

**THE ORIGINS OF THE *CITÉ UNIVERSITAIRE*
AND THE *COLEGIO DE ESPAÑA* IN PARIS:
ELITES, DIPLOMACY AND EDUCATIONAL MODERNITY**

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ABSTRACT

This study analyses the origins of the *Cité Universitaire*, Paris, based on the intellectual and educational cooperation of the League of Nations and French government after the First World War. It was in this context that the construction of the *Colegio de España* began in 1929. This Institution strengthened international relations between both countries and enabled Spanish researchers, artists and intellectuals of the time, to be in contact with the scientific, artistic and cultural advances in France and Europe. The aim of this article is solely to highlight and try to recover a part (the origins) of the political, cultural and educational history of these institutions.

KEY WORDS

Colegio de España; *Cité Universitaire*; League of Nations; University education;
Educational modernity; International policy.



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The origins of the *Cité Universitaire* and the *Colegio de España* in Paris: Elites, diplomacy and educational modernity¹

à Mora Luna

INTRODUCTION

It is not to the most powerful monarchs, nor to the most opulent princes, nor to the chief rulers of a nation that most states owe their splendour, strength and glory. Mere individuals are the ones who have made the most extraordinary progress in the arts, in sciences and in the art of governing. Who measured the earth? Who discovered the celestial system? Who invented those intriguing manufactures that enable nations to function? Who has laid open the secrets of natural history? Who has explored the depths of chemistry, anatomy and botany? Once again, mere individuals who, in the eyes of a wise man most eclipse the aspirers to greatness, those proud dwarves who nourish themselves on vanity alone.

Mercier, 1771, p. 225

In the aftermath of the First World War, when all that was solid melted into air (Berman, 1982), and the weakening of the Enlightenment principles led the human being to seek “a mythology that (...) might rectify society” and return its faith in the human project (Harvey, 2008, p. 51), a number of artists and intellectuals of the period appealed to the image of reason embodied in machinery, industry, technology or the city as a “living machine”; while others explored the limits of the commitment and mythologisation of the proletariat, eventually leading first to idealism, and then to disappointment. Nevertheless, at that time, establishing the bases of peaceful coexistence among the Allied Powers (mainly the British Empire, French Republic and Russian Empire, in addition to Italy, Japan and the USA) and the Central

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Powers (The German and Austria-Hungary Empires, along with the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria) proved to be urgent, and also to reorganize international relations in order to attain understanding among the different nations and to reconstruct the European economies that had been destroyed during the conflict.

The main aim of the League of Nations (LN) was to arbitrate disputes and prevent the outbreak of new war conflicts, to guarantee human rights, collective security, and the integrity of all the states. This first inter-governmental organisation, founded through the Treaty of Versailles (1919-1920), through the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC), came to advocate, some years later, a cultural diplomacy with which relations among the different countries could be strengthened, and to promote the formation of an international spirit to anchor the operations of this organisation in favour of peace and progress. If the LN wanted to successfully accomplish its enterprise, it could not forego its thinkers and scholars; the very individuals who believed that the education of the elite in a unique international context was necessary to ensure the survival of a future leading class with strong foundations in dialogue, cooperation, respect and peaceful coexistence. They believed that this was the way to ensure long-lasting world peace.

INTELLECTUAL COOPERATION, EDUCATION AND INTERNATIONAL POLICY AFTER THE GREAT WAR

Despite the fact that the Covenant of the newborn LN, established in Versailles on 28 June 1919, did not include any article on intellectual cooperation, nor on education, some of its members, picking up on the feeling of the institutions that emerged in the late nineteenth century [such as the “Conseil permanent international d'éducation” (1885), the “Organisation internationale et collective du travail intellectuel” (1894), the “Centre consultant pédagogique international” (1904), the “Institut international pédagogique” (1905) and the “Conseil international pédagogique” (1910-1912)] believed that the new international organisation should also protect the work of its intellectuals, and consider the educational action that was being carried out in each of the member countries of the League, in order to establish an effective international policy. Fostering communication among the knowledgeable and scholarly of the period, ensuring basic educational principles and agreeing upon a conciliatory interpretation of the latest events, in order to simultaneously narrate and



construct the more contemporary history of the conquerors and the defeated (we also construct history when we narrate it and write it), could guarantee closer approximation among the nations and greater understanding among the communities.

These concerns were reflected in different proposals that were sometimes announced by LN members and frequently formulated by external institutions. Such is the case of the “Union of International Associations” (UIA), which requested help, in 1920, from the LN Council to sponsor an “international University”, with the purpose of “to form, among the chosen men in all countries who have influence on civil service, politics and education, an elite composed of thousands of minds capable of collaborating in international harmony and in the work of the League of Nations” (Renoliet, 1999, p. 13). The granting of the subsidy requested by the UIA constituted the first intervention of the LN in intellectual and educational terrain.

That same year, Paul Appel, Chairman of the executive committee of the “Association française pour la Société des Nations” and Dean of the University of Paris, also one of the “pères fondateurs” of the *Cité Universitaire*, expressed to the LN the need to support the creation of a permanent organisation geared towards intellectual work and education. This initiative, published in *L'Europe nouvelle* on 17 January 1920 and pursued by Julien Luchaire, inspector general of state education and chief cabinet secretary to the minister of education (Luchaire, 1920, p. 63), sought “to favour harmony among nations over the territory of thought, science and education, and to boost the intellectual development of mankind” (*La conférence générale et le bureau international de l'instruction & des sciences, lettres & arts*, 1920, p. 63). In the prelude, the need to bind the new body to the LN was stressed given that: “universal peace (...) will be short lived unless national education, among all its related communities, is geared towards a continuously more intimate understanding of others, and provided that the organization of schools and of the appropriate international dissemination institutions enable a far-reaching inter-penetration of intellectual environments and easy circulation of knowledge and ideas”; an idea of peace which, in his opinion, was also based on science and its progress as a remedy to overcome the poverty of the world, a permanent cause of confrontation and conflict (*La conférence générale et le bureau international de l'instruction & des sciences, lettres & arts*, 1920, p. 64).

