



HAL
open science

Internationalized science and human rights activism during the late Cold War: the French Committee of Mathematicians

Ioana Popa

► **To cite this version:**

Ioana Popa. Internationalized science and human rights activism during the late Cold War: the French Committee of Mathematicians. *Social Studies of Sciences*, 2021, 51 (6), pp.871-894. <halshs-03330570>

HAL Id: halshs-03330570

<https://shs.hal.science/halshs-03330570v1>

Submitted on 4 Jan 2022

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



HAL Authorization

Science and transnational activism during the late Cold War: The French Committee of Mathematicians

Ioana Popa

Scientists have on occasion claimed that a commitment to defending universal principles is ‘something natural’¹ for them, and that ‘if international solidarity is the rule anywhere, it’s among scientists’.² These ideas are premised on the existence of a professional community with a (nearly) global reach – ‘the one real worldwide community which exists today’³ – made possible by the universality of scientific knowledge (Forman, 1973). Scientists point to the existence of some particularly unified disciplinary circles, such as the mathematicians that ‘form a closely-knit community’⁴ or even ‘a family’⁵ all over the world. These ideas feed the ethos of the members of this professional community, and even contribute to ‘a loose political-professional ideology’ (Manziona, 2000; see also Forman, 1973). However, these claims can only be a starting point for analysing the ties between the internationalization of science and the mobilization of scientific milieus beyond their national borders, in particular for causes also considered universal, such as defending human rights.

Although science has been shaped by the national contexts in which it emerged, it has a historical international dimension. This dimension is due to a long tradition of transnational circulations and scientific migrations, various kinds of exchange and communication, and international institutions such as journals, conferences and professional societies. Can transnational collective actions by members of the scientific community rely on a pre-existing internationalization of science in general, and of certain disciplines in particular? What effects

does such transnationalized action have on the disciplinary community itself? My aim is not to look at the internationalist rhetoric put forward by scientists and at its (sometimes ambivalent) uses, nor is it to believe unquestionably in an idealized view of scientists' actions belonging only to the universal categories that they proclaim. Instead, I investigate the social underpinnings of predispositions to take transnational actions (Siméant, 2010; Tarrow, 1998, 2000) and defend universal causes and principles. I examine scientists' modes of action and how these practices are shaped by their professional or even disciplinary affiliations, and fostered by specific resources, skills and expertise, as well as by opportunities for interaction based on scientific practices and sociabilities. I thus explore the 'professional solutions' (Matonti, 2002) chosen by these scientists to combine political commitment and scientific activity and to harness resources derived from both cooperation (as defined by Becker, 1984) and the pre-existing internationalization of scientific milieus for re-use in transnational activism.

Concretely, my study aims to analyse these kinds of connections by focusing on an example of a support network operating through several nationally located and collaborative committees to assist scientists persecuted worldwide for their political views . This network grew out of the scientific field (albeit gradually finding allies in other social and professional spaces) in several Western countries. It took institutional form as an 'International Committee of Mathematicians', founded in 1974 and active for a decade. The committee was supposed to 'meet a specific, immediate need',⁶ namely, to protest against, or even counterbalance, the effects of persecution of mathematicians living in the USSR, and then in other Eastern European countries and in authoritarian regimes elsewhere in the world. The transnational action of the Committee was thus conceived both as building a balance of power with foreign governments

deemed repressive, and as cooperation or even coordination of networks of defenders of a cause formed on national bases. This action required efficient resources despite the differences in the national spaces of the committee members, the victims of oppression and the perpetrators alike. This plasticity and multiple locations allowed the committee to assert its international scope from the outset and to name itself the 'International Committee of Mathematicians', whereas local groups sometimes referred to their country of origin, for instance, the 'French Committee of Mathematicians'. For the sake of simplicity, we will refer in this article to the 'Committee of Mathematicians' (hereafter CM), while focusing primarily on the activities of its French component, given its active role, though without neglecting the broader advocacy network to which it belonged.

The Committee proclaimed that it was acting in defence of human rights (Iriye et al., 2012; Keck and Sicking, 1998; Moyn, 2010; Quataert, 2009; Risse et al., 1999; Snyder, 2011, among others), alongside other non-governmental organizations (Evangelista, 1999; Risse-Kappen, 1995; Snyder, 2013) that supported it during the late Cold War. Moreover, it acted during a period when the defenders of this cause were becoming more professionalized, specialized and bureaucratic. This trend gradually led to the constitution of a field of international promotion of democracy and human rights (Dezalay and Garth, 1998, 2002; Guilhot, 2005), a distinct and coherent sphere of social activities to which different players brought to bear their competences, know-how and legitimacy. It is therefore worth asking what place the CM occupied in this space and how it situated itself in relation to the forms of international activism that had been emerging in this context.

The article will thus focus on an analysis of the organization and principles that guided the activities of the Committee, on a sociological study of the trajectories of some of its main protagonists and, finally, on a review of its practices and methods. These focal points will shed light on the social conditions that enabled this transnational action to be implemented. They provide the main lines of my investigation here and constitute the three sections of the article. In this article I aim to contribute to a historical sociology that moves away from an approach focused solely on political macrotrends that are still often assumed to have fuelled and shaped the Cold War. More specifically, I intend to nourish a social history of the ties between science and politics, as well as the transnational trends that strained the national and geopolitical frameworks in this context.⁷

The Committee's scope and principles of action

The CM grew out of a joint proposal by two French mathematicians – Henri Cartan and Laurent Schwartz (rapidly joined by a third, Michel Broué) – and an American mathematician – Lipman Bers. It started in January 1974 as an ad hoc structure founded to work for the release of Soviet mathematicians Yury Shikhanovich and Leonid Plyushch (arrested in 1972). Shikhanovich was released in July 1974, and Plyushch would become the CM's emblematic case. The choice of these individual cases had several justifications: the two men's disciplinary affiliation, the persecution they suffered for their political opinions and activities in the nascent dissident movement, and the blatant irregularities in their legal proceedings. Lastly, both scientists were interred in psychiatric hospitals under the pretence that they were suffering from mental illness.

When it was formally launched, the CM had about forty members. French and American mathematicians, nearly equal in number, formed a large majority, but the CM also included one mathematician from each of Britain, Switzerland, Sweden and Israel.⁸ Five months later, membership had doubled and a wider range of nationalities were represented, including some fifteen countries; the Committee generally appointed a correspondent in each country to publicize its activities. Some of these correspondents had and built further close ties with the French founding members: aside from Lipman Bers (who became the correspondent for the US), this was the case for Israel Halperin (correspondent for Canada), Michael Atiyah (for the UK), Shōkichi Iyanaga (for Japan), Ennio De Giorgi (for Italy), and Shmuel Agmon (for Israel). With Bers and Halperin, who were extremely active in their home countries, communication and coordination was especially extensive for almost all the cases defended by the CM. With other members, such as Atiyah, correspondence was frequent too, even though British mathematicians were (according to Atiyah himself) less invested in the project.⁹

In parallel, the influence and volume of the French contingent grew. This trend was driven by the key role of French mathematicians and the CM's very active policy of reaching out to French universities. As early as the summer of 1974, it had correspondents in a dozen French universities, and their number would double in the following year.¹⁰ Beginning in February 1974, a Committee newsletter (in French and English), edited more or less regularly by Michel Broué, kept the group's members informed and helped structure the committee. The newsletter was sent not just to committee representatives at French universities, but also to its foreign correspondents, who distributed it to mathematicians in their countries, and to human rights organizations. While this communication was intermittent, regaining momentum during crises,

new turns of events or new cases to be defended, this initiative of the French committee gave structure to the international network including from this standpoint, as circuitously suggested here by Halperin:

I am baffled not to receive any materials, communication or information, except from Cartan [from among] my colleagues outside Canada. Is the CM operating? Is the newsletter sent by Broué to the committee members? I have not had any news for almost a year (or more). I hope that the reason nobody has informed me is because the French, the Americans and the others are so active that are too busy to do it.¹¹

This operating mode provided to the French group and its inner circle a pre-eminent role. The national and local structures of the CM were decentralized and were based on activities that varied in time and place, subject to few guidelines. National committees were, though, expected to pool information about their initiatives and possible outcomes, and to coordinate the organization of certain joint events. For example, this was the case for the organization of an International Plyushch Day in 1975 (followed, three years later, by an international day in support of Soviet mathematician Shcharansky), where similar actions (petitions, sending telegrams to Soviet authorities and messages of support to the victim, sending delegations to Soviet embassies and holding press conferences) were held in several countries simultaneously. This kind of coordination, albeit infrequent, showed that the CM could act in a transnational capacity (Della Porta and Tarrow, 2005), rather than simply being a collection of disparate local actions. This ambivalence is inherent to many organizations that aspire to act across borders but actually operate in national units, i.e., without actually being transnational structures (Siméant, 2010). This prompts us to be careful in distinguishing between an activity's transnational (or even global) framing and its real capacity to act on that level (Tarrow, 1998, 2000).

