations began for the Maison to be directed once again by Brazil.

What could have been part of the modernizing facet of the regime, i.e. the expansion of scientific exchanges between Brazil and France (via the Maison du Brésil), succumbed to its authoritarian and repressive face. Juliette Dumont and Anaïs Fléchet, analyzing Itamaraty's cultural action between 1945 and 1980, have shown that specific policies were introduced in this field, aimed at defending the country's economic and strategic interests, such as developing the popularity of Brazilian productions abroad.⁵² In the artistic world, the situation was often ambiguous, indicating a greater autonomy of the Itamaraty vis-à-vis the military, which ended up financing, for example, presentations by anti-dictatorship Brazilian artists such as Chico Buarque and Gilberto Gil.

Similarly, there was a certain "ambiguity" in the development of academic policy. The military surveillance of "subversive students" on scholarship often escaped the intended control, showing the possible connections and networks of the Franco-Brazilian academic milieu. In addition to simple pragmatism, it therefore seems that this was much more a policy of reaction than proposal on the part of the military. This is the key to understanding Brazil's disengagement from its House in France, as soon as the latter became an important point of opposition to the Brazilian regime, in addition to France's own conjuncture embodied by the leftists; these motives served as justification for such action.

Brazil's political reality contrasted with the "integrating ambition" of the project for a House within the CIUP, which was intended to "teach the future ruling elites of each nation to know and respect each other

⁵² DUMONT Juliette, FLÉCHET Anaïs, "Pelo que é nosso!": a diplomacia cultural brasileira no século XX", *Revista Brasileira de História*, 34(67), 2014, p. 214.

in order to ensure peace, such is the claimed utopia of the CIUP, a pacifist utopia based on the application of the liberal solidarist philosophy to international relations".⁵³ The objective of creating transnational networks, which led to the presence of a Maison du Brésil at the CIUP, was conceived by the State in the 1950s, and was imbued with these principles, signalling Brazil's desire for dialogue and a presence on the stage of global intellectual production. From 1964 onwards, the militaristic logic based on the doctrine of national security, whose theory was inspired by the French experience in Algeria,⁵⁴ contrasted sharply with these principles and with the free circulation of ideas that prevailed in the City. The result, somewhat logically, was the negation of internationalism.

⁵³ KÉVONIAN, Dzovinar, TRONCHET Guillaume (dir), *La Babel étudiante: La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (1920–1950)*, op. cit. p. 21.

⁵⁴ NABUCO Araújo Rodrigo (de), *Conquest of minds and trade in arms: French military diplomacy in Brazil (1945–1974)*, PhD thesis in history, Toulouse II University, 2011.

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To Fight at and for the Cité: Iranian Student Mobilisations in the Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (1948–1979)

Valentin Rebour

On 7 January 1976, the leaders of the Iranian Students Association in France (*Union des Étudiants Iraniens en France*, UEIF) went on hunger strike at the *Maison d'Italie* in the *Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris* (CIUP). According to the “Foreigners and Minorities” section of the *Renseignements généraux* (French General Intelligence Division), whose main task is to inform the French authorities about movements and organisations likely to threaten state security, almost eighty people took part in this strike. Four years earlier, however, the *Maison de l'Iran* had been abandoned by the Iranian authorities, following a tug-of-war with Iranian residents lasting several months. Thus, despite the brief existence of this house (1969–1972), sources testify to the continuous presence of Iranian students at the CIUP from the post-war period to the eve

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of the 1979 Revolution, and to the significant role of the CIUP for these students as a space for socialisation, including with other national communities, and for protest.

Unlike other national student communities whose history within the CIUP is closely linked to that of their national pavilion, one particularity of the Iranian student community is its permanent presence at the CIUP without having its own house. This article examines the way in which the student community organised and built itself as a political force at the CIUP between the late 1940s and the 1970s. It examines the way in which student political opposition was deployed outside the country, taking a stand against the Shah's authoritarian policies in a context of hardening imperial rule while turning the Parisian experience into a political resource. Indeed, the CIUP provided Iranian students with a space for not only socialisation but also for political organisation, through mobilisations and debate evenings, allowing them to establish themselves as one of the main forces of opposition to the Pahlavi regime. Yet, the struggles around the *Maison de l'Iran* in particular placed the CIUP itself at the heart of their demands. This demonstrated that for these students, Iranian politics was not the only driving force of their action.

