Europeanising spaces in Paris, ca. 1947-1962
McDonnell, H.M.

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Chapter 4. Europeanising Spaces and the *Mouvement socialiste des états-unis d’Europe*, ca. 1947-1954

In its June 1954 issue, *Gauche européenne* celebrated the eighth year of the organisation for which it was the organ – the *Mouvement socialiste des états-unis d’Europe*. A cartoon depicted a building site where iron girders formed a structure heading ever upward. Listed on each one, from bottom to top, was each successive conference of the *Mouvement*, from 1947 in the Paris suburb of Montrouge, 1948 in the Paris suburb of Puteaux, 1949 in Paris, before moving to Strasbourg in 1950, Frankfurt in 1952, Liège in 1953, Milan in 1954.\(^1\) The journal recapped that the Mouvement had been born between the conference at London in February 1947 (in fact a conference of the British Independent Labour Party (ILP)) and the conference in Montrouge in the same year.\(^2\) In fact, prior to 1948 the organisation was named the *Mouvement des états-unis socialistes d’Europe* (MEUSU). Though the movement has been given little attention in historiography of European integration, the inclusion of prominent Europeanists in its circles indicated that its importance was not negligible; to cite just a few examples: Altiero Spinelli, Paul-Henri Spaak, André Philip, and Guy Mollet. Furthermore, in his study of early post-war socialist Europeanism, Benjamin Heckscher argues that the importance of the MSEUE’s contributions to mobilisations, debate and planning warrant further examination, not only in the context of the history of socialism, but also in the historiography of the European Union.\(^3\)

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\(^1\) International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam. Mouvement Socialiste pour les Etats-Unis d’Europe collection (Hereafter abbreviated to MSEUE), 17, Imprimés. *Gauche européenne* 14 (June, 1954), 1.


Those years of 1947 to 1954 are propitious bookends to examine this movement between its origins and the burial of the plan for the European Defence Community (EDC). This proposal for a pan-European defence force was put forward by René Pleven in 1950, and was strongly supported by the MSEUE, before it was finally sunk in the 7th arrondissement in the Assemblée nationale in August 1954. Robert Frank suggests the importance of this event in post-war European history when he writes that, ‘ce “crime du 30 août” traumatise tous les Européens convaincus et marque le mouvement à jamais.’

It should be noted that the archives of the MSEUE contain many highly detailed public policy ideas and formulations. This chapter only analyses this material to the extent that it was indicative of the movement’s understanding of Europe as a whole. As a further point of clarification, the centrality of Paris to the MSEUE’s discourse about Europe varied. Some examples only related to Paris loosely in the sense that the movement to which they were a contribution operated from the French capital. Others connected much more strongly to Paris, either in the sense of being formulated in conferences or meetings in the city, or contributing to and competing in the Parisian field of intellectual and political debate about Europe.

What is more, it should be emphasised that the MSEUE’s understanding of Europe was only relatively coherent. After all, it stressed that it was not a party but a movement. In this way it facilitated many degrees of adherence and involvement, since it was in no sense highly disciplined or hermetically sealed. As a loose and broad organisation of European socialist activists, it encapsulated the complexities and contradictions that that trend of political thought and activism implied. And of course making sense of Europe was a similarly problematic

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exercise. As the MSEUE delegate Sébastien Constant put it: ‘L’Europe finit ainsi par être un monstre hybride qui simultanément signifie la paix et la guerre, la liberté et l’esclavage, la prospérité et la misère, une sorte d’espoir menaçant que chacun prétend appeler de ses vœux et qu’il écarte dès qu’il la rencontre.’

Yet, certain regularities can be identified in the MSEUE’s discourse, as it grappled with this equally indispensable and confounding concept of Europe. In tracing these debates and formulations, the movement needs to be situated within the wider and under-examined tradition of thinking about Europe within the left. The evolution of the MSEUE and its practical and theoretical precepts concerning socialism and Europe are laid out in this context. The notion of equilibrium is then located and examined as a recurring motif in the movement’s understanding of and advocacy for Europe. This connected to a certain strain of leftist Christianity in the movement, and informed its understandings of Europe and capitalism, Europe and the nation, and Europe and the superpowers. Equality was the other core motif of the movement, and connected in particular to the movement’s deliberations on Europe and rights, and Europe and colonialism.

The MSEUE, Socialism, and Europe

The MSEUE followed in the line of a perhaps under-examined, long and ambiguous tradition of thinking about Europe within the political left, broadly conceived. In his survey of political movements for European integration in 1948, Jean-Marie Domenach invoked a leftist tradition for which the idea of a European federation was key: the revolutionaries of 1848, the

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Communards, Victor Hugo, the syndicalist movements, Jaurès, Briand, and, during the Second World War, the journal of the Catholic left for which he wrote, *Esprit*.\(^7\) Perry Anderson indicates that the ideas, contributions, and debates about Europe on the left were not merely a French peculiarity. Certainly he situates figures like Saint-Simon, Hugo, and Proudhon in this lineage; but also Bakunin, Mazzini, Kautsky, Trotsky, Luxemburg, and Lenin.\(^8\) According to Domenach, this Europeanist spark had faded from the left, so that federalism was now the watchword of European capital and reactionary figures like de Gaulle and Churchill.\(^9\) Similarly, capital and political reaction were chief concerns of the nascent MSEUE – phenomena that were associated with the recent association of Europe with Hitlerism, as acknowledged at the Montrouge conference in June 1947.\(^10\) Anderson concludes his own survey by pointing to the 1941 Manifesto of Ventotene as ‘a final spectacular expression’ of the revolutionary tradition of conceptualising a United States of Europe.\(^11\) This was composed by a leading figure in the post-war MSEUE, Altiero Spinelli, alongside his co-resister Ernesto Rossi. As such, it is an illuminating reference point to measure the MSEUE against Anderson’s description of this socialist manifesto for post-war Europe: ‘The manifesto… is without question the most powerful vision of continental unity to emerge from the European resistance – libertarian and Jacobin

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\(^7\) Jean-Marie Domenach, ‘Quelle Europe?’, *Esprit* (November, 1948), 652.

\(^8\) Not all of these figures invoked an idea of Europe positively, however. Lenin and Luxemburg, for instance, instead offered a strident critique of the concept.

\(^9\) Domenach, ‘Quelle Europe?’, 652.

\(^10\) MSEUE, 2. ‘Rapport de la deuxième conférence international pour les états unis d’Europe, Paris - 21 et 22 Juin, 1947’, 75.

motifs fused white-hot in a synthesis that is testimony to the fluidity of ideas possible before the Iron Curtain fell.\textsuperscript{12}

Evincing the waning prospect of constructing socialism, or even the plausibility of belief in radical change, a key member of the MSEUE, Hermann Brill, made the case in 1952 that ‘depuis 1945 la conception de l’internationalisme socialiste a complètement changé.’\textsuperscript{13} In like fashion, the MEUSE’s initial aspirations to an anti-Communist but revolutionary socialist conception of European unity were soon frustrated. Wilfred Loth explains that the movement’s initial refusal to co-operate with ‘bourgeois’ associations for European unity was soon reconsidered. After the Congress of Europe in May 1948 in The Hague, the idea of a European parliamentary assembly began to take shape in negotiations between the British and French governments. As the French Socialist party (SFIO) and the British Labour party were engaged in discussions based on this project, it was felt that there was no longer any prospect of a Europe-wide socialist association in opposition to that dominated by the ‘bourgeoisie’. Loth emphasises that the organisation’s alignment with mainstream movements for European political integration was motivated by a disinclination to dwindle into a faction without any influence, and thereby abandon the European cause to its ideological opponents. The decision to compromise with ‘bourgeois’ forces of course meant renouncing hopes of a socialist transformation of Europe in the near future, and most members of the Committee accepted it resignedly. In November 1948, the Committee appointed at Puteaux conference reconciled itself to seeking full membership of the European Movement. At the same time, the MEUSU changed its name in an indication of

\textsuperscript{12} Anderson, \textit{The New Old World}, 484. Robert Frank points to the historiographical controversy initiated by the work of Pieter Lagrou about the importance of the legacy of the resistances during the Second World War in Europeanist movements in the post-war period. See Frank, ‘Les contretemps de l’aventure européenne’, 89-90.

