# Anti-Salazarism and Transnational Solidarity: Franco-Portuguese Student Activism in the 1960s

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In April 1968, Portuguese students at the Cité Universitaire in Paris helped to organize some of the early protests that would escalate into the mass movement of May–June. Indeed, the Portuguese residence there was one of the first to be occupied by a Revolutionary Committee. Yet students in Portugal itself appeared to have little part to play in the global spectacle of 1968, at least not that spring and summer. One might ask, then, what inspired and allowed for those Portuguese students in Paris to take such an active role. In the run-up to that storied spring, French and Portuguese student activists nurtured connections that inspired, enlarged, and reinforced their goals and tactics – and their perceptions of their own roles in a worldwide revolutionary movement. These Franco-Portuguese contacts serve as an important reminder both that migrants inherently create their own form of meaningful cross-border contact and that the transnational solidarity of human rights movements was already well developed in the 1960s.

Over the course of the 1960s, Portuguese migrants grew to become France's largest population of foreign workers – surpassing Algerians – with large waves of arrivals after 1962 and again after 1968. In the years leading up to 1968, Portuguese presence in France – and French understandings of the political situation in Portugal – affected French political rhetoric, strategies, and action. French and Portuguese students' anti-Salazar activities emphasized the important role of publicity and awareness-raising within human rights movements during the 1960s. They also provide a useful example of what we today would call allyship: the ways that solidarity movements understand their relationship with the more vulnerable. French and Portuguese students clearly saw themselves as part of an important global and transnational movement with shared enemies – even as they recognized the important difference in context for public protest in Paris and Lisbon. As members of university communities, they regularly highlighted the connections between campus life and society at large. For these students, authoritarianism anywhere was a danger everywhere.

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The author is grateful to the anonymous reviewers for their support and advice. This work was funded by a Sam Taylor Fellowship from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church and Competitive Development Funds from Southwestern University.

All translations from French are the author's.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Volovitch-Tavares, *Portugais à Champigny*, 23 and 49.

Histories of 1968 increasingly acknowledge the global dimensions of the events and their afterlives.<sup>2</sup> Scholars regularly cite anti-colonialism and Third Worldism as crucial influences on the activists of '68.3 While direct organizational ties between different national movements do not appear to drive the events of May–June, multiple forms of cross-border cooperation undergirded participants' experiences, goals, and tactics. Some have highlighted the role of youth travel, international encounters, and the creation of interpersonal networks as foundations for the solidarity movements of the late 1960s. Others consider the importance of Vietnam and anti-war activism as a particular source of ideological and strategic inspiration. <sup>6</sup> Rarely addressed, however, is the role of international populations within national centers like Paris. Yet migrants and foreign students provided yet another crucial point of direct contact between French activists and the world. Portuguese students are a particularly intriguing case not only due to the magnitude of Portuguese presence in France, but also because Portugal existed at the nexus of two conflicts that were fundamental to the worldview of the '68-ers: anti-fascism and anti-imperialism.<sup>8</sup> Portuguese students' appeals for French support were thus easily fit into existing frameworks of protest. The stifling surveillance of the Portuguese regime, both at home and abroad, further raised French activists' awareness of their own ability – even a responsibility – to speak and act on behalf of those whose struggle was more immediately and effectively repressed by existing power structures. Thus, Portuguese students took advantage of what additional liberty and support they had in France to make a stand against the Salazar regime and other sources of repression in 1968, even as they in turn were able to influence French students' perception of their role within a transnational, revolutionary struggle.

Examining the role of Portuguese students in the broader experience of 1968 also contributes to our understanding of the development of human rights activism. While some historians suggest that transnational human rights movements became an important political force only in the 1970s,<sup>9</sup> the actions and interactions of French and Portuguese students throughout the 1960s support calls for alternate definitions and chronologies. The student activists discussed here did not make many specific appeals to "human rights," though the broader French anti-Salazarist movement was more explicit on that front.<sup>10</sup> This, however, does not mean that their rhetoric and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See, for example, Feuer, *Conflict of Generations*; Gildea, Mark, and Warring, *Europe's 1968*; and Suri, *Power and Protest*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Mark, Townson, and Voglis, "Inspirations," 88–103; and Gordon, *Immigrants & Intellectuals*, 8,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Suri, *Power and Protest*, 165.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Jobs, "Youth Movements"; and Gildea, Mark, and Warring, Europe's 1968.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Mohandesi, "Bringing Vietnam Home." See also Mark, Townson, and Voglis, "Inspirations."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Gordon, *Immigrants & Intellectuals*, makes a vital contribution in this respect. Likewise, Pereira, "Les Portugais en France pendant mai–juin 1968," provides detailed insight into the specific expereinces of Portuguese migrants; while Hendrickson, "March 1968," offers the perspective of Tunisian students.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> On these ideologies as particular influences on activists in 1968, see Mark, Townson, and Voglis, "Inspirations." While Spanish and Greek activists had a clear argument about their role in combatting right-wing authoritarianism, they had to be somewhat creative in connecting their struggle to the broader anti-imperial movement – initially framing their interaction respectively in terms of U.S. support for Franco and British control of Cyprus. Mark, Townson, and Voglis, "Inspirations," 89–90. French activists likewise had to frame their opposition to their own state through France's participation in NATO and European support of capitalist imperialism. Mohandesi, "Bringing Vietnam Home," 234. Portugal's regime, in contrast, was actively conducting colonial wars in Angola (1961–74), Guinea-Bissau (1963–74), and Mozambique (1964–74).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> See Moyn, The Last Utopia; and Neier, The International Human Rights Movement.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> See, for example, "Amnistie: Une fleur qui manque au Portugal," Pamphlet, April 1962 (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris [hereafter BNF]); and *Conférence des pays d'Europe Occidentale pour l'amnistie aux emprisonnés et exilés politiques portugais* (Paris, Dec. 15–16, 1962) (BNF), particularly remarks by Emilio Lo Pane, 5.