By examining the presence of Iranian students at the CIUP, this article aims to make these students the subjects—not the objects—of history and, in doing so, to fill a historiographical void. The Iranian diaspora is the subject of numerous works, but these focus almost exclusively on the post-1979 period, be it on political exile,¹ the political role of students in contemporary Iran² or the social and cultural permanences and recompositions within the diaspora.³ Students occupy a marginal place in this

¹ Nader Vahabi, *Récits de vie des exilés iraniens: de la rupture biographique à la nouvelle identité*, Paris, France, Elzévir, 2009; *La migration iranienne en Belgique. Une diaspora par défaut*, Paris, France, L'Harmattan, 2011; "La construction sociologique de la carrière migratoire: le cas des migrants iraniens en Europe", *Migrations Société*, n° 150/6, 2013, pp. 13–39; "The Iranian diaspora in France", *Migrations Société*, n° 158/2, 2015, pp. 19–40.

² Fariba Adelkhah, *Les mille et une frontières de l'Iran: quand les voyages forment la nation*, France, Editions Karthala, 2016.

³ Cameron McAuliffe, "Transnationalism Within: internal diversity in the Iranian diaspora", *Australian Geographer*, vol. 39, n° 1, 2008, pp. 63–80; Sonja Moghaddari, *Migrations et modernités iraniennes: les familles transnationales*, Paris, France, Éditions du Cygne, 2015; *Internal diversity: Iranian Germans between local boundaries and transnational capital*, Switzerland, Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.

research, for both the contemporary and imperial periods. The presence of students abroad during the Pahlavi period has been very little studied, the few works that do exist focusing mainly on their role in the 1979 Revolution, based on activist sources and interviews.⁴ Examining the presence of Iranian students at the CIUP therefore allows us to reflect on the intersection of social and political history, doing so by leaving behind the Iranian political context to give a temporality of its own to this Iranian student community in Western Europe, while also mobilising a more varied corpus to compensate for the preponderance of analyses on the 1979 Revolution.

The history of the Iranian presence at the CIUP is difficult to write, since the Iranian pavilion hosted Iranian students only between 1969 and 1972, before being abandoned by the Iranian authorities to the National Foundation, which manages the entire CIUP estate. From then on, it became necessary to diversify sources used to study the presence of Iranians at the CIUP, beyond the history of the Iranian pavilion alone. To begin with, I worked from the archives of the *Maison de l'Iran*, deposited at the *Archives Nationales de Pierrefitte-sur-Seine* in 2009⁵ containing the agreements signed between the Iranian embassy and the CIUP, as well as correspondence relating to difficulties and tensions in the construction of the pavilion. In addition, using the archives of the French *Renseignements généraux*,⁶ I drew a database of the trajectories of 120 students between 1945 and 1980, at least twenty of whom were official residents of the

⁴ Afshin Matin-Asgari, A., *Iranian student opposition to the Shah*, United States, Mazda Publishers, 2002.

⁵ National Archives, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine site (hereafter: AN Pierrefitte), Archives of the Paris Rectorate and Inter-Academic Services (1921–1994), Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris Collection, Section on Completed Houses (1924–1994), file “Maison de l'Iran/Avicenna Foundation” (hereafter: Maison de l'Iran/Avicenna Foundation).

⁶ These boxes are taken from the National Archives in Pierrefitte-sur-Seine. The first boxes are from the Ministry of the Interior collection, Central Directorate of General Intelligence, files of the “Foreigners and Minorities” section (1944–1983), “Middle East” series, “Iran” sub-series (hereafter: MI, DCRG, FM, ME/Iran), boxes 98 and 99. The second box is from the Association Archives, UNEF (National Union of French Students) Archives; International Vice-Presidency Collection, Correspondence exchanged between UNEF and foreign national student unions, file “Confederation of Iranian Students in Europe (1961–1962)” (hereafter: CISE). The last box is from Ministry of the Interior collection, Directorate of Regulations, Bureau of Foreigners, country files (1933–1983), “Iran” series (hereafter: MI, DR, BF/Iran), file 6 “Iranian nationals in France” (hereafter: Iranian nationals in France).