In 1921, Léon Bérard, Minister of State Education, deemed it appropriate for Aristide Briand, Chairman of the Council and Minister of Foreign Affairs, to defend the project of Luchaire in the LN Assembly, thus launching a direct commitment to intellectual cooperation and education. (Thus far, the LN had only resolved to provide support to the various activities related to the development of intellectual cooperation, organised by the UIA). According to Bérard “that France will take the initiative to propose the



establishment of a body responsible for developing intellectual relations among the various school and university, scientific and artistic environments throughout the world” (Renoliet, 1999, p. 16) would be a motive of joy. Briand, on the other hand, considered the proposal presented by Bérard to be inadequate, and hence, the project of Luchaire “came to nothing”. In his opinion, education needed to be developed outside and beyond international intellectual cooperation if they wished to count on the support of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Eric Drummond, a British diplomat and first LN Secretary-General, also manifested the importance of an intellectual and educational commitment to put in practice a more efficient international cooperation. Drummond recommended the designation of a Commission, as an advisory body of the LN Council, to study issues related to international intellectual cooperation and education.

The proposals presented by Drummond were approved both by the LN Council and the Assembly, albeit with important amendments: the Commission that was about to come into being would have to include women in its workforce and could not conduct research on educational issues “to avoid stripping censorship of its intervention in the internal affairs of the states in the field of education, and not to create the impression that the League of Nations wishes to impose an educational plan”. Therefore, intellectual cooperation at the core of the LN, would ensure the protection of intellectual workers, promote the advancement of knowledge in human sciences and aim to develop the international spirit, in addition to “a human fraternity conscience” (Renoliet, 1999, p. 19). However, after the First World War, education continued to be a “private preserve”, a national heritage unique to each State, which did not permit international collaboration nor any intervention involving experts on the issue. Indeed, education seemed to be more of “a reserved field which cannot be left solely in the hands of educators or become the object of international decisions” (Renoliet, 1999, p. 12).

All these initiatives (constructed interchangeably with varying degrees of success and failure) triggered the emergence of the ICIC in 1921 and 1922. The new International Commission for Intellectual Cooperation, with its headquarters in Geneva, was a mere advisory and provisional body at that time. Nevertheless, with Henri Bergson, Marie Curie, Einstein and Torres-Quevedo among its members, it gradually began to gain autonomy, despite the continuous obstacles presented by France and Britain.

These changes to which the LN was subject, responded to an evolution in its diplomatic policy. Whereas initially, traditional foreign policy had made it possible to consolidate peace and attenuate conflicts between

nations, in its second phase, with the inclusion of intellectual cooperation and education (as highly valuable extra-political forces in the diplomatic action paradigm) they would ensure the success of their pacifist mission. However, as already observed, educational cooperation, perceived in most cases as an encroachment in state policies, would always be far more limited and constrained than the former. International policy had no right to intervene in educational issues. Moreover, rather curiously, the difficulties encountered by the LN in order to intervene in education from an international perspective, appear to have determined the action of the French government and may even justify some of the principles of its university educational policy.

FROM THE FRENCH “CULTURAL IMPERIALISM”

During its initial years of activity, the ICIC re-established the connections to intellectual cooperation that had been extinguished after the war, created the various national commissions in order to identify the intellectual needs of each country, and started up the “Office international de renseignements universitaires” (to the chagrin of the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs, which opposed dealing with educational issues from an international or extra-national perspective). Nevertheless, the ICIC, as specified above, was unable, under any concept, of “interfering in university education or jeopardizing the sovereign right of states to the autonomy of high-level schools” (UNESCO, ICIC, A.61.1922.XII).

While Great Britain did not endorse the usefulness of this Commission, which, according to its judgement, solely assumed an increase in member State contributions; France (simultaneously in favour of and reticent towards international cooperation, for fear of losing its cultural prominence), tried to take control of the situation, not very successfully, in order to protect its own interests. It tried, at all costs, to boost the cultural, political and moral influence of its country, while also avoiding internationalist propaganda that was beginning to sway the ICIC towards a dissemination that would focus on the unique grandeur and virtues of the French culture. The lack of interest on the part of Great Britain in intellectual cooperation and education, coupled with the rejection of the United States Congress towards the LN and its Peace Treaty, plus the systematic exclusion endured by Germany by the other member countries of the afore-mentioned international organization (it would not be included until 1926) enabled France to emerge as the cultural standard bearer and educational model during the inter-war period.



In addition to its own national intellectual commission (national commissions that began to take root as of 1922 in the countries of Central and Western Europe), the French government asked the LN to form a Committee, according to unofficial reports, to reinforce its influence in the cultural environment, and also to safeguard its political interests. This Committee was not meant to be solely concerned with establishing contact between the ICIC and the French intellectual sphere, but also entrusted with protecting the cultural imperialism of its country. This project was accomplished by the French government, despite the significant financial crisis of 1924, as, according to Luchaire:

intellectual growth has become one of the main issues of the external programme of France (...) if France, following an ancient tradition, presents itself as a more gifted nation to understand the intellectual effort of all others, in order to act as a meeting place for its various products, to harmonize them on the basis of genius, and to transfer them, in their transformed state to common human heritage; if France organizes itself, following modern methods with sufficient means to be the main and most prestigious centre of international intellectual cooperation, then its influence will, so to speak, be boundless. (UNESCO, IIIC, A.III.s)

In the intellectual, scientific, cultural and educational terrain, France feared German revenge, thus, constantly feeling the need to assert its superiority. This superiority was not only conveyed from a purely “intellectual” perspective, in the strict sense of the word, but also, in our opinion, was implemented from a far-reaching “cultural” stance. Hence our choice of the concept “cultural imperialism” over “intellectual imperialism” in the development of our critique on French practices during those years. The hard work of its political and diplomatic representatives to demonstrate the supremacy of the French language, thus preventing it from being replaced by Esperanto as the international auxiliary language of the LN, was a prime example of this effort (Chaubet, 2006). Defence of the French university model over the Humboldtian or Anglo-Saxon models are also good examples for showing its prominence and superiority.

The new orientation of its foreign policy, following the victory of the Socialist Party in April 1924, which renounced the use of force in favour of culture as a diplomatic weapon, made the inauguration of the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC) possible (institutional antecedent of UNESCO, a specialised agency of the United Nations for Education and Diversification, Science and Culture), an executive body of the ICIC, with its headquarters in the Palais Royal of the French capital. This immediate action instrument of the

International Commission was totally subsidised by the French government (although it was an organisation dependent on the afore-mentioned Commission and, consequently, the LN Council and Assembly) whose aim was to contribute selflessly to an understanding among the communities, at least this is what the official discourse of the government implied.