By frequently and accurately transmitting available information, the newsletter and periodic CM meetings (often following scholarly events such as seminars or conferences), were the means to implement an aspired 'rigorous democracy',¹² submitting to debate the options that arose in the course of the CM's actions. One of the key decisions that fuelled not just restrained discussions¹³ but also deliberation as a group was whether to make the initial ad hoc committee a permanent organization. This issue was notably discussed during a 1974 meeting held at the International Congress of Mathematicians in Vancouver. Although the effectiveness of initial action had 'largely been due to the narrow focus of [its] objectives',¹⁴ the CM's members decided to transform it into a standing committee and to expand its scope of intervention beyond its two initial cases. This evolution led to some clarification of how new cases to be defended were chosen, based first and foremost on the principle of taking up the defence of only mathematicians. This development is reminiscent of the institutionalization of Amnesty International (of which Schwartz was a member, as was De Giorgi, the CM's correspondent in Italy): The future NGO became institutionalized only after a one-year international campaign. Furthermore, the CM's principles for taking on cases were similar to those of Amnesty (Buchanan, 2002; Clark, 2001), in that rather than emphasizing abstract values, the aim was to target specific individual cases for which documentary evidence could be compiled. Focus was on cases involving flagrant human rights violations, such as imprisonment, torture, and unfair trials. Lastly, cases of repression by both 'left-wing' and 'right-wing' political regimes were selected; during the Cold War, this was one way to assert the universal validity of human rights. For the CM, the aim was therefore to work 'in favour of mathematicians persecuted anywhere in the world'¹⁵ for the sake of a 'universalist' and 'indivisible conception of

human rights ..., without concern for the regime of the countries involved, nor of course for the political opinions of the prisoners',¹⁶ while remaining independent of any political party or government.

By circumscribing its scope of action, the CM avoided fueling an anti-communist or anti-Soviet campaign. These precautions were established from the very outset of the CM's existence.¹⁷ Moreover, they were a basic prerequisite for gathering support within the profession, and then for attracting external allies: from associations and trade unions and from other professions (notably lawyers and psychiatrists) (Popa, forthcoming). In particular, these principles made it possible for communist mathematicians to join the CM. French communist mathematicians, such as Gabriel Mokobodzki and J-P Kahane, were very involved in the campaign in favour of José Luis Massera, the head of the Uruguayan school of mathematics and leader of the Communist Party (outlawed by the military junta), who was arrested in 1975. Lombardo Radice, a member of the Central Committee of the Italian Communist Party, was for his part an early adherent of the CM and signer of a tribune in support of Plyushch. Conversely, the occasional deviation from these rules, produced notably by the inclusion of non-mathematicians¹⁸ among those defended at a meeting held in 1976, gave rise to criticism and thus to a refocusing on the CM's 'specific, concrete and delineated goals'.¹⁹

The geographic locations of the CM's cases expanded quickly. However, there were more cases in socialist countries (the USSR, Poland and Czechoslovakia) than in other regions: Latin America (Uruguay and Argentina), Africa (Morocco, Togo and South Africa) and the Middle East (Lebanon and Israel). While the archives of the CM and of its French founders contain information on many individual situations, not all the cases referred to the CM were actually

taken up or given the same emphasis – and this was primarily for practical reasons. Indeed, the investigations and monitoring of individual situations, as well as the potential actions and initiatives varied from case to case, ranging from punctual events to multi-year campaigns, whose length also varied widely: The campaign for Plyushch lasted longer and was more diverse than that for Shikhanovich, but was successful after two years, as Plyushch was released and permitted to seek exile in France in 1976. (This outcome helped to establish the effectiveness of the CM's action and in particular, of its French branch.) Other campaigns were more lengthy, such as those in favour of the aforementioned Uruguayan mathematician Massera, who was not released until 1984, after nine years in prison, of Moroccan mathematician Sion Assidon, a Marxist-Leninist, released after twelve years in prison and of Soviet mathematician Anatole Shcharansky, behind bars beginning in 1977, sentenced to thirteen years in jail and in the gulag for 'treason to the homeland' and espionage, and released in 1986.

Shcharansky was a founder of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, an active member of dissident groups with close ties to Andrei Sakharov, and an activist for the emigration rights of Jews from the USSR (he had been refused an exit visa beginning in 1973). Whereas these two profiles could be separate, Shcharansky's case was an emblematic example of repression of both dissidents and refuseniks.²⁰ The CM took action to defend both these categories of victims, staying informed and intervening occasionally in favour of other Soviet Jewish mathematicians (such as Naum Meiman, Alexander Yoffe, Mark Azbel, and Irina and Viktor Brailowsky) whose requests for emigration systematically caused them to lose their jobs or suffer other forms of persecution. However, the CM's involvement in these cases was in tandem with other committees focused more specifically on defending refuseniks.

Depending on the resulting situations, some cases were defended on a more collective basis, as in the case of between 20 and 60 Polish mathematicians jailed or interned after martial law was declared in 1981.²¹ Several of them were still incarcerated two years later, when the CM reiterated a petition calling for their release and for the return of civil liberties in Poland, just as the International Congress of Mathematicians (which already had been postponed a year) was to take place there.

The CM gradually earned a reputation for defending persecuted scholars, therefore attracting many and diverse requests for help. It carried out several campaigns simultaneously, but it also had to restrict its efforts, primarily by defending only mathematicians. When, for example, Schwartz was again asked to intervene in favour of the well-known Soviet dissident psychiatrist Simon Glouzman, who had been defended by the CM at the 1976 meeting, he declined that request under this principle.²² In addition, the CM appears to have prioritized cases of unquestionable and very serious repression, while intervening more occasionally in other ones, as shown by the following refusal to accept a request from an Israeli colleague:

As cases of human rights violations are very frequent, we have chosen to focus our efforts on imprisoned individuals, but other people in France can probably do something, and I will take care of it right away.²³

Scientific renown was not a prerequisite for the CM to accept or turn down a case. The victim's professional reputation could have an impact – even if only because it made it easier to get information and to mobilize the community – but this was secondary to the seriousness of the repression, as shown here by the comparison between the cases of two Uruguayan mathematicians defended by the CM:

Massera is a world-famous mathematician, due to his sizeable and important body of research ...; he is one of the greatest representatives of Uruguayan scientific culture, and

probably the teacher of all the mathematicians in Uruguay. We have focused so strongly on his case because of this reputation. Conversely, Markarian is much younger and is unknown internationally or nearly so. But of course his case is also worthy of interest! He was tortured during his arrest and has already spent several years in prison.²⁴

The CM's primary strategy was to invest heavily in publicizing the cases it defended, by using all its resources: information, notoriety, professional networks, coalitions of allies outside academia, etc. Its guiding principle was that 'only the broadest possible publicity can protect or save our colleagues'.²⁵ This does not mean that certain aspects were not kept confidential, as we shall see in the next section of the article, but it involved focusing on organising public campaigns. This strategy was not shared by all activists defending similar causes, and differed from secretive, 'discreet' (Popa, 2015) or even illegal – with respect to the legislation of the target countries– forms of action that other organizations used. It was rooted, however, in a social belief that gradually gained strength during the Cold War context, notably through the transnational defence of dissident Eastern European intellectuals (Popa, 2010) and the 'affairs' (in the terms of Boltanski et al., 2007) built around some of these cases. The validity of this publicity-focused strategy was also accredited by testimony from the mathematicians defended by the CM and their entourage:

Mrs Plyushch is very clear: whenever the vigilance of 'international public opinion' becomes less alert, things get worse. She expressly wants her husband's case to be publicized as widely as possible, and [says] that she should be contacted directly from overseas when possible any in every way.²⁶