tactics should not be seen as crucial evolutions on the front of human rights struggles. 11 Portuguese students and their French allies regularly invoked "fundamental" rights and values, with particular emphasis on the ideals of civil liberty, criminal and social justice, and resistance to oppression. That these notions are predominantly linked to citizenship (alongside numerous invocations of broader social and economic rights) does not exclude them from the realm of human rights. 12 Moreover, the inclusion of anti-Salazarism in French students' conceptions of their global platform represented exactly the sort of global morality - the concern for "suffering abroad" - that characterizes the human rights ethos Samuel Moyn and others limit to later decades. 13 Anti-Salazarism in France in the 1960s also existed at the crossroads of "[t]ransnational solidarity campaigns, based on a shared ideology and geared towards revolution" and emerging "campaigns against political incarceration, torture and the death penalty" 14 – in this case, the specific latter concerns informed the larger sense of revolutionary solidarity. Applying a human rights lens to the experiences of French and Portuguese student activists both enables us to make sense of their work and elucidates the diversity of human rights chronologies and vernaculars to offer a fuller picture of how later movements drew on the tactics and ideals employed in 1968. 15 The ideas and practices of both French and Portuguese students reveal a conscious program of cross-border activism, part of the construction of a broader emerging generational and internationalist identity that served as a call to action.

## **Transnational Student Networks**

French students began to pay closer attention to their Portuguese peers in 1962, following both the founding in Paris of the French Committee for Portuguese Amnesty (FCPA) in February<sup>16</sup> and a wave of student protests from March to June in Porto, Lisbon, and Coimbra.<sup>17</sup> These Portuguese students were met with crushing police tactics – 1,500 were imprisoned on a single night.<sup>18</sup> The regime's violence in turn stimulated a much broader base of support for student opposition that simmered throughout the 1960s, despite (and because of) continued harsh surveillance,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> As Cargas argues that "insisting people were only thinking about human rights if they used the phrase might be a red herring." "Questioning Samuel Moyn's Revisionist History of Human Rights," 414.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> On the important and long-standing relationship between citizenship, sovereignty, and human rights, see Cargas, "Questioning Samuel Moyn's Revisionist History of Human Rights," 418; and Hoffman, "Human Rights and History," 308. We can – and should – take Moyn's warning against projecting contemporary visions of human rights onto the past to heart, even as we recognize the fluid, contested, evolving, and "capacious" meanings of human rights to the historical actors engaged in their promotion. Hoffman, "Human Rights and History," 287. See also Brier, "Beyond the Quest for a Breakthrough," 157.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Moyn, Last Utopia, 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Brier, "Beyond the Quest for a Breakthrough," 161.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> See Brier's call for this sort of expanded understanding in "Beyond the Quest for a Breakthrough."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> The FCPA was inspired by Latin American associations and modeled their inaugural international conference on meetings for Spanish and Portuguese amnesty in Sao Paulo and Montevideo. Other national committees were launched in Britain, Italy, Belgium, and Sweden; the international secretariat sat in Paris.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Accornero identifies the Academic Crisis of 1962 as "the first real mass movement" at the university in Lisbon and the "debut" of students as major actors in the growing protest cycle. *The Revolution before the Revolution*, 51 and 56.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Feuer, *The Conflict of Generations*, 292. Portuguese students faced a "wave of repression of exceptional intensity" through the next protest cycle in 1965. Accornero, *The Revolution before the Revolution*, 59.

imprisonment, and even torture.<sup>19</sup> That December, the FCPA hosted a conference in Paris,<sup>20</sup> and one of their speakers was Jean-Claude Roure, President of the Union Nationale des Étudiants de France (UNEF).<sup>21</sup> Roure, like many of his fellow students, initially understood the Portuguese situation as a parallel to Francoist repression in Spain.<sup>22</sup> He likened the Portuguese regime's recruiting of youth to Hitler and Mussolini's fascist tactics, insisting, "we cannot, as young people, accept it. We must fight in whatever country we find ourselves against this forced submission [caporalisation] of youth because if we accept it elsewhere, there is no reason it won't be imposed upon us at home."<sup>23</sup> Roure's plea for youth solidarity suggests a deep sense of obligation that superseded national boundaries and forged a shared struggle in generational terms. He assured the audience that, despite the difficulties and limitations of this task, "In France, as much as we can, we offer our concrete solidarity to our Portuguese comrades in exile and we try to make their integration, as it were, into French universities easier."<sup>24</sup> One important step, Roure explained, was that UNEF had decided to organize a conference on behalf of Portuguese and Spanish students and against fascism "with our comrades from all the countries of Europe, whatever their political and social regime."<sup>25</sup>

The attempts – mostly failed – to organize such a conference further highlight UNEF's position on transnational solidarity. The plan for meeting with representatives from all of Europe was stymied by Cold War tensions: it was difficult for eastern and western European student groups to cooperate (or even agree to show up to the same place). UNEF insisted that "only a truly representative conference can provide effective political support to Spanish and Portuguese students" and rejected proposals by other national delegations for simply expressing support bilaterally. UNEF's position was grounded in the assumption that student political action needed to cross – even question – national boundaries in order to effect real change. Moreover, their insistence on full European participation came out of the concern that any meeting that weighed heavily towards the socialist East could actually be "harmful to our Spanish and Portuguese comrades," given both Franco and Salazar's propensity to discredit any opposition with the charge

