



John Krige / Helke Rausch (Eds.)

# American Foundations and the Coproduction of World Order in the Twentieth Century

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John Krige and Helke Rausch

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## Table of Contents

John Krige and Helke Rausch: Introduction – Tracing the Knowledge: Power Nexus of American Philanthropy . . . . .	7
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### 1. Interwar Philanthropy – Internationalism and Power Politics

Jens Wegener: “An Organisation, European in Character” – European Agency and American Control at the Centre Européen, 1925–1940 . . . . .	37
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Ludovic Tournès: L’américanisation de la science française? – La fondation Rockefeller et la construction d’une politique de recherche en biomédecine (1918–1939) . . . . .	61
---	----

Helke Rausch: Expertenkämpfe – Die Rockefeller Foundation im Interessendickicht europäischer Anthropologie, 1925/26–1940 . .	85
---	----

Madeleine Herren: Kommentar – Ambivalente Akteure in grenz- übergreifenden Netzwerken der Zwischenkriegszeit . . . . .	114
---	-----

### 2. Constructing World Order in the Cold War

#### *Redefining the Mission*

Paul Weindling: From Disease Prevention to Population Control – The Realignment of Rockefeller Foundation Policies 1920s–1950s . .	125
---	-----

Tim B. Müller: Die Macht der Menschenfreunde – Die Rockefeller Foundation, die Sozialwissenschaften und die amerikanische Außenpolitik im Kalten Krieg . . . . .	146
--	-----

Kiran Klaus Patel: Kommentar – Rockefeller Foundation, Kalter Krieg und Amerikanisierung . . . . .	173
---	-----

#### *The Coproduction of Knowledge*

John Krige: The Ford Foundation, Physics and the National Security State – A Study in the Transnational Circulation of Knowledge . . . .	189
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Giles Scott-Smith: Expanding the Diffusion of US Jurisprudence – The Netherlands as a ‘Beachhead’ for US Foundations in the 1960s .	210
--	-----

Nicole Sackley: Foundation in the Field – The Ford Foundation’s New Delhi Office and the Construction of Development Knowledge, 1951–1970 . . . . .	232
Volker R. Berghahn: Commentary – Turntables or Transatlantic Two-Lane Turnpikes? . . . . .	261
Thanks . . . . .	271
Bibliography . . . . .	273
List of Authors . . . . .	301

John Krige and Helke Rausch

## Introduction – Tracing the Knowledge: Power Nexus of American Philanthropy

The rise and international expansion of large-scale American foundations is widely recognised as one of the key features of the “American Century”.<sup>1</sup> Various Carnegie philanthropies as well as the rapidly expanding range of initiatives taken by the Rockefeller Foundation testify to the unprecedented international strength of US philanthropy beginning shortly after the First World War. Their agendas successively evolved from ad hoc charitable programmes to highly professionalised interventions<sup>2</sup>, and from a domestic to a transatlantic, if not to say global, scale reaching out primarily to Europe, but also to Asia and Latin America.<sup>3</sup> After the Second World War they were joined by the Ford Foundation, which explicitly used its extensive resources to promote American-style democracy and decidedly Western values worldwide.<sup>4</sup> All of these organisations adopted institutional reform, education and training as part of their philanthropic goals. Progressivist and New Deal ideals of social reform in the inter-war period gave way to the more instrumental use of knowledge as power in the Cold War, when America’s vast system of knowledge production was harnessed for its global transformative

1 See Brinkley, “Concept”; De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*. Against the background of the existing bulk of research, we focus on more recent publications of roughly the last decade, mentioning older studies only where crucial to our argument.

2 See Friedman/McGarvie, *Charity, Philanthropy and Civility*.

3 See, amongst the more recent of the many publications that deal with specific instances of global philanthropic commitment in and beyond Europe, Fangerau, “Private Wissenschaft”; Sachse, “Gereinigte Wissenschaft”; Hammack/Heydemann, *Projecting Institutional Logics*; Nemchenok, “So Fair a Thing”; Brier, “AIDS”; Hull, “Conflict and Collaboration”; Korey, *Repressive Regimes*; Berghahn, “America’s Cultural Cold War”; Birn, *Marriage of Convenience*; Shepherd, “Imperial Science”; Stein, “Vital Times”; Lawrence, *Rockefeller Money*; Hewa/Stapleton, *New Political Culture*. Interventions in Europe are more specifically dealt with especially by Gemelli et al., see below. Among the more recent insider accounts are Geithner, “Ford Foundation in Southeast Asia”; Sutton, “Nation-Building”; Bresnan, *At Home Abroad*.

