"A Support Network for Endangered Scholars during the Late Cold War. The Committee of Mathematicians and a Human Rights Broad-based Coalition in France"

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Introduction

The International Committee of Mathematicians was created to defend mathematicians persecuted for their opinions and political commitments in 1974, in a historical context marked by a reconfiguration and a significant increase in human rights movements (among others, Keck and Sikking 1998, Rise, Ropp and Sikking 1999, Quataert 2009, Moyn 2010, Snyder 2011, Iriye, Goedde and Hitchcock 2012, Pendas 2012). It was the result of the common initiative of two French mathematicians, Henri Cartan and Laurent Schwartz – immediately joined in its coordination by a younger colleague, Michel Broué – and of a US mathematician, Lipman Bers. Although it was created as an ad-hoc non-State organization in order to obtain the release of two Soviet mathematicians (Yuri Chikhanovich and Leonid Plyushch) who had been interned in psychiatric hospitals for political reasons, the committee would be led to become permanent.

The committee defined itself in relation to a specific professional group and decided to limit its scope to the defence of repressed mathematicians. Nevertheless, its action was not carried out in the name of sectional claims or corporatist interests[1]. Sticking to the principle 'one is a mathematician, therefore one is concerned' – which admittedly amounts to a restriction – was a way of delineating, rationalizing and justifying choices made by the CM: 'it was not an elitist attitude that we had, it was a practical attitude [....]. It was not ''defending only [mathematicians]'', it was ''at least defending that''[2]', explained Michel Broué. This criterion ensured the feasibility of the actions that the committee carried out and the clarity of the message it promoted. More importantly, an 'universalist' and 'indivisible conception of human rights[3]' underpinned the defence of these cases, which were selected independently of the political orientations of both persecuted mathematicians and persecuting regimes. This principle had also an impact on the geography and 'geopolitics' of the committee's action, as well as on the profile of its potential allies on a case-by-case basis. While its two founding cases, as well as many of those it defended later,

were located in the socialist countries of Eastern Europe (in the USSR, Poland, or Czechoslovakia), the committee also acted in Latin America (Uruguay, Argentina), Africa (Morocco, Togo, South Africa), and the Middle East (Lebanon, Israel). Embedded in Cold War issues, its action tended however to transcend its divides and was not synonymous with the fight against communism, to which the theme of the defence of human rights has indeed served as an instrument, or even has often been reduced (among others, Guilhot 2005, Dezalay and Garth 1998, 2002).

While it dedicated to defending not abstract principles but individual cases, *i.e.* particular situations about which it conducted investigations and campaigns, the committee was nevertheless confronted with the need of carry out a work on de-singularisation and construction of a cause, in order to make its protest heard (Boltanski 1984, Boltanski et al. 2007, Claverie 1994, Collovald and Gaïti 1991, among others) and to revolve these cases around human rights principles. It organized thus public campaigns using a classic range of intellectuals' intervention methods – petitions, press conferences, media interventions, meetings, delegations to embassies of the oppressive States, sending telegrams to the authorities. Relying heavily on the mobilization of the mathematical community, it also used professional practices, networks and resources for the benefit of activist action, and benefited from the previous internationalisation of this scientific discipline.

From the joined initiative of the French and American mathematicians mentioned above, the International Committee of Mathematicians was built incrementally as an internationalized advocacy network (Keck and Sikking 1998, Quataert 2009, among others), aspiring to act in a coordinated, or at least converging, manner within and towards several national intervention spaces (the spaces where activists belong and those chosen as targets of their campaigns, respectively). However, it operated essentially through national committees that multiplied and rapidly established themselves in about fifteen countries. We shall focus here on the French branch of the International Committee of Mathematicians (hereafter, CM). This is first due to a general methodological reason, since we aim investigating the 'national sources of transnational politics' (Tarrow, 2000: 195) and not to separate transnational action and its national footholds (see also Dezalay and Garth 2002, Quataert 2009, Siméant 2010, Popa 2010), on the basis of a thorough empirical study. Advocating a cause at transnational level by a committee that was gradually being built on this scale itself presupposed, indeed, that its action used resources and was deployed

against constraints that were partly specific to the different national backgrounds where it was anchored, and that we want to pinpoint.

Moreover, a specific research question justifies here this choice. The struggle for human rights is not sectorial (Collovald 2002, p. 224) but the subject of diversified involvements by a multitude of actors – associations, trade unions, political parties, press, segments of the State administration, etc. – anchored in different social and professional spaces. Therefore, a detailed investigation of this implantation in a particular professional (in this case, scientific) or even disciplinary (here, mathematical) environment does not exhaust neither the levels of analysis nor the conditions enabling the accomplishment of the CM's action. And effectively, the CM succeeded in gathering around it a heterogeneous and variable coalition of allies, and even in occupying a pivotal position. These networks extended thus beyond the mathematical milieu itself, providing it with other types of resources and modalities of intervention, and can be finely observed at the national level where they were socially embedded. This observation justifies therefore the choice to target here only the French branch, which enjoyed, what is more, a pre-eminence within the International Committee, due to the activism of its initiators.

Our approach aims thus to avoid in particular two conflated pitfalls. The first one might consist in an explanation of the CM's action by an intrinsic power of science, which would draw on a supposed imperviousness of this sector of activity to other social logics. The second one revolves around an enchanted vision of a professional group acting in a heroic[4] and autarchic manner, and that finds in the decisions, resources and know-how of its only members the driving force of their action and the solution to any difficulty they faced. This contribution[5] intends therefore to map out the intersectoral dimension of the CM's action in favor of the human rights (at the expense, here, of a thorough analysis of its transnational scope). Additionally, it takes heed to the social, professional and political characteristics of the various cause entrepreneurs involved, starting with those of the main French leaders of the CM. This analytical perspective allows considering, in particular, in which stage of their often much longer activist carrier the human rights commitment did occur, as well as the historical contexts in which their past and present commitments were enshrined (such as World War II, the Algerian war, decolonization process, European construction). More generally, this makes it possible to historicize, if not the cause of human rights as such, at least the activist practices and networks used to serve it. We will therefore explore hereafter

this broader configuration of actors within which the CM itself was located, their actions as well as their social, professional and political backgrounds.

Cause Entrepreneurs: the French initiators of the CM

The analysis of the trajectories of the French CM's initiators and of their human rights commitment allows to highlight a 'reconversion activism' (Agrikoliansky 2001, 2002) ensuing from previous political engagements that one may conceive as sequences of a 'militant career' (see also Fillieule 2001, Siméant 2001, Collovald 2002). It also put light on individual resources that were leveraged through collective action as well as on the family, professional and political socializations of these scholars. This analysis is also intended to pay attention to interknowledge links that could be reactivated during the CM's intersectoral and transnational action.