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Feuer, *The Conflict of Generations*, 292–94. For a comprehensive discussion of the power and efficiency of the Portuguese political police (PIDE, Policia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado), see Gallagher, "Controlled Repression in Salazar's Portugal."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> "Amnistie: Une fleur qui manque au Portugal," Pamphlet, April 1962 (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris [hereafter BNF]), 8–10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Roure had leftist and syndicalist political leanings but was not affiliated with any single party. Monchablon, "Jean-Claude Roure," Groupe d'études & de recherche sur les mouvements étudiants, <a href="http://www.germe-inform.fr/?p=299">http://www.germe-inform.fr/?p=299</a> (accessed January 31, 2021).
<a href="https://www.germe-inform.fr/?p=299">22 UNEF documents continued to link the two regimes through 1966. One of the key similarities that FCPA</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> UNEF documents continued to link the two regimes through 1966. One of the key similarities that FCPA organizers emphasized was the targeting of communists by both Franco and Salazar' regimes ("Amnistie," 8–10). Close comparison of Spanish and Portuguese student experiences is beyond the scope of this work, but would be a fruitful avenue of further research – as would comparisons with Greek students.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Jean-Claude Roure, remarks, *Conférence des pays d'Europe Occidentale pour l'amnistie aux emprisonnés et exilés politiques portugais* (Paris, Dec. 15–16, 1962) (BNF), 28–29. On the broader uses and understandings of "fascism" by Western European youth in 1968, see Mercer, "Specters of Fascism."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Roure, remarks, Conférence des pays d'Europe Occidentale, 28–29.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Report from the 55<sup>th</sup> Congrès de l'UNEF, Grenoble, 1966 (Centro de Documentação 25 de Abril da Universidade de Coimbra [hereafter CD25A], SGA F026 SSC6), 29–32. For a thorough consideration of the opportunities and challenges of East-West meetings and networks, see James Mark and Anna von der Goltz, "Encounters." <sup>27</sup> UNEF, 55 Congrès, 30.

of communism.<sup>28</sup> UNEF's emphasis on solidarity was shared by the Union des Grandes Écoles (UGE), which had begun to work more closely with UNEF. UGE's April 1968 Congress in Caen affirmed that "recognition of the Portuguese student movement involves an acute understanding on the part of UGE militants ... university problems are rising in all the countries of Europe, to varying degrees of acuity, in the same terms."<sup>29</sup> French students' growing awareness of Portuguese students' protests and their oppression enhanced their commitment to transnational solidarity by encouraging them to cultivate a wide international network and to recognize themselves as one front in a broader struggle for student rights.

French students were also quick to connect Portuguese fascism with the ongoing colonial wars in Africa. In his 1962 speech Roure invoked the role of Angolan students as a crucial part of the struggle against the Salazar regime. Speaking for French students, he acknowledged, "We had the experience of the Algerian War ... only this process of decolonization ... gave us the basis to install a real democracy at home. There is thus a succession of struggles between democratic Portuguese who want a free and democratic regime and Angolan patriots who, themselves, want to be liberated from the colonial regime that still oppresses them." His invocation of Algeria both created a further parallel between French and Portuguese students and served to remind Roure's French audience of the ugly and unpopular reality of France's most recent colonial war. 31

The 1966 UNEF Congress in Grenoble passed motions on both Portugal and the Portuguese colonies, even as it acknowledged its members' "responsibility" to oppose continued French "colonialist" policies in the DOM-TOM and to protest the ongoing Vietnam War and South African apartheid. Here again, these were recognized as part of a single global conflict in which UNEF's allies were the oppressed fighting for their rights and freedoms. Combatting colonial and fascist regimes required an "inter-syndical" collective. The motion against Portuguese colonialism captured this sense of solidarity and accused NATO countries of being complicit in the colonial wars by providing military aid to Portugal. In this way, the students aligned themselves not only against Salazar's regime, but also potentially against their own state (in a move that foreshadowed rhetoric from 1968). The motion on Portugal, echoed at the following year's Congress in Lyon, directly coupled the Portuguese government's domestic "reactionary policy of misery, obscurantism, and repression" with its "war of repression against the people of the Portuguese colonialist states in the world" and argued that the colonial war was "against the interest

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> UNEF 55 Congrès. One option floated at this time was to organize a separate conference in Paris that would bring together Latin American and European student movements on this issue. On the Portuguese government's habit of invoking communism, see AMAE, EU 44–60/Portugal/76 and 78. Victor Pereira has further demonstrated that anti-communism effectively recruited French officials into Portuguese police practices. Pereira, "Emigrés surveilles," 6–

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> UGE, 22 Congrès, "Portugal" (CD25A, SGA F026 SSC6), 27.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Roure, remarks, *Conférence des pays d'Europe Occidentale*, 28–29. In this respect, French students were ahead of their Portuguese counterparts, who gradually committed to anti-imperialism and opposition to Portugal's colonial wars over the course of the 1960s. Cardina, "On Student Movements," 158–60. Lusophone African students, of course, had long been articulating liberationist and anti-colonial ideas. See Reza, "African Anti-Colonialism." Roure's own background makes his stance particularly intriguing: he was born in Algiers but opposed French imperialism in Algeria. Monchablon, "Jean-Claude Roure."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> UNEF had been involved with anti-Algerian War protests since 1960. Ross, May '68, 56.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> UNEF 55 Congrès, "Rapport de la Commission international," 8–10. It is notable that Palestine did not yet appear on their list.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> UNEF 55 Congrès.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> UNEF, 55 Congrès, "Motion sur le Portugal" and 56 Congrès, "Motion sur le Portugal" (CD25A, SGA F026 SSC6).

of the people and youth of Portugal."<sup>35</sup> Throughout 1966 and 1967, UNEF closely followed the cases of a number of Angolan nationalists imprisoned by the regime and crafted a series of press releases targeting international opinion to raise awareness about their situation.