\textsuperscript{13} MSEUE, 4. 5\textsuperscript{o} congrès européen du MSEUE, Frankfurt am Main. 15-17 février 1952. Hermann L. Brill, ‘L’internationalisme socialiste et l’idée d’État européen’, 2.
this new limitation of its hopes. Rather than the ‘Mouvement pour les États-Unis socialistes d’Europe’, the group left Puteaux as the ‘Mouvement socialiste pour les États-Unis d’Europe.’

After the Puteaux congress and the turning point that it represented, members of the left wing of the SFIO drew away from the movement, and their place was taken by prominent deputies from the SFIO executive, including the former economic minister, André Philip, who subsequently assumed the presidency of the organisation. Around this time, national sections came into being, statutes were adopted, and a permanent organisation created with its headquarters in Paris. It is notable that the reason for basing itself there was stated as its favourable geographical location, almost as if the city’s revolutionary symbolic capital were an embarrassment, or at least something to be held at a safe distance.

Subsequent to its change of policy regarding the Council of Europe, the MSEUE’s principal aim was to work for the creation of federal European structures, and this was reflected in its adherence to the emerging consensus around functionalism. This is the context in which the movement maintained that advocacy of socialism was less urgent than the establishment of a politically integrated Europe. The Spaniard Enrico Gironella had said that the Westminster conference demonstrated that there was not one Europe but two: liberal and socialist. Philip reflected that, ‘nous ne sommes pas d’accord sur tous les points. Mais moi, socialiste, j’aimerais mieux une Europe libérale que pas d’Europe du tout, et je pense que nos amis libéraux

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18 Robert Frank & François-Xavier Lafféach, ‘André Philip et l’Europe’, in Chevandier & Morin, André Philip: socialiste, patriote, chrétien, 409. Gironella was based in Paris as secretary-general of the Movement from 1948. He was a former member of the Spanish Communist party POUM.
aimeraient mieux une Europe socialiste que pas d’Europe du tout.19 Three years later, Gironella told the movement’s 1952 conference in Frankfurt-am-Main that this stance had since been vindicated and affirmed that, at least amongst the political and social left, the MSEUE had been the most mindful advocate and most determined defender of the Schuman Plan, and as a result had attracted all those on the social and political left who understood what the plan could mean for the future of Europe.20

The MSEUE’s impeccably mainstream position here was guided by the belief that Europe was a necessary, if insufficient, condition of socialism. Sometimes it was insisted that socialism was conversely the condition of Europe, since the old verities of bourgeois European nation states were moribund. Perhaps because this position was somewhat harder to sustain through the 1950s, when the self-destruction of the capitalist system no longer seemed imminent, it was conceded that various Europes were possible, if not as desirable: a clerical Europe, a German Europe, a liberal Europe, an American Europe, a Europe of the cartels.21

A socialist Europe remained the core aspiration of the movement, of course. But in the meantime the task at hand was to support European political integration as it actually existed, rather than insist on how it should be. Meanwhile this process might be leveraged to the greatest possible extent towards the aim of socialism, now deferred over the horizon. This was a practical retreat from the movement’s theoretical hope in the establishment of socialism on a world scale. In this vision, a socialist Europe was conceived as an intermediate stage before the eventual

triumph of socialism globally. Both as a Europeanist and socialist organisation, then, the MSEUE aimed to put itself out of business. That is to say that its sights were set on a world order in which socialism, having been established, no longer needed to be fought for, and Europe would as such be transcended so that it would signify nothing more than a geographical label. In the meantime, the MSEUE did not shy away from commending the distinctive attributes of Europe and Europeans, above and beyond the Europe that they hoped to push forward in terms of political institutions. In a preparatory document for the June 1947 Montrouge conference, the movement’s Committee for Study and Action stated that until the start of the twentieth century Europe was ‘le coeur et la tête du monde.’ This attractive mix of the Hellenic, Latin, and Christian civilisations of the Mediterranean had made Europe the prime mover in the world – economically, socially, and politically. Europeans were further singularly praised as ‘cultivés, actifs, ambitieux, techniquement expérimentés.’

These kinds of claims can be understood as an admission of the indelibly cultural element of politics. Contingent political arrangements, including those for European integration, are not particularly inspiring, however impeccably rational they are claimed to be. Popular legitimacy must rest on something more than this, and as such political Europeanism immediately reveals its needs for culture, an idea of European commonality or identity to which different European peoples can sign up to. There is a certain overlap here with the notion, most systematically set out by Antonio Gramsci, that political hegemony can never be secured without appealing to the affections of those subject to it; leadership is, after all, much more about consent than

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domination. It is in this sense that one can understand the common deliberate conflation of ‘Europe’ and European political integration.

Even if the apocalypse of a self-combusting capitalism was no longer on the cards, the threat of Communism led the movement to emphasise that the European project was not simply about building a desirable future, but also about averting a detestable present. As Philip put it, ‘En réalité, le choix n’est pas entre l’unification de l’Europe et le statu quo. Nous sommes dans un état de dégradation permanente et accélérée qui nous conduira rapidement au seul choix clair: unification européenne ou triomphe du communisme. Il ne s’agit pas, comme nous le reprochent certains, de faire un saut dans l’inconnu, mais bien un saut hors du trop connu dont nous savons par avance à quelle catastrophe il nous conduira.’

The MSEUE’s pragmatic line, as endorsed notably in the movement’s commission for the study of constitutional texts in Paris in December 1952, was not only shaped by competing Europeanist movements, but also by popular opinion. This was evident in its function as a Europeanising rather than a European movement. The point of this distinction is to illustrate that it tended not to consider that a significant and developed Europeanist sentiment simply lay amongst the popular masses, dormant or not, awaiting political expression. This was so either in the sense of subscribing to pragmatic political European integration, or in the more abstract sense of believing in an integral coherent Europe whose peoples’ histories and lives were obviously linked, or should be linked. Hence the French section of the movement highlighted the need to ‘dégager une conscience socialiste européenne.’ Even at the end of the period examined here,

26 MSEUE, 6. 5<sup>e</sup> congrès européen du MSEUE, Frankfurt am Main. 15-17 février 1952. ‘Résolutions votées par le congrès national français’, 3.
MSEUE delegates acknowledged that the various European peoples needed to be inculcated with a sense of the necessity of transcending national divisions. In setting out his view of the necessary path for European integration, Sébastien Constant remarked without illusions at the 1954 Milan congress, ‘Pour cela, il est vrai, il faudrait une mesure d’esprit de solidarité, un esprit européen qui pour le moment n’existe pas encore.’

In this sense, the MSEUE meets Robert Frank’s specific definition of European consciousness and commitment – a sense of the vital necessity of making Europe.

If Europe was not merely desirable but necessary, the MSEUE was nonetheless prepared to compromise within certain limits, as we will see below, with precisely those forces that were perceived to endanger it: capitalism and nationalism. This was a concession to popular ideology, a reminder that Europeanisation as a top-down technocratic affair – a concern voiced in the resolution of French national congress in 1952 – was never unmediated in the contest for political hegemony.