The three French mathematicians belong to different generations with regard to the institutional and scientific history of their discipline. However, they are all former students of the *École normale supérieure* (ENS) in Paris (Henri Cartan and Laurent Schwartz were admitted in this prestigious academic establishment in 1923 and in 1934 respectively) and St. Cloud (Michel Broué, in 1966). In the mid-1970s, the professional careers, already underway, of the two first of them combined exceptional indicators of scientific and institutional recognition. All three had important militant, associative or trade union commitments outside the CM. Lastly, they came from families whose social trajectory was upward, while they contributed themselves to reproducing the social positions they inherited.

Born in 1904, Henri Cartan was the son of the mathematician Elie Cartan, whose 'selfless work', in his own words, earned him a formative example (Cartan quoted in Schmidt 1990, p. 40; see also Verdier 1988: 236-237; *Notices of the AMS* 1999, p. 782-788). A former student of the ENS himself with modest and provincial social origins (Javillier 1951: 1785-1791), the latter had been elected a member of the Academy of Sciences in 1931. That same year, Henri Cartan became a lecturer, then professor at the Strasbourg university, one of the most prestigious in France at the time. He met another former ENS's student, André Weil, with whom he became one of the co-founders of the Bourbaki group (Beaulieu 2008), alongside Jean Delsarte, Claude Chevalley and Jean Dieudonné (the last two would become

early members of the CM). From 1935 onwards, Cartan thus participated in the collective drafting of the mathematical treatises published under the pseudonym of Nicolas Bourbaki, which contributed to a profound renewal of the discipline. Appointed professor at the Sorbonne in 1940, Cartan taught in practice at the ENS until 1965. Moreover, since 1948, he has been leading the "Cartan Seminars", which have become a central place for the training of young mathematicians and a hub for foreign researchers. While its own work pushed forward innovative research directions, Cartan played a pivotal role in the French mathematical school also through his institutional positions and international recognition. He was elected President of the French Mathematical Society in 1950, a correspondent of the Academy of Sciences and then a member in 1974. He was also a member of the Fields Committee in 1954, vice-president and then president of the International Mathematical Union, and a foreign member of the Academy of Sciences of many foreign countries.

At about ten-year gap, Laurent Schwartz (born in 1915) benefited from the scientific achievements of Cartan, his professor at the ENS. He was the son of a surgeon of Alsatian and rural origins who, moved by patriotism, had decided to leave Alsace (which at that time was a German province) for France and became the first Jewish surgeon in Paris hospitals and then a member of the Academy of Surgery, after overcoming many obstacles due to anti-Semitism. The example of ‘hard work’, ‘moral rigour’, ‘sense of duty’ (Schwartz quoted in Schmidt 1990, p. 209; see also *Société Mathématique de France* 2003) and commitments for causes deemed just shaped the family ethos. Schwartz's mother was the daughter of a rabbi, but he received an atheistic education. The scientific tradition was also established in the family through his maternal uncle, Robert Debré (co-initiator of the University Hospital Centres, future member of the Academy of Medicine and the Academy of Sciences), as well as his uncle by marriage, the mathematician Jacques Hadamard. As in the case of Henri Cartan, these social and professional affiliations were also enriched through matrimonial alliances: while the first was married to the daughter of the physicist Pierre Weiss, Laurent Schwartz married a fellow student, mathematician herself and daughter of Paul Lévy (a professor at the *École Polytechnique* and an internationally recognized mathematician).

As a refugee in the southern zone during the war, Schwartz settled at Cartan's instigation in Clermont-Ferrand, which had become, in a way, the first mathematical centre in France at that time. There he met the founders of Bourbaki, who co-opted him into their group and, under the impetus of Jean Dieudonné, he defended his thesis in 1943. A year

later, Schwartz developed the theory of distributions, for which he would be awarded in 1950 the Fields Medal (considered as the equivalent of the Nobel Prize for mathematics). At that time, he was recruited professor at the Nancy university, and then at the Paris university, and from 1959 onwards, at the *École Polytechnique*, where he became involved in the reform of mathematical teaching and research.

The scientific affinities and friendship between Cartan and Schwartz combined with a complementarity of their militant cultures. Moreover, their political commitments prior to, or parallel to the action they carried out through the CM, were correlated with action in favour of international scientific cooperation. All these stances were underpinned by a certain rapport with the nation-state and in particular, by the propensity to question its sovereignty. This tendency was fuelled by federalist (in the case of Cartan) and (formerly) Trotskyist commitments (in the case of Schwartz and Broué) as well as by the internationalist ethos of the scientific profession they exercised. The challenge of the traditional understanding of state sovereignty via transnational action taken on behalf of the universality of human rights, and even by vindicating a 'right of interference', would be an approach gradually integrated into the interpretative frameworks developed by the CM, and claimed as such during its campaigns. A presentation text of the committee pointed out for example that 'we have never accepted the argument of 'non-interference': the duty of mathematicians is to interfere in the affairs of States when they imprison mathematicians[6]'. Collaboration with lawyers also provided a legal basis for this argument. Associated with the campaign in favour of Plyushch, one of them, Jean-Jacques de Félice, claimed the 'right to interference' in his intervention during a meeting organised in 1975[7].

A pro-European centrist, Cartan criticized the 'harmfulness of the notion of absolute state sovereignty' (quoted in Schmidt 1990, p. 40) and considered that the nation-state system was no longer viable after the two world wars, of which he had been a direct witness[8]. Although he (and members of his family) was involved against the German occupier during the World War II, he turned a fervent supporter of Franco-German reconciliation after the war, a conviction that over-determined his political and scientific positions. Cartan had already been marked by the break that the First World War I had introduced into scientific relations and in particular into international mathematics, and by the consequences of the anti-German nationalism of the French scientists. At least indirectly, this experience provides a better understanding on some of his options as a leader of the

CM, this time in the context of the Cold War, in particular about his reluctance to boycott international scientific relations. Moreover, through his functions at the International Mathematical Union, Cartan worked to ensure that the presence in the international congresses of mathematicians representing the socialist camp was not hindered by political obstacles, which were certainly due to obstructions of the communist authorities themselves but also to Western reticence[9]. Moreover, according to an entangled professional and political logic, Cartan's pro-European commitment led him to be concerned with the european harmonisation of mathematical education, particularly in his capacity as a founder and president of the French section of the European Teachers' Association. He also became politically involved in the European Federalist Movement and even its president in 1973. He believed, what is more, that the unity of the peoples of 'free' Europe would facilitate the (geo)political emancipation of Eastern Europe and eventually, the unity of the whole continent.

Both East-West relations (first, through his Trotskyist activism) and relations between so-called developed and developing countries (through his anti-colonial engagement) structured Schwartz's commitments. Coming from a family situated politically on the moderate right, he became more radical in contact with his fellow students at the ENS, and then through the episode of the Popular Front (he voted socialist in 1936). The Moscow trials pushed him to join the *Parti Ouvrier Internationaliste* (Internationalist Workers Party), of Trotskyist orientation. Both his anti-Stalinism and anti-colonialism, going hand in hand with an internationalism conceived as radical, were forged within this framework of political socialization, for which Schwartz would say that he remained indebted even after his break with the party. In the aftermath of the war, indeed, Schwartz moved away from the Trotskyist party, and was finally excluded. He later joined the *Parti socialiste unifié* (United Socialist Party) and became departmental secretary of the *Fédération de l'Education Nationale* (National Education Federation), a powerful union at the time, and which will be an important support of the CM. But it was in particular his commitment to decolonization that marked the political trajectory of Schwartz during the 1950s and 1960s, notably via his campaigning against the Algerian war and the use of torture. He also became a member of the Russell Tribunal, which was intended to investigate war crimes committed in Vietnam. Informal or institutionalized actions in the field of scientific cooperation with the 'Third World' also accompanied these commitments.