In spite of these confirmations of its strategy, the CM also adjusted its public campaigns, not using publicity-focused approaches too frequently and thus denting the committee's credibility.²⁷ Campaigns also involved trial-and-error and hesitations.²⁸

Campaigns were explicitly driven by the principle of defending human rights, beginning with the CM's first case, defending Shikhanovich. The request, as formulated in a petition that called for a public retrial (after the first trial had been held *in absentia*), referred to the principles in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Furthermore, it pointed out that the USSR had signed this Declaration.²⁹ This kind of reminder was a relatively new approach at that time. Protesting by making reference to international standards – and more specifically to the international commitments formally undertaken by non-democratic governments – was a strategy that would become frequent or even systematic in transnational mobilizations in favour of human rights, especially after the 1975 signing of the Helsinki Final Act (Badalassi, 2014; Korey, 1993; Risse et al., 1999; Snyder, 2011; Thomas, 2001).³⁰ Groups of activists, both in the West and in Eastern Europe, used the Final Act to exert pressure on socialist states. In turn, the CM leveraged the international conferences that originated with the Helsinki process to communicate information to their participants about the cases it was defending. However, compared to other human rights defence groups, the CM did not solely or even primarily follow these political macro-trends. As we shall see in the next two sections, it relied heavily on the professional practices and biographic resources of its founders.

Scientists and human rights advocates

While the CM generally considered it 'very useful to make as much publicity as possible',³¹ this strategy required appropriate means. Looking more closely at the biographies of its main leaders – their positions in the scientific community, their prior political socializations and past

commitments – offers a better understanding of the underpinnings of the CM’s activities, its know-how and its repertoires of actions.

This approach shows the elitist nature of this transnational activism, attributable not only to the intellectual profession that these scholars exercised, but also to their scientific reputations, which sometimes were exceptional. Moreover, it sheds light on how their political activities were affected by the specific forms of social organization within their discipline. A discipline’s level of internationalization, its ties with the government and financing needs, its theoretical or more applied nature, its specific social division of intellectual labour, or even the existence of a ‘disciplinary style’ (Fleck, 2005) are all characteristics that can shape its members’ relationship to politics and their modes of engagement. The harnessing of some of these aspects of the disciplinary framework for transnational activism is crucial for our purposes, beginning with an early international organization of mathematics. International congresses were held in the late 19th century, and at the same period, bibliographic directories and international reviews were founded, as was the International Mathematical Union (Lehto, 1998) in 1920. During the 1970s and 1980s, mathematics was still one of the most internationalized disciplines, as measured, for example, by the percentage of co-signed papers in academic journals (Terttu et al., 1992). The historical context for the CM’s activities was affected by the relatively recent redefinition of international scientific hierarchies within the discipline. Following the pre-eminence of German mathematics until the mid-20th century, the centre of gravity shifted to the US (as in other scientific fields) (Krieger, 2006). However, French and Soviet mathematics also enjoyed strong international recognition. At the time, the discipline was still small in France. This situation made it easier for the mathematicians to know one another, to

discuss directly with colleagues and to build their reputations. The number of faculty members in mathematics would grow in the context of the university expansion of the 1960s, to around 2,000 during the following decade. The discipline was structured into provincial as well as Parisian university centres, among which the department of the École Normale Supérieure held a pre-eminent symbolic position (Andler, 1994).

The three French leading members of the CM – Laurent Schwartz, Henri Cartan and Michel Broué – were alumni of this prestigious academic institution. However, they were from different generations, both in terms of age and with regard to the history of the discipline. Broué (born 1946) was defending his PhD thesis when the CM was being launched, while Cartan and Schwartz (born in 1904 and 1915, respectively) had already enjoyed various forms of scientific and institutional recognition. Cartan taught at the École Normale Supérieure and Schwartz at the École Polytechnique. (In fact, Schwartz has been one of Cartan's former students.) These positions allowed them to play a key role in training new generations of French mathematicians and structuring the discipline's professional networks. Lastly, both men were members of the Bourbaki group (Beaulieu, 2008; Mashaal, 2002; Patras, 2001), whose scientific contributions overhauled mathematics in the second half of the 20th century, and were members of the Academy of Sciences in France and academies of other countries. Their international reputation went well beyond this co-optation in France. Schwartz had won the Fields Medal (equivalent to the Nobel Prize for mathematics) in 1950, and Cartan was a member of the Fields Medal Committee and president of the International Mathematical Union in the 1960s.

The CM's activities took advantage not only from the leading members' prior scientific and professional reputation, but also from their political resources. Its action in favour of human

rights built on previous commitments of its main leaders in political parties, trade unions and associations, with a strong internationalist focus. Cartan, as a pro-European centrist, was a member and then the president of the European Federalist Movement. At the time the CM was founded, Schwartz had been and Broué was still a Trotskyite. As such, they were anti-Stalinist and were attentive to political repression in socialist countries. Broué left the Trotskyite party at the time of his engagement in the CM, as he viewed the universalist cause defended by the CM to be more suitable to his activist aspirations than was a party he regarded as sectarian. As for Schwartz, his political and civic engagements were structured around the focus on East-West relations (initially through his pro-Trotskyist engagement) and the struggle for decolonization. He also became a member of the Russell Tribunal created to investigate war crimes in Vietnam. These engagements were combined with scientific cooperation efforts with 'Third World' countries: frequent scientific trips to, courses given in, or shipments of mathematics books to these countries. The internationalist political commitments of the three mathematicians were therefore closely tied to the scientific cooperation approach they advocated. Lastly, they tended to challenge state sovereignty – which both underpinned and constrained the creation of the post-World War 'human rights system' (Quataert, 2009: 2-18) – and to call clearly for the CM's actions as a 'right of interference'. This principle was gradually incorporated into the interpretive frameworks developed by the CM and asserted in its campaigns.³²

Among the causes previously defended by CM's leading members, especially Schwartz, one warrants special attention: the fight against torture during the Algerian War, specifically in the form of mobilization for Maurice Audin, a young mathematician tortured to death by the French army. Schwartz was a member of Audin's thesis jury, organized *in absentia*; this was a

form of protest that mobilized already resources and professional repertoires specific to academia. This affair became a key reference for the CM because it placed the committee's actions in a tradition specific to the mathematical discipline and because it framed its action under the theme of the fight against torture. Indeed, one of the common points of the two first cases taken up by the CM was that both victims were interned in psychiatric hospitals, while one of them, Plyushch, was treated with high doses of antipsychotic drugs that affected his health. The CM and psychiatrists (see also Bloch and Reddaway, 1984; van Voren, 2010) who worked with it (Popa, forthcoming) viewed these practices as an abusive use of psychiatric medicine for the purposes of political repression, and they were thus assimilated to torture.

The main members of the CM were thus distinguished by a variety of types of resources: strong scientific reputations, professional networks in mathematics in France and abroad, public notoriety (including in the media), experience and know-how as activists, and contacts in political parties, associations and labour unions. Nevertheless, their action also required help from informants – mathematicians or not –, reliable contacts in the home countries of the repressed mathematicians and experts in local situations who could alert them to specific cases of repression and keep them up to date. For example, the alert about Massera's arrest came from Venezuelan colleagues during an international conference in Caracas. The actual launch of the CM proceeded from interventions by both such an 'informant' and a 'peer': Tania Mathon – who worked as psychologist at the National Center for Scientific Research and told Schwarz about Shikhanovich's recent arrest in late 1973 – and Lipman Bers – who had learned about Plyushch's case and suggested in early 1974 to his French colleagues that they take up the case.