CIUP.⁷ As my research focuses on the politicization processes within the Iranian student community in France, sources from the *Renseignements généraux* can give us a precise idea of political practices. In particular, they provide information on conflicts between residents of the *Maison de l'Iran* and diplomatic authorities, as well as on the various Iranian student mobilisations at the CIUP. However, the nature of these documents presents a certain number of limitations,⁸ in particular how non-Iranian actors viewed the student community, the absence of primary sources and the lack of relevance of the analyses proposed. To counter these limitations, six one-and-a-half-hour interviews were conducted in Paris, with former Iranian students⁹ who had lived or frequented the CIUP, five of whom had been active within the Confederation of Iranian Students. It should be noted that none of them lived at the *Maison de l'Iran*, indicating the mistrust of student activists towards the Iranian pavilion. Finally, I occasionally drew on the diplomatic archives of La Courneuve, as diplomatic correspondence between France and Iran regularly revolves around political unrest within the Iranian student community in France.

Based on this diverse corpus, I will examine how Iranian students turned the CIUP into a resource as they increasingly positioned themselves as a force of opposition.

THE FOUNDING OF THE ASSOCIATION DES ÉTUDIANTS IRANIENS EN FRANCE AT THE CIUP (1947–1962)

The Iranian Student Community in Paris After the Second World War

At the end of the Second World War, among the 2,000 Iranian students who lived abroad, most of them were studying in France,¹⁰ and more specifically, in Paris. According to *Renseignements généraux* statistics, over

⁷ Only one student under surveillance stayed at the *Maison de l'Iran*.

⁸ To go further on this methodological point, refer to Laurent Bonelli and Fabien Carrié, “Aux sources de la radicalisation”, in *La fabrique de la radicalité: une sociologie des jeunes djihadistes français*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 2018.

⁹ Names are anonymized at the request of respondents.

¹⁰ West Germany and the United States in particular soon became the preferred destinations.

400 of the 540 Iranian students in France in 1953,¹¹ lived in Paris.¹² This situation can be explained first and foremost by Paris' importance in the French higher education system, a city where most universities were located. However, from the end of the 19th century, Paris was also home to the majority of Iranians who lived in Europe,¹³ especially Iran's elite who were known for their Francophilia and familiarity with the French language. Most Iranian students belonged to that social group, and can thus be considered as "heirs", in the sense given by Pierre Bourdieu.¹⁴ However, this Parisian centrality masks a spatial fragmentation of the Iranian student community within the capital. Most students lived in hotels in the Quartier Latin, in various pavilions of the CIUP¹⁵ or in private homes. Thus, the CIUP appears to be just another place of residence.

At the turn of the 1950s, the CIUP was a privileged space for socialisation and political expression for these Iranian students. The politicisation of Iranian students was at the heart of Franco-Iranian diplomatic relations, and resulted in close surveillance of these students by both states. Iranian diplomatic authorities complained about the communist propaganda in Paris, relaying parents' fears about its alleged influence on their children¹⁶ and multiplying requests to the French authorities to put a

¹¹ This count only takes into account Iranian students staying in France with a student passport, and therefore ignores the large number of students staying in France without going through official channels.

¹² "Propagande politique exercée sur les étudiants iraniens", Préfecture de police de Paris, April 15, 1954. AN Pierrefitte, MI, DR, BF/Iran, Iranian nationals in France.

¹³ Vida Nassehi-Behnam, "L'exil occidental", *Civilisations*, vol. 38, n° 2, 1988, pp. 209–248.

¹⁴ Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, *Les héritiers: les étudiants et la culture*, France, Les Éditions de Minuit, 1964.

¹⁵ Some of the students monitored by the Renseignements Généraux stayed at the Maison de la Norvège, the Maison des États-Unis, the Fondation Victor Lyon or the Pavillon hollandais.

¹⁶ "Colonel J. reports that a number of Iranian families are reluctant to send their children to study in France because of the extremist propaganda to which young Iranians staying in our country would be subjected", Letter from the Direction des Relations culturelles, service de l'Enseignement et des œuvres to Mr. Pezet, Senator and President of the Union des Français à l'étranger, July 1952. Diplomatic Archives Centre of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, La Courneuve (hereafter: CADC), Asia and Oceania Directorate collection, Levant and Iran Sub-Directorate (1944–1953) (hereafter: Iran 1944–1953), Iranian Students in France.

stop to it. The letter from the Imperial Iranian Embassy of 29 January 1950 denounced “the propaganda campaign against the Iranian government [...] undertaken by certain agitators residing in France”, before expressing regret that “unfortunately, these activities, far from ceasing, are redoubling in intensity and the Iranian authorities are beginning to be concerned about the harmful influence they could produce among the Iranian colony and more particularly among students”.¹⁷ From then on, CIUP appeared to be the epicenter of this communist propaganda. A note from the *Renseignements généraux* in February 1953 bears witness to this: “Following fairly violent incidents between students and the CIUP management, a serious ‘purge’ was undertaken, and the results obtained proved very satisfactory, enabling the removal of particularly active communist elements”, before emphasizing that “the considerable agitation that persists at the CIUP among Iranian students [...] facilitates, to a certain extent, communist propaganda”.¹⁸