Therefore, the action taken by Cartan and Schwartz, within the CM, in favour of the human rights followed on from past partisan, trade union and militant commitments and added to those carried out simultaneously outside the CM. This was also the case of Michel Broué. A significant age difference distinguished him, however, from the other two mathematicians. In 1975, barely a year after the creation of the CM, the professional careers of each of them underwent changes that symbolized these contrasting stages: Cartan retired and so, ended his academic career[10]; Schwartz was elected a member of the Academy of Sciences; Broué defended his State doctoral thesis (*thèse d'Etat*), whereas he had been a research associate with the *Centre national de la recherche scientifique* (National Centre for Scientific Research) since 1970. This biographical stage also allowed the latter to free up more time for activist work and the very demanding task of secretary of the CM he occupied. Born in 1946 in Paris, the 'young' Broué was the son of a schoolteacher and historian Pierre Broué (professor at the *Institut d'Etudes Politiques* in Grenoble and Trotskyist militant), but was raised by his grandparents, socialist schoolteachers. His grandfather, a trade unionist and former resistance fighter, transmitted in particular strong anti-Stalinist convictions to him. These views led Michel Broué to join the *Organisation Communiste Internationale* (OCI) (Internationalist Communist Organisation) in 1971, since he was attracted by its critical positions on Eastern European regimes and by its members' knowledge on this topic. Broué's meeting with Lionel Jospin[11], who ensured *incognito* his activist training within a Group of revolutionary studies, also counted towards membership. The intellectual and political openness of Jospin, in Broué's eyes, led the latter to join the OCI in spite of some reticence about the party's sectarianism[12]. Finally, Broué's admiration for Schwartz (since the latter was a former Trotskyist militant himself) played a part in favour of his own commitment. The impact of the CM's action, the militant capital and the prestige it has enabled him to acquire would lead Broué to cumulate his intense action in this framework with others ones, or to expand it in its wake: he also joined other committees, more or less ephemeral, committed to fundamental freedoms[13]. What is more, Broué conceived this expansion as allowing him to go beyond a partisan cause. He would leave the OCI in the early 1980s, since he estimated this party too sectarian and considered, by contrast, the universalism of human rights as better adapted to his political expectations.

However, the risk of a too extensive broadening, or even an overrun, regarding the causes to be defended and the networks they were invited to join led Cartan and Schwartz

to be selective. Schwartz's arguments against the invitation to join the International Sakharov Hearings, for example, are significant in several respects. On the one hand, they reveal the centrality for him, at that time, of his commitment within the CM, with which Schwartz identified himself and knew that he was identified; yet, he did not wish to compromise it by mixing it up with other militant activities: 'As far as the Eastern countries are concerned, there is always the risk of believing that my name commits the French Committee of Mathematicians and this forces me to be even more reserved[14]', he replied to the invitation mentioned. On the other hand, his refusal shows reluctance to join enlarged transnational networks of activists, and that is apparently paradoxical because of the restrictive geography of the action he indicated he wished to take: 'I do not give my name to committees unless they are in Paris and consult me before each important communication[15]'. This argument suggests, however, the importance to him of rooting these actions in social, professional and even geographical spaces with which he could maintain a direct link and on which he could exercise control. In contrast, it shows the importance of having built the CM's action primarily upon scientific, and even disciplinary, networks.

Although effective and reliable, such networks were nevertheless not sufficient to ensure neither the investigation and the follow-up of adopted cases, nor the implementation and impact of public campaigns organized in their favor. This was also the case with the individual social resources of the three French leaders of the CM, even if they were certainly quite exceptional: indeed, these scholars put to the benefit of the CM's action a rare combination of national and international scientific prestige, professional relations in both French and foreign mathematical circles, public notoriety (including in the media), militant experience and know-how, contacts in trade union and political circles. The gradual construction of an increasingly broad coalition of allies of the CM will, however, make it possible to diversify the professional and associative setting-up of its action as well as its forms of intervention, and thus, to increase their impact.

A broader activist front

The visibility, if not the impact, of the actions carried out by the CM increased firstly thanks to the diversification of its scientific networks that was not only international, but also disciplinary. This was the result of the founding of committees that were created in an

independent manner, but that can be considered as homologous, and whose existence was mutually reinforcing. This is the case of the Committee of Physicists (whose active members were for example Jean-Paul Mathieu, Christiane Caroli, Georges Waysand, Yuri Rychenkov, Paul Kessler), the Committee of Biologists (led by Claude Caussanel and Antoinette Karlinski) and the Committee of Chemists (by P. Rabette). Their activities followed their own logic, depending on the sociological, morphological and organizational specificities of each discipline as well as on the repression that affected their representatives in different political and national configurations. However, these disciplinary committees nurtured affinities that made possible convergent, and sometimes even common, approaches.

These actions were thus strongly (though not exclusively) based on the activation of interknowledge links and professional networks (Snow, Zurcher and Ekland-Olson 1980) on a national and international scale: 'We wrote to each other, we knew each other[16]', testified Michel Broué, joined on this point by one of the initiators of the Committee of Physicists: 'the profession's internal networks worked![17]'. These networks fed the flow of information, the gathering of resources, and the specific repertoires of action th"y used. Both the choice of the cases defended and the actions in their favour were therefore based on professional proximity and even affinities that were genuine or at least represented as such ('there was this complicity, which often have became friendship (...) because we knew each other, because we appreciated each other[18]', commented a physicist close to the action of the CM). These proximities were one of the driving forces behind the enrolment of scientists, since all of them were not very politicized beforehand, unlike the CM's initiators themselves.

Moreover, the action of these committees created on a disciplinary basis and under the banner of human rights converged with, and partially relied on, that of other bodies with a more sectorial and communitarian vocation. This was particularly the case of the Scientific Committee of the French National Council for the Protection of the Rights of Jews of the USSR, which acted in favour of the rights of the *refuznik*[19] and fought the state anti-Semitism in the USSR that also affected the scientific milieus. Schwartz, alongside Alfred Kastler and André Lwoff (Nobel Prize winners in Physics and Medicine, respectively) co-chaired this committee. This obviously facilitated the collaboration and the circulation of information with the CM, which led, or was associated with, campaigns in favour of Soviet Jewish mathematicians (such as Naum Meiman, Alexander Yoffe, Mark Azbel, Irina and Victor Brailowski). But there were also overlaps with other disciplinary committees already

mentioned, whose members – such as Paul Kessler, active in the Physicists' Committee – could also act within the framework of the Scientific Committee of the French National Council for the Protection of the Rights of Jews in the USSR.