This engagement by French students was not one-sided. Portuguese students, particularly those in France, actively solicited support from their French peers. Humberto Lucas was the head of the Union des Étudiants Portugais en France (UEPF) from 1962 to 1969. He was also a member of the Portuguese opposition, with links to the Portuguese Communist Party (Partido Comunista Português. PCP) and the Frente Portuguesa de Libertação Nacional (FPLN). While abroad, Lucas also joined the Frente de Acção Popular (FAP, a revolutionary anti-Salazar organization connected to the Maoist Comité Marxista-Leninista Português, CLMP). 36 UEPF bulletins from 1965 and 1966 devoted considerable space to the importance of international solidarity, cultivating a sense of belonging within a worldwide student struggle.<sup>37</sup> UEPF emphasized the importance of raising awareness about the Portuguese regime and its crimes through participation in international conferences, encouraging other national student groups to petition their own governments, and publishing booklets and newsletters. The UEPF also organized meetings and petition drives with UNEF in 1965 and 1966 for the March 24 Journée Internationale de Solidarité avec les Étudiants Portugais.<sup>38</sup> As an organization, UEPF actively sought support and cooperation from their French (and other European) peers, as well as identifying their own plight with Spanish, Greek, and other student groups facing repression.

Lucas himself spoke as a Portuguese representative at both the 1967 UNEF and 1968 UGE meetings; his notes further suggest that he was involved in crafting the motions on Portugal in 1966 and 1967. His role was partly informative: his remarks cataloged the Salazar regime's unjust treatment of students and the greater population. He also provided inspiration to student militants by listing the array of repressive tactics turned against Portuguese students, all while declaring that none of these succeeded in "breaking the resistance." Portuguese students, he insisted, "have always mounted a vigorous action in defense of their fundamental rights and for the safeguard of their free and democratic associations." In his speech to the 1967 UNEF Congress, Lucas invoked Portugal's colonial wars in order to draw attention to the ways that the Portuguese were themselves subject to foreign domination; "Portugal is simultaneously a colonizing country and a colonized one." His emphasis on Portugal's membership in NATO and the military aid received

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> UNEF, 55 Congrès, "Motion sur le Portugal" and 56 Congrès, "Motion sur le Portugal" (CD25A, SGA F026 SSC6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Ferreira, "Luta Armada em Portugal (1970–1974)," 211. The FAP and CLMP grew out of frustration with the PCP, mirroring the widespread rejection of traditional, Soviet-aligned communist parties by leftists across Europe in the 1960s. See Mark, Townson, and Voglis, "Inspirations," 77–81.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> UEPF, *Informations* 2–10 (CD25A, SGA F026).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> UEPF, *Informations*, 4 and 10 (CD25A, SGA F026).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Lucas, 56 Congrès, 1967 (CD25A, SGA F026 SSC6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* Lucas had already raised the idea of Portugal as a country colonized by foreign monopoly investment in a UEPF dossier sent to the 19th UGE and 54th UNEF Congresses in April 1965 and the formulation of Portugal as both "colonizer and colonized" appears in the 22nd UGE Congress's report from April 1968. UEPF, "La Lutte des Etudiants au Portugal," 10 and UGE, 22 Congrès, 22 (CD25A, SGA F026 SSC6). The UEPF under Lucas's leadership appears to have published its first major denunciation of the Salazar regime's "colonial repression" in June 1966. UEPF, *Informations* 10, June 1966 (CD25A, SGA F026). This further tracks Cardina's previously mentioned chronology of Portuguese students slower embrace of overt anti-imperialism over the course of the 1960s. Cardina, "On Student Movements," 158–60.

from Western allies neatly intersected with French students' ideas about their position within a global struggle against capitalism and imperialism.<sup>42</sup>

By 1968, Lucas spoke more fervently about the need to make stronger and more frequent connections between UGE and Portuguese students, particularly at the Instituto Superior Técnico in Lisbon, "so as to breach the wall of silence that the fascist regime imposes on the country." He cited a statement just issued by student associations meeting (illegally) in Lisbon that proclaimed "the path of student syndicalism as the most appropriate path for this stage in history and [serving] the deepest needs of national life." This shared invocation of the need for solidarity movements was furthered by their demand for "integration into the international community of students." As much as French student activists proclaimed the need for joint action, Portuguese student leaders linked their own success to their ability to mobilize across national lines and capture public attention to pressure the regime from outside. <sup>44</sup>

## Connecting the University to the World

French and Portuguese students forged another important link in their activism: between the university and society at large. This idea would, of course, be central to the 1968 attempts to merge student and worker movements in France. Students in Portugal advanced claims about the connection between their frustrations and the state of the nation throughout the "Academic Crisis" that began in Coimbra in 1962. As part of their strategies for garnering international attention, some students (and likely professors) sent a pamphlet in English to select Lisbon embassies in which they declared that

Conscious of our rights, both as students and as men, with regard to the University as to the Portuguese people, we will not abandon our struggle ... as long as there are threats to the fundamental values of Truth, Justice, Liberty, and Dignity, which no man worthy of that name has the right to renounce, our sacrifice and our struggle will contribute to liberating and renewing our diminished homeland and allow it to finally rejoin the community of peoples.<sup>46</sup>

Clearly, the students understood their position as intertwined with the fate of Portugal and the world community. <sup>47</sup> Following this line of argument, Roure's remarks to the FCPA's conference

