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Fragile Links, Frozen Identities.

The governance of telecommunication networks and Europe (1944-1953)¹

Léonard Laborie

Abstract

During 1944-1953 the governance of international telecommunication networks within the International Telecommunication Union framework became much more permeable to politics than before. The foundation of the United Nations system, East-West tensions, and the early dynamics of European integration were three forces that taken together questioned the traditional vision of technical cooperation among experts. The negotiations among the actors, experts, diplomats and politicians resulted in both the survival of the ITU and a freeze of European contemporary projects building a new European identity upon telecommunication networks.

Key words: Telecommunications; Cold War; ITU; modern European history; international organization; technocratic internationalism; United Nations

Introduction

“The excesses of a meaningless and ambitious phraseology”: thus Emile Saigey, a telegraph engineer, in 1872 warned the readers of the old established French literary review “La Revue des Deux Mondes” against those contemporaries like the British essayist and historian John R. Seeley or Charles Lemonnier, president of the International League of Peace whom, inspired by the United States of America, wanted to ban war in Europe through the creation of a federation.² Such a big political scheme, he felt, was not realistic. Instead, Saigey sought to promote more limited but concrete endeavours to strengthen international ties. He saw value, for example, in the focused efforts of a range of international congresses: In geology, statistics, the social sciences, or the creation of the Red Cross. But he argued that no arena of cooperation had proven as fruitful as telegraphy. In this field, public “technical delegates” had freed themselves from professional diplomats and traditional politics, and created a forerunner of a model international association.³ Saigey acknowledged neither this new communication technology nor cooperation between national experts that allowed lines to cross borders, had prevented the outbreak of wars in recent years, between Austria and Prussia (1867) or France and Prussia (1870-1871) for instance. Still, he saw in the governance of the telegraph a model for the governance of other sectors of international life that would make international ties, and hence peace, stronger. Less ambitious in appearance, it was more realistic than purely political approaches. In what can be read as a type of pre-functionalist thinking,⁴ he thought that though technical rationality could not annihilate political passions, it could contain them: “it is not true that the understanding established on administrative questions can leave all space free to political misunderstandings. Let us sign as many special agreements as possible and rest assured that national hatreds will die off as much”.⁵

Schot and Lagendijk showed that an ideology of “technocratic internationalism”⁶ – a mix of pragmatism, apolitism, and faith in the ability of experts to weigh national and universal

issues – was widespread among technical experts dealing with transnational infrastructures such as electric grids or motorways. The movement, rooted in early 19th C. Saint-Simonian thinking⁷, took form with the creation of quasi-autonomous spheres of international technical cooperation from the 1860s onwards, beginning with the International Telegraph Union (1865), and culminating during the Interwar years. This paper seeks to investigate how, why, and with what consequences this vision faltered in the years after the Second World War, looking precisely in the institutions where it was born. My thesis is that this vision became entangled in competing political assessments on how to value the tradition of technical cooperation as a means to build a durable peace on a global scale, and, more specifically, in Europe in the context of the Cold War. My narrative, thus, focuses on the debates and fights over the governance of telecommunications networks as a marker of the fate of technocratic internationalism.

From the mid-19th century onwards, telecommunication infrastructures such as land or undersea telegraph lines and, later telephone cables or radio links had crossed not only natural but also political borders. European governments had used them from the very beginning, notably in the imperial context to tie together countries and their colonies. They also came to serve the news industry, business interests, and, eventually, common people seeking to keep in touch with their relatives and friends while migrating abroad, mainly for labour or tourism.⁸ The International Telegraph Union was set up in Europe in order to organise and foster the deployment of these international infrastructures. A collective platform, on the work of which Saigey was actually commenting, it was renamed International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in 1932 to take into account the emergence of new means of communication, by telephone or radio. The General Postal Union (1874), renamed Universal Postal Union (1878) was its twin organization. It had the same core project: to smooth international

communications for postal operators and users. Twenty countries signed the convention, all of them committed to forming “a single postal territory”.⁹

George A. Coddington, a political scientist specialist of the ITU and the UPU described in a work published in 1952 the politicization of technical cooperation after the Second World War.¹⁰ Historians subsequently have detailed how United States hegemony depended on telecommunication infrastructures and how the US through the concept of “free flow of information” sought to shape the field of international regulation, inside and outside the ITU.¹¹ Here I analyse these changes from another point of view, shifting attention from diplomatic or political projects to technical experts’ positions, and from USA actions to European reactions. Instead of the frequently used notion of “regime”¹², I will lean on the concept of “order”, coined by historians of European politics to qualify the goal and result of political endeavours to stabilize power relations in Europe and the world. This approach helps highlight the dynamics of interaction between international organizations dealing with communication networks and the broader international political scene cast by the European Concert, the League of Nations and later the United Nations system.

At the end of Napoleonic Wars, the Congress of Vienna (1814-1815) institutionalized continual dialogue among main powers. The so-called European Concert created common institutions and legal norms, cemented by shared values. Added to the classic balance of power, this produced a new kind of European order.¹³ Partly the result of it, but also partly independent, the ITU and the UPU, began to produce their own order fifty years later, around a set of institutions, norms and values. At the core of the latter was a shared “technocratic internationalism”, a perspective that was challenged after the Second World War in the context of the rebuilding of world order, and, thereby, affecting the course of “infrastructural Europeanism” in the field of communication technologies.

The ITU and the UPU institutionally embodied a long-term alliance between the national public postal and telegraph networks operators that had enabled the interlinking of various systems through technical and organizational sharing.¹⁴ Born from a collaboration of telegraph experts with the support and agreement of diplomats, in the context of a European Concert's revival in the wake of the Crimean War (1856), the ITU was a means to foster cooperation, open to every country in the world. Each and every member had equal rights to express points of view and to vote. As such it was one of the birthplaces of the new concept and practice of "international community".¹⁵ European by birth, but broadly international in scope, this community emerged in the 1850s and the first part of the 1860s. In its philosophy it stood in distinction from a classical conception of balance of power among European countries, and even went beyond the notion of European Concert. It provided momentum among contemporary observers, such as Saigey or international law specialists¹⁶ for optimism on the future handling – we would now say *governance* – of international relations between peoples of the world.