This last mentioned organization collaborated itself with other scientific structures, in particular the Committee of Concerned Scientists (created in the United States and led by the mathematical physicist Joël Leibowitz) as well as with non-scientific organizations *stricto sensu*, notably the *Bibliothèque juive contemporaine* (BJC) (Contemporary Jewish Library), enlarging thus the national and international activist networks. These bodies shared information and organized visits of persecuted scientists in the USSR, which also took advantage of opportunities that remained scientific, such as the participation to the so-called seminars of the "excluded from science''. Multidisciplinary, these seminars were founded in cities such as Moscow and Leningrad by, and for, those who could no longer participate in official Soviet science, since they had been dismissed from their posts as refuznik and/or dissidents. As for the BJC, it was officially an autonomous documentation centre established in Paris. However, in a very discreet way, it worked in collaboration with the State of Israel, which is said to have partially financed its activities[20], and acted anyway on the basis of community-based affinities. The BJC played an important role in the organisation and coordination of visits to *refuzniks*, by supporting financially the travel of French scientists to the USSR for this purpose[21] and providing to the disciplinary based committees information on the identity and addresses of local contact persons as well as on new cases of repression. The BJC was not the only organization that played this intermediation role; another very active body, based in Paris, was the *Comité des Quinze* (Committee of Fifteen), founded and led by David Selikowitz (a businessman of Jewish and American origin). While there was some competition between these two organizations[22], it was only with the BJC that the CM and the disciplinary committees already mentioned collaborated.

These scientific players were thus led, if not forced, in particular for practical reasons, to diversify their contacts beyond their own disciplinary or even professional environment. They must therefore have been learn to navigate in a complex associative and activist space that claimed itself from the struggle for human rights, to make distinctions between its different sectorial logics and to deal with its inherent competition. All at once, they considered it necessary to vary their partners both in terms of social and professional

implantations as well as of the aims (particularist or universalist) that animated their struggle. Therefore, these heterogeneous coalitions brought together associative milieus, trade unions and professional circles, which were able to organize campaigns and to ensure to them an increased social, political and media impact. These coalitions were sometimes specifically built around an individual case according to relevant sectorial anchors – such as the collaboration of the French National Council for the Protection of the Rights of Jews of the USSR, in the case of mathematicians persecuted because of their Jewish origin, or that of a Committee of Psychiatrists, in favour of Plyushch. But they have been also partly replicated from one campaign to another – as shown by the regular collaboration of the Amnesty International (AI) (Clark 2001, Buchanan 2002) and *La Ligue française des droits de l'homme* (LFDH) (the French Human Rights League) (Agrikoliansky 2002).

Since it acted in favour of 'prisoners of conscience' within, and for the benefit of, the scientific communities and, more specifically, on the scale of a particular discipline, the CM placed itself in a logic of sectorial specialisation with regard to the scope of other organisations, some of whom had already acquired a longer experience and even a reputation in the defence of this cause. This was notably the case for the last two mentioned, the LFDH and the AI, which became partners of the CM since its 'founding' campaign in favour of Plyushch, and thus contributed to the committee's broadened legitimacy and media visibility. It was in their company that the CM organized one of its very first actions outside the mathematical community, namely a joint press conference about the Soviet mathematician: 'It was very useful to have these two organizations sit with us in the middle! – commented Michel Broué. The press, people, political staff understood that something was happening. (...) [AI and LFDH] could have had a sectarian attitude, or say ''it's us, it's not you''... Not at all! Not at all at all![23]' The relationship between these three organisations became a key one, and it was therefore not one of competition, but one of cooperation, materializing through joint meetings, delegations, common declarations, as well as constant exchange of information.

Genealogies of principles and forms of political action

Affinities have particularly linked the CM and the AI. They did not simply manifest by the addition of these activist arenas by some protagonists, since Schwartz and Ennio De

Giorgi (the CM's correspondent in Italy), for example, were also members of AI. This proximity also surpassed the agreement on specific projects[24] as well as the overlapping of the efforts of the two organizations for the benefit of specific cases. Other mathematicians than Plyushch that were defended by the CM were also adopted by the AI as 'prisoners of conscience', indeed. This was the case of José Luis Massera, a Uruguayan communist mathematician sentenced to twenty years imprisonment, and of Sion Assidon, a Moroccan Marxist-Leninist mathematician sentenced to eight-teen years imprisonment.

Yet, these affinities were deeper, and were due to the strong proximity of the strategies and general principles governing the action of these two organisations: target individual cases rather than putting forward abstract ideas, focus on flagrant violations of human rights (imprisonment, torture, failures in judicial investigation, etc.), choose cases of repression by both right- and left-oriented regimes. This proximity can be interpreted as a more or less direct effect of the circulation of a 'model', embodied by AI, as well as of norms (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998) and practices due to the reshaping of the international space of organizations specialized in the defence of human rights (Guilhot 2005). In the context of the Cold War, it could even be seen as the effect of a symbolic hegemony that relied on the infrastructure of international NGOs to disseminate political principles and values, as well as to export organizational forms and practices establishing it (Dezalay and Garth 1998, 2002). However, two sets of remarks make it possible to qualify these possible interpretations by recalling both the temporality of the processes and the specificities of the national as well as disciplinary space in which they took place.

The first is intended to recall the relatively particular trajectory of the French section of the AI, due to its creation much later than most other national sections (in 1971, whereas the parent organization had been created ten years earlier). Marie-Josée Protais, founding member and then head of the French section (on whom the collaboration of the AI and the CM was essentially based), has incidentally testified on several occasions to the difficulties she encountered in establishing the legitimacy of the British NGO in France in its beginnings. In spite of the growing international legitimacy of AI[25] (which did not prevent it from being in competition with, or even already contested by newcomers to the human rights NGO space), it is likely that the collaboration of the French section *per se* of AI with the CM contributed in turn to strengthening it in the French associative space. This was helped by symbolic benefits due to the political effectiveness of the methods shared by the two organisations, which

have been proven fruitful regarding Plyushch – since he was liberated in 1976 with significant impact and media resonance. (Upon his release, a representative of the Austrian section of AI was part of the 'delegation' that came to welcome him to Vienna, alongside an English member of the Psychiatrists Committee as well as Michel Broué and a close collaborator of the CM, Tania Mathon. The last two accompanied Plyushch to France, the country where he wished to seek political asylum.)