Having laid out the trajectory of the movement, what were its core theoretical tenets? In his survey of post-war European movements, Domenach noted that Communism and Marxism were commonly conflated as a single antithetical Other of Europe. If the MSEUE avoided the most polemical varieties of this rhetoric, it was nonetheless true that Marxism was not invoked with enthusiasm, at least after 1948. Like most European social-democratic organisations, attitudes on the subject were ambivalent, a point that might seem trivial, but is nonetheless...
noteworthy given the common historiographical narrative of a facile division in European socialism of revolutionary Marxism pitted against reformist social democracy.\(^{32}\)

The MSEUE’s theory correlates closely to Donald Sassoon’s argument that post-war social democratic movements tended to pride themselves on pragmatism. At the 1952 conference in Frankfurt, Henri Brugmans remarked that socialism was not defined by a homogeneous sociological doctrine, but that since the victory of Marx over Proudhon ended in the victory of the former within socialism broadly conceived, ‘des catastrophes devenaient inévitables.’ Unfortunately, international social democracy had abandoned Marx without returning to Proudhon and without finding anything better: ‘crise doctrinale, par conséquent.’\(^{33}\)

Yet, the paucity of the MSEUE’s theoretical repertoire did not imply that it was uninterested in the themes that preoccupied contemporary European theorists. Technology in particular was a point of reference for the movement. The fears that the movement expressed about the power of technology to subjugate man were compatible with the contemporary arguments of the Frankfurt School about the dialectic of Enlightenment. In Montrouge in 1947, for instance, it was noted that, ‘Les conquêtes de la science et de la technique offrent à l’homme la possibilité de s’émanciper de l’esclavage économique et social. Mais, en même temps, la centralisation économique et politique nécessaire pour organiser ces conquêtes menace de substituer à la vieille domination une nouvelle forme d’oppression l’État totalitaire.’\(^{34}\) This is suggestive indeed of Adorno and Horkheimer’s thesis that the Enlightenment principle of man’s domination over nature dialectically rebounds, so that men come to be considered objects among other objects to be instrumentalised.

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\(^{33}\) MSEUE 5. 5\(^{e}\) congrès européen du MSEUE, Frankfurt am Main. 15-17 février 1952. Henri Brugmans, ‘Quelle sera la gauche européenne ?’, 2.

The parallel did not run very deep, however. The MSEUE was soon characterised more by a rehabilitated, albeit attenuated, adherence to the notion of progress. Its aspirations were seen to be achievable gradually within the European status quo – an outlook derived in large part from confidence in the development of technology, including atomic power. Philip, for one, placed his faith in technological revolution to deliver a peaceful Europe. Elsewhere at the 1947 Montrouge conference, atomic energy (along with the colonies) was cited as the very condition of possibility for Europe. This is an important point, since there is perhaps a tendency to overestimate the extent of the state of disrepair of the belief in progress as a core and constitutive feature of Europe in the post-war period. We will return to this point below in an examination of the movement’s understanding of Europe in relation to capitalism, and to European colonial territories and the Third World generally.

For all these convergences between the movement and other European social democratic parties and organisations in relation to the concepts of both socialism and Europe, there were still important divergences. This was apparent in the expression of two constant priorities for the movement – equilibrium and equality.

The MSEUE and Equilibrium

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The recurring emphasis on equilibrium as a guiding principle and aim derived to a certain extent from currents of social Christianity in the MSEUE.\textsuperscript{37} This was especially important to Philip, who, though a Protestant, was also influenced by the left Catholic Personalism of Emmanuel Mounier.\textsuperscript{38} In their discussion of Philip, Robert Frank and François-Xavier Lafféach assert that, ‘à ses yeux, le christianisme est le fondement principal de l’identité européenne.’\textsuperscript{39} His understanding of Christianity in turn presupposed a balance between the real and the ideal. For him, equilibrium was ‘une notion typiquement européenne’, and an equilibrium of elements was a preferable outcome to a dialectical synthesis. As Philip himself explained, ‘Pour moi, la définition de l’Europe, c’est l’antinomie de la culture, c’est l’acceptation, dans l’âme même de la valeur, d’une contradiction… qui oblige à chaque instant à établir entre les forces contradictoires des équilibres, à inventer des compromis qui ne sont jamais que des compromis passagers.’\textsuperscript{40}

Equilibrium might have been a particularly European characteristic, but it was also a particularity of Europe that in this period it was particularly difficult to achieve; such was the implication of Gironella’s report on the 1952 Frankfurt conference:


\textsuperscript{37} On the MSEUE’s deliberations about the relationship between religion and socialism, see MSEUE, 2. ‘Rapport de la deuxième conférence international pour les états unis d’Europe, Paris - 21 et 22 Juin, 1947’, 33; MSEUE, 4. 5\textdegree\ congrès européen du MSEUE, Frankfurt am Main. 15-17 février 1952. S. Constant, ‘Vers une gauche européenne’, 5-7; MSEUE, 4. 5\textdegree\ congrès européen du MSEUE, Frankfurt am Main. 15-17 février 1952. ‘Commentaire sur le rapport Constant’, 2.

\textsuperscript{38} Mounier himself was an attendee at the 1947 Montroûge conference.

\textsuperscript{39} Frank & Lafféach, ‘André Philip et l’Europe’, 405.

\textsuperscript{40} Cited in ibid., 406.

\textsuperscript{41} MSEUE, 4. 5\textdegree\ congrès européen du MSEUE, Frankfurt am Main. 15-17 février 1952. E. Gironella, ‘Rapport d’activités’, 7.
This section will now attempt to discern the contours of the problem of achieving equilibrium in such a multifaceted actuality, by examining three prominent motifs in the discourse of the MSEUE, which of course interacted and overlapped in various ways: capitalism, the nation (including nationalism and the institution of the nation state), and the global system of the two blocs.

Capitalism, Europe, and Equilibrium

In its formative period, the movement subscribed to the general European consensus famously described by A.J.P. Taylor in November 1945: ‘Nobody in Europe believes in the American way of life – that is, in private enterprise; or rather those who believe in it are a defeated party and a party which seems to have no more future than the Jacobites in England after 1688.’ 42 Indeed, as Sassoon points out, between 1945 and 1950 no pro-capitalist liberal party succeeded in becoming the main party of government anywhere in Europe. 43

As such, it is unsurprising that the movement particularly emphasised anti-capitalism in the period before its change of name and direction. Its first congress in Montrouge in 1947 highlighted the propensity of capitalism to crisis, and capitalist class relations were criticised as divisive, not merely hierarchical. In this conception, trusts were inherently detrimental to the European peoples. 44

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42 Cited in Maier, ‘The Two Postwar Eras’, 327.
Mistrust of capitalism endured in the movement, though it was tempered by the reassurances of the Keynesianism that had filled the European ideological void left by pre-war capitalism. The 1949 conference in Paris insisted on the threat of cyclical economic crises, and of course of unemployment. At the February 1952 conference in Frankfurt, capitalist anarchy was mentioned in the same breath as totalitarianism as an adversary of Europe. ‘Boom and bust’ was noted as a concern at the 1953 conference at Liège, and it was notably suggested that harmonisation was a contradiction in a capitalist society. At the Milan 1954 conference, Stalinist totalitarianism and capitalist oppression were again mentioned together as dangers to Europe. At the Montrouge conference in 1947 it was proposed that, ‘we are in the presence of a new phenomenon of a capitalism incapable of living. This phenomenon is precisely the relation between a capitalism which has become more and more powerless and a socialist government which has not been able to conquer power.’ One is reminded here of Gramsci’s well-known aphorism: ‘the crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear.’ Gramsci, of course, was talking about the interwar period, and Charles Maier argues that, although in the period immediately following the Second World War it was considered likely that the two post-war

45 Sassoon, One Hundred Years of Socialism, 140-141.
47 MSEUE, 6. 5e congrès européen du MSEUE, Frankfurt am Main. 15-17 février 1952 Résolution votée par le congrès national belge du mouvement socialiste pour les états-unis d’Europe, le 13 octobre 1951, 2.
periods would resemble each other, in fact the remarkable feature of the second was the emergence of stability.\textsuperscript{51}

It was this stability which underlay the MSEUE’s avowed pragmatism. Capitalism for the MSEUE was, as it were, on constant probation having disgraced itself in Europe. Though to some degree it would always be suspect, it was provisionally acceptable if it delivered the equilibrium without which Europe could not survive, let alone flourish. While it sustained a satisfactory level of prosperity and stability, the strongest indictments of capitalism – that its relations of production were constitutively unjust and exploitative – could be shelved. Philip notably took the view that ownership had become unimportant, and that the fundamental problem of socialism was the distribution of power between social groups.\textsuperscript{52} The MSEUE largely signed up to the European social democratic consensus that emerged in the 1950s, as described by Sassoon: ‘The new revisionism tried to find a way out of the impasse between a tradition which appeared to have come to a standstill (socialism) and a thriving reality (the popularity of capitalism); it did not seek to establish a rigorous doctrine but, rather, gloried in pragmatism.’\textsuperscript{53} As mentioned above, the MSEUE had to fashion its advocacy of Europe with one eye on this ideological position of the popular masses to which it appealed. Sassoon further argues that this European socialist revisionism entailed a drastic rethinking of the generally held socialist position immediately after the Second World War. Namely, capitalism would not possibly recover, could not possibly deliver constant growth. Renewed expectations about the capacities of capitalism and the regeneration of the ideology of progress went hand in hand. Indeed, Sassoon goes as far to say that in the 1950s ‘this belief translated into an overwhelming


\textsuperscript{52} Sassoon, \textit{One Hundred Years of Socialism}, 247. It should be noted that Philip was speaking here as a member of the SFIO rather than in the context of the deliberations of the MSEUE.