Afshin Matin-Asgari showed that the development of Iranian student activism in Western Europe must be understood first and foremost as a projection of the same activism that had been taking place since the 1930s within the University of Teheran.¹⁹ In other words, Iranian students had already developed a political consciousness prior to their arrival at the CIUP: as a result of this previous politicisation, sometimes the very cause of their departure,²⁰ the CIUP represented an attractive space for socialisation and exchange, not only with other Iranian students, but also with left-leaning and far-left students from France and abroad. It is worth noting that, at the outset of the Cold War, the obsessive fear of communism shared by both French and Iranian authorities often obscured the true political convictions of these Iranian students, and the reasons for their actions. Without denying the influence that Toudeh, the Iranian Communist Party in exile from 1949, sought to exert on students, the majority of Iranian students adhered to the ideas of the National Front of

¹⁷ Idem.

¹⁸ General Intelligence report on communist propaganda at the Cité Internationale. AN Pierrefitte, MI, DR, BE/Iran, Iranian nationals in France.

¹⁹ Afshin Matin-Asgari, *Iranian student opposition to the Shah*, op. cit.

²⁰ On this point, see Valentin Rebour, “De la déclamation de poèmes à l’occupation d’ambassade: l’expérience migratoire des étudiants iraniens en exil en France (1950–1979)”, *Journal of international Mobility*, vol. 9, n° 1, 2021, pp. 11–27.

Mossadegh, the reformist and nationalist Prime Minister deposed in 1953 during a *coup d'état* .

The CIUP at the Heart of Student Community Structuring, Between Surveillance and Political Expression

The *Association des Étudiants Iraniens en France* (AEIF) was founded in Paris in 1948, its first headquarters established on Boulevard Jourdan, within the CIUP. From the outset, the association was financed by membership fees, 100 old francs per month, which is equivalent to 1 new franc or 0.5 dollars, as well as by subsidies from the Iranian embassy.²¹ AEIF members met weekly, either in a pavilion at the CIUP, or at one of their homes. On average, around forty people attended these meetings, which generally resulted in the drafting of records.²² At the time of its creation, the AEIF appeared to be a structured and dynamic association, albeit dependent on its embassy.

AEIF presented itself as an association whose vocation was “[to defend] the interests of Iranian students, to strengthen the bonds of friendship between all students and to make Iranian culture and civilization known to the French and vice versa”.²³ In other words, the AEIF was economically dependent on the Iranian diplomatic authorities, closely monitored by them but also by the French authorities who forbid any dissident political expression among foreign students. Thus, although it undeniably was a political association, it couldn’t present itself as such. The action of this first association was indeed limited to what the Iranian authorities were ready to accept. As a result, AEIF members worked primarily to improve living conditions for students, particularly regarding currency change and accommodation. This is why, in 1948, the association’s first event called for the creation of a national pavilion, not so much for patriotic reasons as for the lower-cost accommodation that the

²¹ In 1950, the AEIF received 10,000 old francs from the Iranian diplomatic corps.

²² These are scattered between the private archives of former militants, the archives of La Contemporaine in Nanterre (France) and, above all, the archives of the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam.

²³ Statuts de l’Association des Etudiants Iraniens en France, May 2, 1948, cited by Renseignements généraux. “Propagande politique exercée sur de jeunes étudiants iraniens”, Préfecture de police de Paris, January 30, 1953. AN Pierrefitte, MI, DR, BE/Iran, Iranian nationals in France.

CIUP offers.²⁴ However, this emphasis on the material hardships of life in France doesn't imply the absence of political commitments and convictions. Mr. S. recalls that "in the years 1945–1946 up to 1953, you had Iranian students of communist persuasion, who were active, who formed an association. [...] They were the contacts of the CIUP to distribute rooms for students".²⁵

For these Iranian students in Paris, the CIUP is a privileged place to meet and socialize, but also to express their demands.

THE MAISON DE L'IRAN AS A FOCAL POINT FOR TENSIONS BETWEEN STUDENTS AND IRANIAN DIPLOMATIC AUTHORITIES

The story of the *Maison de l'Iran*, its difficult inauguration and its rapid closure, illustrates the conflictual relationship between Iranian students in France and the Iranian government, which imposed a forced modernization and Westernization of Iranian society as part of the "White Revolution" initiated in 1963.