A second remark that contibutes to qualify the idea that the CM merely assimilated a 'template' whose prototype would be the AI consists in inscribing the modes of intervention of the committee, and even the causes it defended, in a longer temporality as well as in a militant genealogy specific to the French mathematical discipline. This previous history has already led to experimenting with similar modes of action and 'working methods[26]'. It is therefore a matter of collective work and historical constructing of causes and modes of intervention (Collowald 2002, p. 178), which implies that the repertoires of action used by the CM did not proceed from a mechanical application of an international prescriptive model. Indeed, the committee relied substantially, first of all, on pre-existing, even routine practices of intervention in the public space and claimed itself from a much longer history of commitment of French intellectuals, starting with what is generally considered to be its founding moment, the Dreyfus Affair[27] (Charle 1990). (Besides, symbolically, Dreyfus's grandson sent a message of support on the occasion of the meeting in favour of Plyushch). But above all, a professional precedent served as a reference for the CM: the fight against torture during the Algerian war and in particular, the Maurice Audin Affair, named after a young mathematician who has been tortured and killed by the French army in 1957. He had been assistant at the Faculty of Sciences in Algiers, a communist and an activist for Algerian independence. This reference was neither a rhetorical nor an incidental element for the CM, but a central one at several levels. That was the case, first of all, because of Schwartz's personal commitment on this occasion[28] and the acquisition of militant experience and know-how. Second, this mobilization relied on the creation of an 'Audin Committee' of which Schwartz was one of the founding members: based on the investigation of an individual case, it established itself as a body for the fight against torture. The CM reiterated this reasoning, mode of organization and the use of certain repertoires of action. Third, the mobilization against the Algerian war was a crucible for building activist networks and helped to (in)direct interknowledge links between activists. This previous shared experience

favoured affinities and even reinvestment of these links at the time of the CM's action. This was evidenced by the collaboration between the CM and J.-P. Mathieu, one of the leaders of the Physicists' Committee and who has been committed himself against the Algerian war. Other connections have (re)emerged on this basis, in particular with lawyers who had advocated for the *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN) in Algeria, as well as with Pierre Vidal-Naquet, author in 1958 of an investigative book, *L'Affaire Audin*, prefaced by Schwartz, and who participated in certain CM's actions, and with Pierre Astre, permanent secretary of the National Education Federation and rapporteur on Algeria at the time of its 1961 Congress. Astre was in charge of the question of freedoms within the trade union at the beginning of the mobilisation of the CM and in that capacity, participated actively in the campaign for Plyushch.

Finally, the Audin Affair and, more generally, the Algerian war were references that made it possible to place the CM's action under the banner of the fight against torture, *inter alia*. Indeed, one of the characteristics of the CM's two founding cases was not only that they have been interned in psychiatric hospitals, but also for one of them, Plyushch, to be treated with high doses of neuroleptics, which deteriorated his state of health. The CM interpreted these medical practices as a means of political repression and assimilated them to a form of torture. Moreover, its activism and the existence of other similar victims in the USSR contributed that this issue would be included in the AI's global campaign against torture launched in 1975. Action against this form of repression also allowed mathematicians and psychiatrists circles to converge. The latter organised themselves in a specific committee, acting both in favour of the liberation of victims and against what they considered to be a misuse of psychiatry.

"Allies" professional groups: committed psychiatrists and cause lawyers

The progressive construction of a broaden coalition of CM's allies, althought it had a variable outline according to the individual cases defended, made it possible to strengthen the perimeter of the advocates for the human rights, while diversifying their professional implantation and forms of commitment. The action of the CM thus converged with that of groups of psychiatrists and lawyers. They were not only involved in the organisation of public campaigns, but also made it possible, on the basis of the specialised knowledge they

possessed, to develop forms of counter-expertise, psychiatric and legal respectively, on the cases defended.

Independent of the CM but rapidly joining it in some of its campaigns (starting with the one for Plyushch), a Committee of Psychiatrists against Special Psychiatric Hospitals – later called the Committee of Psychiatrists against the Use of Psychiatry for Political Purposes – was formed in 1972. It was created since other cases predated, or were contemporary with that of Plyushch, and about which the press and Vladimir Boukovsky's book, *A New Mental Illness in the USSR: The Opposition* (published in 1971), already warned French readers. From its very inception, this committee has brought together different professional and political (namely mainly left-wing) sensitivities, as evidenced by the adhesion of the secretaries-general of the Hospital Psychiatrists Union, Jean Aymes (also a former Trotskyist), of the National Union of Private Psychiatrists, Gérard Blès, and of the French Psychiatrists' Union, Charles Brisset. At the founding meeting, they were also joined by Gaston Ferdière, former president of the prestigious journal *L'évolution psychiatrique*, Jean-Paul Descombey, a doctor, hospital psychiatrist and former member of the French Communist Party, and Martine Legay, social psychology specialist, member of the OCI, who would provide the secretariat of the committee.

The Trotskyist organization also played a role in the initiative of the founding meeting of the Committee of Psychiatrists (however held at the Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital) and provided logistical support for its secretariat, but there was no organic link between these two organizations. The OCI was also been a channel through which contacts have been established between the Committee of Psychiatrists and the CM, but given prior interknowledge links, it was not the only one either. Jean-Paul Descombey for example had known from the time of their common activism within the Communist Youth[29] Tania Mathon, a psychologist working at the CNRS. Frenchwoman, born in Germany in 1924, but with Russian origins, she had become close to Elena Bonner[30], the wife of physicist Andrei Sakharov (Rhéaume 2004), co-founder of the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights and Political Victims. At the end of 1973, Mathon informed Schwartz's about the imprisonment of Yuri Chikhanovich, who would become the very first case defended by the CM. Beyond that, she would be a key informant for the CM on the persecution of Soviet scientists and facilitated exchanges with the Committee of Psychiatrists.

The rapid convergence of these two committees did not therefore come up against obstacles but was on the contrary encouraged by the sharing of similar objectives, interknowledge links and prior political proximities. Moreover, it has manifested publicly on the occasion of a meeting held in 1975 to support the liberation of Plyushch, and for the organization of which a dozen psychiatrists called for. Some debates and internal oppositions were emerging rather within the psychiatric community itself. This came from communist psychiatrists[31] and fellow travellers, as well as from psychiatrists close to the disalient-oriented movements and the anti-psychiatry, but without hindering the action of the Committee of Psychiatrists whose first petition gathered, for example, almost two thousand signatures in the professional environment[32]. The international organisation of this medical speciality offered French psychiatrists an additional arena for debate (not always consensual either), in particular through the World Congresses of Psychiatry (Bloch and Reddaway 1984), notably the one held in Honolulu in 1977. Sessions devoted to ethics were organized on this occasion and allowed documented statements about the misuse of psychiatry in the USSR, Romania, Chile, Argentina and South Africa (see also Ayme's testimony 2004). In addition to traditional activist forms (petitions, press interventions, publication of a newsletter), the Psychiatrists' Committee created a Study Group on internment procedures for political reasons, whose scientific secretary was Descombey. It carried out a counter-expertise work based on medical reports and internment procedures drawn up by Soviet psychiatrists as well as the hearing of witnesses (former 'patients' – starting with Plyushch, after his release – and Soviet physicians who have been able to go into exile). Its aim was not to launch a discussion on the diagnosis to be made (or not) of persecuted individuals, but to examine the medical procedure and eventually to denounce the mix of the medical and 'police' roles of Soviet psychiatrists. Drawing on this counter-expertise, Jean-Paul Descombey also took part in a meeting organised by the CM in 1976 and outlined the misuse of Soviet psychiatric expertise. The action of the Psychiatrists' Committee was symbolically reinforced by requests made by relatives of the victims, and in particular by those around Plyushch. In December 1974, his wife called to the international associations of psychiatrists and lawyers respectively, for assistance of their representatives.