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., 244.
consensus, especially among economists.’ He qualifies this, though, by pointing out that for socialists, a belief in perpetual capitalist growth did not at all necessarily mean progress, and indeed could well facilitate barbarism.\textsuperscript{54} The MSEUE did not align itself with that pessimistic prognosis, even if its ranks were not filled by full-blooded apologists for a vision of history inexorably on the up. Much closer to its general tenor was Philip’s contention that ‘la revolution technique et sociale… assurera seule le salut de l’Europe et la paix.’\textsuperscript{55} Walter Benjamin’s excoriation of the social democratic and socialist belief in progress in the pages of \textit{Les Temps modernes} in 1947 had little currency in this milieu.\textsuperscript{56}

Equilibrium, Europe, and the Nation

Nationalism was a culture which the MSEUE generally held in disregard, though perhaps it was with one eye on the popularity of the doctrine that the movement sometimes drew back from condemning it forthrightly in its discourse about Europeanisation. For the movement had to contest hegemony in the broader field of left-wing politics, which in France included a powerful Communist party. Indeed, as late as the European Defence Community (EDC) debates of 1954 it was ‘le premier parti politique français.’\textsuperscript{57} In December 1955, a month before forming and leading the French government, Guy Mollet quipped that ‘French Communists are not Left, they are East.’\textsuperscript{58} In doing so, he exemplified the common accusation that the PCF was in effect a foreign, Russian outfit. But it was in fact decidedly nationalistic, and this could not be ignored,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 245-246.
\item \textsuperscript{55} MSEUE, 4. 5\textdegree\ congrès européen du MSEUE, Frankfurt am Main. 15-17 février 1952 André Philip, ‘Des principes d’un socialisme européen’, 8.
\item \textsuperscript{56} Walter Benjamin, ‘Sur le concept d’histoire’, trans. P. Missac, \textit{Les Temps modernes} 25 (October, 1947), 623-634.
\item \textsuperscript{57} Philippe Buton, ‘La CED, l’Affaire Dreyfus de la Quatrième République ?’, \textit{Vingtième siècle. Revue d’histoire} 84 (October-December, 2004), 44.
\end{itemize}
perhaps all the more so as the MSEUE would make no concessions to the Communists’ virulent condemnations of contemporary European political integration. Interestingly, the PCF deputy for Paris, Georges Cogniot, urged a continuation of popular resistance to the EDC in subsequent plans for European integration. In referring to contemporary political integration, Cogniot constantly used quote marks to refer to ‘Europe’ and ‘European’, thereby disputing that there was anything natural about these concepts. Instead, this ‘Europe’ was solely a reification of a contingent arrangement between a few states dominated by Germany and the United States in the interest of capital.\(^{59}\)

Perhaps it was in the context of the peak of the PCF’s power in 1947 that it was noted at the Montrouge congress of that year that ‘internationalism is not anti-nationalism’, and the analogy was made that, in terms of the guarantee of security and liberty, Europe was to the nation what socialism was to man.\(^{60}\) Likewise, the Provisional Committee from the Montrouge conference held that,

Internationalism has nothing in common with anti-nationalism. One cannot ignore or minimize the concrete forms of national cultures and traditions. One of the great riches of Europe is the immense diversity of national characteristics. Without national autonomy, other liberties signify little. This liberty, threatened to-day from all sides, will find its greatest safeguard in a voluntary European federation. Human liberties can only be established and safeguarded by a libertarian and democratic socialist society.\(^{61}\)

Sometimes the doctrine of nationalism was condemned quite frankly. Logically enough, given that the movement intended to be supra-national rather than international. This was less a matter of preference than necessity: ‘si le Malthusianisme nationaliste l’emporte, c’est la FIN DE


l’EUROPE’, whilst a socialism whose roots were dug in national soil would be one of austerity rather than abundance.\textsuperscript{62} Constant portrayed the choice between nationalism and Europeanism in starkly competitive terms at the 1952 Frankfurt conference; if Europe were to succeed, it had to make a clean break with sclerotic national traditions and ways of thinking – ‘l’Europe ne continue pas – elle commence.’\textsuperscript{63} Though it was occasionally repeated that various kinds of Europe were possible, the possibility of a continent based on nationalism was dismissed at the Second Congress at Puteaux in 1948. Henri Brugmans, for instance reported that ‘as a matter of principle, the alternative between a Churchillian and a socialist Europe was a false one: it was a question of European concentration versus the perpetuation of nationalist chaos.’\textsuperscript{64} A January 1952 resolution of the Belgian section of the MSEUE pledged to fight against nationalism in all its forms.\textsuperscript{65} Even as late as 1954, when the institutional foundations of European integration had been laid, the risks of a nationalist ‘solution de repli’ were still highlighted.\textsuperscript{66}

The MSEUE did not simply hold that socialism had to contend with nationalism, but that socialism was itself impoverished by its confinement to the national level. As such, Philip remarked cynically in 1952 that, ‘la seule nationalisation que nous autres socialistes ayons réussi complètement à réaliser a été la nationalisation des partis socialistes.’\textsuperscript{67} Though he differed from him in every other respect, Philip in effect fully endorsed Trotsky’s repudiation of the prospect of establishing socialism in one country. Socialism in Europe would be on a European scale, or

\textsuperscript{62} MSEUE, 4. 5\textsuperscript{e} congrès européen du MSEUE, Frankfurt am Main. 15-17 février 1952. André Philip, ‘Des principes d’un socialisme européen’, 6. Emphasis in the original.

\textsuperscript{63} MSEUE, 4. 5\textsuperscript{e} congrès européen du MSEUE, Frankfurt am Main. 15-17 février 1952. S. Constant, ‘Vers une gauche européenne’, 9.

\textsuperscript{64} ‘Assemblée générale du Comité d’étude et d’action pour les États-Unis Socialistes d’Europe, Puteaux: 22 juin 1948, Compte rendu’, in Lippens & Loth, Documents on the History of European Integration, 298.

\textsuperscript{65} MSEUE, 6. 5\textsuperscript{e} congrès européen du MSEUE, Frankfurt am Main. 15-17 février 1952. ‘Résolution votée par le congrès national belge’, 1.

\textsuperscript{66} MSEUE, 15. 7\textsuperscript{e} congrès, Milan. 9-11 juillet 1954. Raymond Rifflet, ‘Rapport au congrès national belge du M.S.E.U.E.’, 7.

not at all. Accordingly, the MSEUE condemned national socialist parties that would not think beyond the limits of their national political constituency. The British Labour party came under particularly heavy fire, unconvinced as it was of a need to forge links with Europe and the continental socialists. At various times the SFIO was also criticised for national myopia – a rather embarrassing point of tension, given the MSEUE’s base in Paris, perhaps all the more so because the SFIO executive had thrown its weight officially behind the MSEUE at the time of its change of name and reconfiguration. In his contribution to the Milan conference in 1954, Raymond Rifflet, for example, regretted the French chauvinism that led to disasters like Dien Bien Phu. He contrasted the frustratingly chauvinistic French concern with its own ‘grandeur’ with the internationally endorsed, sensible Europeanism of Frenchmen like Philip, Jacquet, Schuman, and Teitgen. Indeed, he lamented ‘une détérioration graduelle de l’idée européenne en France’, which he did not see being reversed any time soon. In this regard, Rifflet was particularly vexed about French intransigence over the EDC. In any case, it was a reminder that if Paris offered many advantages as a Europeanising space, its pivotal place within a proud French national and nationalistic culture also presented distinct limitations.