4 See Krige, *American Hegemony*; Berghahn, *Intellectual Cold Wars*; Rausch, “Scientific Philanthropy”; Rausch, “Verordnetes Wissen?”.



agenda. Improved scientific knowledge and understanding, embedded in a tissue of social relations that tied centre to periphery, became a preferred instrument for exporting American ideas and models abroad with the purpose of improving the human condition and warding off rival ideologies.<sup>5</sup>

While there seems to be a consensus on the general shape of the historical trajectory that integrates US philanthropy into a broader context of both global and US-American history, our sense is that there needs to be a sharper focus, in both current and future research, on the intricacies of this worldwide philanthropic expansion. Indeed, in this volume we tackle a specific set of important issues that demand further study and that are conspicuously under-theorised – notwithstanding the interesting research still being conducted into the activities of the foundations along the lines of the now-current master narrative. This collection of articles is interested both in a diachronic *longue-durée* perspective of philanthropic encounters during the twentieth century as well as in the specificities philanthropists had to deal with when building their social networks. How are we to make sense of the confusing plethora of parallel processes in US philanthropy from the 1920s to the 1970s? How should we rate their range and effects? And how can we connect apparently disparate instances of philanthropic funding and eventual knowledge transfers especially in Europe to a broader, more complex analysis of twentieth-century transnational or global history?

When it comes to answering these questions, even the ever-growing body of scholarly research on the multifaceted interventions of the Carnegie, Rockefeller and Ford foundations throughout the world has major lacunae. On the one hand, a host of studies tend to confine themselves to small-scale analyses of the funding of individuals or institutions.<sup>6</sup> While this is certainly invaluable for a sound understanding of local constellations and action, it often tends to ignore the more general regional or (trans)national circumstances and logics of philanthropic activities. On the other hand, many broad-brush studies of US philanthropy proliferate.<sup>7</sup> While it is obvious that current research projects – including this volume – still avail themselves of some of these, others tend to restrict the history of US philanthropic activities to a domestic dynamic and thus do not explore the relationship with the

5 See generally Engerman, “American Knowledge”; Guilhot, *International Relations Theory*; Tournès, *Sciences de l’homme*; Müller, *Krieger und Gelehrte*; Parmar/Cox, *Soft Power*.

6 For US philanthropy in Western Europe see the many invaluable contributions especially by Giuliana Gemelli et al. such as Gemelli/Macleod, *American Foundations in Europe*; Gemelli, “Unacceptables”; eadem, *Ford Foundation and Europe*. See also Fleck, *Transatlantische Bereicherungen*; Tournès, *L’Argent de l’influence*.

7 See Zunz, *Philanthropy in America*; Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad*.

“periphery” in any detail.<sup>8</sup> More to the point, many still seem to ignore the critical question of whether the international history of philanthropy is in actual fact simply about transferring knowledge from the North American West to the rest of the world, a diffusionist model of knowledge circulation that we emphatically reject in this book.

For all the richness of existing research, there is ample reason to insist that the issue of US philanthropy still requires sustained reconsideration. This volume accordingly sets out from the proposition that US philanthropy needs to be integrated into a bigger picture – without underestimating its internal polymorphism on the one hand or squeezing it into an all-too-narrow and static frame on the other. To this end, our point of departure is the hypothesis that US philanthropic initiatives and multiple research activities sponsored around the world (in Western Europe in particular) must be understood as embedding knowledge in all its forms in international political, social and cultural power alignments. Thus, we aim to link the production and circulation of knowledge promoted by US philanthropy to a broader twentieth-century inter- or transnational history, shaped not only by such fundamental processes as inter-war Wilsonian Internationalism and Cold-War bloc antagonisms, but also by both US and European late colonialism and development as well as, not the least, by modernisation ideologies that, as we know from recent research, were not monopolised by the United States or the northern hemisphere but proliferated throughout the world.<sup>9</sup>

This volume focuses on the knowledge–power nexus that lay at the core of US philanthropic activity during the inter-war period and for the first two or three decades after the Second World War. The horrors of the Great War provided the recently established foundations with an opportunity to extend the scope of their activities from the domestic to the international sphere, and to support initiatives as diverse as the promotion of public health in Europe and the creation of organisations that were supposed to make another war politically impossible. The transformations of world order in the 1970s set the upper limit to our analysis. This decade is marked by a decline of the nation-state as an autonomous historical actor along with renewed global interdependence typified by the oil crisis of 1973–74, the rise of neo-liberal economics and its emphasis on deregulation, the turn to increasingly sovereign market forces, and the proliferation of non-governmental organi-

<sup>8</sup> See among many others Khurana/Kimura/Fourcade, “How Foundations Think”; Buxton, *Patronizing the Public*; Rojas, “Mission in Black Studies”; Lagemann, *Politics of Knowledge*; Sealander, *Private Wealth*.

<sup>9</sup> See Latham, *Right Kind of Revolution*; Ekbladh, *Great American Mission*; Engerman et al., *Staging Growth*; Bright/Geyer, “Globalgeschichte”; Büschel/Speich, *Entwicklungswelten*.

sations.<sup>10</sup> If previously the foundations had operated in a world in which they could count on American leadership, if not to say dominance, they now had to reposition themselves in a rapidly changing global regime. These radical transformations call for a separate study of their own, though the transnational focus of this book undoubtedly provides useful raw material for such an analysis.