The Genesis of the Maison de l'Iran at the CIUP: A Project Driven by the Top of the Imperial State

The first discussions on the project to build an Iranian pavilion at the CIUP dated back to 1959, and culminated in a deed of donation the same year, followed by the agreement signed on 3 May 1960 between the Iranian ambassador to France, H.E. Nasrollah Entezam, and the rector of Paris Academy, Jean Louis Sarrailh.²⁶ This agreement provided for "the construction of a student residence with around one hundred rooms within the CIUP, and the provision of the furniture and equipment necessary for its operation, all of which is destined to become the property of the University of Paris, under the name of '*Université de Paris Maison de l'Iran*', and to set up a working capital fund and a reserve fund for the

²⁴ AN Pierrefitte, MI, DCRG, SEM, MO/Iran, boxes 98 and 99.

²⁵ Interview with Mr. S., February 15, 2018.

²⁶ Acte notarié relatif à la donation iranienne à la Cité internationale universitaire de Paris, May 3, 1960. AN Pierrefitte. Maison de l'Iran/Avicenna Foundation.

benefit of this residence”,²⁷ valued at three million new francs, including a donation to the University of Paris of one hundred thousand new francs as of the month following the signing of this decree.

The construction of this *Maison de l’Iran* at the CIUP can be understood in the light of the Iranian foreign policy pursued by the Shah at the turn of the 1960s. As Damien Richard points out, the project was part of Iran’s policy of rapprochement with the Western bloc following the signing of the Baghdad Pact in 1955,²⁸ and therefore had a highly symbolic function. Moreover, Iranian authorities sent students to stay in Western countries in order to train an administrative and scientific elite, who would return to Iran once they had obtained their degree. Studying in Europe, and France in particular, has been a common practice among the Iranian aristocracy and urban bourgeoisie from the 1920s–1930s,²⁹ while the CIUP also enjoyed a certain reputation as the Shah’s wife, *Shabanou* Farah Diba, stayed at the *Collège néerlandais* when she was studying architecture in Paris. Be that as it may, the 1959 deed of gift is explicit as to the imperial motives: “the Maison de l’Iran at the Cité Universitaire de Paris [...] is intended to provide students of Iranian nationality with all the advantages they can enjoy from a stay at the Cité Universitaire and to be associated with the work of intellectual and moral rapprochement between the elites of all the nations that make up the Cité Universitaire de Paris”.³⁰ In other words, this Iranian pavilion was intended to welcome the young Iranian elite, whom the authorities hoped will be loyal to the crown, following a long-standing practice of training Iranian elites abroad.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Damien Richard, “Constituer un sérieux dossier d’archives de la Cité “: le fonds d’archives de la Cité internationale universitaire de Paris “, In Situ. *Revue des patrimoines*, n° 17, 2011.

²⁹ This practice is part of the “symbolic function of a stay in the West” developed by Victor Karady for students from Central and Eastern Europe between 1850 and 1939 in the second 19th and first 20th centuries. Victor Karady, “La migration internationale d’étudiants en Europe (1890 - 1940)”, *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, vol. 145, n° 5, 2002, p. 47–60.

³⁰ Acte de donation de l’ambassade d’Iran à l’Académie de Paris et fondation de la Maison de l’Iran, 1959. AN Pierrefitte, Maison de l’Iran/Avicenna Foundation.

*The Short-Lived Maison de l'Iran at the Heart of Tensions Between
Imperial Power and Iranian Youth in France*

But the construction of an Iranian pavilion was also part of the imperial government's attempt to keep a tighter grasp on an ever-growing student population in Europe—as the structural weaknesses of Iranian universities³¹ and the prestige of Western diplomas³² among many other factors pushed thousands of them to study abroad—this growth allowing them to become a real opposition to the growing authoritarian imperial regime. Indeed, Mohammad Reza Shah, who began his “White Revolution”³³ in 1963, tended to harden its stance and violently repress all dissent, both in Iran and abroad. In the case of Iranian students in Western Europe, this led to the introduction of a series of administrative and legislative tools to control them. Firstly, a Director General of the Iranian Education Office was designated to be responsible for administering the Iranian student population, supported by national coordinators working in Iranian embassies in Europe.³⁴ This surveillance also took more offensive forms. In an internal memo from the Ministry of the Interior,³⁵ it is reported that the diplomatic corps refused to renew the passports of students deemed subversive. Complaints have even been lodged by Iranian students who accused the embassy of sending agents to their homes to steal their identity documents.³⁶ In so doing, the diplomatic corps hoped to expel from France the elements deemed the most politicised and therefore the most likely to influence the rest of the Iranian

³¹ Ervand Ebrahmanian, *A history of modern Iran*, Cambridge, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 123–154.