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Lucas, 56 Congrès, 1967 (CD25A, SGA F026 SSC6). See also Mohandesi, "Bringing Vietnam Home."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Lucas, 22 Congrès UGE. The IST in Lisbon was seen as one of the more vocal opponents to the regime. Rose, "Des étudiants portugais," July 19, 1968 (Centre des Archives diplomatiques du ministère des Affaires étrangères, La Courneuve, (hereafter AMAE), EU 44–60/Portugal/87).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> International pressure, particularly from western allies, had played an important role in the Portuguese government's methods for addressing student protests in 1965. Rose, "Les étudiants et le pouvoir," Feb. 4, 1965 (AMAE, EU 44-60/Portugal/78).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> This can be understood within the pattern of more broadly engaged student activism in Portugal over the course of the 1960s. See Accornero, *The Revolution before the Revolution*, 51–55; Almada, "A Cultura Política de 68," 134–41; and Cardina, "On Student Movements," 154–55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Beauverger, "Agitation universitaire," Sept. 24, 1962 (AMAE, EU 44–60/Portugal/76).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Salazar's regime also made this link between student activism and broader social and political opposition; this explains harsh repression of student protests and especially attempts to make their demands seem narrow and unpopular. French ambassadors correctly read student protests throughout the 1960s as posing a long-term (not immediate) danger to the regime. See Bernard de Menthon, "Agitation parmi les étudiants," Apr. 10, 1962 (AMAE, EU 44–60/Portugal/76), etc.

later that year emphasized that for students "as intellectuals, it is our task to show that these regimes, because they oppress intelligence, because they oppress self-expression, are a brand on the human spirit as a whole." In a world where human rights frameworks rested on civic rights to thought and expression, the question of free thought and instruction within the universities was far more than academic.

A new series of student protests swept Portuguese cities in 1965, partly as a response to the trial of three students arrested the previous year – a stark reminder of the potential costs of opposing the regime. This wave gathered a fair bit of momentum: demonstrations grew in size, families of detained students began their own public campaigns, and international press attention added to the pressure. 49 This forced the regime to plead its case in the public sphere: a Ministry of Education communiqué in March insisted that they had an obligation to protect the "values to which we owe obedience as a western and Christian community." Governmental arguments recognized the students' claim to social solidarity and made numerous attempts to sever any sympathies that students were able to cultivate. In addition to invoking the values of order and respect, the regime accused students not only of communism (a habitual refrain) but also of a policy of "uprooting" themselves from the social soil, creating the universities as a space apart, accessible only to a certain class of student.<sup>51</sup> At the same time, the Ministry of National Education insisted that universities had full autonomy from government intervention, except in cases where multiple universities were implicated or where they strayed beyond the "limits of university activities."52 In other words, even as the regime worked to cut ties between students and the population, their repressive response was justified by those very connections.

Student groups countered these charges directly. A tract responding to the assertion of "values" retorted, "Which values? The value of the police, capable of shutting down divergent voices? The value of torture as a means of obtaining confessions?" Members of the political opposition still in Portugal also responded to the 1965 protests by drawing parallels between the students and society. Police force used on the streets to quell demonstrations was linked to broader political violence, like the use of force within courtrooms. Students' demands for democratic pedagogies were part of the fight for the freedoms of critique and of information. Moreover, the government's reliance on repression and "reactionary fascism" to suppress student demands was proof that the regime was "incapable of resolving the fundamental problems of the population." Groups on all sides of these protests thus perceived the students' actions as resonating far beyond campus regulations.

This was also the case Lucas made in his addresses to French student congresses. After setting up the regime's attacks on university freedom at the UNEF conference in 1967, Lucas explained that the policies towards universities were "but a reflection of the current situation in the country." In April 1968, he described the ways that student associations in Lisbon demanded not only pedagogical democratization and reform, but also "fundamental liberties" of association,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Roure, remarks, *Conférence des pays d'Europe Occidentale*, 28–29.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Rose, "Les étudiants et le pouvoir," Feb. 4, 1965 (AMAE, EU 44–60/Portugal/78).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Rose, "Agitation à l'Université," Apr. 8, 1965 (AMAE, EU 44–60/Portugal/78).

<sup>51</sup> Ihid

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Rose, "Le gouvernement et l'agitation universitaire," Mar. 11, 1965 (AMAE, EU 44–60/Portugal/78).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Rose, "Agitation à l'Université."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Rose, "L'Action Démocratique et Sociale et l'opposition universitaire," Feb. 11, 1965 (AMAE, EU 44–60/Portugal/78).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Lucas, UNEF 56 Congrès.

press, and expression – and, building off of those, the right to strike. <sup>56</sup> Curricular reforms were central to social change because, according to the UGE report on Portugal, "All instruction has the sole goal of forming an elite devoted to Salazar's fascist regime."57 French observers in Portugal likewise asserted that Portuguese universities existed "to prepare technicians totally devoid of the training that is an integral part of a true man." This concern about the ways national education could actually prop up the regime surfaced again in the protests in Coimbra in May 1969, where students opposed a set of academic reforms on the basis that these were intended only to improve national profits and thus strengthen governmental power.<sup>59</sup> While students in Portugal connected their struggle to that of their society to gain popular support, Portuguese students in France built on this idea to reinforce the notion that they and their allies (French or otherwise) were battling the same global forces of oppression.