This gesture of generosity was initially met with some reticence: “one believes that it conceals a highly ingenious form of intellectual imperialism”. Nonetheless, the trust France inspired in them and the promise that the Institution would be an international body in every aspect, with the exception of the economic, dissipated doubts in Geneva, while they knew fully well that it would be difficult to bypass the influence of France on its own functioning. There was “an intellectual preparation task for the general organization of the world” and France felt responsible for ensuring its accomplishment “in the best possible and most far-reaching conditions”. The ICIC was required to draw up regular statistics on the movements of intellectual life, and to study the organisation’s potential problems; to establish contact with renowned institutions and international scientific associations, to coordinate its efforts and support its activities; to organise literary and artistic production, and to promote arts in general; to connect worldwide institutes “de haut enseignement” (when the inter-university relations Office was transferred to the Parisian Institute); and, from a legal perspective, to address the material situation of the intellectual workers (UNESCO, IIC, A.I.2).

In the mid 1920s, France wished to be the intellectual and cultural centre of the world. In order to accomplish this aim, the creation of the ICIC was not sufficient. Although the Institute had reasserted its centrality as a political and cultural player within the scope of the intellectual on a world-wide scale, its new diplomatic initiative required being involved in educational issues in order to attain the “imperialistic” goals proposed by the government. It was at this point that the decision was made to construct an exceptional university campus to bring together and “educate” the future governing elite (of the West and the whole world), in accordance with its principles and cultural models. From then on (and up to the outbreak of the Second World War), the French capital also played a leading role in educational terms. France came to occupy the gap left by international policy when the international organisations (essentially by order of the French Minister for Foreign Affairs) decided not to intervene in educational policies to the serious and committed extent they had wished for (the fact that neither the ICIC nor the IIC were permitted to intervene in education has already been mentioned).



THE *CITÉ UNIVERSITAIRE* OF PARIS. A UNIVERSITY CAMPUS FOR PEACE AND OTHER PURPOSES

Although we are unable to demonstrate a direct connection between the LN and the *Cité Universitaire*, available data, up to now, has revealed a relationship between the institutional projects and the presence of some equal ideological principles. It was precisely in the midst of this political and diplomatic scenario that the construction of the *Cité Universitaire* commenced, in the 14^{ème} arrondissement of Paris—on the former fortifications of the city. The *Cité Universitaire*, an extraordinary architectural and educational complex designed, according to official discourse, to accomplish the most honourable utopia; a utopia that even escaped the LN and its domains: “no place would be more propitious for the formation of an elite, capable of conceiving the diversity of national minds and temperaments, of dissipating all misunderstandings stemming from mutual ignorance, and of establishing through the countries a place of trust, a community of intelligence, among future governments and opinions” (De Jouvenet, 1927, para. 5). The desire, or at least the official discourse of politicians, intellectuals, businessmen and sponsors of the neighbouring countries was to achieve the peace and security of the world through education, science and culture, as another acceptable myth to recover trust in human beings.

The *Cité Universitaire* of Paris, established by law on 28 June 1921, was born from pacifist ideas (Ingram, 1991; Vaïse, 2004), and hygiene concerns (Viñao, 2010) typical of the modernism of inter-war-periods and solidarity-based liberalism. This international university campus had, on the one hand, the task of ensuring peace among communities, thus reinforcing the LN project, and on the other to contribute to the international projection of France, and the consolidation of its cultural and political influence. Education and culture, fundamental instruments of French diplomacy after the First World War, came together in the *Cité Universitaire* to constitute an international community that would remedy all the errors made in the past.

Paul Appell, Dean of the Academie de Paris and Chairman of the executive committee of the “Association française pour la *Société des Nations*”, André Honnorat, Minister for State Education, also senator and first Chairman of the *Fondation Nationale pour le Développement de la Cité Universitaire*; Émile Deutsch de la Meurthe, businessman and first sponsor of the project and David-Weill, banker, sponsor and first treasurer of the *Fondation Nationale* in 1925, conceived an international university campus, a dormitory campus, an American style park campus as a reaction to the disaster experienced of the Great War, and as a solution to the problems of accommodation of the French universities and those arriving from other parts of the world.



Of the 22,000 students enrolled at the University of Paris in 1925, 3,300 were foreigners. These youths, the majority from poor or “formerly rich” families, lived in hardship, and so felt obliged to “finding a few hundred Francs in mercenary work so that the parents, confronted with difficulties, may send them each month” (La Cité Universitaire de Paris. Pour la jeunesse de nos écoles, 1925, p. 3). Before this situation, Émile Deutsch de la Meurthe, “a man of great generosity” donated “to the University of Paris, the sum of ten million Francs to accommodate poor studious youths” (La Cité Universitaire de Paris. Pour la jeunesse de nos écoles, 1925, p. 4). The donation encouraged other French and foreign donations until 1938, when a university campus with twenty halls of residence was configured: the Fondation Deutsch de la Meurthe was inaugurated in 1925, Canada launched its premises in 1926, Belgium-Luxembourg in 1927, Argentina and the *Institut national agronomique* in 1928, Japan celebrated its opening in 1929, Armenia, Indochina and the United States in 1930, Sweden in 1931, Denmark and Greece in 1932, Switzerland, Cuba and the *Maison de Provinces de France* in 1933, Spain opened its doors in 1935, the Honnorat residence in 1936, Great Britain and Monaco in 1937, and in 1938 the house for students from the Netherlands [Figure 1] was inaugurated. This important initiative assumed a starting point for “a crusade to improve the moral and material standards of living of the youthful elite” (La Cité Universitaire de Paris. Pour la jeunesse de nos écoles, 1925, p. 4), pursuing three very clear objectives: first and foremost, “offering the students, men and women, secure accommodation at a good price”; secondly, they set out “to give these youths the habit and taste for hygiene and a social life”; and finally, “to teach these students, from different horizons, to live together” (Institut français d'architecture, 1995, p. 47). However, in the opinion of Kévonian and Tronchet:

The notion of an “ideal of the City”, this approximation of the elite of all nations to the heart of a common home of intellectual life, from which would stem a mutual understanding among the nations, so as to establish peaceful international relations, is not the *essence* of the City, but rather a discourse—among others—conveyed by the elite who, on the other hand, may do something else to the City and not what they set out to do, projected within the heart of a social space that will know—being international—how to establish axiological neutrality. (2013, p. 27)

Besides the official pacifist discourse that surrounded its construction and the pragmatic response underlying this urban complex and the housing needs of the young students, the *Cité* did, in fact, qualitatively improve the offer of education the University of Paris proposed to the international university market, during which period the education of its elites was challenged (Karady, 2013). The creation



of the *Cité Universitaire* reaffirmed the excellence of the French university model (questioned at various stages of the nineteenth century by Germans and Americans) and turned the French capital into the most desired academic destination of students from all over the world, including German students:

One purpose of the *cité universitaire* was to encourage students to study in Paris to reinforce French success in surpassing the Germans on the intellectual and researched-based scientific forefront. (...) Cross-cultural participation demonstrated the success of international education if students from an “enemy” country would choose to study in France. In 1910, 363 Germans attended French universities. In 1926, seven years after the Treaty of Versailles, 500 Germans were enrolled in French schools. (Reis, 2010, p. 159)

Internationalisation of the French linguistic and cultural model and its universalist vocation reaffirmed the “imperial nation” concept, practised by French politicians, intellectuals and educators during these years. This nationalism, more typical of the nineteenth than the twentieth century, also left an interesting ray of hope that was not specified in its *curriculum* for other less imperialistic knowledge. This student Babel (which, during the inter-war period used the French language predominantly and ended up apprehending and importing the symbolic assets of its culture-just as the French government had proposed), was also meant to be a conducive space to all types of cultural exchange and transfer, for the export of other knowledge, other languages, other learning experiences and other ideologies that were not included in the official *curriculum* of university teachings:

National pride through scientific superiority did not destroy scientific exchange. Cultural internationalism aspired to introduce a non-nationalist curriculum to teach students about shared traits rather than indoctrinate them with patriotic pride. However, nationalism did not suddenly disappear with the birth of this movement. After the First World War, strong patriotic ties remained at the forefront of people's belief systems and education continued to teach the greatness of one's heritage. Comparative nations learned from one another and interacted, even if it was merely an attempt to outdo one another. (Reis, 2010, p. 159)

As far as the construction of the *Cité Universitaire* of Paris is concerned, “one of the centres in which tomorrow’s world is constructed”, according to Paul Hazard in *Les Nouvelles Littéraires* (1930, p. 1) the decisions of the French government have a



two or three-fold interpretation. On the one hand this university campus was part of the LN project and its ideal of peace as the official discourse (Sereni, 1992), while simultaneously on the other, it served to reinforce the presence and cultural and political influence of France abroad. *Mutatis mutandis*, the task of the IIC and the mission of the *Cité Universitaire* were not so far apart. Although it is true that the latter involved a new kind of cultural internationalism during the inter-war period, it is also true that it emerged as a diplomatic weapon of extraordinary value for France: “despite this awareness of and interest in cultural internationalism, French educators and public figures continued to view their culture as worthy of emulation. The French creators hoped to convince the public of the universality of French culture and the excellence of French education” (Reis, 2010, p. 157); by the same token, this university campus may also be interpreted as “une école pratique” of international relations, that is to say, as a governmental player in the integration of worldwide university elites through the diplomatic exercise of soft power (Kévonian & Tronchet, 2013, p. 31).



Figure 1. The various halls of residence of the *Cité Universitaire* under construction. Fragment of a newspaper report published in the French press. Unknown origin (circa 1932). In the photographs, the stage of the works on the *Colegio de España* (Spanish), the *maison de la suede* (Swedish), the *Fondation Hellénique* (Greek), *Fondation Danoise* (Danish), the *Maison des Étudiants Arméniens* (Armenian) and, finally, the *Maison de Cuba* (Cuban) may be observed (ACE, 148/1).



FOUNDATION OF THE *COLEGIO DE ESPAÑA*
IN THE *CITÉ UNIVERSITAIRE* OF PARIS

On 23 February 1925, the Ministry of Finance for Foreign Affairs, at the desire of the Spanish government, sent a draft decree to the Spanish Embassy in Paris, in which the French obligations and commitments of the pedagogical, diplomatic, political and cultural enterprise, the so-called *Cité universitaire*, were duly specified. A brief and general description of the project was also sent, with its location, size (9 hectares at first), the various point of access and connections to the city, the payroll of the various halls undergoing construction and the different countries “en pourparlers” with the University of Paris. By building a “maison”, a hall “pour étudiants” within the enclosure of this university campus, would ensure Spanish presence in the intellectual cooperation and international policy and would contribute to the regeneration of Spain and its image abroad. Furthermore, it would enhance the “imperialist” political and cultural project of the French government.

In order to participate in the innovative urban and academic proposal that was being built in stronghold 81, 82 and 83 of the former fortified enclosure of the French capital, the Spanish government was required to fund the construction of a property designed to house students on these grounds; seeking to provide them with “healthy accommodation at a moderate price (...) in the best possible conditions of material, intellectual and moral standards of living” (Arrêté autorisant l'accession au bénéfice de la Cité universitaire, 23 February 1925, [ACE, 148/1]). Once the decision had been taken, the government of King Alfonso XIII was simply required to send its proposal to the *Académie de Paris* so that Spain could enter the centre of this international cultural universe, much longed for by most of its intellectuals (especially the scholars and intellectuals, modernists and *noventayochistas* [generation of 98], who thought of Europe as a remedy for the national decadence into which Spain had plunged after the “colonial disaster” of 1898). However, and despite the fact that on this same date the Embassy of Spain forwarded the received documents to the cultural relations office in Madrid, the Spanish had to wait until 25 June 1927 for the King, accompanied by José María Quiñones de León, the Spanish Ambassador in the French capital and member of the executive council of the LN at the time, to visit *Cité Universitaire* with a view to personally choosing the location for the construction of the Spanish hall of residence, and to take possession of the land deemed appropriate for its construction by the Monarch. The



King was welcomed by Honnorat and Benet, respective Chairman and Secretary of the *Fondation Nationale*. The event was deemed historic for the University of Paris and served, as stated in the telegram sent by André Honnorat to Eduardo Callejo de la Cuesta on the day of the royal visit, to narrow the gap between the spiritual relations of the elites of the countries even further (Telegram from André Honnorat to the Minister of State Education in Spain, 25 June 1925 [ACE, 148/1]).

After the event, it was determined that the Spanish hall of residence would have a hundred rooms for students and researchers; a few days later, the king (perhaps impressed by the British and American proposals), considered this to be insufficient. Finally, Alfonso XIII increased the capacity of the Spanish “maison” to accommodate up to 150 residents of Spanish, Brazilian or Portuguese nationality, or from any Hispanic-American country without representation in the *cit * (*La maison espagnole   la Cit  Universitaire*, 1927, para. 2). It should be noted, in relation to this event, that the Argentinean hall of residence was inaugurated in June 1928 and the Fundaci n franco-cubana Rosa Abreu de Grancher opened its doors in 1933, the other halls for the accommodation of Latin-Americans, were only built after the Second World War (Mexico, 1953; Brazil, 1959; Portugal, 1967), therefore, amplification of the Spanish building was perfectly justified.