³² Valentin Rebour, “De la déclamation de poèmes à l’occupation d’ambassade: l’expérience migratoire des étudiants iraniens en exil en France (1950–1979)”, op. cit.

³³ The Iranian government's policy of modernizing and westernizing Iranian society began with the agrarian reforms initiated by Prime Minister Ali Amini in 1961.

³⁴ One respondent, who does not wish to be named, notes the gradual strengthening of this policy of supervision at the end of the 1950s, when the Director General of the Education Office saw his prerogatives reinforced, to fight more effectively on a European scale against student unrest, which was then in the process of being structured into increasingly coordinated associations.

³⁵ “Iranian [students] confronting their embassy.” AN Pierrefitte, MI, DR, BE/Iran, Iranian nationals in France.

³⁶ Internal memo from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, August 30 1965. AN Pierrefitte, MI, DR, BE/Iran, Iranian nationals in France.

student community.³⁷ On the other hand, young people judged to be loyalists were approached to act as mole, in exchange for the promise of positions of responsibility on their return to Iran or financial benefits.³⁸ The founding of the *Maison de l'Iran* in 1969 was seen by some Iranian students as a way of keeping a closer eye on them,³⁹ as confirmed by the former students I interviewed who, although they lived in the CIUP, did not reside in this Iranian house.

This conflictual relationship between the imperial authorities and Iranian students may explain why the *Maison de l'Iran* didn't welcome its first residents until 1969, ten years after the deed of donation was signed. The delay between the signing of the deed of gift in 1959, the laying of the foundation stone by the Shah during his visit to France in 1961, the design period up to 1966 and then the inauguration of the Maison in 1969 is officially explained by disagreements between the architects and a whole series of technical difficulties. The CIUP authorities constantly denounced late payments by the Iranian government,⁴⁰ while the 1962 report by the Directorate of Hygiene and Public Safety pointed to a number of dysfunctions in the building's design.⁴¹ However, it was during this same period that the Iranian student movement in Europe and North America began to take shape. In 1962, the Confederation of Iranian Students National Union (CISNU) was founded in Paris, bringing together all Iranian student movements and associations.

³⁷ As early as the late 1940s, correspondence between Iranian and French intelligence services referred to the expulsion of students deemed subversive, with large-scale operations such as the dissolution of the AEIF in 1952 and the dozens of expulsions from France that followed.

³⁸ Internal memo from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, August 30 1965. *Op. cit.*

³⁹ Prefecture report on the resignation of the director of the Maison de l'Iran, (1972). AN Pierrefitte, MI, DCRG, SEM, MO/Iran, box 98, "Central Directorate of General Intelligence, General Intelligence Reports on Iranian Students in France (1960–1980)" (hereafter: General intelligence reports/Iranian students in France).

⁴⁰ See the correspondence between the Académie de Paris and the Iranian embassy. AN Pierrefitte, Maison de l'Iran/Avicenna Foundation.

⁴¹ Report from the Hygiene and Public Safety Department to the Paris Prefecture, April 24, 1962. *Ibid.*

The Maison de l'Iran, Object and Place of Confrontation

The *Maison de l'Iran* was inaugurated at the beginning of the 1969 academic year, almost ten years after the signing of the donation agreement and in the wake of the events of May 1968, which for the CIUP represented “not so much a rupture as a radicalized convergence of earlier protests”.⁴² The tensions within the management of the *Maison de l'Iran*, which ultimately led the Iranian embassy to relinquish control to the *Fondation Nationale* in 1972, reflects the lasting effects of this convergence.

Renseignements généraux sources offer a number of factual insights. In a 1971 memo on the resignation of Mrs. Alaam, director of the *Maison de l'Iran* since its opening, the intelligence services note that “if, at that time [1969], [Mrs. Aalam] had no difficulty in carrying out her task as administrator, this was not the case thereafter, due to the untimely initiatives of members of the ‘Residents’ Committee’ of the Progressive Pavilion, who undermined her authority and disturbed the tranquility of the establishment”.⁴³ The author of the note added that, “on several occasions, the reading room has been used as a meeting place by associations from outside the pavilion, and has hosted prolonged ‘hunger strikes’ by Iranian students”, before noting that “the building itself is frequently covered in graffiti hostile to the Tehran regime”.