#### 1968

By May 1968, these trends of transnational activism and connecting school to society were on clear display. French students rallied around both ideas, soliciting support from foreign students – and workers<sup>60</sup> – in France, continuing correspondence with student movements in other countries, and asserting the resonance between university and broader social issues. UNEF materials from May 1968 insisted, "the radical contestation of the university is inseparable from the contestation of established power."<sup>61</sup> Indeed, "The university struggles only have meaning when integrated with the struggles of the whole."<sup>62</sup> University officials and regulations served as easily identifiable and immediately felt constraints on youth freedom. In this way, the residence halls became a major front in the renewed struggle against authoritarianism and the pressures of social, cultural, and political power. 63

As of 1967, there were about 500 Portuguese students studying in Paris, some of them avoiding military service in the colonies, and most of them with pronounced anti-Salazarist positions.<sup>64</sup> Tracing individual Portuguese students' engagement in the massive events of May-June 1968 is challenging, given available sources. What is clearly documented, however, is that the Portuguese house within the Cité Universitaire in Paris was one of the hotbeds of political activity. 65 The residence housed fifty-six Portuguese and sixty-six other foreigners, including students, researchers, and artists. 66 In late April, Portuguese students helped to organize protests

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> Lucas, UGE. There is an interesting wrinkle in that UEPF (the association for Portuguese students in France) was deeply divided on the question of whether to use their association to push beyond questions limited to student welfare and education in France or to participate openly in anti-Salazarist activities. See Préfecture de Police, "Colonie portugaise de la Région parisienne," Mar. 1967 (Archives historiques de la Préfecture de Police, Paris, [hereafter AHPP], GD 53). 57 UGE, 23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Rose, "Des étudiants portugais," July 19, 1968 (AMAE, EU 44–60/Portugal/87).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Rose, "Agitation universitaire," May 2, 1969 (AMAE, EU 44–60/Portugal/85).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> See Gordon, *Immigrants & Intellectuals*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> Flyer, "L'UNEF propose..." (CD25A, SGA F026 SSC6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup> Déclaration de l'UNEF, May 25, 1968 (CD25A, SGA F026 SSC6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> On the renewed attention to anti-fascism as a critique of contemporary societies that failed to live up to their democratic claims or resolve the legacies of their own authoritarian pasts, see Mark, Towson, and Voglis, "Inspirations." 72–88.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> Préfecture de Police, "Colonie portugaise de la Région parisienne."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> For a broader discussion of the various foreign student groups active in the Cité Universitaire, see Gordon, Immigrants & Intellectuals, 82-85.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> Pereira, "Les Portugais en France," 291.

at the USA pavilion and their own – initially to challenge rules about allowing (female) visitors into the residences. <sup>67</sup> The president of the residents' committee at the Portuguese house, João Manuel Fiadeiro Santos Marques, had been one of the earliest members of the group demanding this rule change. <sup>68</sup>

The April protests already included calls of "Down with the dictatorship" and "Down with fascism." The Paris police were quick to assert that the meetings were "only a pretext permitting [the Portuguese students] to publicly mark their opposition to the Lisbon regime and the official Portuguese services in France, under whose control the Portuguese student residence functions." Flyers from the April meetings fittingly declared "We have had enough of police paternalism." What the police dismissed as "pretext" was the connection both French and Portuguese students had been making for years: if campus politics was the extension of social control, opposing dorm regulations was in fact a meaningful action against authoritarianism more broadly. This was particularly true for the Portuguese students, given the presence of the regime's secret police (PIDE, Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado) within Paris. The local police post in the Cité Universitaire was also conveniently close to the Portuguese residence, making those students doubly vulnerable to surveillance from French and Portuguese state forces.

The Portuguese residence was occupied by a Revolutionary Committee from May 22 to June 12. The practice of occupation for protest purposes among Portuguese students had its roots in the experiences of 1962.<sup>72</sup> Only a minority of the residents supported the occupation, however; even Santos Marques was slow to embrace this tactic.<sup>73</sup> The residence director, who in April had been willing to host some of the student meetings, was locked in his rooms until he escaped to the Portuguese embassy.<sup>74</sup> From there, Portuguese diplomats intervened with the French government to gain assurances of protection.<sup>75</sup> A number of the Portuguese students who took part in the occupation had considerable experience as activists, beginning with the 1962 and 1965 mobilizations in Portugal.<sup>76</sup> Most of the occupiers, Santos Marques included, were involved with anti-Salazar organizations that had grown critical of the PCP and were tending towards Maoism.<sup>77</sup> This tracks the broader trajectory of many '68 radicals who were turning away from established communist parties. Though a number of the students involved had personal ties to the UEPF, the UEPF and the PCP played almost no functional role in the occupation.<sup>78</sup> Yet, the occupiers'

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> Préfecture de Police, Apr. 22, 1968, "Un Meeting organisé..." (AHPP, FD 97).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Pereira, "Les Portugais en France," 292.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> Pascault to Directeur Général, "Situation aux pavillions des USA," Apr. 18, 1968 (AHPP, FD 97).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> Pascault to Directeur Général, "Manifestation à la Cité Universitaire," Apr. 21, 1968 (AHPP, FD 97).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> On the effects of PIDE's presence in France, see Pereira, "Emigrés surveillés."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Accornero, The Revolution before the Revolution, 57.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> Most residents and official staff were expelled from the residence during the occupation, for fear that they would serve as regime or police informants. Pereira, "Les Portugais en France," 294. Pereira notes that some residents may have been ideologically opposed to the '68 protests, while others were fearful of losing funding or of being arrested on their return to Portugal.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Préfecture de Police, "Membres de Comité Révolutionnaire [...]," June 6, 1968 (AMAE, EU 44–60/Portugal/87).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Préfecture de Police, "Le directeur de la 'Maison du Portugal' [...]," June 14, 1968 (AMAE, EU 44–60/Portugal/87). There were also concerns about thefts and vandalism in the house. Ambassador Rose even requested a formal letter of sympathy for the President of the Gulbenkian Foundation, which funded the residence and a number of fellowships for its residents. Rose, "Pavillon portugais à Cité Universitaire," June 14, 1968 (AMAE, EU 44–60/Portugal/85).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Pereira, "Les Portugais en France," 294–95.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> Pereira, "Les Portugais en France," 292 and 295.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> On individual student connections to the UEPF, see Pascault to Directeur Général, "Situation aux pavillions des USA." On the UEPF and PCP during the occupations, see Pereira, "Les Portugais en France," 295.

commitment to transnational activism was very much in line with the approach Lucas and UEPF had taken throughout the 1960s.