This call in particular and, more generally, the campaign conducted in favour of Plyushch led to the articulation of the CM's action and that one deployed by representatives of these two professional milieus. It is worth noting that these milieus did not collaborate

with each other beforehand, but only thanks to the connection made possible by mathematicians. On the occasion of this call, the CM was also brought closer to the lawyer Jean-Jacques de Felice (Méance 2017, Barry, Israël and Thénault 2015) who agreed to involve in Plyushch's defence. De Felice was then a personality already known for his activism in favour of human rights (particularly within the LFDH, to which he joined in the early 1960s) and of the rights of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, as well as for his professional commitment to colonised peoples, conscientious objectors, and against racism. Like other French lawyers who have collaborated with the CM, he embodied the figure of the 'cause lawyer', which brings together through inseparable professional and militant practices 'the legal treatment of a case' and 'the militant defence of a cause' (Gaïti and Israël 2003, p. 22; see also Sarat and Scheingold 1998; Israël 2001, 2007).

De Felice was born in 1928 from a line of Protestant pastors and this family socialization made him aware of the plight of minorities of all kinds. He was the son of a lawyer involved in politics and began his career in 1952. The Algerian War was a structuring step in his career and a socializing experience, both professional and political. Indeed, he became one of the defenders of the FLN leaders and was part of the group of French lawyers who pleaded in Algeria in favour of the pro-independence activists. At the meeting organised by the CM in 1975 in favour of Plyushch's release, it was him who presented the legal aspects of the case, the irregularities in the judicial investigation in view of the Soviet law and the violations of the right of defence. It also recalled the practice of observer lawyers, used in various countries for trying to ensure the defence of fundamental freedoms; however, the USSR perceived it as interference in its internal affairs[33]. De Félice had also asked the Soviet authorities to travel to the USSR for providing legal assistance to the mathematician, but he was denied a visa[34].

Without being systematically associated with the intervention of other professional groups, the collaboration between the CM and lawyers followed its own logic and geographical deployment, through the defence of mathematicians from both Eastern Europe and South America. Both geopolitical and local constraints shaped the means of action and the strategy defined each time. For example, in 1978, the CM sent three Spanish lawyers to Uruguay to find out about Massera's legal situation, on the advice of the president of the International Association of Catholic Jurists, since the latter considered that 'the only lawyers who could do anything in Uruguay were those from Spain[35]'. The defence of Soviet

refuznik mathematicians was organised, for its part, through the Legal Commission of the French National Council for the Protection of the Rights of Jews in the USSR. The French lawyers Jean-Paul Lévy and Jacques Toutain tried to get involved in the defence of Alexandre Lavout and Yossif Begun respectively, but visas for the USSR were refused to them. The means of action were more diversified in the case of Anatoli Shcharansky, in the defence of whom the CM organized a long campaign from 1977 onwards, and for whom the lawyers Daniel Jacoby, Roland Pettiti and Roland Rappaport jointly mobilized. However, on the proposal of the former, it was only the latter that had been initially in charge of this case. The extension of the defence proceeded from the concern to federate wide-ranging sensibilities, but also from professional and political competition.

Jacoby acted as intermediaries between the CM and Rappaport, indeed. He was member of both the LFDH and the International Federation for Human Rights and, at the same time, Secretary of the Legal Commission of the French National Council for the Protection of the Rights of Jews of the USSR, and he learned about the Shcharansky's case in these capacities. The latter was both a dissident (and co-founder in 1976 of the Moscow Helsinki Group) and a refuznik to whom the Soviet authorities had denied an exit visa since 1973. In contrast, his wife had been allowed to leave the USSR and had since played an active role in organizing an international campaign in his favour. Like Plyushch's wife, she asked the CM to provide him with a French lawyer[36], given also the difficulties in finding Soviet lawyers willing and/or authorised to defend him. The CM's strategy, both judicial and political, consisted then in addressing, through Jacoby, a lawyer who would be a member of the French communist party and, at the same time, sensitive to democratic concerns; this membership was thus supposed to increase the chances that the Soviet authorities allow him to participate in the defence, or at least be an observer at the trial. The choice was made on Roland Rappaport, who combined the two attributes sought ('Rappaport has been a member of the PCF [French communist party] for a long time and has always fought for freedom[37],' Schwartz wrote about him). Born in Paris in 1933, he came from a Jewish family who emigrated from Poland. His parents had been communist voters and he had joined himself the Communist party at a young age, in 1949, considering that, at that moment in history, 'there were many reasons to be communist[38]'. Another political context that helped to forge his professional and militant dispositions for the benefit of legal activism was the Algerian war. From 1957 to 1959, Rappaport pleaded before military courts on behalf of

FLN's and Algerian Communist party's militants and was the first to bring back to France leafs from the manuscript of Henri Alleg's book testimony on torture, *La Question*[39]. Rappaport was also known both for his sympathy for eurocommunism and for his criticism of the reality of the Soviet system when his colleague Jacoby proposed him to defend what he would have described as a 'difficult case[40]'. The two lawyers knew each other in particular through the executive board of the Movement against Racism and for Friendship between Peoples (MRAP), within which, in the 1960s, they shared common – albeit minority – concern on the increase of anti-Semitism in the USSR. Sensitivity to this cause undoubtedly played a role in Rappaport's acceptance of Shcharansky's case. Moreover, he did not consult the Communist party leadership beforehand. That is way the head of the intellectuals' section at the time, Jacques Chambaz, asked him (as a kind of sanction against him and as a political prudence on his own part) not to claim his communist membership when taking public positions on this issue.

Competition, confrontation, cooperation

If Rappaport was not the only lawyer who finally involved in defending Shcharansky, it is because another one has presumably liked to take this case over – Robert Badinter[41]. The latter, a member of the LFDH and the Socialist party, was him also very well known for his political and professional commitments. Moreover, in 1975, he had just chaired a committee mandated by the Secretary General of the Socialist party, François Mitterrand, to draw up a Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms (published under the title *Liberty, Freedoms*). This initiative was part of a more general political dynamic: it fuelled complex and evolving relations between the Socialist party and the Communist party, in the very particular context of the construction of the Union of the Left (*Union de la gauche*), a political and electoral alliance concluded between the two parties from 1972 to 1977 with the aim of coming to power. The 'freedoms issue' was then the subject of competition (Agrikoliansky 2005) nurtured by the know-how of the lawyers and jurists who played the role of experts for each of these parties. They thus embarked on a 'speed race[42]' in order to draw up such a document codifying their positions on this issue. The Communist party appointed a commission to elaborate its own "Declaration of Freedoms", so as to be 'at least as up to date as the declaration we knew that it had to be produced from the Badinter

team[43]'. One of the challenges of this competition for political ideas, within an electoral alliance, was eventually the revision of the positions of the French communist party, which was deemed until then as one of the most politically aligned Western communist parties on the USSR's line.