The international community regulating telecommunications networks was a community of "technical delegates" – we would now say *experts* –, meeting periodically in large multilateral ITU conferences. A "bastion of the traditional national public monopolies,"¹⁷ the ITU also included private companies that operated international networks, but only granted them a consultative role. A small International Bureau was set up in 1869 in Berne. Composed mainly of Swiss civil servants it had almost no formal power. Its main task was to facilitate the circulation of information between members and organize the conferences. The community forming the ITU performed a balancing act: They were agents of their respective nations, but at the same time they were creating a transnational telecommunication public service. It was in this tension between national interests and the benefits of international cooperation that ITU operated. The way the experts managed this tension could be summarize

with the formula of “mutual concession”: a strong feeling of human solidarity, based on the interdependence of technical networks and shared professional knowledge, made them open to negotiation, despite their national allegiances. On a practical level, the experts were reviewed, assessed, and sought to reach agreement on common technical standards, rates, and operational procedures, all of which were frequently adapted to changes in technology. They tried hard to minimize the role of international politics in the organization before the Second World War. The last pre-war conferences, held in Cairo in 1938, assembled delegates from countries that had by then acquired quite diverging foreign policies. Italy and Nazi Germany were no longer part of the League of Nations, but their delegates still actively participated in the governance of telecommunications networks in collaboration with many other countries, including the USSR and the United States. Hosted by a neutral country, Switzerland, the International Bureau kept the ITU alive during the Second World War. At the end of it, in the emerging conditions of the Cold War, the ITU became both a mirror of world political struggle and a distinctive site for shaping conceptions of the international order.

In comparison with the pre-war years, there were several changes that reoriented the ITU and the balance among experts, national interests, and international cooperation. This article will detail them in the three following parts. First, ITU modes of governance became the object of intense debate among its member countries, reflecting the decline of European colonial empires and the emergence of a new global order as represented by the United Nations system. Second, the “hot” Cold War years between the Marshall Plan (1947) and Stalin’s death (1953) put international cooperation at risk, right in the middle of the process of reforming the ITU. Such tensions within the ITU had never occurred before in peacetime. Third, contemporary projects for integrating the European communication sector became again part of the agenda of proponents of European unification.¹⁸ Globally, infrastructural links might have never been so dense and cooperation never so needed. But they had equally

never seemed so fragile. If cooperation was to survive the Cold War, European projects for the integration of European postal, telephone and telegraph communications, had to be put on hold. In the view of most European experts, I conclude, these two subjects were linked: it was in large part for the sake of “their” international cooperation that they did not support early European integrative projects.

1. A New Governance for the ITU within the United Nations : the end of technocratic “splendid isolation”?

A new international order in the regulation of telecommunications emerged in the aftermath of the Second World War. In the years 1944 to 1947, the US and USSR acted hand in hand in reshaping the ITU. Even though it had never been a purely technical entity for facilitating communication worldwide, the ITU post-war became more immersed in politics. The international organization of telecommunications started to align with the general world order.

The US had been a member of the ITU since 1932, although it had not been deeply involved in the organization’s work prior to the Second World War. As the US sought to reshape the post-war world, its position toward the institution was not clear to its European partners. What would the US do with the ITU? Would they suppress and replace it? Would they marginalise it for the benefit of an inter-American consortium in the hands of American commercial interests? Would the US dominate in a kind of “dictatorship” as a French War ministry official feared?¹⁹ In fact, its new dominance on the telecommunication scene in combination with the need to regulate the radio spectrum drove them to a determined, yet more conciliatory position. According to Jill Hills, the Truman administration’s support of an ITU revival, and for US participation primarily was intended to strengthen the United Nations (UN) and have the Europeans link both institutions.²⁰ In agreement with the USSR, a

preliminary conference took place in Moscow in September 1946. Together with the United Kingdom, France and China, the 'Big Five' sought to pave the way for a new international telecommunication order.

The talks in Moscow clarified one important thing with regard to the future of the ITU: the Superpowers opted to strongly affiliate it to the United Nations. The ITU had remained separate from the League of Nations scope during the interwar years, despite some cautious moves from the latter to strengthen their links.²¹ As a sanction for its collaboration or at least permissiveness with the Nazis before and during the war, the USSR argued that the ITU should lose its independence and become integrated into the new UN system.²² Only full UN members could commit to the ITU decisions and policies. The ITU itself should, in turn, conform to UN political decisions, being a technical "weapon in the hands of the Security Council."²³

The US Department of State agreed with the USSR on many points. At the Bermuda Conference near the end of 1945, it became clear to the British representatives that American government wanted to transfer the seat of the organization from Berne in Switzerland to the other side of the Atlantic, close to the UN headquarters, to internationalize the work force of the ITU and to set up either a permanent or a periodical administrative Council.²⁴ This move would disconnect the administration of the ITU from the Swiss government.²⁵ The general underlying idea was that the United Nations system should embrace all sectors of international life to consolidate peace and foster economic development. It was also considered a symbolic gesture to integrate the oldest intergovernmental institution into the newborn UN.

As far as the seat of administration was concerned, USSR proposed Prague as an alternative location. In response, the Swiss government offered the vice-presidency of the ITU's

International Bureau in Berne to an American citizen, Gerald Gross. It hoped that in doing so, the US would then moderate its reform plans and follow their British allies on that point.²⁶

The French were also favourable to Switzerland, though they secretly hoped to be the white knight that would finally host the International Bureau in Paris.²⁷ On that point and more generally, British public post and telecommunications office wanted links with the UN to be as weak as possible, in order to preserve the ITU's autonomy and the way it was governed. Jacques Aymé de la Chevrelière, of the French interdepartmental *Comité de coordination des communications impériales*, and Sargent of the British General Post Office (GPO) had daily contacts to prepare a common position on these issues during the first months of 1946.

In De la Chevrelière's words, the GPO was by then "worried about seeing the ITU (...) contaminated by the intrusion of politics and above all by a policy where the American commercial interests would be predominant".²⁸ The British Postmaster General, William Francis Hare, indeed "thought that any attempt to bring about major changes in the present structure might lead to division between the powers with an ensuing deadlock which in turn might lead to the break-up of the ITU."²⁹ The British engineer H. Townshend of the GPO who had worked for two decades in European long distance telephony added in the same way that "there was great risk in changing too rapidly the machinery which had been very successful in its own sphere. He thought that it was preferable that the organizations for dealing with technical and political questions should be kept to some extent distinct."³⁰ One of his arguments was that "telecommunications organizations had been very prompt in getting their international services working after the war and that they had already held several successful conferences for this purpose."³¹ The community of experts had not waited for diplomatic supervision to undertake its international duty. It was for instance already working on a five year plan to develop "high speed" transeuropean telephone trunk lines, made of coaxial cables, as shown in figure 1.³²

Insert Figure 1. Rebuilding Europe on “high speed transmission lines”. The CCIF European telephone network interconnection programme, 1947-1952³³

To that general reasoning the British Foreign Office answered that it was ill-thought to separate politics and technology when decisions had to be taken on such subjects as telegraph press rates or frequencies allocation.³⁴

After the Moscow Conference, further discussions took place in New York, at the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the UN organization in charge of coordinating UN specialised institutions. The Chair of the ECOSOC Temporary Transport and Communications Commission was Osborne Mance, a British who was reluctant to weaken ITU's or UPU's independence, which he viewed as a vital means for the organization to realize its international ideals.³⁵ He stated the position of the GPO: “It is essential that the control of technical postal matters should remain with Postal Union Congress and should not pass to the Economic and Social Council which would have neither the time nor the knowledge to deal with them.”³⁶ For Mance, and others, the value of independence had been demonstrated in the past. Had not the USSR, Germany, and other countries stayed in the ITU during the 1930s despite the fact that they had renounced their membership in the League of Nations? Had not Spain in 1932 invited the USSR to participate in the conference in Madrid despite the fact that the two countries did not have diplomatic relations?