A tract from the Portuguese house's Revolutionary Committee emphasized the international make-up of the occupiers; while this is unsurprising for the Cité, which housed many of Paris's foreign students, the need to assert this level of cooperation aligned with the longstanding bids for solidarity across national borders. The occupiers of the various international residences also worked with each other, melding their opposition to dictatorships in multiple countries with a profound internationalism.<sup>79</sup> Among the goals outlined by the Revolutionary Committee were demonstrating "the active integration of national minorities in France to the just struggles of progressive students, of the working class, and of the French people."80 Their occupation of the Portuguese and Brazilian residences in particular signified their attack on "the fascist or militarist regimes that reign in the countries of origin for these pavilions"; their denunciation of "the hold of the totalitarian embassies over these pavilions"; and their desire to "demolish networks of political espionage and fascist nuclei."81 The administration of the student residences became, in this context, an extension of Portuguese state control, including the presence and effective force of the regime's police. For students in these Cité Universitaire residences, opposing regulations quickly became a direct confrontation with their regimes. Working together, they crafted an image of the various dictatorships as a singular shared enemy.

Portuguese workers in France also played a role in the events of May–June. As with the students, many Portuguese workers fled to France to escape military service in the African colonial wars. Before 1968, Portuguese workers had been reluctant to engage in overt political activity, though a few organizations were founded after 1962<sup>83</sup> and a number of opposition newspapers were published in Paris throughout the 1960s. As workers' movements garnered strength that spring, however, Portuguese workers engaged at similar rates to French workers. The Portuguese regime was concerned by the circulation of propaganda targeting Portuguese laborers in April 1968 and requested extra surveillance by French police to prevent such political contagion. Portuguese (and other) migrants were particularly well represented in the May 13 march against police brutality in Paris. This participation encouraged more involvement with French labor unions and immigrant rights groups even after June.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> Inter-residence activity most often took the form of joint actions to expel non-supporters or occupy new houses. Pereira, "Les Portugais en France," 294. Fifteen Cité Universitaire residences were occupied at some point during May–June. Pereira, "Les Portugais en France," 292.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> Tract, Comité Révolutionnaire d'Occupation des Maison du Brésil et du Portugal, June 12, 1968 (AMAE, EU 44–60/Portugal/87). From late May, through the end of the occupation, students renamed the residence the "maison des travailleurs et des étudiants portugais" to emphasize their solidarity with workers. Pereira, "Les Portugais en France," 273.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> Tract, Comité Révolutionnaire.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> Volovitch-Tavares, "Les immigrées portugais en France et la 'révolution des œillets'", 153.

<sup>83</sup> Cravo, Les Portugais en France, 103-104.

<sup>84</sup> Gordon, Immigrants & Intellectuals, 156.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>85</sup> Gordon, *Immigrants & Intellectuals*, 59 and 80. A significant number of Portuguese workers also returned home (or considered returning home), while the majority continued to work in order to continue earning. Pereira, "Les Portugais en France," 273–78.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> R. Bressier, "Propagande auprès des marins portugais stationnés à Nantes," Apr. 25, 1968 (AMAE, EU 44–60/Portugal/87). Portuguese workers were also susceptible to fears of PIDE surveillance, an anxiety that was ironically heightened by activists who denounced PIDE's presence. Pereira, "Les Portugais en France," 280–81. 
<sup>87</sup> Gordon, *Immigrants & Intellectuals*, 76.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>88</sup> Volovitch-Tavares, *Portugais à Champigny*, 152.

Portuguese workers did have some interaction with their student compatriots. A group of twenty students, some of whom were part of the Cité Universitaire occupation, formed the Portuguese section of the Latin Quarter's Comité d'Action Travailleurs-Étudiants in order to foster outreach to Portuguese neighborhoods and workplaces, though they had limited success. Stronger connections existed for the number of Portuguese students who actually were or had recently been working in French factories to support themselves. The occupying students at the Portuguese residence also hosted open cultural events and debates that attracted some workers. Overall, however, Portuguese workers were less likely than students to criticize the Portuguese regime directly and devoted their efforts to labor questions more than political activism. This stemmed in part from differential goals and timelines: most workers came to France with the intention of returning home as quickly as possible – with as much savings as possible – while the majority of student activists did not expect to go back soon – or to be able to go back at all.

Lisbon and other Portuguese university cities were notably quieter than Paris in the spring of 1968. Students from Lisbon's Tecnico did publish posters inviting Portuguese students "to show solidarity with the French universities and workers who are courageously fighting against the police in the streets of Paris." UNEF pamphlets were also in circulation. France's ambassador to Portugal, whose reports over the years suggest some sympathy for the student protests, insisted that this relative calm should not be misinterpreted as acquiescence. Rather, he remarked, "repression has been efficient." The regime's reliance on academic expulsion, imprisonment, and especially the threat of forcing students into military service in the African colonial wars, had managed to tamp down Portuguese students' public opposition since the outbursts of 1962 and 1965. Though Portuguese students had felt empowered to hold large protests against the Vietnam War in front of the US embassy in February, public opposition to Portugal's own wars was too difficult in the face of both public opinion, which still supported the empire, and the "brutal" regime.

These explanations of students' inability in Portugal to participate in the wider events of 1968 remind us of an important caveat to the regular invocations of a shared global struggle: students directly under the Salazar regime faced significantly greater personal danger than French students. Even Portuguese students within France were subject to greater surveillance and feared harsher penalties for their actions. Charles de Gaulle was no Salazar, and if students believed that they were all part of a transnational, generational struggle against power and authority, they also understood that the stakes were not the same everywhere. To their credit, most French students involved in these movements acknowledged this difference. UNEF reports recognized that the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>89</sup> Pereira, "Les Portugais en France," 284–85 and 290.