An implicit objective of the CM as well consisted in leading, through the campaigns it conducted, to a critical distancing of the French communist party from the 'real' socialist regimes, if not to obtain its support for actions carried out in favour of persecuted mathematicians in Eastern Europe. 'The public positions of communist leaders are (…) the best way to put pressure on the Soviets[44]', considered Broué in 1975. However, the political and electoral context we have just mentioned led the CM's leaders to fear losing independent action in the Shcharansky's case if a lawyer such as Badinter took over his defence[45]. Therefore, the CM did not change its strategy regarding the choice of a communist lawyer, but considered it would be useful that the latter would be joined on this matter by two other colleagues whose political sensitivities were complementary: Daniel Jacoby, already involved in this dynamic, and Roland Pettiti, at the time President of the Paris Bar and of the International Movement of Catholic Jurists.

This group was very active in favour of Shcharansky. Although none of these lawyers received the visa for the USSR, which they requested several times, they were regularly in communication with Shcharansky's mother and wife, organized conferences and press releases, made requests for hearings, and published in the French press analyses of the Soviet law, particularly concerning its respect for freedoms. These analyses also fed into the publication, in 1978, of a book, *L'Affaire Chtcharansky: procès sans défense,* prefaced by Schwartz. While it followed the publication of another one, on the Plyushch affair[46], it was not without bringing back to memory Vidal-Naquet's book about Audin affair, since both were conceived as an inquiry and as a means of demonstrating the inconsistencies in the legal investigation and the failure in the respect of the convicted person's rights.

We thus can see that the action of the CM not only took advantage of the cooperation within the alliances it managed to build, but also had to deal with professional and political competition, and even confrontation, in particular when partisan and state players were involved. The confrontation was consubstantial with the action of the CM, indeed, since it intended, through the publicization of cases of persecution, to create a power balance with the governments responsible for them as well as with their relays in

other countries (whether in the form of the official diplomatic representations or in that of allied political parties). The French communist party was such a relay towards the USSR. At the same time, its adherents permeated different professional milieus, as we have seen with regard to lawyers and psychiatrists, and this was also the case with the mathematical milieus themselves. This fact made relations between CM and them more complex and dynamic than those, more antagonistic, that the committee had with the central authorities of the party themselves.

But symmetrically, the CM needed also to be vigilant towards players who spontaneously appeared as allies sharing the same objectives. It was very keen to preserve its independence including from them, indeed, even more when they were partisan and state players following their own strategies. However, the CM also relied occasionally on this kind of actor. Partisan allies were located to the left of the political spectrum and included mainly the Socialist party and, as we have seen, the OCI. Joining various campaigns, the former participated notably in the one in favour of Shcharansky through the organization of a large meeting. As for the latter, it had its own networks of informants regarding the repression in Eastern Europe and could be able to conduct campaigns in its own way. The OCI financed the plane tickets of the Pliushch when they fled to France and those of Broué, who pick them up at the Austrian border. However, the Trotskist organization provided this financial support without any obvious will to capitalize politically on it and 'without compensation[47]' requested from the CM. On the same case, the CM also sought the support of the French State. It was through the National Education Federation that a direct intervention with the then Prime Minister, Jacques Chirac, allowed obtaining rapidly visas for the Pliushch[48], in a context where competing international attempts to attract the one who had become a strong symbol of Soviet dissent had become very explicit and pressing[49].

The coming to power of the left in 1981 changed the political situation in France and gave to the CM a certain leeway with state institutions (as the course of the campaign conducted for the Moroccan mathematician Assidon[50] shown, for example). Moreover, interventions with senior officials allowed the Shcharansky case to be put on the agenda at the international conferences in Belgrade and Madrid devoted to evaluating the implementation of the Helsinki Accords. Certain of these initiatives have been facilitated, once again, by biographical links resurrected on occasion (such as those bringing Schwartz closer to a former French ambassador to Vietnam who was expected to be delegate to the

Belgrade conference[51]). However, CM's interventions with state and diplomatic actors remained distinct of the political dynamics initiated by these actors themselves[52]. These inter-state and inter-governmental dynamics, which are still little known, have even led to exchanges of political prisoners, allowing their release (such as in the case of Shcharansky). Although the CM has contributed, sometimes decisively, to conferring and increasing the visibility of certain cases and turning them into a cause to be defended internationally, it had neither information nor influence over these negotiations, as its main leaders acknowledged.

The CM's own political activism has therefore not excluded, and even it implicitly favoured, plural appropriations of the cases it defended by other players that had their own political and social interests – governments, political organizations in exile, NGO etc. While their actions have been able to converge towards the protection of the victims, the cooperation and complementarity of these players have not excluded competition between them and their political and professional visions. This observation leads us to recall the porosity between the categories of 'cause' and 'interest' as well as between the actors who defend them, most often distinctly identified as 'advocates' and 'interest groups' respectively (Offerlé 1987, Michel 2003).

Conclusion

One of the reasons we have nevertheless placed here more emphasis on forms of cooperation than on confrontation is that we wanted to re-integrate, on solid empirical basis, the activities of the CM into a intersectoral human rights mobilization. The fact that the professional networks and resources of the scientific milieus were, in this case, crucial to the (trans)national campaigns deployed should therefore not prevent to provide a more complex picture of the social and political configurations in which they took place. This approach makes it possible to reveal both the multisectoral nature of the defence of the human rights cause and the diversity of professional and political networks, skills, knowledge and know-how mobilized in its favour.

Such a broader focus also allows identifying, indeed, 'composite' ways of action as well as the association of diversified and complementary forms of commitment that are specific to the players involved. They are manifest not only through the 'traditional' figure (in France) of the critical intellectual acting on behalf of universal values and asserting his

autonomy from political power (Charle 1990), but also through the mobilization of professional skills and knowledge leading to forms of counter-expertise, or even through activism within partisan organizations, specific to the institutional intellectual (Sapiro 2009). Whereas the CM's leaders resorted to critical commitment that leveraged the ethos and specific values of the scientific field, the interventions of both lawyers and psychiatrists involved the use of specialized knowledge and khow-how, as well as the articulation, and even hybridization between activist practices and professional activities (Gaïti and Israel 2003, Champy and Israel 2009). The last ones contributed thus to the rise of expert activism. These developments are part of a more general and surreptitious transformation of commitment practices and causes (Reynaud, 1980) as well as of the players advocating them, since the latter were distinct from, and partly beyond the reach of, 'traditional' partisan players, trade union and associative organizations.