At the time, Lipman Bers was head of the Mathematics Department at Columbia University, where he had been teaching since the mid-1960s. His trajectory illustrated the intense scientific migration from Europe to the US in mid-century (Siegmund-Schultze, 2009). Like other North American scientists who were activists for human rights and the defence of persecuted scholars (such as Canadian mathematician Israel Halperin or the American Joel Leibowitz), he was of Eastern European Jewish descent. A polyglot who was born in 1914 in Lithuania to a secular Jewish family of teachers, Bers spent part of his childhood in Berlin and Zurich (Keen et al., 2010). His support for the Social-Democrats of the Bund almost led to his arrest. He sought refuge to Prague, where he started a thesis in applied mathematics (which he finished in a rush in 1938), then in France, and finally in the US. When the CM was launched, Bers was one of the American mathematicians most recognized by his peers. He was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 1964 and headed its mathematics section from 1967 to 1970. Moreover, he was the vice-president and then the president of the American Mathematical Society between 1975 and 1977, i.e. during the early years of the CM. He was also known for his political activism, through the assistance he had provided to the victims of McCarthyism in the academic world and through his ~~as a result of~~ protesting the Vietnam War; he considered himself to be ‘an old social democrat – I would say an old Marxist, if the word had not been vulgarized’.³³

From the time the CM was founded, Tania Mathon helped provide other kinds of professional anchoring and connections with the committee’s surroundings in order to facilitate both its transnational and cross-sector activities. Given the specific circumstances of the first cases defended by the committee, and as a psychologist herself, Mathon liaised between the

CM and psychiatrists. Yet even more importantly, she shared her ties to Soviet dissident milieus with the French mathematicians. Born in Germany in 1924, Mathon was from a cosmopolitan and polyglot Jewish family, with social democrat orientation and originally from the USSR. One of her grandfathers had taken part in the 1905 Revolution and then left Russia, as did her parents, after the October Revolution, taking refuge first in Berlin, then in France. After the Second World War, Mathon joined the French Communist Party, but she left it after the Soviets invaded Hungary in 1956. It was at an international congress on child psychology in Moscow in 1966 that she renewed contact with the USSR, where she no longer had family living. Being a speaker of Russian, Mathon took several additional trips to the USSR, until she was refused a visa in 1972 because of her activities and acquaintances in the country. She had been in contact with dissidents, notably befriending Yelena Bonner, the wife of physicist Andrei Sakharov (Rhéaume, 2004), a cofounder of the Committee on Human Rights in the USSR himself.

Transnational action is in general significantly helped by the presence – either emerging, threatened or reduced by surveillance and repression – of such local defenders of the cause, with whom communication and ties can be maintained from overseas (see also Burgerman, 2001; Evangelista, 1999; Keck and Sicking, 1998; Popa, 2010; Snyder 2013). Mathon would maintain these contacts to support the CM's efforts. The very first case reported to the CM benefited directly from these ties, as Mathon had met Shikhanovich in person in Yelena Bonner's entourage. The case also benefited from a unique proximity with the CM, which fostered reciprocal trust and led to action in his favour: Shikhanovich had been the Russian co-translator of Bourbaki's *Théorie des ensembles*. The bridge with local defenders was thus bolstered by mutual acquaintances and friendly ties, along with the reputational effects of both

Western and local activists. Whereas the prestige of Western scholars aided in publicizing the cases defended, the scientific reputation and ethical authority of some of the local dissidents, notably Sakharov, helped boost the CM's credibility and legitimize some of its initiatives. To give just one example, at the International Congress of Mathematicians in Vancouver, the CM's mobilization was supported by Sakharov's appeal calling for Plyushch's release. In his speech, Bers specifically referred to Sakharov's 'unquestioned moral authority'.³⁴

Sakharov and his connections were thus the source for much of the CM's information from the USSR. Mathon maintained contact with them by telephone, albeit with some difficulties³⁵ and risks for her Soviet correspondents. Moreover, she was in contact with representatives of different generations of Russian exiles, and the ones who had arrived in the West most recently could provide updated information about dissident milieus and, in particular, direct information from Plyushch's wife. Apart from Plyushch's case, women relatives of persecuted mathematicians often played an important, albeit underestimated, role in spreading information or even organizing campaigns. For example, the CM was in contact with Massera's daughter, with Assidon's mother and with Shcharansky's wife, Avital, who was exiled in the West and was very active in the international campaigns in favour of her husband. Lastly, Soviet mathematicians who managed to leave the country also helped the CM.

Information was generally collected and verified by a small number of people who had the necessary knowledge, but who often preferred to stay in the wings. Here again, Mathon was both a counterexample – when she commented on the missteps of certain Western activists ('You had to know how to get around in that country!' she insisted in an interview with the author about the USSR) – and an example – when, at the time, she 'did not wish for her role [as

an intermediary] to be mentioned³⁶ in order to protect her ability to intervene. The contexts in which the CM's members acted required them to take various precautions, e.g. by cross-checking information whenever possible,³⁷ by not publicizing names in order to protect individuals (and especially sources still living in the USSR), by curbing the circulation of some documents,³⁸ or by authenticating documents disseminated during campaigns. It was also believed that these documents should not go through 'more than one intermediary',³⁹ as demanded by Halperin – who was, according to Broué, 'very demanding on information control'⁴⁰. This meant that Westerners, and especially certain high-profile individuals such as Schwartz, signed as the guarantors of certain information,⁴¹ while exiled mathematicians were asked to 'give an assurance of authenticity, as the Soviets could not sign'.⁴² This was the case, for example, for those who authenticated a report about the situation of mathematics at Novosibirsk University:

I am very familiar with the facts [described] in this report because I lived in Novosibirsk and I worked at the Institute of Mathematics from 1962 until 1978. I confirm that all the facts presented in this report are true. While I cannot fully approve [its] presentation, I agree for my signature to appear beneath the text of the report.⁴³

When there were doubts or information was contradictory, the CM took a cautious approach, as illustrated by the aforementioned report:

In a new copy of a report on Novosibirsk ... one paragraph is deleted since EB Dynkin [another Soviet mathematician exiled in the United States] says that the information there is false. My informants assert that it is true, so there is something behind it. But to be on the safe side, I deleted it.⁴⁴

The biographic resources of the CM's founding members, as well as the resources derived from broader circles of participants, therefore affected the kinds of actions they took and their relative effectiveness. The last section of this paper will focus on these transnational

repertoires of action and how they were grounded in professional practices of the activist scholars.

Professional resources and repertoires of transnational action

The CM's action leveraged or built on scholarly practices, resources, methods and scientific networks. However, unlike contemporaneous mobilizations by psychiatrists in defence of similar cases of persecution or, more broadly, for situations of expertise rooted in 'epistemic communities' (Haas, 1992), mathematicians' intervention methods were not based on the inherent content of their scientific knowledge or skills, but on a combination of their professional reputation and previous experience as activists.

Their forms of action borrowed heavily from conventional repertoires (Tilly, 2006, 2008), described as 'classic'⁴⁵ even by the CM's leading members, and based on their authority as intellectuals: petitions, press releases, letters and open letters, and delegations to the embassies of the states concerned. These forms of action were clearly connected to a tradition of intellectual commitment in France, going back to the Dreyfus Affair (Charle, 1990).⁴⁶ They often brought to the fore symbols of intellectual prestige. For instance, petitions often stated the number of Fields Medals winners, members of Academies of Sciences, or presidents of professional associations among the signatories.⁴⁷ They also referred to 'values' and to a 'universal ethic',⁴⁸ which they claimed to be specific to their professional universe and legitimized 'in the name of the oldest traditions in the scientific world',⁴⁹ including the free circulation of people and ideas.⁵⁰

These arguments – together with the prestige of science in general and national scientific communities in particular – were put forward to the general public and especially to the representatives of the oppressive regimes. The CM targeted government and political authorities (such as presidents, heads of government, ministers, military chiefs, etc.), as well as mathematician colleagues who held leadership responsibilities in academic institutions, often reminding them of the ‘considerable harm to the reputation of scientific milieus’⁵¹ of their countries caused by these cases of repression. Prior professional contacts with these colleagues were reactivated to inform or challenge them about specific cases and/or general principles. For example, Schwartz wrote to the rector of Moscow University regarding a mathematician refusenik whom he described as ‘one of the most brilliant’:

Such a mathematician in any country should enjoy considerable prestige and a key position. Yet he is unable to actually work in the USSR The Soviet mathematicians in leadership positions absolutely must find a solution to this problem. You cannot be asked to do the impossible, we know you do not have much freedom of action, but you could at least do everything you can to protect your colleagues threatened by anti-Semitism⁵²

Other forms of intervention such as petitions not only relied on the notoriety of the people signing them (Sapiro, 2009; Matonti, 2002), but also leveraged professional resources, using pre-existing scientific networks (to circulate petitions effectively and quickly) and professional venues (facilitating direct communication). Thus, for example, the CM’s ‘international declaration’ calling for the release of Shikhanovich and Plyushch, launched at the International Congress of Mathematicians in Vancouver, was signed by more than 900 mathematicians (including the two winners of the Fields Medal awarded at the same congress) from some 30 countries,⁵³ excluding notably mathematicians from socialist countries, who represented around a third of congress participants.