While the partisan analysis provided by the *Renseignements généraux* is of little interest, this note brings to light several noteworthy elements. To begin with, the *Maison de l'Iran* appeared to Iranian students as a projection of the Shah’s coercive and repressive policies at the heart of the CIUP, and the director, appointed by the Iranian authorities, as a relay for these policies. The CIUP was a place of debates and demonstrations, and these tensions illustrate the convergence in 1968 examined by Guillaume Tronchet, between political protest—in this case, students’ fierce criticism of the imperial authoritarian regime, taking the form of hunger strikes for example—and resident protest—residents’ refusal to see the *Maison de l'Iran* as anything other than a place to live. Thus, the fact the Iranian authorities relinquished the *Maison de l'Iran* testifies the failure of its attempt to control the student population. Secondly, the author of the

⁴² See the article of Guillaume Tronchet in this volume.

⁴³ Resignation of the director of the *Maison de l'Iran*, 1971. AN Pierrefitte, MI, DCRG, SEM, MO/Iran, General intelligence reports/Iranian students in France.

note described the many ways in which residents were taking over their living space. Mr. I., who arrived in France in 1970 and was a member of the French section of the Confederation of Iranian Students, recalls these weekly meetings, “the different political groups having their meetings in the different houses [...] And also demonstrations and also collages. So posters, in the subways. But also graffiti in the subways at 5 a.m., which people didn’t like very much [...] We liked to denounce the regime, writing ‘Down with the Shah’s fascist regime’”. The aim was therefore to make visible, the struggle waged by Iranian student youth against imperial power, which, according to the *Renseignements généraux*, brought them into disrepute among French public opinion.⁴⁴ This attests to the success of their efforts to make their struggle visible. Last but not least, the Iran pavilion was a political place for other foreign student communities. The latter found in this *Maison de l’Iran* what the Iranian students had found in the other pavilions before 1969, testifying to a close proximity between these students, as well as a shared vision of the CIUP and its houses as a resource.

FROM THE 1970S ONWARDS, THE IRANIANS JOINED THE ANTICOLONIALIST STRUGGLES TAKING PLACE IN THE CIUP

The closure of the *Maison de l’Iran* in 1972 and its takeover by the *Fondation Nationale* under the name of *Fondation Avicenne* (Avicenna Foundation) resulted in the eviction of its former residents. In addition, the doubling of the rent with the end of the embassy support made it impossible for them to stay. Moreover, the new pavilion was primarily intended for PhD students and visiting researchers. However, this should not be seen as the end of Iranian student political action at the CIUP.

In this way, the CIUP remained a privileged space for exchanges and rapprochements between student factions. In 1973, following the intervention of the Shah of Iran in the conflict in Dhofar (Sultanate of Oman), a meeting was held at the *Maison du Maroc*. During the meeting, Iran’s military intervention was strongly criticized as running counter to the Arab revolutionary movements sweeping the region. A Palestinian student even intervened to call on the Iranians to overthrow the Shah, an ally of

⁴⁴ Prefecture report on the closure of the *Maison de l’Iran*, 7 July 1972. *Ibid.*

the United States and Israel.⁴⁵ This episode highlights the closeness of Iranian students to other communities in the CIUP, first and foremost the Moroccan student activists of the *Parti du Progrès et du Socialisme* (Party of Progress and Socialism). Members of this party were unwavering in their support for the Iranian cause. In 1976, Mohammed A., a Moroccan student activist, was arrested at the French border carrying abundant documentation in several languages, including Arabic, from the Confederation of Iranian Students. Adhering to the same anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist ideas, this proximity testifies to the interpenetration of the Moroccan and Iranian radical left movements in the 1970s.