French experts also tried to convince their national colleagues in New York to support such arguments for independence. But as in the UK, there was a strong push from their foreign offices favoring a closer connection between the ITU and the UN system. In March 1947 the “technicians community” within the French administration harshly contested statements by a French Foreign Ministry representative in New York which the community perceived as opening the door to “very strong UN interference into the Union (...). On the contrary,”

claimed de la Chevrelière, “it had been recognized desirable to keep those links as loose as possible and the Union out of politics to the largest possible extent.”³⁷ According to the French radio expert Pierre Lahaye “the American plan (was) in fact a grab plan via the UN organization.”³⁸

In this uncertain context, in which the US imposed more than it proposed,³⁹ a series of three huge global telecommunication conferences convened in Atlantic City (New Jersey), from May to October 1947.

The French delegation sent to Atlantic City in May was divided. Most of the delegates were radio and telephone experts. Within the delegation, Maurice Leproux was soon ordered by the French Foreign Office ministry to silence the delegates after they openly campaigned against the proposal to affiliate the ITU to the UN as a specialised institution – going as far as to request some foreign colleagues to support a revision of the San Francisco Charter that constituted the UN system since its signature by 50 countries in June 1945, in order to keep the specialised agency away from UN control.⁴⁰ Leproux claimed that if the ITU was under UN auspices, then only full UN members could be full members of the ITU. The result might be devastating for France: Territories of the French empire might no longer be admitted as full members, and that nation would lose voting power. This would be extremely harmful for French interests, especially as regards radio frequency allocation, for which “only the number (of votes) allows winning in this competition”.⁴¹

At stake was a dramatic shift in the governance of, and control over, the institution that had to handle a technology—radio communications—central to the strategic interests of many nations. At issue was not only values or ethos – such as expert independence from politics – that motivated French or British technicians in their campaign but whether they would be able to maintain their national positions in the ether. According to Leproux many delegations, and probably above all European ones, were thus torn between national self-interest and their

belief in the ideals of international governance of networks and the challenges of postwar reconstruction as represented by the UN.⁴²

At the end of painstaking negotiations in Atlantic City and Lake Success (with the ECOSOC representatives) a compromise finally emerged: the ITU would be affiliated with, but not integrated into, the UN. It would retain a separate budget, and ITU headquarters would stay in Europe but would transfer from Berne to Geneva, the city that now hosted the European pillar of the UN. More important, participating countries did not also need to be UN members (a requirement of which was to be a sovereign state). Non-sovereign territories that participated in the ITU before the Atlantic City conference could retain their membership. But they no longer could be represented by another delegation (usually a European imperial state) and instead had to have their own delegates, a departure from prior power relations between states and colonies. This change marked the end of the “plural vote” system, which had ensured several votes to one single delegation. In compensation, France, Great Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Portugal, and the US would receive an extra vote for all their colonies not registered as members.⁴³

Such adjustments were indicative of the negotiations between proponents of the status quo and reformers promoting a stronger link with the UN system. The latter, pertaining mainly to diplomatic spheres (in the USA, USSR and also in Europe, obtained some key changes in return. There would be no permanent council nor extra power for the International Bureau (some feared the US would impose such a council or at least an American secretary with broad authority at the head of the International Bureau, renamed General Secretariat), but an Administrative Council would be created, meeting once a year to better control the work done by the International Bureau and specialised bodies in between the periodical conferences of delegates. As in the Security Council of the United Nations, the US, the USSR, China, Great Britain and France would have a dominant position, their representatives serving as

vice-presidents of the Administrative Council. In addition, it was agreed that members of the ITU that were simultaneously member of the UN should follow resolutions from the Security Council, notably in case the Security Council would order to shut off telecommunication flows with a country.⁴⁴ All of this was in line with the idea of connecting the ITU with multilateral diplomacy, but did not dramatically change the way it functioned.

The ITU was still quite autonomous –similar to other specialised agencies created as part of the UN system.⁴⁵ This was the result of the durability of the institution’s established values, embedded in a transnational coalition of experts, mainly European ones, opposed to what we could call the “diplomatisation” of technical cooperation.⁴⁶ Still, the ITU was affiliated to the UN, and designed to participate in the construction of the new world order desired by the superpowers and their allies. The ITU had become more permeable to world politics. For instance, Franco’s Spain was banned from the ITU conferences in 1947 following a UN General Assembly decision. In the words of Maurice Leproux “a general ascertainment immediately appears: this is that the spirit of the old treaties of Union no longer exists”.⁴⁷

What was this spirit about? In 1885, Julien Vinchent, a Belgian administrator who had been involved for twenty years in the ITU and the UPU, had proposed a motto in latin to his colleagues: «In dubiis libertas, in necessariis unitas, in omnibus caritas”.⁴⁸ It translates as: “When in doubt: liberty of choice; when in need: union; between all of us: solidarity». Frank Gill, a British engineer, wrote in a private letter in 1946 to George Valensi, head of the ITU body specialised in telephony since its creation after the First World War: “As I look back on the 24 years’ history, I feel the wisdom of setting up the ideal of standardization of essential clauses by consent and how great has been the contribution to success by the atmosphere of informality, expert knowledge and above all of friendliness which form such a marked characteristic of all the meetings .”⁴⁹ To the many who believed in the virtues of apolitical cooperation between a community of experts linked by what they called technical solidarity,

friendliness or even brotherhood, what was going on after the Second World War was potentially damaging. As he remembered the growing political tensions within expert assemblies before the war, and feared that the reforming process would just accentuate this tendency, George Valensi for instance refused to have a seat at the Administrative Council of the ITU.⁵⁰

On the eve of the Cold War, the international telecommunication order and the world order had been greatly aligned: the ITU was now part of the UN system, and, in accordance to the reform that had occurred, it was potentially much more in touch with international politics than before. What would happen if a country decided to quit the UN? Would it quit the ITU too? The question was asked in France as early as March 1946 with the USSR in mind.⁵¹ It became central in the following months. As the Cold War took shape, the ITU soon became more directly responsive to geopolitical tensions and disorders.

2. Fragile links: technical cooperation, from world order to world disorder

From July 1947 to the mid-1950s, the “hot” Cold War diametrically opposed the Eastern and Western blocs in every field of international life, reorienting the ITU.⁵² Yet the organization also proved to be one of the very few entities in the UN system in which Eastern bloc countries continued as participants. The two superpowers agreed on many points as the ITU was reformed in the years 1946-1947. Many of the political disagreements that complicated negotiations in Atlantic City predated the East-West divide, for instance, the status of colonial votes and the admittance of Spain. It would be false to say the Cold War completely shaped the revamping of the ITU, but it did give a tragic dimension to some of the debates.