The nation state itself was also seen as an inherent source of disequilibrium for the new Europe. One of the key points made at the 1947 Montrouge conference was that history had supplanted the era of the nation state: ‘The outworn principle of national sovereignty’ was

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72 MSEUE, 15. Rapport par Raymond Rifflet sur le mouvement belge, 8, 6. Underlining in the original.
condemned as a generator of hatred, misery and war. It was a transitory phenomenon, and thankfully so. Quite apart from its dubious moral fabric, national sovereignty was deemed obsolete in this new atomic era. More generally, the emerging world system dominated by ‘continent-states’ rendered political and economic solutions on the national level at best ineffectual or delusional. At worst, national approaches would only exacerbate the propensity of that system to generate war. As such, at the 1952 Frankfurt conference it was argued that socialists must at all costs oppose the reconstitution of European national armies.

Its antipathy towards the nation state underpinned several of the MSEUE’s concrete policies. The allocation of Marshall Plan funds on a national basis was seen as fundamentally shortsighted, for instance. But the most pressing concern about the inadequacies of the nation state and the threat of nationalism was in relation to Germany, whose militarism was naturally seen as catastrophic for any measure of European equilibrium. One should not underestimatethe extent of Germanophobia amongst Parisians at this time. Reflecting on the Six Power conference in London in the summer of 1948, Janet Flanner suggested that upon talk of a united Germany, ‘Parisians can hear, like an echo of the rhythm of the Nazi feet along the Champs-Elysées. No sooner was the Six-Power London accord announced than the Communists plastered the boulevards with a Party poster… l’Allemagne d’abord? Non!’ Conversely, Philippe Buton

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74 MSEUE, 7. 5e congrès européen du MSEUE, Frankfurt am Main. 15-17 février 1952. Commission A sur les principes d'un socialisme européen. Projet de résolution.
76 MSEUE, 6. 5e congrès européen du MSEUE, Frankfurt am Main. 15-17 février 1952. ‘Résolution votée par le congrès national belge’, 3.
78 Flanner, Paris Journal, 88.
points to Germanophobia as a prominent reason for support of the EDC.\textsuperscript{79} Germanophobia, then, was the common currency of partisans and opponents of European political integration alike.

Germany was of course always necessarily a point of reference for the MSEUE, just as for other Europeanist movements, in that they were formed by the experience of the Second World War. Germany’s comportment in the war also inevitably weighed on discourse about Europe thereafter, as indicated by the peremptory remark of former Communist minister François Billoux in the first parliamentary debate on the European Defence Community: ‘L’Europe, c’est une idée de Hitler.’\textsuperscript{80}

For the MSEUE specifically, Germany remained a central concern even after the abandonment of any hope of a federal pact of like-minded countries after the disappointments in 1950. For, the ‘functional’ partial organisations that the MSEUE focused on encouraging thereafter, notably the ECSC and the EDC, necessitated no less the focusing of attention on the German problem.\textsuperscript{81} We have already noted how the MSEUE made a point of advertising the extent of its commitment to the landmark agreements of European integration, as well as its role in bringing them about. Its advocacy in this regard often ran up against a significant body of Parisian and French opinion, including that of the French left. A particularly striking example was the EDC issue, described by Raymond Aron and others as the Dreyfus Affair of the Fourth Republic on account of the rancour it incurred on all sides.\textsuperscript{82}

At the inaugural Congress in Montrouge in June 1947, a lengthy appeal to the German people was issued in addition to a general resolution. In a reiteration of the organisation’s commitment to integrate Germany with Europe on the basis of respect and equality, it warned

\textsuperscript{79} See Buton, ‘La CED, l’Affaire Dreyfus de la Quatrième République ?’, 53-54.
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid., 50.
\textsuperscript{82} Cited in Buton, ‘La CED, l’Affaire Dreyfus de la Quatrième République ?’, 43.
that it was Germany that was most at danger in the emerging Cold War world of two blocs. Indeed, it was noted elsewhere that Soviet policy was precisely about tearing Germany away from Europe.\(^{83}\) While insisting on the ultimate responsibility of the German people, the statement at Montrouge also conceded that the interwar policy of the Western democracies had pushed Germany in the direction of Nazism. Furthermore, it warned the German people ‘against the mentality and the methods which during twelve years of the Hitlerian régime penetrated deeply into large sections of German opinion.’\(^{84}\) The MSEUE here in effect suggested the necessity for the German people of a crash refresher course of Europeanisation – the more intensive the better. Here again, the movement made a rare but revealing allusion to the need for European political institutions to rest on a popular sense of Europeanness which, crucially and contrary to much Europeanist rhetoric, they did not necessarily imply.

Germans of course contributed amply to the MSEUE, both as individual members from 1947, and in the framework of a national section from 1950.\(^{85}\) As such, they joined the movement’s consensus that conquered Germany must be integrated promptly in a supranational European community of states on the basis of equal rights.\(^{86}\) This was not a matter of indulgence, but rather a belief in the impossibility of the unification of Europe without Germany. This unification would be even further impeded if retributive policies such as dismantling German factories were implemented. These could only serve to intensify nationalist opinion, already exacerbated by the nation’s defeat. It was imperative that policy not be led astray from the requirement that a democratic Germany be integrated in the European Community, followed by a

\(^{86}\) Ibid., 279.
waiver of part of her sovereignty.\textsuperscript{87} In sum, it was not merely preferable but necessary that Germany be included in Europe. Germany would be Europeanised or there would be no Europe to promulgate in the first place.

Equilibrium, Europe, and the Superpowers

The concept of equilibrium was also fundamental for the MSEUE with regard to the Cold War confrontation between the USA and USSR. The two superpowers were important to the movement in another sense as well. It was admitted at the 1947 Montrouge conference that the victors of the Second World War had of course been from outside Western Europe.\textsuperscript{88} This was significant since it tied into generally held fears about what this implied for Europe’s place in the new post-war world. The MSEUE was no less afflicted with the common worry about Europe’s loss of control of its own destiny. Sartre expressed this powerfully in the same year as the MSEUE was founded. In \textit{What is Literature?}, he argued that the European proletariat and bourgeoisie were equally disenfranchised of control over their destinies, that ‘Europe is conquered and ruined; she is no longer master of her destiny; and that is the reason why her ideas can no longer make their way.’\textsuperscript{89} Moreover, ‘The present situation, revolutionary by virtue of the fact that it is unbearable, remains in a state of stagnation because men have dispossessed themselves of their own destiny; Europe is abdicating before the future conflict and seeks less to

\textsuperscript{88} MSEUE, 2. ‘Rapport de la deuxième conférence international pour les états unis d’Europe, Paris - 21 et 22 Juin, 1947’, 77.
prevent it than to range itself in advance in the camp of the conquerors.\textsuperscript{90} As a further illustration of this generalised preoccupation, in her Paris diary entry for 1 October 1946, Janet Flanner wrote that:

The new balance of power in Europe is now being balanced by a couple of powers that are not European – Russia and the United States… Because of sheer size, they have become the world’s bosses. They have set up the chimera of absenteeism as the new order for Europeans, some of whom may be the most civilized creatures on earth but all of whom are now reduced to sitting quiet and worried in their cities or on their land and nodding like yes men to a pair of enormous, newly grown up outsiders. Europe has lost the right to maintain her own power balance because no sooner had it been reestablished by peace, after one war, than uncontrolled Germany upset it and the world by rushing us all into battle again… The earth’s surface is changing. Europe is contracting; the U.S.S.R. and U.S.A. areas of influence are expanding. It is as if Europe were slowly entering a new ice age.\textsuperscript{91}

How did the MSEUE propose to deal with this predicament? In the first instance, the constraints that this represented for a European movement were recognised without illusions. Ultimately neither power was prepared to ‘visualize any European organization apart from their influence. And yet it is evident that no hope remains for the present generation of Europeans apart from a federated socialist Europe.’\textsuperscript{92} If the movement’s socialism was to be attenuated by political European integration, this political Europe in turn was to be attenuated by the exigencies of the Cold War.