Participants could use opportunities for meetings, mobility and professional communication, but they could also divert them to benefit the transnational activism: newsletters of professional associations (such as of the American Mathematical Society) disseminated information about any ongoing mobilizations; seminars (such as at the Bourbaki Seminar), colloquia and conferences were opportunities to gather in a single place, share information on current activities, launch petitions or collect money, or were the scenes of occasional protests. This notably occurred at the International Congress of Mathematics held in Warsaw in 1983, when participants dedicated their oral contributions to Polish colleagues interned after the declaration of martial law in 1981, writing the names of those colleagues on the board.⁵⁴ During the International Congress of Mathematics in Helsinki in 1978, participants wore ‘Shcharansky-Massera badges’ as a sign of protest; according to one of the CM members, the badge was a ‘last-minute idea of Douady [a French mathematician and early member of the CM]. He had 300 of them made in a hurry, and they went fast, he could have given out many more.’⁵⁵

Other common professional practices could take on a political function and become transnational means of action, such as sending mathematical documents, offprints or works dedicated to imprisoned mathematicians. For instance, a delegation of French mathematicians went to the Soviet embassy to present a copy of a new edition of Bourbaki’s *Théorie des ensembles* dedicated to Shikhanovich, the book’s Russian co-translator, in order to ‘provide [him] with new working tools and prove to him that he has not been forgotten’.⁵⁶ The CM considered disseminating or even publishing papers written by mathematicians during their detention, or disseminating information about the existence of papers written in detention, such as about Massera’s mathematical writings (which were confiscated by the prison

authorities).⁵⁷ These signs of Western mathematicians' interest in papers by their imprisoned colleagues were also aimed at persuading authorities to give the detainees the right to continue their research, which was asking for an improvement in their conditions of detention:

Myself and my colleagues from the École Polytechnique are highly interested by the mathematical work of V. Senderov, who is now in a camp Consequently, we ask you very respectfully to give him the possibility of continuing this work; in particular, it is very important for him to be able to get mathematical papers written by himself and/or other persons and also to send his works to colleagues in the Soviet Union or elsewhere – in particular to our École Polytechnique.⁵⁸

Similarly, in sending imprisoned mathematicians invitations for conferences or for guest professorships, an aim was to show repressive authorities that these mathematicians were well-known overseas, in the hopes that notoriety would protect them or even to give them a chance to emigrate. This was even more true for the professorships offered to Massera by several universities,⁵⁹ and the doctorate *honoris causa* awarded by the University of Nice. This process, designed to show authorities 'the esteem that French scientists have for Massera and the importance they give to his work, and therefore to the Uruguayan scientific community',⁶⁰ became leverage to obtain his release: The Uruguayan government was asked (albeit unsuccessfully) to allow Massera to travel to France, receive his honorary degree and settle there permanently.⁶¹ In cases in which mathematicians faced less danger, a lack of material resources and especially the shortage of available university teaching positions meant that no such invitations were extended. The decision also might involve, at least marginally, a criterion such as the mathematician's professional reputation:

Unfortunately, we are not able to help him, there are no available positions in France at present, and moreover, nobody is familiar with him in the mathematics field. We cannot invite him, nor do we have the material resources for him to live in France.⁶²

Another form of action that leveraged professional practices was turning research or teaching trips to hard-to-access countries into fact-finding missions to get first-hand information. This was also the case for official group delegations, which gave an opportunity to gather information on threatened scientists. For instance, a French delegation went to Poland to investigate whether the International Congress of Mathematics, planned for 1982, should be held there after already being postponed for a year.⁶³ According to one of its members, the delegation enquired into the situation of mathematicians who were still detained and asked about the reopening of the Polish Mathematical Society, which had been shut down.

A form of solidarity, this time with scientists who had been dismissed from their posts because of their requests to emigrate, consisted of participating in ‘seminars for excluded scientists’. These seminars were organized by such scientists, notably in the USSR, outside any official academic institution. The participation of Western scholars could be arranged during an official academic cooperation trip or during a private trip – notably by the French National Council for the Protection of the Rights of Jews in the USSR, whose scientific committee was co-chaired by Schwartz. This organization co-financed some such trips by seeking subscriptions, and the CM worked with it. Such seminars were held in several large Soviet cities. This multidisciplinary event was also open to Western scientists’ oral contributions and it was gradually publicized overseas. In Moscow, the seminar started in 1972 at Alexander Voronel’s apartment, then successively moved to the home of other scientists. Until 1986, 114 seminar sessions were held, with 143 papers presented (in decreasing order: in physics, mathematics, biology and medicine, and chemistry), which involved the participation of 126 foreign scientists from France, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the UK, the US and Venezuela.⁶⁴ Lastly, after an initial

attempt fell through in 1974, several International Conferences announced ahead of time to Western scientists⁶⁵ were also organized in connection with these seminars, with the proceedings published in the *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*. These conferences have thus given the initial meetings an increased scientific impact on an international level. Therefore, we can note not only that pre-existing internationalization of scientific milieus was re-used in transnational activism but also that in return, such initiatives, which were primarily driven by political and professional commitments, consolidated or even strengthened this prior internationalization of the mathematics community (even though, in this case, it was through 'unofficial' channels or on the fringes of practices allowed in authoritarian regimes).

At the time of the arrest of one of the organizers of the seminar, Viktor Brailowsky, a protest telegram sent to the president of the Soviet Academy of Sciences emphasized Brailowsky's international reputation as a mathematician and also stressed that organizing a symposium was a perfectly ordinary professional activity in the world of science:

We have learned, to our great surprise, of the arrest of Brailowsky, very well-known and highly esteemed by all his French colleagues. ... The pretexts given are not valid. He was arrested for organizing an open seminar. This activity is not only licit but common around the world for the progress of science. After the sanctions inflicted on Shcharansky, Orlov, Sakharov and many others, sanctions that have seriously compromised Franco-Soviet scientific relations, this recent measure can only deteriorate these relations even further and less reversibly.⁶⁶

This protest telegram alluded to the threat of a boycott of intergovernmental scientific cooperation. The CM suggested this kind of pressure from the very beginning of its activities in support of Shikhanovich and Plyushch, even though the committee members wanted to maintain ties with academic communities themselves while interrupting relations with the USSR's official scientific authorities.⁶⁷ As this distinction was hard to maintain,⁶⁸ possible

boycotts sparked debate and even controversy within the mathematics community; there was probably less of a consensus around them than in other disciplines (notably for physics) and other national communities (notably in the US) (Rhéaume, 2004). Therefore, boycotts were more of a threat than something to be implemented. As Schwartz answered a colleague who regretted a potential interruption in Franco-Soviet scientific relations:

With regard to the boycott weapon, we would use it with the greatest caution without having our hands tied too tightly, and keeping the possibility of participating in conferences for making public presentations.⁶⁹

The threat was applied not only to the USSR, but also to other countries that had scientific cooperation agreements with France, such as Morocco,⁷⁰ where the CM defended Sion Assidon for many years. Support for Assidon involved an information-gathering trip aimed at visiting him in prison. Such trips were often self-financed⁷¹ and taken on tourist visas. As such, after an initial attempted trip to Morocco by Schwartz and Broué (which failed because they had informed the Moroccan authorities prior to their visit), Broué took a much more discreet trip alone. By coordinating with Assidon's family, he managed to meet and talk with Assidon. The CM initiated similar attempts to meet with Massera in prison: by the French mathematician Jean Dieudonné in 1979,⁷² and by Schwartz during a scientific trip to Uruguay in 1980 (he only managed to contact Massera's wife and his lawyer).⁷³ This kind of trip had been considered for Plyushch's case but failed to receive unanimous support from CM members: Lipman Bers,⁷⁴ for instance, was sceptical that mathematicians seeking to go to the USSR could obtain visas to meet with Plyushch.