<sup>90</sup> Pereira, "Les Portugais en France," 287–88.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> Pereira, "Les Portugais en France," 296–97.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>92</sup> Gordon, *Immigrants & Intellectuals*, 87.

<sup>93</sup> Pereira, "Les Portugais en France," 282 and 300.

<sup>94</sup> Rose, "Des étudiants portugais."

<sup>95</sup> Rose, "Des étudiants portugais."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> Rose, "Etudiants et ouvriers au Portugal," May 6, 1968 (AMAE, EU 44–60/Portugal/85).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>97</sup> Rose, "Etudiants et ouvriers au Portugal."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>98</sup> Over the course of the 1960s, Portuguese students came to be seen as one of the greatest threats to the regime: by 1973, students constituted the majority of political prisoners in Portugal. Accornero, *The Revolution before the Revolution*, 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>99</sup> Fears of PIDE repression or detention upon returning to Portugal were in the end much greater than any actual actions by the Salazar regime, which had a great deal of trouble establishing solid information about the participation and activities of individual Portuguese students. Pereira, "Les Portugais en France," 298–300.

Portuguese student struggle could in a real sense be one of "life or death." Contact with Portuguese students, in other words, altered French students' perceptions of their particular place within the shared global struggle. Part of their role as allies was to publicize the Portuguese regime's repressive tactics: to name the students arrested, to warn about recruitment by PIDE, to call attention to torture and sleep deprivation within political prisons. In this, student activism dovetailed with emerging human rights movements' similar emphasis on increasing public awareness of state crimes.

#### **Conclusion**

Ultimately, this realization that certain populations were far more vulnerable to state violence and oppression reinforced the role of cross-border solidarity within student movements. Students who benefitted from more open public spaces, and who had stronger protections for their own rights, believed they had a responsibility to fight for those who could not. These ideas were not, of course, the sole purview of Portuguese students and their allies. Leftist politics, communism, syndicalism, and other strategies for collective action were woven through students' politics and practices. Portuguese students' presence within Paris made them a direct point of contact for other activists in the city. Franco-Portuguese interactions made a specific contribution to these evolving forms of internationalism not only by adding yet another regime to the list of French activists' global enemies, but also by causing them to reflect on how best to use their own position within the struggle.

It is quite likely that this transnational solidarity was not always practiced as meaningfully as the rhetoric suggests. Indeed, it points us to "one of the most important political questions of the period: how could one most effectively demonstrate solidarity with a struggle that is not one's own?"<sup>101</sup> We know that East-West contacts among activists could provoke discomfort, frustration, and misunderstanding. 102 Likewise, French activists deeply engaged with Vietnam had to navigate between the poles of decontextualization, which risked privileging their own projections over actual Vietnamese experiences (and thus falling into orientalism or imperialism), and overcontextualization, which so emphasized difference as to make active solidarity impossible. 103 Contacts with Portuguese students were likely somewhat less fraught, in that the Salazar regime was an easy enemy to embrace within the existing anti-fascist or anti-authoritarian rubric – not to mention shared anti-imperialism and a common European identity. Portuguese students themselves actively sought connections with their French and other peers, seeing a strong transnational network as a vital weapon against the regime. Being abroad, in turn, allowed them somewhat greater freedom for their own activism; being in Paris offered specific opportunities to engage with students from around the world. 104 Students in Portugal may not have had as conducive an environment for mass public protest in May 1968; by November, however, they were again active in opposing the regime. 105 Both student and worker strikes increased after 1968 and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>100</sup> UNEF, 55 Congrès.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>101</sup> Mohandesi, "Bringing Vietnam Home," 219.

<sup>102</sup> Mark and von der Golz, "Encounters."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>103</sup> Mohandesi, "Bringing Vietnam Home," 240.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> In this way, their experience may be more similar to that of Tunisian students in France who were able to forge important contacts, gain experience, and hone their demands. Hendrickson, "March 1968," 769.

Gordon, *Immigrants & Intellectuals*, 156. It is worth remembering, too, that Salazar was succeeded by Marcelo Caetano as leader of the *Estado Novo* in September of 1968.

the influence of Portuguese political exiles rose. The 1974 Carnation Revolution, whose parallels to May '68 are yet to be fully explored, transformed Portugal briefly into a center of internationalist ideological foment that reverberated back into France itself. Experiences throughout the 1960s, not least in Paris in 1968, shored up support for the Portuguese opposition and provided tools and templates that would help carry the revolution forward.

Finally, we must recognize the special place Portuguese students occupied at the heart of human rights movements in the 1960s. Their specific struggle provided the (apocryphal) founding myth for Amnesty International, placing them front and center of the global movement against state-sanctioned violence and oppression. Student activities – and the broader context of French anti-Salazarism – relied heavily on ideas of shared rights and values, as well as on gathering and disseminating information about the regime's crimes and its victims. Throughout the 1960s, French and Portuguese students were thus an integral part of an early transnational activist movement that drew explicitly on the rhetoric of universal human rights and employed strategies of transparency and raising public awareness. The students' understanding of solidarity went far beyond a network for swapping strategies and ideas. It was, rather, an ideological foundation for a generational, cross-border struggle against oppression in any form. Their solidarity was both means and end; it crossed national borders as readily as class, professional, and even racial lines. These core assumptions about shared values, shared needs, and shared enemies animated much of the events of 1968 around the world, as well as the growing network of human rights organizations.

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<sup>107</sup> Gordon, *Immigrants & Intellectuals*, 156–58. Beyond 1968, much of the mobilization in Portugal in the immediate aftermath of the revolution can be traced through activism in the preceding decades. See Accornero, *The Revolution before the Revolution*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup> Gordon, *Immigrants & Intellectuals*, 156.

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