Some months later, on 18 October, “by order of His Majesty King of Spain”, a Commission was created under the State Ministry, to “construct, install and equip the services of the *Colegio de Espa a* in the enclosure of the University Campus of Paris”; this commission was composed of “His Excellency D. Jacobo Fitz James Stuart y Falc , Duke of Alba and Berwick; His Excellency the distinguished Ambassador of Its Majesty in Paris, and last, but not least, the illustrious Director General of Higher and Secondary Education” (Real Orden 1284 de 18 de octubre de 1927, 1927, p. 413). This means that the Duke of Alba, Qui ones de Le n and Wenceslao Gonz lez de Oliveros were entrusted with constructing and starting up the *Colegio de Espa a* until its normal functioning, the former the Chairman of the Commission and Qui ones de Le n permanent delegate general of Minister Callejo in Paris and the Commission.

On 8 November 1927, Qui ones de Le n established an agreement to construct the *Colegio* in the *Cit  Universitaire*. This event, as may be observed in the telegram sent by the Minister of State Education, Callejo de la Cuesta, to the Spanish Ambassador in Paris [Figure 2] and in the telegram sent by Andr  Honnorat to the Chairman of the Spanish Council, was of utmost importance for the “spiritual approximation of both countries”:



As the Ambassador of Spain has just signed the deed for the Spanish foundation in the University Campus, I wish to extend to Your Excellency my personal gratitude, and my respectful regards to His Majesty the King, for such joy resulting from this great event. I am sure that 8 November will be a memorable date in the history of the spiritual relations that unite these two countries. (This telegram was published in *La Nación* on 9 November 1927 [ACE 148/2])

“The People and the Spanish government”, as the Chairman of the Council wrote in his response telegram to the Chairman of the *Cité Universitaire*, a symbolic union of the two countries had taken place which would now serve to strengthen even further their affective ties, using the “essential cultural feature” (El Colegio Español de la Ciudad Universitaria de París. Notas de ampliación, 1927, para. 6) as a pretext.

However, the other side to the story of the construction of this hall of residence dates back to the Spring of 1916, when five French academics travelled to Spain with the purpose of showing the locals the greatness of their country (Delaunay, 1994). Once in Madrid, in the presence of the Spanish aristocracy and many other “illustrious people”, “one of them, Ch. M. Widor, an illustrious composer, ends one of his conferences expressing his wish for the French artists and intellectuals to go in mass to study in Spain” (Niño Rodríguez, 2005, p. 68). Alfonso XIII, in response to the wishes of France, decided to grant the *Académie française des beaux-arts*, free usufruct with indeterminate duration, 21.600 square metres of the Moncloa (the area upon which the University Campus of Madrid would be built) for the construction of the *Casa de Velázquez*. This *Casa*, founded by law on 18 April 1920, in the same way as the Schools of Fine Art of Rome and Athens, would enable the French artists and intellectuals to complete their studies in the Spanish capital. Barely a few months later, construction works began, and thanks to the support of several French sponsors, the building was partially inaugurated on 20 November 1928 with the most solemn of ceremonies. Total inauguration of the project was accomplished seven years later, on 14 May 1935. The *Casa de Velázquez*, that was part of the strategy to fight against “the force of Francophobia that arose during the world conflict” (Niño Rodríguez, 2005, p. 69), found its Spanish counterpart in the French capital. The so-called *Villa Carpeaux*, seed of the *Colegio de España*, was to be, as had initially been foreseen, the satellite of the Fine Arts Academy of San Fernando in the city of light. Nevertheless, the project underwent a number of transformations until the *Casa de Velázquez* found its kindred, the *Colegio de España*, in the university campus of Paris, some years later.



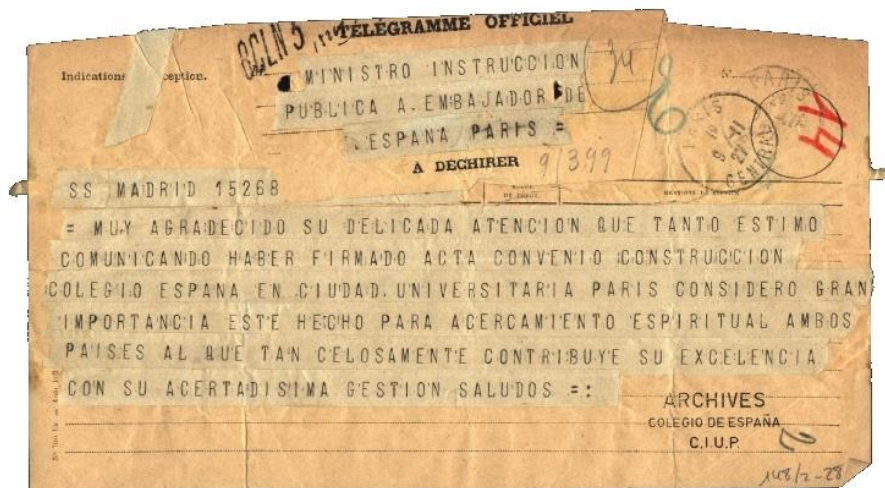


Figure 2. Telegram from the Minister of State Education and Fine Arts, Eduardo Callejo de la Cuesta, to the Ambassador of Spain in Paris, José María Quiñones de León, after the establishment of the agreement with the *Fondation National* of the *Cité Universitaire* on 9 November 1927 for the construction of the *Colegio de España* in Paris (ACE, 148/2).

THE *COLEGIO DE ESPAÑA* IN PARIS AND THE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS IN MADRID

The Spanish hall of residence was the target of criticism, not only due to its modern and accurate architectural design by Modesto López Otero or to the comfort of the premises, but also as it was the first “maison” funded entirely, according to what may be read in the French press in the early 1930s, by the public funds of a government. However, as one may read in the daily newspaper *ABC*, this hall received a number of sponsorships for its construction, by individuals who were attracted by the prestige and social standing underlying their donations.

In May 1926, the entrepreneur Guillermo Solms donated “the sum of one hundred thousand francs” to start the construction of the *Casa del Estudiante español* in Paris, referred to as such from then on. This donation “deserves a two-fold applause”, according to the journalist, and perhaps also an opinion shared by the governmental leaders committed to the cause, since it not only represented a generous contribution, “but also a stimulus so that individual initiative may flow towards this beautiful accomplishment”. Quoting the same article, “in order to enable the Spanish colleges of higher education to send their students to the fruitful conviviality of the university *cité* of Paris, these initial contributions will be reflected in an individual donation. Therefore, when the works are



under way, our Government, which regards this enterprise with the interest and kindness it deserves, may make its protection effective” (La Casa del Estudiante español en París, 1926, p. 23).