Within this conjuncture, the Europe for which the MSEUE strove would be a force for counterpoise, both doctrinally and in terms of mitigating the practical dangers of international politics. The former since the MSEUE’s vision of Europe was demarcated from the blocs by a

\textsuperscript{90} Ibid., 224-25.
\textsuperscript{91} Flanner, \textit{Paris Journal}, 68-69.
\textsuperscript{92} MSEUE, 2. ‘Rapport de la deuxième conférence international pour les états unis d’Europe, Paris - 21 et 22 Juin, 1947’, 133.
commitment to both liberty and socialism.\textsuperscript{93} The latter because a cohesive and purposeful Europe could alone be a counteracting force against the drift to a new world war that was inherent in the status quo. A related fear in terms of maintaining equilibrium was that Europe would be colonised by either bloc if it failed to integrate itself, the battleground of a third world war, or left simmering as an atomic wasteland.\textsuperscript{94}

Occasionally, the case was made that Europe could be more than merely a maintainer of an uneasy status quo and an upholder of peace, that it could actually guide the Cold War world system towards a more satisfactory new form of human civilisation.\textsuperscript{95} But given Europe’s recent history and the ongoing tension in international affairs, projections of a pacified future were usually overshadowed by the pressing concern of warding off a renewal of catastrophic armed conflict. So, even in 1954, when one might think that attitudes might be cooler and more sober after the paranoia of the early Cold War and the death of Stalin, fear was still invoked as a fundamental point of European commonality. At the 1954 Milan conference, Sébastien Constant remarked that,

\begin{quote}
la masse des Européens (qui ne se dit pas “Européens” de quelque manière) est dominé par la peur. L’Europe subit les peurs et les espérances, réelles ou imaginaires que lui inspirent les fluctuations de la tension internationale. L’idée et l’action européennes en suivent les hauts et les bas, la placidité suit l’affolement; à moins que les peurs contradictoires ne se neutralisent pour se concrétiser dans un naturalisme et méprisant des réalités.'\textsuperscript{96}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{93} See MSEUE, 1. Dossier sur la Deuxième Conférence/le Premier Congrès, Paris -Montrouge. 21-22 juin. Documents pour la Conférence.
\textsuperscript{95} MSEUE, 2. ‘Rapport de la deuxième conférence international pour les états unis d’Europe, Paris - 21 et 22 Juin, 1947’, 123.
To borrow Sartre’s term, Constant’s remarks here suggest a European ‘seriality’. There is a bond between these Europeans – albeit a negative one – so that it is not invalid to talk of a category of Europeans in the first place. But these Europeans do not intentionally conceive of themselves as Europeans in any relationship of reciprocity, but are thrown together, or ‘serialised’, by a sense of external pressure or danger.97 Interestingly, Wakeman cites European integration alongside the Cold War and decolonisation as a source of post-war fears and uncertainties in Paris.98

If this fear of catastrophe was not to be confirmed, Europe was irreplaceable in securing the equilibrium that was precluded by the almost constitutive antagonism between the two blocs – their deference to Franco’s Spain being an exceptional point of consensus guided by cynical power politics, and roundly condemned as such by the MSEUE.99 The movement made an important point of stressing that it was not a rampart between the two blocs, but something more like a bridge.100 Wilhelm von Humboldt made the case in 1821 that, ‘Where two beings are separated by a total gap, no bridge of understanding extends from one to the other; in order to understand one another, they must have in another sense, already understood each other.’101 To connect to the questions of availability and intelligibility that are identified as vital to Jacques Berque’s sense of Europe (see chapter 7), Europe was in this instance the precondition of mutual translatability of the USSR and the USA. The danger of the analogy was that it could easily be appropriated by the kind of Manichean rhetoric of Cold Warriors, hectoring about eternally

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100 Ibid., 139. Likewise, Europe was described as ‘non pas un rempart mais un trait d’union entre les deux puissances.’ See MSEUE, 1. Dossier sur la Deuxième Conférence/le Premier Congrès, Paris -Montrouge. 21-22 juin. Documents pour la Conférence, 21.
conflicting and irreconcilable foes, especially if Europe was dismissed by them as irrelevant. This kind of secular religious world view and its attendant reckless politics were thus an important source of the fear common to Europeans that we identified above. In this regard, the bellicosity of figures like General MacArthur was contrasted to the kind of conflict mediation Europe was compelled to undertake.102

The priority of equilibrium of course did not imply that the MSEUE’s prescribed Europe stood equidistant from the two superpowers. 1947 was a key year in the escalation of the Cold War, and this was reflected at the conference in Montrouge in June. It was asserted that there could be no neutrality between the two blocs and a retreat to a national position was equally impossible.103 The movement, then, endorsed Sartre’s maxim that one was necessarily situated and must choose, but also inferred that his choice for a truly neutral socialist Europe between the two blocs, as represented by the Rassemblement démocratique révolutionnaire (RDR), was not a valid option.104

The MSEUE’s preference for the United States, however, did not at all imply wholehearted deference to its hegemony or an enthusiasm for its society. Besides distaste for what was perceived as its vulgar capitalist essence, the movement made clear that it had no illusions about its imperialism.105 In the debates around the EDC, moreover, members were

102 MSEUE, 5. 5e congrès européen du MSEUE, Frankfurt am Main. 15-17 février 1952. Gérard Jacquet, ‘Rapport sur quelques problèmes d’actualité’, 2. Incidentally, if the Soviet Union was considered by the French public to be the greater danger, 36 % of respondents to a July 1954 poll still considered the United States a danger for peace. Buton, ‘La CED, l’Affaire Dreyfus de la Quatrième République ?’, 52.


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adamant that a European army must be properly European, and not subordinated to the United States within a putative Atlantic coalition. This connected to broader questions about the nature of the Europe that the movement was working for. Anticipating de Gaulle’s quandary a decade later, the MSEUE consistently raised the question of whether Europe was developing into a European Europe or an Atlanticist Europe. Which was another way of asking whether the United States was a negation of Europe, or the condition of it. The balance of opinion within the movement considered that Atlantic solidarity and European independence were not necessarily antithetical. At the same conference, Philip argued that,

L’Europe ne se fera qu’avec l’aide et sous la pression américaine, une Europe neutraliste ne se ferait jamais. Le socialisme doit donc accepter la coalition atlantique avec le capitalisme progressiste américain, tout en luttant d’une part avec les syndicats des E.U. pour renforcer l’influence ouvrière général dans la coalition, d’autre part entre nous, pour créer rapidement une force Européenne capable de réaliser avec les E.U. une coalition égalitaire.

The enslavement of Eastern European countries, on the other hand, only confirmed that the Soviet Union could not contribute to Europe, that it could only use it. This Soviet repression was condemned in unambiguous terms. A caption in the June 1954 Gauche européenne for example read: ‘Juin 1953: L’Armée rouge tire contre nos camarades, les ouvriers libres de Berlin-Est. Juin 1954: Nous n’oublierons jamais.’ The Soviet threat, it was noted,

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106 MSEUE, 6. 5e congrès européen du MSEUE, Frankfurt am Main. 15-17 février 1952. ‘Résolutions votées par le congrès national français’, 1-2; ‘Résolution votée par le congrès national belge’, 3.
contributed in no small measure to the Europeanisation of public opinion. But this did not translate into a general readiness for the movement to be used as a tool against Russia.

There was also a sort of retroactive endorsement of the essential Europeanness of Eastern Europe. The inclusion of the suggestion in the official report of Montrouge that its states were ‘half European, half Asiatic’ was as such an anomaly. Much more indicative of the MSEUE’s general position on this issue was the fundamental rejection of the system of blocs as a point of principle. For it separated the countries to the east of the iron curtain and west of Russia ‘from the natural community of which they form part, namely Europe.’ Furthermore, with reference to the Soviet-held eastern bloc countries, ‘Europe, unless it desires to acquiesce in its own division, is inconceivable without the totality of the peoples which have constituted its historical community.’