These trips were not without risks for the travelling scholars. In 1979 Dieudonné was briefly arrested in Prague (and then expelled from Czechoslovakia), where he had travelled on

behalf of the CM in a delegation of French intellectuals to attend the trial of VONS (the Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Accused), in which one of defendants was a mathematician. The CM's representative in the delegation that attended the appellate procedure was also expelled.⁷⁵ These cases illustrate the limitations of the protection afforded to western scientists by their international professional reputations. Moreover, the CM was sometimes faced with situations in which its modes of action were ineffective, ill-adjusted or exhausted: 'Repression is becoming so widespread that we are losing our resources',⁷⁶ noted Schwartz in 1980. Since the committee was overwhelmed by the higher number of cases referred to it, its actions became more routine and less effective. Schwartz continued:

In the past, we have intervened with the Soviet authorities so many times that this mode of action no longer has any influence coming from us. Clearly, we must find new methods.⁷⁷

Like other transnational networks defending causes, the CM's actions had fluctuating effectiveness. The mode of action could be a success or a failure depending on the national anchoring of the mathematicians implementing it. For example, the Moroccan embassy in Washington refused to grant any visas to American mathematicians seeking to visit their imprisoned colleague Assidon, whereas French mathematicians were granted visas and – albeit with some difficulty, as we have seen – were able to meet him.⁷⁸ Conversely, most of the French mathematicians' initiatives with the Uruguayan government ended in failure, including their plans to meet with Massera in prison, whereas two members of the Committee on Human Rights of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States were able to visit him.⁷⁹ In other words, the effectiveness of various initiatives depended on the positions and relations of countries. It also depended on potential leverage through diplomatic and economic

intergovernmental relations, on scholars' social prestige and on the existence of scientific cooperation agreements.⁸⁰

Lastly, the CM's interactions with various countries' authorities were overdetermined by transformations affecting each country. The policy of perestroika ushered in by Gorbachev, for example, was a major change. Sakharov's return from exile and Shcharansky's release – like the releases of Massera and Assidon in other countries – were signs of these transformations, as was the decline in new cases referred to the CM. Eventually, in these circumstances, the CM disbanded.

Conclusion

Recent historiography of the Cold War gives henceforth full scope to transnational approaches as well as to the analysis of non-state actors who are part of these processes. The CM is a good case study in these respects, while adding some nuances. Looking at the CM is useful to fuel reflection on what and who the Cold War players were, on how these players' transnational goals and practices can be understood, and on the relations between science and politics in those historical circumstances. In its most open-ended definitions, 'Cold War science' refers to the variety of ways in which practices and contents of science were shaped by Cold War circumstances, rationales and players (Dongen, 2015; Heyck and Kaiser, 2010; Oreskes and Kriege, 2014). In some ways, my case study adopted a reversal in how the interactions of Cold War science are commonly understood. I focused less on the Cold War's impact on the scientific production and communities than on the interferences between the mobilization of scientific practices and scholars, on the one hand, and Cold War dynamics, on the other. This perspective

favoured an analysis of practices (at times the most ordinary ones) and professional resources leveraged as means of action. While focusing here on a professional group, my approach allowed to show that this group had specific resources suitable for transnational action, but without taking for granted the affinities between scientific practices and a universalist commitment to human rights (Robinson, 2012).

The human rights theme, which became predominant in the 1970s and 1980s, was connected to the defence of democracy and, for some government and non-government players, was reduced to the fight against communism, for which it served as a tool. The CM avoided this oversimplification.⁸¹ At the same time, given its aims, frameworks, contexts and the results (both direct and indirect) of its actions, this committee was itself a player in the late Cold War. The multiple locations in which the CM intervened, as well as the geopolitics sketched out through the cases it defended, attest to the somewhat schematic nature of a partition viewed as geographically equivocal, since it was materialized through an East-West line of demarcation and assimilated to the opposition between 'capitalist' and 'socialist' regimes, 'free' and 'occupied' world, 'democracy' and 'totalitarianism' (according to the categories of the time). On the contrary, the CM's actions attested to the possibilities for cooperation and interaction across the Iron Curtain, thus showing that the 'bipolar scientific internationalism' (Manziona, 2000) was not, or was no longer, an operative category, at least in this late historical configuration of the Cold War. Moreover, the CM's actions went beyond the most obvious divisions of the Cold War because the committee worked in favour of both opponents to 'socialist' regimes and communist militants suffering from oppression in 'capitalist' and 'right-wing' regimes. In a context where these divisions were assumed to be simple and one-sided, like

the identities of the players involved, the CM's actions deployed a cross-cutting critique of various kinds of political regimes and revealed overlapping geographies that were not exclusively Euro-centric or trans-Atlantic.

The CM followed a specific trajectory within the space of human rights activism and the making of democracy, which at the time the committee was active was becoming increasingly specialized and professionalized, as well as dense and encompassing, but not undifferentiated. The CM and, in particular, its French branch on which I focused here, offers an example of an activist and scientific network that remained on the sidelines of these processes. Moreover, the CM's actions reflect 'older' forms of intellectuals' commitment rather than the new trends that pushed players to move to a 'new global orthodoxy' (Guilhot, 2005). The CM also stood apart from other academic players who were willing and able, for their part, to transform their knowledge into human rights expertise, when their competences came from areas that could provide useful tools for this transnational activism, while bolstering its legitimacy: notably law, economics, political science and international relations (Dezalay and Garth, 2002; Guilhot, 2005). Instead, the CM proclaimed its own specific legacy of activism and attempted to combine critical commitment modes that leveraged professed ethos and specific values of the scientific field on behalf of the cases that it took up.

This case study thus shows the value of taking into account the national contexts of Cold War players and how their activities were influenced by their positions within those local contexts; in other words, the importance of an analysis that does not separate national anchoring and transnational action (see also Dezalay and Garth, 2002; Kott, 2011; Popa, 2010; Siméant, 2010). This approach sheds light on the 'national sources of transnational politics'

(Tarrow, 2000: 195) and thus on the variability of forms of activism, albeit claiming identical principles, depending on the national spaces within which they were grounded. The case study is therefore interesting because it focused on a loosely organized group at an international scale that operated 'informally', in decentralized, but also in convergent ways.

The CM was shaped by hybrid rationales in many respects. It was a public interest group whose actions were, however, drawing and focused on a sectorial group. It was situated at the crossroads of rationales of 'moral' transnational activism, professional solidarity, and affinities that generally govern 'thought collectives' (Fleck, 2005). Operating in specific national contexts, it endeavoured to give a transnational scope to (some of) its actions and practices. An apolitical player inasmuch as it was non-partisan, the CM nevertheless drove 'micropolitical' trends that could interfere with geopolitical macro-trends with which the Cold War has often been identified, or even to which it has sometime been reduced.

Acknowledgements

I am most grateful to Michel Broué for entrusting me to consult his personal papers, Alain Guichardet, who authorized me to consult the Schwartz's archives, as well as all those who agreed to give me an interview and share their past experience. I also thank Christopher Mobley for provided me writing assistance in English and Sergio Sismondo for his valuable editorial suggestions.

References

Andler M. (1994) Les mathématiques à l'ENS au XX^e siècle: une esquisse. In: Sirinelli JF (ed.), *Ecole Normale Supérieure. Le livre du Bicentenaire*. Paris: PUF, 351-404.

- Badalassi N (2014) *En finir avec la guerre froide: La France, l'Europe et le processus d'Helsinki, 1965-1975*. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes.
- Beaulieu L (2008) *La Tribu. N. Bourbaki 1934-1956*. Berlin: Springer.
- Becker H (1984) *Art Words*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bloch S and Reddaway P (1984) *Russia's Political Soviet Psychiatric Abuse. The Shadow over World Psychiatry*. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd.
- Boltanski L, Claverie E, Offenstadt N, Van Damme S (eds) (2007) *Affaires, scandales et grandes causes*. Paris: Stock.
- Buchanan T (2002) 'The Truth Will Set You Free': the Making of Amnesty International. *Journal of Contemporary History* 37(4): 575-597.
- Burgerman Susan (2001) *Moral Victories: How Activists Provoke Multilateral Action*, Ithaca, Cornell UP.
- Charle C (1990) *Naissance des 'intellectuels' (1880-1900)*. Paris: Minuit.
- Clark AM (2001) *Diplomacy of Conscience: Amnesty International and Changing Human Rights Norms*. Princeton: Princeton UP.
- Christofferson M (2004) *French Intellectuals against the Left. The Antitotalitarian Moment of the 1970s*. New York: Berhahn Books.
- Della Porta D and Tarrow S (eds) (2005) *Transnational Protest and Global Activism*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Dezalay Y and Garth B (1998) Droits de l'homme et philanthropie hégémonique. *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 121: 23-41.