The discussion on the status of the Baltic and Mongolian Republics is an illuminating

example. These issues became a major source of conflict as early as July 1947. On a par with its attitude in the UN General Assembly, the USSR demanded full member status for each of these formerly independent Republics, which it had annexed in 1940 – so that it could control and benefit from a larger number of votes. France supported the USSR for tactical and political reasons. Tactically, it hoped to gain Soviet support in the debate on colonial votes. Politically, the French government wanted to preserve good relations with the USSR. Still a majority during the ITU conference eventually voted and rejected the argument. At the occasion of a lunch specially organised with the French, British, and American delegates, before the vote, the Soviets threatened to leave the conference if their demand was not met. This did not happen, and the Soviet delegates stayed.

Similar tactics had occurred at the Universal Postal Union congress two weeks earlier in Paris. A vote had occurred on this issue just when, also in Paris, the three Foreign Ministers from USSR (Viatcheslav Molotov), Great Britain (Ernest Bevin) and France (Georges Bidault) were meeting (7th of June to the 2nd of July 1947) to discuss Georges Marshall's offer to rebuild Europe on American funds. The USSR decision to reject the offer added to the divisions shaping the early Cold War. With angry rhetoric, the Soviet delegation at the Postal congress denounced "the imperialist states that turn Small nations into slavery".⁵³ The Bulgarian delegation expressed its worry: "Europe is about to be cut into two parts. The same fate is threatening the Postal Union."⁵⁴ The congress indeed seemed about to disintegrate, but the Soviet and Eastern European delegates stayed at the Congress, and in the Union.

Neither the ITU nor the UPU imploded, but they had been on the verge of a break. From 1948 onward, technical cooperation was burdened by political tough tensions, and was almost frozen by a strategy of obstruction on the part of the Soviets and Eastern delegates. The USSR and its allies did not quit the organization and its various committees but they obstructed the work.

Elected president of the Administrative Council for the year 1948, M. Fortuschenko did not attend the opening of the meeting and did not provide any instructions. Up till the mid-1950s, the Soviet attitude would be perceived as “discourteous” by French delegates, violent at worst and rude at best.⁵⁵ The idea of a Franco-Soviet alliance had not survived the 1947 trade-off between the two delegations regarding rights of vote, which failed as far as USSR interests were concerned, and the end of the participation of the communist party in the French government. The minutes of the 1952 Administrative Council of the ITU (21st of April - 6th of June) provide an anecdotal piece of evidence: declarations by the Soviet representative alone filled roughly half of the volume’s pages!⁵⁶

Apart from affiliation to the UN, the other major ITU reform was the creation of a new environment for radio spectrum regulation, the organization’s most sensitive and crucial task, and in which international cooperation was essential.⁵⁷ At stake was the allocation of bands of frequencies to certain categories of users (amateurs, fix liaisons, aeronautics, marine, broadcasting) and the possibility for each country to use the spectrum independently but without causing or suffering “harmful interferences” to or from the others. With the development of high frequencies during the Second World War, and with stations becoming more and more powerful, the risk of “degeneration” and “chaos” in the ether was looming according to some observers as no central authority undertook coordination.⁵⁸ Set up in 1948, the Frequency Provisory Committee was composed of national delegates and eleven international civil servants from the newly established International Frequency Registration Board. Its task was to register all the radio stations emitting throughout the world and to give a new slot to the ones that were no longer emitting in the appropriate band (following the allocation agreed to during the radio conference at Atlantic City). The Soviets participated in this work but did not provide the necessary data regarding their stations.

An expert in broadcasting, Pierre Schaeffer was delegated by the French government to a special radio conference on high frequencies broadcasting held in Mexico during more than six months (October 1948 to April 1949). He published a novel (which occurred some twenty years after it was written) in which he gave vivid accounts of these technical and political debates. He might have exaggerated some points, but still conveyed the strange Cold War atmosphere in arenas that had historically been built around the idea of being “apolitical”. “It is not a single USSR representative that speaks, but all the chorus takes it up as in a musical canon”, he explained. “Thirteen echoes from the East” punctuated the conference and the delegates theatrically left their chairs empty a great many times.⁵⁹ At some point, a discussion occurred as to whether to admit a delegate representing Mongolia, that is to say a communist country. In the novel, the discussion appears as an hour long surrealistic, insincere argument between East and West. The final decision was negative. Then, Schaeffer wrote:

“The thirteen delegates stand up one after the other, they stand up as many statues of the Commander, they pronounce thirteen funeral orations, issue thirteen protests, show thirteen varieties of indignation, thirteen nuances of regrets, heap thirteen plays of malediction on the Assembly, formulate at last thirteen identical demands so that everything that they have been saying be written down in extenso in the minutes.”⁶⁰

The conference alluded to in the book led to a compromise endorsed by more than fifty countries from Asia, South America and Western Europe. But neither the Eastern bloc nor the US signed it.⁶¹

Outside this global arena parallel negotiations regarding frequency regulation happened on a regional level. As far as Europe was concerned, the Soviet delegates and their satellite state counterparts always had the same attitude: they participated but eventually refused to sign the final agreement.⁶²

In October 1949, the USSR decided together with five of its European satellites to get out of the global Frequency Provisory Committee (FPC). The outbreak of the war in Korea in June 1950 abruptly stopped the second International High Frequencies Broadcasting Conference in

Florence and Rapallo. A year later, not surprisingly, the socialist countries condemned the list of frequencies proposed at the Extraordinary Administrative Radio Conference held in Geneva, which was based on FPC work. After a five-year process aimed at designing a new stable international regulation of the ether, the outcome was substantial but extremely contested. To the experts the ITU and the regulation it channelled, above all in radio communications, may have never looked so fragile in their long history.⁶³

3. Frozen identities: “infrastructural Europeanism”⁶⁴ and the governance of telecommunication networks during the Cold War

The Eastern bloc’s versatile strategy of participating while obstructing foretold their possible negative reaction to the creation of a new European institution within the ITU to facilitate the process of (Western) European integration. Would it not cut the last fragile links between West and East and sign the death sentence of the old universal ITU? All the opponents of European integration in the field of communication raised this question.

Two political projects were discussed in the years 1949-1953 regarding the creation of a new European institution dealing with postal and telecommunication services. Both defined Europe as Western Europe. One came from the very first meeting of the Assembly of the Council of Europe, set up in May 1949 as a kind of “club of countries attached to liberal democracy and political pluralism”.⁶⁵ Around 700 members of the Parliaments from ten countries formed an Assembly with purely consultative powers. The other project came from Hans Schuberth, PTT Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). Both initiatives aimed at reinforcing technical cooperation and lowering rates for services between national public operators in order to strengthen telecommunication ties linking European countries

together, at a time when these countries embarked on the construction of variations of European unity.