From our perspective, the propaganda for the collection of funds that involved the publication of the article was a means to meet the financial difficulties of the Spanish government to tackle not only the construction of the Parisian project, but also to lay the foundations for its own university campus, in Madrid. To such end, the delegated Commission tried to reduce the size of the building: of the 150 rooms agreed upon after the first royal visit, and an attempt was made to return to the 70 or 80 rooms designed in the first draft. However, the commitments established with the *Cité* and with André Honnorat, made it impossible to change the project. While the public treasury did not permit further expenditure, the continuation of private funding appeared to be the only solution. A number of funds that had been channelled by a new commission presided by the Count of Romanones and composed of Solms, the Duke of Alba, Doctors Recaséns and Aguilar, the Marquis of Valdeiglesias and a gentleman by the name of Buendía (La Casa del Estudiante español en París, 1926, p. 23).

Although we do not know the amount of funds collected by this illustrious commission to start the construction works, it is known that the delegated Commission later created by Alfonso XIII, in October 1927, for the management and inspection of the *Colegio de España* construction works (composed by the Duque of Alba, Quiñones de León and Wenceslao González de Oliveros) left office on 19 November of that same year. Primo de Rivera then commissioned the Cultural Relations Board, under the Ministry of State “to perform the construction and implementation services of the *Colegio*”. The dictator provided the Board with a subsidy of 250.000 pesetas to start constructing the building (Real Orden 1424 de 10 de noviembre de 1927, 1927, p. 845); a construction estimated at two million pesetas (some eight million francs at the time), which did not begin until 1929 (Sazatornil Ruiz, 1995).

The university campus of Madrid, the great work that would commemorate the twenty fifth anniversary of the reign of Alfonso XIII, overshadowed the Parisian project. In the words of Jiménez Fraud:

the huge University Campus enterprise, patronized by the King (...) undoubtedly involved a reform of University life, entirely enclosed in unsuitable buildings, in narrow and noisy parts of the centre of the capital and lacking space so that the physical life of the students might develop, at least with basic hygiene conditions (...). The enterprise, however, deserved all kinds of praise. What was



reprehensible was the luxury it was intended to display and, above all, that attention be paid exclusively to the size of the buildings and their luxurious decor, without, deliberately, paying any attention to the internal reform of the University. (1971, pp. 469-470)

Alfonso XIII was constructing a monumental work in the Moncloa, inspired by the American university model in order to upgrade the unwieldy Spanish university of those years. However, in the eyes of Jiménez Fraud and the other institutionists, this great work was devoid of a pedagogical renewal on which it could be founded. “Suspicion increased when it was verified that those in charge, particularly the members of the Construction Board of the University Campus, were individuals with no connections to the ILE or the JAE, the most vehement promoters up to then of the university reform” (Niño Rodríguez, 2013, p. 86). According to the researcher, “it was not right that the University Campus project should be limited to constructing ostentatious buildings and imitating the style of the American university. It should also be concerned with suitably preparing future teachers” (Niño Rodríguez, 2013, p. 87).

For some, the University Campus of Madrid “is [was] far more urgent than the guest house for pensioners abroad, and could have been perfectly well replaced by the numerous hotels in the *barrio latino*” (La Ciudad Universitaria, 1929, para. 5); while for others, “the idea of building a house for teachers” in the *Cité Universitaire* of Paris called for a new impulse “so that (...) the commitment voluntarily undertaken by our Country to collaborate for a most worthy enterprise entrusted with protecting education and disseminating science is [would be] accomplished” (España en la Ciudad Universitaria de París, 1929, p. 21).

The King silenced the rumours and tempered the diplomatic relations with the *Fondation nationale* when, accompanied by the Duke of Miranda, he visited the French capital in the summer of 1930 (Le roi Alphonse XIII et M. Doumergue ont déjeuné hier à l'ambassade d'Espagne, 1930). He returned again in March of the following year (La Junta de Relaciones Culturales. España en la Ciudad Universitaria de París, 1931). However, and despite his repeated trips to Paris, the work was not progressing quickly enough, the deadlines had been extended and surpassed over and over again, and the funding required to complete the construction was more than the State could afford at the time (ACE, 148/6).



CHANGE OF REGIME AND INAUGURATION OF THE *COLEGIO DE ESPAÑA* (OR WHEN SPAIN ENTERED EUROPE)

With the arrival of the Second Republic on 14 April 1931, and after confronting a number of problems (including raising the issue of whether to surrender the building of the university of Paris, given the lack of means to complete the works (ACE, 149/2), the institutionists took charge of the educational projects in progress: they continued the works of the University Campus of Madrid, extended the reform that the Central University had prepared in 1922 to the rest of the Spanish universities, and successfully completed the construction of the *Colegio de España* in the *Cité Universitaire* of Paris with Jiménez Fraud leading the way as Director of the Student Residence Hall; in other words, Jiménez Fraud performed the duty of technical director of the Students Residence Hall and the Fundación del Amo in Madrid, and the *Colegio de España* in Paris. “Thanks to the support of the dean of the University”, says the institutionist, and thanks to the support:

of the outgoing secretary of the University campus, Dr. Aguilar, and the incoming secretary, Dr. Negrín, and the help from the Board of Cultural Relations of the Ministry of the State, of the architect of the *Colegio de España*, and thanks also to my dear friend Don Fernando de los Ríos for the consignments that led to the budget so that the works on the *Colegio* in Paris could be completed, and who reorganized the internal life of the Foundation and gave the last boost to the construction of the *Colegio de España*. (Jiménez Fraud, 1971, pp. 474-475)

Very concrete teaching and educational tasks were assigned to these three institutions. The ultimate goal was to form a class of directors that could pull Spain out of the “decadence” and backwardness in which it was immersed in relation to Europe, so as to embrace modernity. To this end, they counted on Ángel Establier and Andrés León, “two highly efficient individuals for their posts, with broad scientific knowledge and training and who identified totally with the ideals of the Hall of Residence” (Jiménez Fraud, 1971, p. 475).

Hence, in 1932, Alberto Jiménez Fraud began to work in close connection with Ángel Establier, a chemist and pharmacist, head of the Scientific Department of the IIC and LN at the time, to prepare the *Colegio de España*.

As may be observed in the correspondence between these two institutionists (ACE, 3/1), a correspondence in which “ordinary life” predominates, if, with this term, a second start up of the Students Hall of



Residence is being referred to, the *Colegio de España* implied a continuation of the institutionist project in the French capital.