- Dezalay Y and Garth B (2002) *The Internationalization of Palace Wars: Lawyers, Economists and the Contest to Transform Latin American States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Dongen van J (2015) *Cold War Sciences and the Transatlantic Circulation of Knowledge*. Leiden: Brill.
- Evangelista M (1999) *Unarmed Forces: The Transnational Movement to End the Cold War*, Ithaca: Cornell UP.
- Fleck L (2005) *Genèse et développement d'un fait scientifique*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.
- Forman P (1973) Scientific Internationalism and the Weimar Physicists. *Isis*, no. 64: 151-180.
- Guilhot N (2005) *The Democracy Makers: Human Rights and International Order*. New York: Columbia UP.
- Haas P (1992) Introduction: epistemic communities and international policy coordination *International Organisation*, no. 46: 1-35.
- Heyck H and Kaiser D (2010) 'Introduction: New Perspectives on Science and the Cold War'. *Isis* 101(2): 362-366.
- Iriye A, Goedde P and Hitchcock W (eds) (2012) *The Human Rights Revolution. An International History*. Oxford: Oxford UP.
- Keck M and Sikkink K (1998) *Activists Beyond Borders. Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Ithaca: Cornell UP.
- Keen L, Kra I and Rodríguez RE (2010) *Lipman Bers, a Life in Mathematics*. American Mathematical Society.
- Korey W (1993) *The Promises We Keep. Human Rights, the Helsinki Process, and American Foreign Policy*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

- Kott S (2011) Les organisations internationales, terrains d'étude de la globalisation. Jalons pour une approche sociohistorique. *Critique internationale* 52(3): 9-16.
- Krige J (2006) *American Hegemony and the Postwar Reconstruction of Science in Europe*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- Lehto O (1998) *Mathematics without Borders. A History of the International Mathematical Union*. New-York: Springer.
- Luukkonen T, Persson O and Sivertsen G (1992) Understanding Patterns of International Scientific Collaboration. *Science, Technology & Human Values* 17(1): 101-126.
- Manzione J (2000) Amusing and Amazing and Practical and Military: The Legacy of Scientific Internationalism in American Foreign Policy. *Diplomatic History* 22(1): 21-55.
- Mashaal M (2002) *Bourbaki, une société secrète de mathématiciens*. Paris: Belin.
- Matonti F (2002) La Colombe et les mouches. Frédéric Joliot-Curie et le pacifisme des savants. *Politix* 58: 109-140.
- Moyn S (2010) *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP.
- Oreskes N and Kriege J (eds) (2014) *Science and Technology in the Global Cold War*. Cambridge Mass.: Cambridge UP.
- Patras F (2001) *La Pensée mathématique contemporaine*. Paris: PUF.
- Popa I (2010) *Traduire sous contraintes. Littérature et communisme (1947-1989)*, Paris, CNRS Editions.
- Popa I (2015) 'Discreet Intermediaries'. Transnational Activities of the *Fondation pour une entraide intellectuelle européenne (1966-1991)*. In: Mikkonen S and Koivunen P (eds)

Beyond the Divide: Entangled Histories of the Cold War Europe, New York: Berghahn, 151-173.

Popa I (*forthcoming*) A Support Network for Endangered Scholars during the Late Cold War. The Committee of Mathematicians and a Human Rights Broad-based Coalition in France. In: Dakhli, L Laborier P and Wolff F (eds), *Scholars at Risk: History and Politics of the Protection of Endangered Scholars*. Berlin: Springer.

Quataert J (2009) *Advocating Dignity. Human Rights Mobilizations in Global Politics*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Rhéaume C (2004) *Sakharov. Science, morale et politique*. Laval: Presses de l'Université Laval.

Risse T, Ropp S and Sikking K (eds) (1999) *The Power of Human Rights*. New York and Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Risse-Kappen T (ed) (1995) *Bringing Transnational Relations Back in. Non-State Actors, Domestic Structures and International Institutions*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Robinson P (2012) "For Our Soviet Colleagues". Scientific Internationalism, Human Rights, and the Cold War". In: Iriye A, Goedde P and Hitchcock W (eds), *The Human Rights Revolution. An International History*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 245-264.

Sapiro G (2009) Modèles d'intervention politique des intellectuels. Le cas français. *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 176-177(1-2): 8-31.

Siegmund-Schultze R (2009) *Mathematicians Fleeing from Nazi Germany. Individual Fates and Global Impact*. Princeton: Princeton UP.

- Siméant J (2010) La transnationalisation de l'action collective. In: Agrikoliansky E, Sommier I, Fillieule O (eds) *Penser les mouvements sociaux. Conflits sociaux et contestation dans les sociétés contemporaines*. Paris: La Découverte, 121-144.
- Snyder S (2011) *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War. A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.
- Snyder S (2013) Bringing Transnational Relations Back In: Writing Human Rights into the International History of the Cold War. *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 21: 100-116.
- Tarrow S (1998) *Power in Movement. Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. New York and Cambridge: Cambridge UP.
- Tarrow S (2000) La contestation transnationale. *Culture & Conflits. Sociologie politique de l'international* 38-39: 187-223.
- Thomas D (2001) *The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights and the Demise of Communism*, Princeton: Princeton UP.
- Tilly C (2006) *Regimes and Repertoires*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Tilly C (2008) *Contentious Performances*. New York: Cambridge UP.
- van Voren, R (2010) *Cold War in psychiatry: human factors, secret actors*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.

¹ Edward Teller, 'The Human Rights Movement: Providing for Peace', *The Center Magazine*, January-February 1985.

² Michel Broué, 'Le Comité des mathématiciens', *Esprit*, no. 54, 1981, p. 88 (Broué's papers).

³ A. Sakharov, quoted in J. Lebowicz, 'Physics and Human Rights: Reflections on the Past and the Present', *Physikalische Blätter*, 56, nos 7-8, 2000, pp. 1-4.

⁴ Bers to R.H. Bothe, 15 November 1976 (Broué's papers).

⁵ Bers's speech, meeting organised in defence of Plyushch, Vancouver, *Bulletin du Comité des Mathématiciens*, no. 4, 1974. (hereafter, *Bulletin du CM*).

⁶ Michel Broué, 'Le Comité des mathématiciens', *Esprit*, no. 54, 1981.

⁷ This research is based on several collections of archives and personal papers: Broué (privately held), Schwartz (Ecole Polytechnique), Cartan, Rhéaume and Mathon (La Contemporaine), Kessler (privately held), the papers of the Committee of Physicists (privately held), as well as some interviews. I referred mainly to the Broué papers for

the *Bulletin du CM*, but these newsletters are also partially held in the Schwartz's and Cartan's papers. I presented partial results for this research progress at the 12th Congress of the French Association of Political Science (2015) and at the international conference "'Endangered' Scholars and 'Rescue' Policies. Recent Research and Future Prospects", Marc Bloch Center, Berlin (2018).

⁸ *Bulletin du CM*, no. 1, 1974.

⁹ Atiyah to Bers, 18 February 1975, Cartan's papers, box 936/9.

¹⁰ *Bulletin du CM*, no. 2, 1974 and no. 8, 1975. Among the very first French members were M. Berger, C. Chevalley, G. Choquet, J. Dieudonné, A. Douady, A. Guichardet, J.-P. Serre, J.-L. Verdier, A. Weil.

¹¹ Halperin to Schwartz, 1 November 1978, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX.B.IV. 2.1.7.

¹² Laurent Schwartz, *Un Mathématicien aux prises avec le siècle*, Paris: Odile Jacob, 1997, p. 501.

¹³ Bers to Schwartz, 1 July 1974, Cartan's papers, box 936/8.

¹⁴ *Bulletin du CM*, no. 3, July 1974.

¹⁵ 'Après Pliouchtch, sauver Massera, Boukovski et Glouzman', *Bulletin du CM*, no. 8, 1976.

¹⁶ Michel Broué, 'Le Comité des mathématiciens', *Esprit*, no. 54, 1981.

¹⁷ 'Appel à la création du Comité International des Mathématiciens', 15 January 1974, Broué's papers.

¹⁸ A Chilean engineer, the secretary of the Bolivian miners' union and a Soviet psychiatrist.

¹⁹ 'Sur le meeting du 23 octobre', *Bulletin du CM*, no. 9, 1976.

²⁰ 'Refusenik', in this case, is a term used to refer to Soviet Jews who were not authorised to emigrate.