Moreover, the Iranian student community draws on a diversified and transnational repertoire of action, a dynamic found among other student communities, notably the activists of the *Fédération des étudiants d'Afrique noire en France* (Black African Students Federation in France).⁴⁶ The practice of hunger strikes, coupled with the occupation of buildings, became a preferred form of protest action, with the main challenge being to make the demands “visible”, thanks to the spectacular aspect of the action. Thus, in January 1976, in response to an appeal launched by the Confederation of Iranian Students in Frankfurt in support of Iranian political prisoners and to denounce the death sentence passed on ten militants of the Iranian People’s Combatants Organisation (the Mujahedin), the leaders of the *Union des Étudiants Iraniens en France* started a hunger strike in the *Maison d’Italie* in the CIUP.⁴⁷ But this strike was part of a more general program of action. The hunger strike, which lasted from 7 to 11 January, was accompanied by two other actions. On Saturday 10 January, some thirty Iranian students marched through the central hall of the *Gare du Nord* station in Paris, distributing leaflets denouncing the executions of political opponents. The following day, Sunday 11 January, a banner reading “*Sauvons les dix condamnés à mort en Iran*” (“Save the ten condemned to death in Iran”) was hung on the pediment of Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris.⁴⁸ Thus, far from being

⁴⁵ Report on the meeting of Iranian students at the Maison du Maroc. *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Françoise Blum, “L’indépendance sera révolutionnaire ou ne sera pas. Étudiants africains en France contre l’ordre colonial”, *Cahiers d’histoire. Revue d’histoire critique*, n° 126, 2015, p. 119–138.

⁴⁷ Report from the Renseignements Généraux on the Iranian students’ hunger strike, 12 January 1976. *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

merely a place of residence, the Cité Universitaire was for Iranian students a space of politicization, but above all of activism, transnational alliances, and visibility for their struggles—a reflection of the tensions between a youth living abroad and an imperial power seeking to control it beyond its borders.

CONCLUSION

By reconstructing the political trajectory of Iranian students at the *Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris* between 1948 and 1979, this article highlights a dual dynamic: the emergence of political activism in a context of mobility, and the “territorialisation” of protest within a space initially conceived as apolitical. Far from being a mere place of residence, the CIUP asserted itself as a silent yet central actor in this history: a laboratory for new forms of mobilisation, a space of socialisation and diplomatic confrontation, and—through the *Maison de l’Iran*—a focal point for tensions between an engaged youth and an authoritarian regime intent on monitoring its elites from afar. By examining how Iranian students turned the CIUP into a resource—a lever for political action, a space for collective affirmation and a site of symbolic reappropriation—this article reframes the experience abroad not as the simple extension of pre-existing political commitments, but as a moment of experimentation, creation, and recomposition within a singular Parisian environment. Rather than a passive setting, the CIUP emerges as a political space in its own right—one that calls for closer attention to student living environments as sites of mobilisation. It also reveals the formation of transnational solidarities—between Iranian, Maghrebi, African, and Palestinian students—which sketched out a distinct geography of global protest in the 1970s.

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¹ The CIUP library, located in the Maison internationale, offers a wide range of online resources: inventories of archives deposited with the Archives nationales and publications available at the Bibliothèque historique de la Ville de Paris, periodicals produced by the Cité, bibliographies on the Alliance des anciens résidents, the houses and foundations.

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Association du Foyer international des étudiants catholiques – 1925¹³

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¹¹ Its purpose is “to establish a bond of solidarity between residents and former residents of the College, and to maintain among former residents the spirit of good fellowship, cordial friendship and active cooperation which animates the College”. Composed of two branches, alumni living in Commonwealth countries and those living in France and other countries.

¹² Founding Chairman M. Bachelot (later director of MI). Among his successors: Jean-Pierre Martin (MPF), Victor Levi (MLD), Michel Javaux, Philippe Lecolier (DLM Suède 1958–62).

¹³ Founded by Abbé Picard de la Vacquerie in November 1925 with the support of Cardinal Dubois and Mgr Chaptal, “l'évêque des étrangers”. Object: “To promote the exchange of philosophical, social and religious ideas between students; to encourage the practice of sports” (Journal officiel, November 13, 1925). Moved to avenue du parc Montsouris in 1926; remained there until November 1936, when the students' church was inaugurated. From 1937 to 1939, Canon Lallier was director of the Foyer. After the war, Abbé Joly appears to be in charge.

Le Globe-trotter, journal des anciens du Foyer international catholique de la Cité universitaire de Paris [variante : *Journal de l'Association des amis du foyer des étudiants catholiques de la CIUP*], trimestriel, 1959–1964.

Groupe international des étudiants protestants¹⁴

« Groupe international des étudiants protestants », *Bulletin de l'Alliance*, n°36, 1960, p. 10.

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¹⁴ Led by Pastor J.-P. Meyer. Home built in 1936 in the Villa du Parc Montsouris, according to Paul Marcel