In the daily correspondence taken and brought to and from Paris and Madrid in the diplomatic pouch, the “selection and reform enterprise” (Jiménez Fraud, 1971, p. 476) was made known, referring to a future leading class and a Spanish university that had already inaugurated the Student Hall of Residence in Madrid in 1910. However, one may also read the personal commitment to this cause of those who took on such projects since seemingly, at that moment “the most anguishingly pressing issue was to form a conscious, educated and loyal class of directors” (Jiménez Fraud, 1971, p. 436) which would inherit a project called Spain.

Jiménez Fraud intended to contribute by educating the students of his hall of residence, who were guided by public and civil values, transmitting to them that they would be capable of accomplishing that which the historical destinies of the race required of them with dignity.

The first schoolboys were admitted in October 1933, although the works had not yet been completed. Among the different tasks expected of the house director, Establier manifested in his correspondence with Jiménez Fraud, were his responsibility as tutor and counsellor in the academic trajectory of the residents. Some tutors were entrusted with the task of “deliberately and competently transmitting the cultural heritage that is passed from generation to generation, the features of liberal education, without which the university function is sterile” (Jiménez Fraud, 1971, p. 488). On 15 December 1933, Jiménez Fraud wrote the following to Establier:

I am extremely happy to hear that the *Colegio* is functioning well. You tell me that “every, or almost every night I leave the parlour to talk to the residents for a few minutes”, “Is that the only time you see them, or do you also see them during the day? Otherwise those relations appear to me to be insufficient. If you can give me more details on this matter I would be extremely grateful, as the entire success of this venture will depend on the daily and extensive relationship you maintain with the residents. Please forgive my persistence, but you already know how much I hold you in esteem and regard you as fundamental, in fact as the only fundamental one in the Hall of Residence. (ACE, 3/1)

The start up of this institution went from strength to strength, moving forward with the wind in its sails: the works progressed at great speed, Establier had considered the possibility of putting some money into making a library, they organised the first guided tours and excursions to the museums of the Louvre, Carnavalet, Cluny, Rodin, and to various laboratories and factories; they even planned a visit to the Natural



History Museum, and the residents began to organise the first scientific dissemination workshops.

Its official opening was postponed, for a number of reasons, until the spring of 1935. The inauguration, instigated by the Spanish government and the Spanish Ambassador in Paris, Juan Francisco Cárdenas, also counted on the presence of the French President of the Republic, Albert Lebrun; Sébastien Charlety, Council Chairman of the University of Paris; André Honnorat, Chairman of the National Foundation in the *Cité Universitaire*; Ramón Prieto Bances and André Mallarmé, Ministers of Spanish and French State Education, and José Prieto del Río, at that time Consul-General. Ortega y Gasset, Juan de la Cierva and López Otero were among the illustrious guests of the Spanish delegation who attended the event on Wednesday, 10 April. An event that congregated around five hundred people (among them the almost fifty resident students of the *Colegio* at the time). Gregorio Marañón, Ramón Menéndez Pidal, Manuel de Falla, Assín Palacios and Jacinto Benavente, although they did not attend, were also invited to the celebration.

Miguel de Unamuno “was to give a conference” on Thursday 11 April (Unamuno, 2014) and Blas Cabrera, father of physics in Spain, Vice-Chairman of the Cultural Relations Board of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Chairman of the Spanish Delegation, would also give a conference on Saturday 13 April. On Friday 12 April, the anniversary of the Second Republic was celebrated in the Spanish Embassy and, given the festive events of those days, an exhibition was launched on the engravings of Goya in the National Library of Paris. Sunday 14, as a final touch, the *Colegio* celebrated a gala ball. Finally, in order to continue to celebrate the inclusion of Spain in this international intellectual and political universe, the works of Dalí, Miró, Picasso, Juan Gris, Bores, Castellón, Gargallo Gerassi, González, Bernal, González de la Serna, Junyer, Gregorio Prieto, Viñes and María Blanchard were exhibited from 24 May to 13 June. This was the first, and undoubtedly the most remarkable exhibition of Spanish painters organized by the *Colegio* to date.

The “grandiose” participation of Spain in the *Cité Universitaire* was, in the opinion of Cabrera, the best contribution to the formation of a comprehensive human spirit, the unification of the soul of the communities and the maintenance of an unshakeable peace. In the eyes of the physicist, the *Colegio* also made the reincorporation of Spain in the scientific world possible “in order to accomplish—after a long interruption caused by the various battles sustained by our country—the work of the *Junta para Ampliación de Estudios* [Council for the Expansion of

Studies] presided by our fondly missed Cajal, to be able to clearly judge our abilities in the study of physics” (ACE, 1/1).

“The destiny of Spain and the universality of its language” was the title chosen for the intervention of Unamuno, “a kind of 'spiritual testament' of the old intellectual”, according to Rabaté (Unamuno, 2014, p. 26) in which he invites his audience to embrace the universal to feel the national. The *Colegio de España* in Paris had been constructed, in the opinion of the writer, “to win over (...) the French to the Spanish language and at the same time, here it is!, winning the Spanish over to the French language”. For Unamuno, the knowledge of others, the different knowledge, can give us the key to our personal and intimate knowledge. Only thus, and by means of this “reciprocal conquest can one reach true universality, which is above all that is not common to us, embodied in that which is our best, the eternal us we want to be, even if we do not get there” (2014, p. 59).

According to Magalhães “the representation of education involves a systemic notion and intellectuals can function as a system. They configure and demarcate the educational field” (2016, p. 303). This is the perspective we ought to adopt in order to read and interpret discourse and all the demonstrations that were carried out during the construction and inauguration of the Spanish hall of residence in Paris (however a more lengthy analysis would require more pages and another space). Some of the intellectuals of the Generation of 98 and the Generation of 14 met in that exact location to bring feeling and meaning to the event. Those intellectuals also represented education and were unable to ignore it, although it was disguised as a political, diplomatic, or cultural act; since, as well noted by the author, the intellectuals “represent education in a full sense, as they prefigure the different acceptations and, fundamentally, because they ensure the relationship between education and society” (Magalhães, 2016, p. 303).