²¹ 'Déclaration de mathématiciens à propos du Congrès International de Varsovie', 13 May 1983, Broué's papers.

²² Schwartz to J. Patziersky, 15 June 1979, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.2/B.IV.2.2.9.

²³ Schwartz to A. Luntz, 25 January 1980, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX.B.IV.2.1.13.

²⁴ Schwartz to the French Ambassador in Montevideo, 9 August 1982, Schwartz's papers.

²⁵ Michel Broué, 'Le Comité des mathématiciens', *Esprit*, no. 54, 1981.

²⁶ 'Pour la défense de Pliouchtch', *Bulletin du CM*, no. 5 [1974 or 1975] and T. Mathon to H. Cartan, 2 December 1974, Cartan's papers, box 936/9.

²⁷ Schwartz to Prof. Kieger, 27 October 1978, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX.B.IV.2.2.5.

²⁸ Schwartz to Prof. Dvoretzky, 26 November 1980, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX.B.IV.2.2.5.

²⁹ Cartan, Schwartz and Chevalley, 4 December 1973, Broué's papers.

³⁰ The signatories (including the USSR) undertook to comply with the principles of the Universal Declaration of the Human Rights. This document was non-binding, but its application was monitored via a series of international conferences in the 1980s and by the creation of 'monitoring groups' in several socialist countries (that were repressed by the socialist regimes).

³¹ D. Pignon's report about Abraham Kagan, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.2/IX.B.IV.2.2.14.

³² Michel Broué, 'Le Comité des mathématiciens', *Esprit*, no. 54, 1981.

³³ Quoted by Carol Corillon and Irwin Kra, 'On the Social Activism of L. Bers', *Notices of the AMS*, January 1995, p. 21.

³⁴ Bers's speech, meeting organised in defence of Plyushch, Vancouver, *Bulletin du CM*, no. 4, 1974.

³⁵ Mathon to Cartan, 8 January 1975, Cartan's papers, box 936/8. Some notes from these phone conversations, including about Plyushch, are included in Mathon's papers, box 2/9.

³⁶ 'Compte rendu de M. Broué' 25 April 25 [1974], Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX.B.IV.2.2.7.

³⁷ 'Report on the situation in Novosibirsk in mathematics. December 1979', Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX.B.IV.2.1.12.

³⁸ Schwartz to R. Fein, 29 February 1980, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX B IV.2.1.13.

³⁹ Broué, 'Compte rendu', 25 April 1974, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX.B.IV.2.2.7.

⁴⁰ *Idem*.

⁴¹ Schwartz to Atiyah, 29 April 1974. Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX.B.IV.2.2.7.

⁴² Schwartz to Weisfeiler, 9 January 1980, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX.B.V.2.1.13.

⁴³ Kolesova to Schwartz, 22 January 1980, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX.B.IV.2.1.13.

⁴⁴ Weisfeiler to Schwartz, 8 January 1980, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX.B.IV.2.1.13.

⁴⁵ Michel Broué, 'Le Comité des mathématiciens', *Esprit*, no. 54, 1981.

-
- ⁴⁶ Schwartz, 'Leonid Pliouchtch', Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX.B.IV.2.2.7.
- ⁴⁷ Lipman Bers, 'For immediate release. Press statement September 4, 1974', *Bulletin du CM*, no. 4, 1974.
- ⁴⁸ L. Schwartz, 'Un "fou" exemplaire: Leonid Pliouchtch', *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 21 April 1975, Broué's papers.
- ⁴⁹ 'Communiqué presse du CM', 15 March 1980, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.2/IXB.IV.2.2.21.
- ⁵⁰ Schwartz to the Soviet Ambassador to France, 5 March 1980, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.2/IXB.IV.2.2.21.
- ⁵¹ Schwartz to N. Bogolyubov, 16 November 1976, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.2/IXB.IV.2.2.17.
- ⁵² Schwartz to A. Logunov, 13 February 1981, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX B IV. 2.2.3.
- ⁵³ *Bulletin du CM*, no. 3, July 1974.
- ⁵⁴ 'Compte rendu du Congrès international des mathématiciens, Varsovie, 16-24/8/83', Cartan's papers, box 936/1.
- ⁵⁵ 'Note de Tania Mathon à Broué', Cartan, Schwartz, 25 August 1978, Broué's papers.
- ⁵⁶ Broué, 20 March 1974, Cartan's papers, box 936/8.
- ⁵⁷ Schwartz to the Director del Instituto de Matematica y Statistica, Montevideo, 1 December 1976, Schwartz's papers, box IV.4/IX.B.IX.4.34.3. A similar action was successful with Soviet physicist Yuri Orlov, whose paper was published in *International Journal of Theoretical Physics* in 1982, with the scientist's institutional affiliation being given as 'Prison Camp 37-2, Urals, USSR'.
- ⁵⁸ Guichardet to Osin, 29 September 1986, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.2/IX.B.IV.2.2.25.
- ⁵⁹ 'Editor's note', *Notices of the American Mathematical Society*, 208(2), February 1981, p. 166.
- ⁶⁰ Schwartz to Lieutenant-General Luis Queirolo, 13 February 1981, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX.B.IX.4.34.3.
- ⁶¹ Schwartz to Bers and Halperin, 17 February 1981, Schwartz's papers, box IV.4/IX.B.IX.4.34.3.
- ⁶² Schwartz to L. Fukshansky, 8 June 1976, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.2/IX.B.IV.2.2.18.
- ⁶³ 'Séjour à Varsovie, mars 1982', Schwartz's papers, box IV.B/IX.B.IV.2.27.1.
- ⁶⁴ Joel Leibowitz, 'Foreword, Reports from the Moscow Refusnik Seminar', *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, vol. 491, 1987, pp. IX-X, Rhéaume's papers, box 2. 'La longue attente des "exclus de la science"', *Bulletin d'information du Conseil national français pour la protection des droits des juifs en URSS*, December 1982, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX.B.IV.2.1.10.
- ⁶⁵ 'Note ayant trait aux scientifiques qui, en URSS, sont privés de leurs possibilités de recherche', Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX.B.IV.2.2.5.
- ⁶⁶ L. Schwartz, J. Dieudonné, S. Mandelbrojt, G. Choquet, J.-C. Pecker, H. Cartan, R. Castaing, L. Michel, A. Abraham, 'Telegram to Alexandrov', [November] 1980, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX.B.IV.2.2.5.
- ⁶⁷ *Bulletin du CM*, no. 3, 1974.
- ⁶⁸ 'Quelques informations sur la situation des scientifiques soviétiques', *Bulletin du CM*, no. 12, 1979.
- ⁶⁹ Schwartz to L. Vigneron, 26 September 1978. Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.1/IX.B.IV.2.1.7.
- ⁷⁰ 'Rapport de la mission de Broué et Schwartz au Maroc pour Sion Assidon', 10 March 1982, Broué's papers.
- ⁷¹ Schwartz to Broué, 9 July 1982, Broué's papers.
- ⁷² *Bulletin du CM*, no. 13, 1980.
- ⁷³ Schwartz to the French Ambassador in Montevideo, 9 August 1982, Schwartz's papers, box IV.4/IX.B.IX.4.34.2.
- ⁷⁴ Bers to Cartan, 21 January 1975, Cartan's papers, box 936/9.
- ⁷⁵ *Bulletin du CM*, no. 13, 1980.
- ⁷⁶ Schwartz to M. Fascia, 9 December 1980, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.2/IXB.IV.2.2.18.
- ⁷⁷ Schwartz to M. Fascia, 15 July 1980, Schwartz's papers, box IV.2.2/IXB.IV.2.2.18.
- ⁷⁸ Schwartz to Assidon, 8 July 1982, Schwartz's papers, box IXB.IV/4.24.2.
- ⁷⁹ Bers to Schwartz, 11 December 1978, Schwartz's papers, box IX.B.IX.4.34.3.
- ⁸⁰ Tilly's (e.g. 2006, 2008) call to examine the constraints facing specific social groups in defining appropriate repertoires of action for confronting their countries' authorities is extended here by the need to look at the advantages and limitations of these repertoires due to the professional group's differing geographic and geopolitical locations.
- ⁸¹ Some historiography associated the CM almost exclusively with the anti-communist struggle or with the political combat of Eastern European dissidence (Christofferson, 2004; Rhéaume, 2004).