The MSEUE and Equality

The other key motif in the discourse of the MSEUE was equality, a value that it understood as a core precept for European political integration and the appropriate yardstick of Europe’s relations with the world. Accordingly, in 1954 it was reiterated that it was no coincidence that the privileged and the PCF – groups which supposedly mirrored each other in upholding inequality and elitism – were set against European political integration. The two

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113 Ibid. 65.
most prominent instances of the application of the notion of equality in relation to Europe are examined in this section: equality and rights, and equality and colonialism.

Europe, Equality, and Rights

From its conference in Montrouge in 1947, the movement appealed to The Rights of Man as the common heritage of the West. Furthermore, delegates stipulated the need for ‘a charter of common rights of citizens and of the European peoples.’ This would guarantee national freedoms, and individual freedoms of expression, of meeting, of press, and of religion. What is more, the third congress of the MSEUE in Paris in 1949, passed a resolution on citizenship stating that,

The establishing of a double citizenship, national and European, imposes itself immediately on the constitution of the European Authority both from a juridical and moral point of view.

In order to demonstrate clearly the solidarity of the European peoples and to give to the refugees from the totalitarian countries of Europe a legal status, it is decided that European citizenship will be conferred upon them. This will be a clear proof to the popular masses that a decisive step has been taken towards European federation.

This was certainly an imaginative and proactive plan to tackle the pressing problem of refugees in post-war Europe. Hannah Arendt, of course, noted that refugees were treated as if they carried ‘the germs of a deadly sickness’, since their mere existence threatened the authority of nation states. The question arises, then, whether this constitutional proposal to include East

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118 See also Henri Cartier-Bresson’s reference to the issue of European refugees in chapter 8.
European refugees was adequate to counteract such ingrained negative predispositions to uprooted peoples. On the contrary, it could be argued that the endowment of European citizenship to these refugees might have inscribed a two-tier Europeanness; given the importance often placed on the nation state and nationalism as quintessentially European institutions, those endowed with this special European citizenship could ironically be considered less European than holders of European national citizenships.

The question becomes even more complicated if we take a step back and interrogate both this appeal to the centrality of the Rights of Man and the proposed endowment of European citizenship, particularly with regard to demarcating or grading Europeanness. To be precise, this sense of Europeanisation appears in a stroke as both a means of inclusion and of erecting a border of exclusion. Jacques Rancière argues with reference precisely to appeals to political subjectivity based on the Rights of Man that ‘Political subjects are not definite collectivities. They are surplus names, names that set out a question or a dispute (litige) about who is included in their count.’¹¹⁹ This is to do with Rancière’s concepts of the ‘police order’ and ‘politics’. Police, in his meaning, ‘is not a social function but a symbolic constitution of the social. The essence of the police is neither repression nor even control over the living. Its essence is a certain manner of partitioning the sensible.’ He explains further that,

this partition should be understood in the double sense of the word: on the one hand, that which separates and excludes; on the other, that which allows participation. A partition of the sensible refers to the manner in which a relation between a shared ‘common’ and the distribution of exclusive parts is determined through the sensible. This latter form of distribution, in turn, itself presupposes a partition between what is visible and what is not, of what can be heard from the inaudible.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Jacques Rancière, ‘Who is the Subject of the Rights of Man?’, The South Atlantic Quarterly 103/2-3 (Spring-Summer, 2004), 303.
What does this imply for the MSEUE’s recommendations for state legislation of Europeanness based on the Rights of Man? Its importance as a discourse lies in structuring the social body in which each ‘European’ has a part in the polity. Excluded from this is a supplement of a non-European ‘part of no-part’, unseen and unheard in the sense that its claims are not so much dismissed as not even registered.

Rancière’s idiosyncratic sense of politics, on the other hand, refers to a contestation of this police order. It indicates the phenomenon where those who are not counted in the social order, or, at most, have a subordinated place in it, demand inclusion as equal speaking beings. In doing so, this part presents itself as ‘the immediate embodiment of society as such, in its universality, against the particular power interests of aristocracy or oligarchy.’ The movement plausibly adumbrated this form of politicisation with regard to Europe in a reference to threatened liberties or oppression of peoples in Berlin, Eastern Europe, in Spain, or in Greece as ‘the vanguard of the new Europe.’ But it had not the slightest inkling of any comparable politicisation of putatively non-European peoples in its base in Paris. This was not because this simply was not a pressing issue. Many groups were impacted upon by either legislated non-European status, or in terms of a lack of recognition, so that they were devalued as either dubiously or less European, or non-European. The movement’s call for the regulation of labour migration flows, for instance, might have been pointed to as an example of the loss of ‘le droit d’asile’ in Europe, which, as we will see in chapter 7, Louis Massignon so lamented. Likewise, it is unclear how the MSEUE would have related to non-white permanent residents of

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Paris, or those like *pied noirs* whose cultural European credentials were seen as ambivalent; far less how it would have gauged the Europeanness of Parisians who belonged to what Stoler terms boundary groups. To take an example from the key year of 1954: repatriates in Paris from Indochina, including Eurasians and Asian Catholics.\(^{124}\)

Europe, Equality, and Colonialism

The most immediate sense in which the MSEUE was concerned with colonisation was its anxiety about being colonised by either the USSR or the USA, which at some level in turn necessarily called into question European colonialism.\(^{125}\) There is arguably a trace of such a sentiment in a declaration submitted to the 1947 Montrouge conference: ‘This second conference of the U.S.S.E. expresses its complete solidarity with all peoples who are struggling for their independence, for genuine democracy and European unity.’\(^{126}\) Perhaps the last part of the statement indicated that it was uttered with the Eastern bloc in mind, but it also hints at the question of the appropriate relation between Europe and the third world. The same goes for the remarks of the *Comité d’étude et d’action pour les états-unis socialistes d’Europe* in a May 1947 communiqué: ‘nous ne voulons pas d’une Europe colonisée par un bloc ou un autre, que ce soit sous la forme d’une Europe passive et asservie ou sous celle d’une Europe militarisée et casquée au service de l’un des deux impérialismes.’\(^{127}\) One should not overstate the extent to which the question of US or Soviet colonialism stimulated reflection on European colonialism, though,

\(^{125}\) Étienne Balibar makes precisely this point. Cited in Don Reid, ‘Étienne Balibar: Algeria, Althusser, and Altereuropéanisation’, *South Central Review* 25/3 (Fall, 2008), 68.  
given the extent of entrenchment of the ideology of European imperialism. We will return to this point below in an examination of the limits of the MSEUE’s professed vision of equality between Europe and the non-European world.

It was nonetheless the case that European colonialism was critiqued in terms of an underlying normative standard of equality in international affairs. This presumably lay behind the invitation to Montrouge of various political leaders from the non-European world, including Jawaharlal Nehru, George Padmore, and Ferhat Abbas. Nor did the anti-colonial leanings of French figures like Sartre and André Breton in any way dissuade the organisers from extending invitations to them as well.\(^\text{128}\)

The movement distanced itself from imperialism and instead advocated cooperation, solidarity or free association with colonial subjects. This was deemed to be a necessary foundation for the properly global scope of socialism. Likewise, delegates spoke in positive terms of the colonised’s right to independence. Colonial intransigence on the part of European powers was conceptualised as myopic nationalism that was in fact detrimental to Europe, rather than a quintessentially European enterprise. As late as June 1954, on the eve of the Algerian war, the movement’s organ, *Gauche européenne*, reiterated its commitment to ‘la pratique constante d’une politique d’égalité entre la métropole et les territoires et déplacements d’outre-mer, de manière à permettre à ces derniers de participer aux institutions européennes dans la mesure de leurs moyens et de leurs intérêts propres.’\(^\text{129}\) Accordingly, the French section of the movement condemned ‘la politique qui a exclu les pays d’outre-mer de la C.E.C.A. et de la C.E.D. et


demande que le Parlement et le Gouvernement français considèrent en toutes circonstances l’outre-mer comme partie intégrale de la République Française, elle-même intégrée à l’Europe.\textsuperscript{130} Philip, likewise, identified one of the tasks of the movement as the affirmation of a European policy on relations with these overseas territories.\textsuperscript{131}