After some of the French representatives to the Council of Europe made a proposition to create a postal union issuing a single European stamp, the Council's Economic Commission and subsequently the Consultative Assembly enlarged the project in 1951. The effort now included telephone telecommunications and the Assembly called for a European Post and Telecommunication conference.⁶⁶ This was part of a larger contemporary endeavour on the part of the Council to create European authorities governing the integration of specific sectors – Agriculture, Transport, Aeronautics or Raw materials⁶⁷ – in the spirit of the pioneering European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). Established in May 1951 by six countries, namely Belgium, France, FRG, Italy, Luxemburg and The Netherlands, the ECSC was indeed the first experiment in supranational sector-based integration.⁶⁸ In order to create a common market for these two highly strategic and symbolical goods, governments agreed on empowering a common High Authority that sought to be neutral regarding the various national interests.

In September 1951 in Aachen, Hans Schuberth, political head of the FRG *Bundesministerium für das Post und Fernmeldewesen* held an official speech on European integration in the communication networks field, before his administration and some high civil servants from neighbouring countries. His view may have been inspired by F. Hofman, director of the Netherlands Post Office who had proposed the creation of a European Postal Union.⁶⁹ But it was shaped more directly by the experience of a divided Germany, which gave the meeting a clear political tone and goal. For Schuberth, the danger came from the East, and PTTs were “in Europe, the best hyphen which could link all the members of a general Union.”⁷⁰ In this vein, he proposed the lowering of rates and the development of automatic switching on international trunk lines; the development of radio communications on international trains;

and the coordination of radio communication across rivers, canals and airspace. He also underlined the usefulness of coordinating European views before attending global ITU conferences.

Schuberth imagined an ambitious scheme to make “postal officers the forerunners of the foundation of a real and unified Europe”: a “PTT High Authority” formed by international civil servants would drive an integrated service, executing a common policy decided jointly and on a majority basis by a “Council of PTT ministers” and a “postal Parliament”. But anticipating that sovereign states were not ready to give up the control over telecommunication networks to a supranational authority comparable to the one driving the ECSC, he proposed starting with a less radical solution: To establish a regional European Union within the ITU (and the UPU for postal matters), to include a European bureau composed of the very best experts of the continent. In January 1952, the Bundestag voted a law proposal encouraging the government to defend this project before the Council of Europe. Though they had overlapping objectives and were mutually reinforcing, these two projects failed, buried under “a series of obstacles, political as well as technical” raised by the political arm of the Council of Europe, the Committee of Ministers.⁷¹ In this context “technical” referred to the technical ministries in charge of postal and telecommunication networks, which were reluctant go along with the proposed directions. The lack of support by national administrations also explained the failure of comparable contemporary projects for agriculture or health. In the words of historian Pierre Gerbet, “The political interest (of such projects) was not sufficient for the governments to overcome their divergences and their administrations resistances”⁷².

In the particular case of telecommunication, the timing was simply not good. Right after the war, domestic telephone networks were completely nationalised in most of the European countries, supplanting private enterprises of the pre-war period.⁷³ The move toward

nationalization also extended to international radio or cable operators. For instance, the British Post Office took control of the private company *Cable and Wireless* by 1950.⁷⁴

Reluctance to integrate European telecommunications was due to several factors. Public operators gave priority to the reconstruction of sovereign national or imperial networks, based on national interests. Sharing authority within a more integrated European structure was seen as blunting such interests, especially given the industrial and financial issues at stake. In France, the *Direction générale des télécommunications* (telecommunication branch of the PTT), together with a new public research centre dedicated to telecommunication (CNET) progressively elaborated a program of national independence, with strong military and industrial dimensions. The French telecommunication industry was at the time generally considered too fragile to retain its autonomy in any kind of European telecommunications consolidation.⁷⁵ Moreover, lowering rates for trans-European telecommunications would diminish revenues, given that international calls were most profitable type of service. This area de facto had subsidised low rates for both national and imperial traffic for decades. In the case of France, the loss was estimated between 250 and 300 millions Francs. European calls represented an important source of foreign currencies – of the 3 billions francs generated by international traffic, 2.3 were produced by calls from or to the FRG, Belgium, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Luxemburg, the UK and Switzerland alone.⁷⁶

But in fact the projects of European unification under discussion were very cautious about impinging on national sovereignty. Even if the integration proposals imagined the possibility of a single PTT administration for the future Europe, their primary aim was to reinforce cooperation, not to abandon sovereignty to a supranational entity. Concerns over sovereignty or profits were not the only reason national administrations resisted backing European-wide initiatives.

In its decision the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe said that “a postal regional union in Western Europe would put cooperation within the UPU at risk, which gathers states from the entire Europe”.⁷⁷ This declaration focused on postal matters, but the same worries played for telecommunication matters: East and West were still cooperating through the ITU, or at least the socialist states still remained as members of the ITU, even though they had left most other specialised UN agencies. In the view of the Ministers and the administrations behind them, the creation of a Western European Union might then cut the last fragile links of an organization already under political stress. The probable creation of an Eastern counterpart as a reaction from the Soviet bloc worried British and Dutch partners, as it might push the two superpowers to desert a useless internationally inclusive Union.⁷⁸

At that moment, the universal aspirations of the Union was more valuable for many European technicians than the creation of a (Western) European institution. They felt a strong bond to the borderless “international community”, and to the old institution that had provided standards for global communication for almost a century. The ITU was as such fully part of their mental landscape. In 1945, a Norwegian delegate confided that “every man working for telephone services considers his national network as an integrative part of the network that spans over the universe.”⁷⁹ Back from Atlantic City, a French delegate was suspicious of the consequences of the several proposals for regional Unions within the global framework of the ITU. When legislating, he said, “we must go from the universal to the particular, to be sure that particularism won’t win over universalism.”⁸⁰

Some also saw a strategic interest in the survival of the ITU. Like the UPU, it already was a framework for European cooperation, with the immense advantage of having the policies, regulations, and standards adopted between Europeans applied internationally or articulated advantageously to global settings. Such was the “European service” already identified within

the ITU legislative body, with some specific rules and rates.⁸¹ In this reasoning, anything that weakened the ITU could weaken the global power of Europeans. As a British postal expert said in 1951:

“The fact is that the UPU largely already, by means of the strength and tradition of European membership (...) fills the gap which might otherwise exist to be filled by a Western European Union as such. It is no doubt for this reason that all previous proposals for a similar Union have come to nothing -except Hitler’s; and that only lasted as long as he did. It might even be said that an unspoken motive of the Pan American and Spanish Union was that the orientation of the UPU is too European”.⁸²