Most of the Spanish and French newspapers paid great homage and offered words of kindness to the *Colegio de España* and its inauguration. However, in *El Debate*, Antonio Bermúdez Cañete claimed that the republican celebrations around the recently opened hall of residence would not have been possible if the government of Alfonso XIII—with the Duke of Alba and Quiñones de León leading the moves, had not made a commitment to the French government for its construction three years later. The University Campus of Madrid and the *Colegio de España* in Paris, “a true University, guest house and classes”, are, according to this critical journalist “daughters of the Spain of today. But a today a little more like yesterday than the vision which the radical socialists both here and abroad currently have” (Bermúdez Cañete, 1935, para. 10).



Mariano Daranas, press correspondent in Paris for the daily *ABC* [Figure 3], writes that the inauguration took place in an environment of “anti-universality” and “anti-university” in view of “the offensive of the native school census against the foreign students”. Those “outsiders” were being criticised and vetoed for “infiltrating”, having completed their studies in Sorbonne, in the liberal professions and technical services of the French state, leaving doctors and engineers without jobs. According to the journalist, the Hispanic-American students asked the Spanish and Italian governments to transfer their records and to validate the subjects passed in the university of the capital, so that they could complete their studies in one of those countries. He praises the construction of the Spanish hall of residence effusively, whose layout and spatial planning “fortunately turn their backs on the conceptions that inspired other halls of residence”, and reflects upon the construction of López Otero, extolling its monastic, military and civil appearance, regarded as a representation of the Spanish character abroad and as a “lesson of eternity”. However, the Spanish journalist criticises the French *Cité Universitaire* project because “neither plastically, nor spiritually (...) does it or will it ever exercise the hegemony dreamt of by its sponsors and animators”. The idea of rejuvenating the international influence of renaissance Sorbonne, “and at the same time of establishing an international university campus, or rather, a school League of Nations”, seems to have failed in the eyes of the chronicler for two reasons: “if one part of the State’s root erred on the side of hardship or greed, the same State or society and nation, of which it is their exponent, lacked an ideal that was able to gather, under the same flag, the new universal generations”. The lack of financial resources on the part of the French government to fully accomplish the ambitious project, added to the unmeasured zeal of its programme to enhance its cultural and political influence abroad, coupled with its imperialistic diplomatic exercise caused the *Cité Universitaire* to emerge “weak in spirit and lacking this young animal sap that simmers beneath the models of North American foundations”. But there is even more: Daranas bodes “a vegetative life, a rotation in mediocrity and anaemia” to this Genevan LN miniature, this LN of the students (Daranas, 1935, p. 6-7). Despite all, modernity was, at that time, a synonym of scientific progress and avant-garde, and the *Cité Universitaire* still appeared to be dreaming about it in 1935.

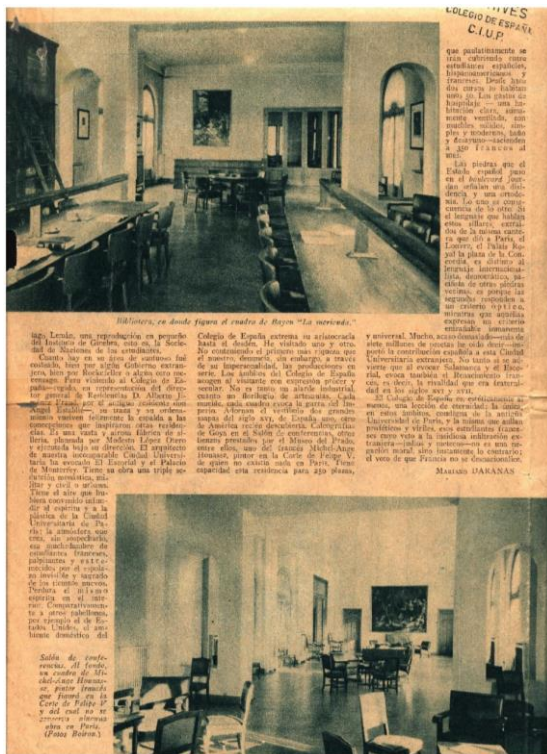
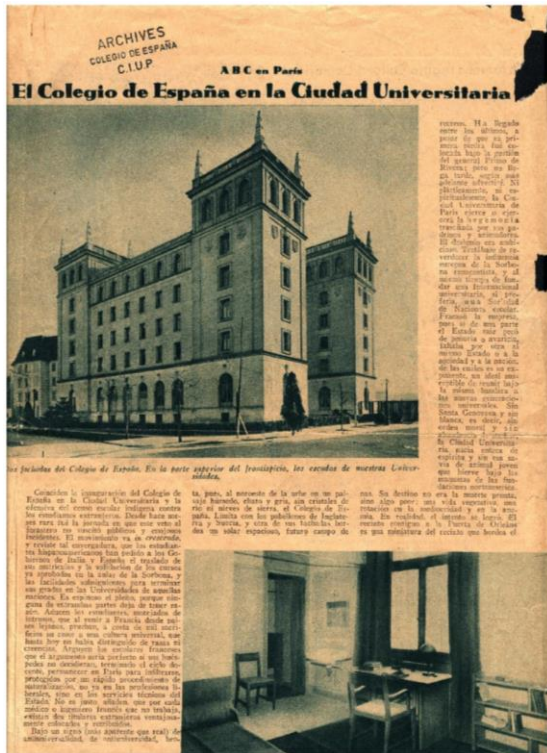


Figure 3. The Spanish Press echoes the inauguration of the Colegio de España in the Cité Universitaire de Paris (1935). On 10 April 1935, Mariano Daranas publishes an incisive report in ABC on the details of the inauguration of the Colegio de España in Paris and the international university scenario of those years (1935, p. 6-7).



Sadly, if we take into account the events that blighted Spain and the whole world some years later, perhaps we can speak of the failure of the LN and its peace ideals. When we consider the shallowness of all these pacifist ideas with which they wanted to build a better society, we can assume the lack of meaning of an institution like the *Cité Universitaire* of Paris, and its particular idiosyncrasy. Nevertheless, and beyond the frustration that the Spanish Civil War and Second World War brought with them, or the many discourses that were not so ideal which promoted intellectual cooperation and the creation of a different university reality in the south of the French capital, the efforts of those scientific, artistic and individual intellectuals as Mercier pointed out in the eighteenth century when imagining the Paris of 2440—were a true triumph, the great victory and force behind the progress of society, life, this world of ours. Some achievements, according to the author, are largely due to the eventful enterprise of individual men and women, dwarves at the shoulders of giants, but also, in our opinion, due to the support of international policy and their governments which, in the 20s, were able to create environments that fostered the development of the arts, letters and science, such as the *Colegio de España* in Paris particularly, which has just commemorated eighty years of a trajectory, and the *Cité Universitaire* in general, which will soon celebrate a century of existence.

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