Yet, connecting colonies to Europe as a whole rather than to European nation states did not circumvent the fundamental tension at the heart of the European imperial enterprise. Fanon held that once one talked of equality, the colonial settler no longer had any interest in remaining. But the granting of equality also placed strain on the colonial system at the metropolitan end. Frederick Cooper convincingly argues that the crisis of European imperialism arrived precisely in this post-war period when European states were dissuaded by calls for equivalence as much as by those for independence. The inegalitarianism of racism was no longer serviceable, and extending the rights of the European welfare state to colonial subjects was considered unviable.\textsuperscript{132}

There was a certain presupposition within the MSEUE that its advocacy of equality could be reconciled with a gradual approach to altering European colonial relations. But if equilibrium and equality preoccupied the movement, it was ultimately the former that took priority. This gradualism was increasingly out of tune with the emergent wave of anti-colonialism, as made evident at the June 1948 Puteaux meeting. As Domenach described it,

\begin{quote}
Ce congrès fut marqué par les interventions véhémentes des délégués des peuples colonisés d’Afrique et d’Asie qui reprochèrent aux socialistes de chercher dans la Fédération européenne un moyen de se sauver seuls avec leur bonne conscience. La violence avec laquelle ces envoyés d’Outre-Mer [sic] revendiquèrent leur émancipation nationale déconcerta quelque peu les
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{130} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{131} MSEUE, 11. 6$^{e}$ congrès, Liège, 29-31 mai 1953. André Philip, ‘Les tâches du MSEUE’.
\textsuperscript{132} See Frederick Cooper, \textit{Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), passim.
But there is little to suggest such conceptions of colonialism were drastically revised thereafter. In this sense, the judgement of the theoretical paucity of the movement mentioned above might be qualified; for the movement followed closely Comte’s doctrine of progress in order.\(^{134}\)

The limitations of the MSEUE’s commitment to equality between Europe and the non-European world were particularly starkly expressed by Guy Mollet. To come back to André Philip’s insistence that any Europe was better than no Europe, it is interesting that Mollet took a rather different tack at the congress of the French national section of the MSEUE in June 1954: ‘nous ne voulons pas de n’importe quelle Europe. Il nous est impossible d’accepter un marché commun qui ne serait pas que l’extension à l’échelle européenne, du “laissez-faire”, principe fondamental d’un libéralisme économique périmé.’\(^{135}\) What Mollet certainly did not consider obsolete was the European colonial system, and his conception of the appropriate relationship between Europe and the developing world seemed to cut against the grain of the MSEUE’s rhetoric on equality. Mollet addressed the SFIO in 1950 on the topic of ‘L’heure de l’Europe’, in which he insisted that Europe as a third force must ‘dépasse ses frontières géographiques.’\(^{136}\) Socialists too, then, subscribed to an idea of a Europe that must exceed itself, that was constituted by its imperial supplement. He argued quite frankly that, left within its continental frontiers Europe was not viable, but that supported by the British Commonwealth and French and other European colonies, it was so. He spoke with no sense of contradiction as a socialist,

\(^{133}\) Domenach, ‘Quelle Europe?’, 645.
\(^{136}\) Guy Mollet, *L’Heure de l’Europe* (Pas du Calais: Société d’Éditions, 1950), 8. It should be noted that Mollet was addressing the SFIO here, not the MSEUE. However, his views were consistent on this issue.
critical of the capitalistic United States, about the immense markets these imperial holdings provided for Europe.\footnote{Ibid., 10.}

If Mollet was a key figure in French social democratic circles, he was also a catalyst in its perceived moral degeneration.\footnote{Interestingly, Rancière points to the experience of being part of a generation that came into political consciousness at the time of Mollet and for whom as such ‘l’histoire de la gauche est celle d’une trahison perpétuelle.’ See ‘Rancière: ‘‘L’élection, ce n’est pas la démocratie’’, \textit{Le Nouvel observateur} (23 April, 2012). \url{http://bibliobs.nouvelobs.com/tranches-de-campagne/20120418.OBS6504/jacques-ranciere-l-election-ce-n-est-pas-la-democratie.html}, More generally, on the formative and negative importance of Mollet on French socialists see Martin Evans, \textit{Algeria: France’s Undeclared War} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).} His Algerian policy was notably disavowed by Philip in the letters page of \textit{Le Monde} in November 1956, before he resigned from the Socialist Party in January 1957. His excoriation of Mollet was systematically laid out in his work of the same year, \textit{Le socialisme trahi}. Yet, on closer inspection, Philip and the MSEUE’s record on colonialism is rather more ambiguous. True, Philip passionately opposed Mollet’s direction of the war, but he had supported the granting of special powers in April 1956 and had backed firm action against Nasser.\footnote{Evans, \textit{Algeria}, 199.} And there was no trace of any discomfort on his part, or on that of the movement in general, with regard to Mollet’s 1950 comments on the integral importance of colonialism to Europe. Indeed, those remarks correlated closely to those of the movement’s \textit{Comité d’étude et d’action} in May 1947. Here it held that Europe was a viable and coherent economic unit on account of the possibilities of atomic energy and, crucially, the availability of raw materials from its colonies.\footnote{MSEUE, 1. Dossier sur la Deuxième Conférence/le Premier Congrès, Paris -Montrouge. 21-22 juin. Documents pour la Conférence, 16.}

Likewise, Rifflet’s indictment of France’s policy at Dien Bien Phu was followed by the advice that instead France should turn to Europe where its ‘grandeur’ would be further advanced
by drawing on the resources of its overseas territories. This was a general pattern in which talk of the rights of non-European peoples did not allow much space for the notion that they would subsequently be significantly less dependent on Europe. The contradictoriness of these sentiments was symptomatic of a view in which Europe was, in Michael Rothberg’s formulation, a ‘normative progressive narrative’ or as ‘the telos of civilization’. This axiom was quite resilient to professions of good intent of equitable treatment, however sincere. This is not to revert to a claim that the MSEUE’s policies on colonies could be read off uncomplicatedly according to a colonial calculation of economic profitability, but it at least infers that its rhetoric on equality should be read with particular caution and close attention to the ideological context of post-war European socialism.

Conclusion

The fluidity of leftist ideas about Europe, exemplified for Anderson by the Ventotene Manifesto, indeed diminished after the formation of the Iron Curtain. By the time of the sinking of the EDC in Paris in August 1954, it was clear that the Europe that the MSEUE talked about and fought for was characterised less by creativity than constraint and contestation. Equilibrium had to be secured, and so Europe was to be fashioned by accommodating forces not deemed inherently conducive to its prosperity – capitalism, the nation, the two bloc system. Likewise, the values that were to characterise the movement’s preferred sense of Europe were constrained by...

142 Michael Rothberg, Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2009), 80. See also Chakrabarty, Provincializing Europe, passim.
the perdurability of mechanisms and ideologies of hierarchy and exclusion that were subtle and sturdy enough to withstand genuine commitment to a Europe based on equality. Insistence on a Europe based on equality of rights was undoubtedly progressive, but could not foreclose the problematic and more preliminary question of who counted as European in the first place. Likewise, European imperialism might be considered disreputable (though, as we have seen, not always), but that did not imply a more fundamental interrogation of Europe as the normative standard of progress and development, and the corollary assumptions of the continued reliance of the colonial and non-European world on Europe. Furthermore, the MSEUE had to contest what Europe was in the first place. It was the gambit of advocates of European political integration that ‘Europe’ was coterminous with these contingent political treaties and agreements. In the Parisian intellectual and political field, however, organisations like the PCF countered that this was a reification and mystification of an unpropitious and avoidable trajectory of the continent in the new post-war world. Much of the discursive energy of the MSEUE, then, was spent either tacitly or explicitly, on denying, explaining, or minimising this embarrassing disjuncture between Europe of contemporary political integration, and Europe as it was understood by the European peoples. Given the movement’s base in Paris, that disconnect was of course all the more awkward when it applied to the French people.