The ideal of universal governance was in fact a hidden form of European governance, thanks notably to the partial survival of the system of colonial votes. There was no statement similar to the above regarding the ITU, but several clues suggest this same attitude. In order to explain the American attitude, George Coddington wrote in 1952 that: “Representatives of the United States, as well as those of the other countries of the Western Hemisphere and elsewhere, considered that the ITU had been too much subject to European domination and influence.”⁸³ By the mid-1950s, in France, the ITU was still said to be “certainly one of the specialised UN institutions where the French position is the strongest.”⁸⁴ In addition to the General Secretariat and the Board, the ITU consisted of three committees, established to cope with the growth of telecommunications flows and the technological development after the First World War: the International Consultative Committee for Telephony (CCIF); the International Consultative Committee for Telegraphy (CCIT, also in charge with the telex network) and the International Consultative Committee for Radiocommunication (CCIR)⁸⁵. They were under control of Western Europeans since their creation, above all the first two of them. According to the French *Directeur général des telecommunications*, Jean Rouvière: “one could not (...) silence that within the CCIF and the CCIT Western European countries are practically holding the essential roles and driving these organisms’ activity and recommendations,” which redounded to the advantage of their industries and operators’ accounts.⁸⁶

Last, there was a serious governance issue at stake. The experts themselves governed these forums, following a question-driven and consensus-based approach. Manufacturers also had a “consultative” voice, and to a lesser extent, so did users, most significantly, through contacts with the International Chamber of Commerce. The “recommendations” they issued were not binding. In the uncertain politics of the period, experts wondered whether they would have the same independence and flexibility under the auspices of a European post and telecommunication Union that would have a clear political goal and would hence most probably be under closer political control.

Conclusion

In Emile Saigey’s view in the early 1870s, it was in the ITU framework and in its participants’ “practice and current circumstances that we should search for what can serve ideas of European union.”⁸⁷ Two World Wars later, with Europe each time at the epicentre, the picture looked different. On the one hand many contemporaries, at least in Foreign Ministries, no longer considered the way in which the ITU was governed as an engine of international peace. Its function was necessary, but its governance needed reform to become an instrument for constructing an international order and maintaining the peace in a new context. And it was reformed. On the other hand, technical cooperation in the field of telecommunications networks at the European scale seemed to lag behind the European integration process. Political promoters of European unity in the post-war years proposed to create something new, a specialised institution to deal with communication matters. But they had achieved no result by the end of the 1950s. The reason for this was partly the influence of classical diplomatic perspectives. More important, though, was the less visible contextual mix of financial, institutional and cultural concerns expressed by experts, who historically had been charged with international technical cooperation. The first concern was not to weaken

national public operators' sovereign grip on networks. Another was not to jeopardize the existence of the ITU in the context of the Cold War. Finally, experts did not want to put their culture of international autonomy at risk, which already had been damaged in the ITU's governance reform as it was incorporated into the United Nations system.

It was the French PTT minister Edouard Bonnefous' skill to associate with, and even put the experts at the head of his project of a European Union for PTTs in 1955. The context for such a project was far more favourable by that time. A window of opportunity had opened: soon after Stalin's death Eastern bloc delegates radically changed their attitude towards their Western colleagues. At the CCIR the Soviet delegation for instance was said to be "conciliatory and binding".⁸⁸ This feeling was reinforced a year later, in 1954 at the ITU administrative council where Soviet interventions were "often constructive."⁸⁹ Their withdrawal from the ITU or UPU became less likely. Hence the creation of a European institution became less problematic. After a decisive conference held in Messina to re-launch the European integration process after the failure of the European Defence Community project (1955), the very first common initiatives by the PTTs of the six countries already firmly associated within the European Coal and Steel Community did provoke the creation of an Eastern counterpart, but they did not destroy the ITU or the UPU. Thus by the late 1950s, an important argument against the formal creation of a Western European institution disappeared. And a new one had appeared in favour of such an undertaking. Several regional Unions had been created since the end of the war, with their members standing together when participating in global negotiations. In contrast, Western Europe was too divided to present unified regional positions. According to the Swiss post and telecommunication administration, regional Unions "were operating as unitary blocs inside the international conferences, at the disadvantage of a divided Europe"⁹⁰. "Facing the emergence of blocs, Europe was becoming aware of itself"⁹¹. Reinforcing this predicament, European countries

also could less and less count on their colonial votes as the decolonisation process gained momentum. The ITU was no longer a tool in the hands of Europeans.

In 1959 nineteen countries founded the European Conference of Post and Telecommunication Administrations (CEPT) and soon became a regional Union within the international entities. It was a “very primitive type of organization”.⁹² A purely administrative forum gathering experts separated from political control, it issued non binding recommendations.⁹³ The governance of international telecommunication infrastructures in Europe remained almost untouched. The CEPT was charged with forging more solid ties between Europeans, but it remained almost absolutely invisible to them. Nevertheless, it was to be an important forum in Europe for technical and operational cooperation, counting multiple legacies. It was notably there, in 1982, work began that ten years later would lead to the Global System for Mobile communications, a digital standard first intended for Europeans, which became dominant worldwide.⁹⁴ As a conclusion, this tells us something clear: the technocratic internationalism that had appeared in 19th C. Europe resisted the challenges of both the hot Cold War and the early European integration years. It became a conceptual assumption in new institutional settings. It was a defining aspect of communications and of infrastructural Europeanism in the 1980s, and of that region’s participation in larger, global structures.

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² Saveney, « La télégraphie internationale. Les anciens traités, et la conférence de Paris », 360. On the League and the United States of Europe : Petricioli, Cherubini, Anteghini, *Les Etats-Unis d'Europe. Un projet pacifiste*.

³ Saveney, « La télégraphie internationale. Les conférences de Vienne et de Rome », 553 and 577.

⁴ In political science, functionalism is a theory based on the idea that large sections of international relations are better governed by specialised agencies and experts than diplomats and governmental representatives. The institutional setting should be freely adapted to each function. It was first developed by David Mitrany, in his book *A Working Peace System. An Argument for the Functional Development of International Organization* (1943). Schwok, *Théories de l'intégration européenne*, 40-44.

⁵ « il n'est pas vrai que l'entente établie sur les questions administratives laisse toute carrière aux mésintelligences politiques. Signons autant d'arrangements spéciaux qu'il sera possible, et soyons sûrs que les haines nationales se trouveront amorties d'autant". Saveney, « La télégraphie internationale. Les anciens traités, et la conférence de Paris », 383.

⁶ Schot and Lagendijk, « Technocratic Internationalism in the Interwar Years: Building Europe on motorways and electricity networks », 198.

⁷ Picon, *Les Saint-simoniens*.

⁸ Winseck and Pike, *Communication and Empire*.

⁹ « Les pays entre lesquels est conclu le présent traité formeront, sous la désignation de l'Union générale des postes, un seul territoire postal pour l'échange réciproque des correspondances entre leurs bureaux de poste ». *Documents du Congrès postal international réuni à Berne du 15 septembre au 9 octobre 1874*. Berne : Bureau international de l'UPU, 1944 (reprint), 139.

¹⁰ "The Union is now, more than ever, faced with questions of an international political character" wrote in 1952 George Coddington in *The International Telecommunication Union. An Experiment in International Cooperation*, 461. The same for the UPU: Coddington, *The Universal Postal Union*, 242.