Bringing to light this heterogeneity, even these hybridizations, is not supposed to reduce analytically the scope of the work undertaken by the CM himself, but to make it possible to question some of the conditions enabling the accomplishment of its actions, as well as its porosities with regard to different social logics. The historic sociology that we have practiced here allowed embedding CM's action within these logics, as well as within much longer individual and collective histories. It also enables us to qualify some of the prospects outlined by the intellectual history of human rights. Taking heed to social actors, to their backgrounds as well as to their prior incorporations of political ideas and practices breaks away from the assumption of an ex nihilo emergence of the human rights activism in the 1970's simply thanks to the erasing of previous declining and compartmentalized 'utopian ideologies' (notably Moyn 2010). The patterns of its advocacy, its relevant agents and their practices have been much more intricated, and were provided with history.

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[1] Jeanine Rondest's article, « Les chercheurs et la défense des droits de l'homme », *La Recherche,* 93, 1978, p. 924 echoed this criticism, for example.

[2] Michel Broué's interview with the author, 22 Nov. 2006. See also L. Schwartz, ''Un 'fou' exemplaire : Leonid Pliouchtch'', *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 21 April 1975.

[3] Michel Broué, ''Le Comité des mathématiciens'', *Esprit,* n° 54, 1981.

[4] On the ''heroic illusion'' that can creep into social sciences analysis, see Dobry (1986).

[5] It is based on the consultation of several collections of archives: Broué (privately held), Schwartz (École Polytechnique, Palaiseau), Cartan, Rhéaume, Mathon and de Felice (La Contemporaine, Nanterre), Kessler (privately held), the fonds of the Comité des physiciens (privately held), as well as on interviews.

[6] Michel Broué, ''Le Comité des mathématiciens'', *Esprit*, 54, 1981. Broué's papers.

[7] File "Pliouchtch", Félice's papers.

[8] During the World War I, his father even brought him on the front line.

[9] Jean-Pierre Kahane's interview with the author, 29 Feb. 2008.

[10] However, his scientific recognition will increase even afterwards, since he obtained the CNRS Gold Medal in 1976 and the Wolf Prize in Mathematics in 1980.

[11] Lionel Jospin was a member of the OCI since 1965 but he also joined the Socialist Party in 1971. He climbed the career ladder within this party and became its first secretary in 1981 and deputy, then minister, and finally, Prime Minister in 1997.

[12] It is precisely because of Broué's reticences, and in order to help him overcoming them, that the OCI's official decided to 'entrust' him to Jospin for discussions in the framework of the study group.

[13] Such as the International Association for the Defence of Persecuted Artists (chaired by the stage directors Ariane Mnouchkine and Patrice Chéreau), the Jan Hus Association (led by the philosopher Jacques Derrida and the historian Jean-Pierre Vernant), and the International Committee for Defence against Repression in Eastern and Western Countries (whose founding appeal was launched by Broué alongside Jean-Jacques Marie, an historian specialist of the USSR, and Trotskyist activist within OCI).

[14] Letter from L. Schwartz to L. Osbrandt, 1 Aug. 1977, Schwartz's papers, box IX.B.IV. 2.1.1.6.

[15] *Ibid*.

[16] Michel Broué's interview with the author, 22 Nov. 2006.

[17] Christiane Caroli's interview with the author, 11 Dec. 2007.

[18] Edouard Brézin's interview with the author, 19 Sept. 2007.

[19] That is, Soviet Jews who were refused permission to emigrate to Israel, whereas this request almost systematically resulted in the loss of employment and other forms of persecution.

[20] Michel Broué's and Paul Kesler's interview with the author, 22 Nov. 2006 and 13 Nov. 2007 respectively.

[21] These trips could also be self-financed or carried out on the occasion of scientific missions performed as part of official cooperation with the USSR.

[22] Paul Kesler's interview with the author, 13 Nov. 2007.

[23] Michel Broué's interview with the author, 22 Nov. 2006.

[24] Letter from Broué to Cartan, April 11, 1975, Cartan's papers, box 936/9.

[25] AI would be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1977.

[26] Nicole Mokobodzki's interview with the author, 12 June 2008.
[27] Schwartz, untitled and undated document on Plyushch, Schwartz's papers, box IX B IV. 2.2.7.
[28] Schwartz has personally known Maurice Audin, who had proposed him to be a member of his Phd dissertation committee, and was one of the first to be informed of his disappearance. He asked the French authorities for information on Audin's fate and made strong press contributions against the use of torture. Schwartz's involvement in this affair and more generally, during the Algerian War also entailed a professional cost for him, since he was temporarily revoked from his position as professor at the *École Polytechnique*. However, none of his colleagues agreed to replace him and that contributed to his reintegration. This episode is often recalled by French mathematicians to illustrate the solidarity that the community has shown in response to a political decision targeting one of its members.
[29] J-P. Descombay's interview with the author, 21 May 2008.
[30] T. Mathon 's interview with the author, 15 Nov. 2007.
[31] Although it does not cover this episode, see Papiau (2017) on the relations between psychiatrists and French communist party.
[32] J-P. Descombay's interview with the author, 21 May 2008.
[33] ''Pliouchtch'' file, de Félice's papers.
[34] J-J. de Félice's phone interview with the author, 22 April 2008.
[35] Letter of Schwartz to Leopoldo Torres Boursault and Ruiz Gimenez, 21 Dec. 1977, Schwartz's papers, box IX.B.IX.4.34.3.
[36] Letter of Schwartz to di Giorgi, 12 May 1977, Schwartz's papers, box B.IV.2.2.9.
[37] *Ibid*.
[38] R. Rappaport's interview with the author, 2 April 2008. He left the Communist party in 1979.
[39] The whole manuscript was collected once it reached Paris and was published in 1958. It had been taken out of Algeria by packets of leaflets by French lawyers coordinated by Léon Matarasso, a communist lawyer himself.
[40] R. Rappaport's interview with the author, 2 April 2008. Shcharansky was accused of treason to the homeland and espionage. In detention since 1977, he was sentenced to thirteen years in prison and gulag and would be released in 1986.
[41] R. Rappaport's interview with the author, 2 April 2008.
[42] Claude Michel's interview with the author, 27 May 2008.
[43] *Idem*. Claude Michel, a communist lawyer, was part of the team that drafted this declaration. He was also one of the co-founders and leaders of the French Lawyers' Union and a close friend of Rappaport.
[44] Letter from Broué to Cartan, 9 May 1975, Cartan's papers, box 936/9.
[45] This is the Rappaport's explanation, interview with the author, 2 April 2008.
[46] Published in 1976, *L'Affaire Pliouchtch* contains documents collected and translated by Tania Mathon and Jean-Jacques Marie and is prefaced by Broué, Cartan and Schwartz.
[47] M. Broué's interview with the author, 22 Nov. 2006.
[48] L. Astre's interview with the author, 13 March 2008.
[49] M. Broué's interview with the author, 22 Nov. 2006; correspondence between M. Broué and J-J. de Félice, file ''Pliouchtch'', de Félice's papers.
[50] Schwartz's papers, box IX.B.IV.4.24.2.
[51] Letter from L. Schwartz to I. Halperin, 7 June 1977, Schwartz's papers, box B.IV.2.2.9.
[52] See, for example, Snyder (2011) on the initiatives of US authorities in favour of Soviet dissidents, including Shcharansky.