¹¹ Headrick, *The Invisible Weapon*, 267; Hugill, *Global communications since 1844*, 224 ; Hills, *Telecommunications and Empire*, 42-54.

¹² Cowhey, "The International Telecommunications Regime: the Political Roots of Regimes for High Technology", 169-199 ; Drake, "The Rise and Decline of International Telecommunications Regime", 124-177.

¹³ Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics 1763-1848* ; Soutou, « Le Concert européen, de Vienne à Locarno », 117-136 ; Schirmann, *Quel ordre européen ?*, 9.

¹⁴ Summerton, "Power plays: the politics of interlinking systems", 217-238.

¹⁵ Bruley, « Le Quai d'Orsay sous le Second Empire », 575.

¹⁶ See for instance : Edouard Laboulaye and Bluntschli, *Le droit international codifié, X-XI* ; Renault, *Etudes sur les rapports internationaux. La poste et le télégraphe*.

¹⁷ Noam, *Interconnecting the Network of Networks*, 151.

¹⁸ Communication networks had already been associated with project of European unification during the interwar period, and also, with some common bases, during the Second World War by Nazi Germany, the administration of which set up in 1942 a European Union of Post and Telecommunications. Laborie, *L'Europe mise en réseaux*, 315-345.

¹⁹ Procès-verbal de la réunion du comité de coordination des communications impériales du 13/08/1946, 16/08/1946, 12 p., p. 7. Archives du ministère des Affaires étrangères (MAE ; Paris), NUOI 376.

²⁰ Hills, *Telecommunications and Empire*, 48.

²¹ Boisson, *La Société des Nations et les bureaux internationaux des Unions universelles postale et télégraphique*.

²² « Procès-verbal de la séance plénière de clôture de la conférence des télécommunications tenue à Moscou par les représentants des Cinq Puissances, le 21/10/1946 », 22/10/1946. MAE, NUOI 376.

²³ The Security Council was at the head of the United Nations. Composed of five permanent members and six temporary elected for two years by the General Assembly, it had the power to issue « resolutions » and economic sanctions. CCTI, commission n°1 préparatoire à la conférence mondiale des télécommunications, procès-verbal de la huitième réunion (19/03/1947), 24/03/1947, 13 p., p. 6. MAE, NUOI 376.

²⁴ R. Gallop, "Memorandum on the Bermuda Telecommunications Conference", 149-160, 152. National Archives (NA; Kew), FO 475 / 3 : confidential printed papers, further correspondence, part 16 (October to December 1945).

²⁵ A country that « has not let good souvenirs to the US » and has problematic relations with the USSR. Lieutenant-colonel de la Chevrelière, comité de coordination des télécommunications impériales (CCTI), « Entretien du 11 mai 1946 avec Gerald Gross, vice-directeur du bureau de l'UIT. Mémoire ». MAE, NUOI 375.

²⁶ On Gerald Gross' appointment in April 1945 : Henri Hoppenot, ambassadeur de France en Suisse, à la direction des Unions, 24/08/1945. MAE, Y internationale 80.

²⁷ Charpentier, de la part de Léon Mulatier (ITU vice-president), pour Erhard, chef de cabinet de M. Lange (DGT), Moscou, 12/10/1946. MAE, NUOI, 376.

²⁸ De la Chevrelière, CCTI, extrait du compte rendu de mission à Londres (février-mars 1946). MAE, NUOI 375.

²⁹ Record of a meeting held in the House of Lords at 5.30 pm on the 4th of April to discuss telecommunications matters in relation to the United Nations [1946]. NA, F0 371 / 55020.

³⁰ Idem.

³¹ Idem.

³² The CCIF, a prewar institution was revived as soon as October 1945, with a general assembly of experts meeting in London and undertaking the design of a European interconnection program. Comité consultatif international téléphonique, XIIIe Assemblée plénière.

³³ The legend reads « in case high speed lines could not be established across German territory ». The plan bypassed Germany due to its uncertain political future at the time of the meeting. Montreux 1946, 60.

³⁴ Record of a meeting held in the House of Lords at 5.30 pm on the 4th of April to discuss telecommunications matters in relation to the United Nations [1946]. NA, F0 371 / 55020.

³⁵ De la Chevrelière, CCTI, extrait du compte rendu de mission à Londres (février-mars 1946). MAE, NUOI 375. See also Mance's International Transport and Communications.

³⁶ Universal Postal Union. Relationship with UNO, 5 p. (non dated). NA, F0 371 / 55020.

³⁷ « une ingérence très marquée de l'ONU dans l'Union au moins en ce qui concerne ses relations avec les organismes tels que ceux de l'Aviation ou des Transports maritimes. Il avait été au contraire reconnu désirable que ces liens fussent les plus lâches possible et que la politique fut écartée au maximum de l'Union ». CCTI, commission n°1 préparatoire à la conférence mondiale des télécommunications, procès-verbal de la huitième réunion (19/03/1947), 24/03/1947. MAE, NUOI 376.

³⁸ CCTI, commission 1 préparatoire à la conférence mondiale des télécommunications, procès-verbal de la dixième réunion (02/04/1947), 08/04/1947. MAE, NUOI 376.

³⁹ The US did not follow the normal procedure to call for these conferences. Lamarle, télégramme au ministère des Affaires étrangères, New York, 04/03/1947. MAE, NUOI 376.

⁴⁰ « Rapport de M. Leproux. Rattachement de l'Union internationale des télécommunications aux Nations Unies », 07/08/1947. MAE, NUOI 377.

⁴¹ Idem.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Idem.

⁴⁴ Articles 41 and 103 of the amended United Nations Charter. « Rapport à Monsieur le secrétaire d'État sur les résultats de la conférence d'Atlantic City ». MAE, NUOI 377.

⁴⁵ Gerbet, Ghebali, Mouton, Le rêve d'un ordre mondial: de la SDN à l'ONU, 162.

⁴⁶ Since 1874, two types of ITU conferences were distinguished, administrative and plenipotentiary. Only the latter involved diplomats. This was to a large extent the result of a collective strategy to gain autonomy on cooperation. Laborie, *L'Europe mise en réseaux*, 109.

⁴⁷ « Une constatation générale apparaît immédiatement : c'est que l'esprit dans lequel étaient conclus les vieux traités d'Union n'existe plus ». Maurice Leproux, « Note sur les conférences des télécommunications d'Atlantic City », Atlantic City, 03/08/1947. MAE, NUOI 377.

⁴⁸ Documents du Congrès postal de Lisbonne 1885. Tome II, 6.

⁴⁹ Frank Gill to Georges Valensi, 19/11/1946. ITU Archives (Geneva), CCIF.

⁵⁰ CCTI, commission 1 préparatoire à la conférence mondiale des télécommunications, procès-verbal de la dixième réunion (02/04/1947), 08/04/1947, 13 p., p. 6. MAE, NUOI 376.

⁵¹ De la Chevrelière, CCTI, extrait du compte rendu de mission à Londres (février-mars 1946). MAE, NUOI 375.

⁵² Girault, Frank, Thobie, *La loi des géants, 1941-1964*, 168 and 106.

⁵³ « Note », 05/07/1947. MAE, Y internationale 80.

⁵⁴ *Idem*.

⁵⁵ « Note », June 1954 (9th session of the ITU 's Administrative Council). MAE, NUOI 375.

⁵⁶ If one believes the report made by the French PTT ministry to the ministère des Affaires étrangères (non dated). MAE, NUOI 375.

⁵⁷ Henrich-Franke, *Globale Regulierungsproblematiken in Historischer Perspektive: Der Fall des Funkfrequenzspektrums, 1945-1988*.

⁵⁸ Coddington, *The International Telecommunication Union*, 195.

⁵⁹ « il n'y a pas qu'un seul URSS qui parle, le chœur tout entier reprend en canon » ; « treize échos de l'Est ». Schaeffer, *Le gardien de volcan*, 167 and 51.

⁶⁰ « Alors se lèvent l'un après l'autre les treize délégués, ils se lèvent comme autant de statues du Commandeur, ils prononcent treize éloges funèbres lancent treize protestations témoignent de treize variétés d'indignation de treize nuances de regrets profèrent treize jeux de malédictions sur l'Assemblée formulent enfin treize demandes identiques pour que tout ce qui a été dit soit consigné in extenso dans les minutes ». *Idem*, 59.

⁶¹ CCTUF, procès-verbal de la réunion du 29/07/1947, 03/08/1947. MAE, NUOI 376.

⁶² Examples include the Copenhagen conference on broadcasting, June to September 1948; Copenhagen regional radio conference on maritime communications, 1948; Geneva administrative conference for radio in Europe, 1949; Geneva radio conference on aeronautical communications, May to September 1948 and August to October 1949. The organization dealing with cooperation among European broadcasters (independent from the ITU) was cut into two parts at the beginning of 1950: the Organisation internationale de radiodiffusion on one side (headquarters in Prague) and the European Broadcasting Union (headquarters in Geneva and Brussels).

⁶³ Above all in the light of the East West divide in the field of broadcasting cooperation. Fickers, Lommers, Suzanne, "Eventing Europe. Broadcasting and the Mediated Performances of Europe", 236.

⁶⁴ See Schot and Schipper, « Introduction » of this issue.

⁶⁵ Gerbet, *La construction de l'Europe*, 82.

⁶⁶ « Rapport sur les relations postales et télécommunications présenté au nom de la Commission des questions économiques par M. Motz », 13/05/1951. Centre des archives contemporaines (Paris), CAC 920257 / 1.

⁶⁷ Robertson, « The European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations », 101.

⁶⁸ Mioche, Les cinquantes années de l'Europe du charbon et de l'acier.

⁶⁹ Hofman, « De l'utilité d'une Union postale européenne et de sa tâche », 2-5. Reflecting on the geographical scope of this project, the British Post Office concluded : " it seems clear that the proposed union is envisaged as comprising all the European countries outside the Iron curtain ". « Memo ». Royal Mail Archives (RMA ; London), Post 122 / 506.

⁷⁰ HCRFA, direction générale des affaires économiques, service des PTT, R. Pages au ministre des PTT de France, Baden-Baden, 02/02/1952. CAC 920257 / 1.

⁷¹ Quatrième rapport du Comité des ministres à l'Assemblée consultative du Conseil de l'Europe. Strasbourg, 07/05/1953. CAC 920257 / 1.

⁷² Gerbet, La naissance de la construction européenne, 69.

⁷³ This happened in Spain in 1944. Similarly, urban private concessions ended in The Netherlands, and Norway, Millward, Private and Public Enterprise in Europe, 245.

⁷⁴ Idem.

⁷⁵ If the telecommunication industry was to be organised at the European scale « la situation de l'industrie française ne se trouverait pas favorable, dans l'immédiat, en raison de la cherté relative des prix de revient de ce secteur de production ». Masson, « Note sur la création d'une communauté européenne des Postes et Télécommunications », 31/10/1952. CAC 920257 / 1.

⁷⁶ Datas for 1953. Domestic traffic generated 52 billions of Francs. Idem.

⁷⁷ Quatrième rapport du Comité des ministres à l'Assemblée consultative du Conseil de l'Europe. Strasbourg, 07/05/1953. CAC 920257 / 1.

⁷⁸ « Création d'une union postale entre les Etats membres du Conseil de l'Europe. Analyse des réponses des Etats ». CAC 920257 / 1.

⁷⁹ Rynning-Tonnesen. Comité consultatif international téléphonique (CCIF), XIIIe Assemblée plénière, London, 29-30/10/1945. Paris, CCIF, 14.

⁸⁰ « Rapport à Monsieur le secrétaire d'Etat sur les résultats de la conférence d'Atlantic City ». MAE, NUOI 377

⁸¹ For instance, since 1938, rates for coded and non coded telegraph messages were the same, but only in the « European service ». Krijnen, F. « Les télécommunications mondiales dans l'après-guerre », p. 12.

⁸² Locke, GPO, to Miss Armstrong, General Department, Foreign Office, (London, 27/07/1951), draft. RMA, POST 122 / 506.

⁸³ Coddington, The International Telecommunication Union, 235.

⁸⁴ The French administration evaluate at 40 to 50 the number of its civil servants contributing to the ITU, most of them spending 5 to 10% of their working time to it. « La position française à l'UIT. Note remise par M. Mulatier à M. Toussaint », 2/10/1952. MAE, NUOI 375.

⁸⁵ Leive, International Telecommunications and International Law : the Regulation of the Radio Spectrum, 52.

⁸⁶ « Note pour le Secrétariat général par le directeur général des Télécommunications Rouvière », 24/10/1956. CAC, 920257 / 2.

⁸⁷ « dans la pratique et dans les circonstances courantes que nous voulons chercher ce qui peut servir les idées d'union européenne ». Saveney, "La télégraphie internationale Les anciens traités, et la conférence de Paris", 360.

⁸⁸ CCIR Plenary Assembly, London, 2/09 to 7/10 of October 1953. « Note », 17/09/1953. MAE, NUOI 376.

⁸⁹ « Note », June 1954 (9th session of the ITU 's Administrative Council). MAE, NUOI 375.

⁹⁰ Switzerland embassy, « Aide-Mémoire », London, 17/09/1958. NA, FO 371 / 133743.

⁹¹ Centre d'accueil et de recherche des Archives nationales (CARAN ; Paris), F 90 / 21117 : « Note », 1957.

⁹² Coddington, The Universal Postal Union, 232.

⁹³ Labarrère, L'Europe des Postes et des Télécommunications.

⁹⁴ Hillebrand, *GSM & UMTS*. Kammerer, « Off the Leash », 213.