With these considerations in mind, we adopt a twofold research perspective: First, we propose to account for the extent to which transnational processes affected American philanthropists over the period in question. As we have suggested, they obviously benefitted from the economic superiority of the foundations during the inter-war period and even more so from a world order underpinned by US military and political hegemony after 1945.<sup>11</sup> The structural ascendance of the Carnegie, Rockefeller and Ford foundations over their institutional or individual grantees abroad is not to be underestimated; it definitively shaped philanthropic encounters and actions throughout the twentieth century to an extent that needs careful study in each case. Second, this volume aims to historicise the knowledge–power nexus at the core of philanthropy by systematically incorporating additional substantial factors that influenced negotiations over knowledge circulation in different places and periods. Taken together, the following contributions argue that the asymmetries in favour of American foundations can only partly explain the terms of encounters and negotiations between philanthropists and their potential and actual counterparts, especially in Europe. The articles stress that it is imperative to take seriously the role and importance of the foundations' respective negotiating partners in the dyadic relationship. Only then do we no longer expect the philanthropic endeavour to merely mirror international power imbalances. As many contributions in this volume suggest, foundations could not unilaterally impose US scientific paradigms or "Atlantic" values on the world. Rather, each time philanthropists entered different local, regional and national stages and settings abroad, their ambition to reconfigure substantial parts of the academic sector or social, cultural and political practices met with incongruous traditions of disciplines and politics, institutional settings and complex actor constellations. Their funding activities in fact exposed the philanthropists to a whole set of asymmetries both in spatial as well as in chronological terms to which foundation officers in their turn had to adapt.

10 See Ferguson et al., *Shock of the Global*.

11 See Maier, *Among Empires*; Ninkovich, *Diplomacy of Ideas*.

## 1. American Foundations and the Coproduction of World Order in the Twentieth Century: Explorations in an Open Field

The contributions to this volume all take the knowledge–power nexus in philanthropic activities as a point of departure. While each author adopts his or her own timeframe and explores specific settings, they all deal with the role of agency – whether it concerns foundations as self-proclaimed vectors of knowledge circulation (Section I) or local grantees as their distinct and avowedly self-interested counterparts (Section II). While many of the characteristics illustrated pertain to both inter-war and Cold-War situations, it is obvious that these two periods remain decidedly distinct (Section III). Thus, this volume presents case-studies that throw light on how US philanthropy, as a driver of knowledge circulation, operated in different structural, regional and personal contexts abroad.

The collection begins with a discussion from three perspectives, exploring representative instances of philanthropic initiatives in Western Europe after the First World War. All of them contrast attempts at diffusionist control with the regulating effects of the role played by the foundations' local counterparts. Jens Wegener traces the tactics adopted by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP) in its promotion of the “international mind” campaign in Europe, intended to diplomatically counteract US isolationist foreign policy. The CEIP's hope of furthering both educational exchange and a more scientific approach to foreign relations was undermined by the conflict-prone power politics of the European grantees. The next two contributions deal with the Rockefeller Foundation as the most bustling transatlantic US philanthropy with a strong historical impact. Ludovic Tournès focuses on both country- and knowledge-specific dimensions in his discussion of the foundation's intervention in the field of French biomedicine. By virtue of prior French commitments in this particular area of knowledge and of various pre-established transatlantic interchanges, much of what might be superficially interpreted as strong US interference in French science emerges as an attempt to modernise a pioneering research field by adapting philanthropic activities to local peculiarities. Helke Rausch explores inter-war Rockefeller philanthropy from a comparative angle, focussing on anthropology as a major knowledge input to social planning in crisis-ridden late colonial contexts. By comparing and contrasting parallel funding commitments in France and Britain, she identifies the specific circumstances that favoured knowledge co-production. European grantees emerge as idiosyncratic actors (and as modernising agents in their own right, in fact) who were quite capable of manipulating their benefactors when it came to negotiating what was deemed to be an American agenda.

The contributions in the larger, second group of articles deal with the changed context in which both philanthropists and their grantees were active after the Second World War. Paul Weindling begins with a view from inside the Rockefeller Foundation and shows how a major organisational change both reflected and pre-empted a more basic reorientation of priorities. The closing of the Rockefeller Foundation's International Health Division in 1951 testifies to a major politics- and generation-induced shift from international health issues to population and nutrition programmes intended to support future-oriented knowledge in a world that segregated a prosperous West from a "backward" Southern hemisphere. While endorsing the fundamental imprint of East-West ideological rivalry in US philanthropy, Tim B. Müller then traces the myriad intricacies of early Cold-War philanthropy. He not only profiles central Rockefeller funding initiatives that testified to the philanthropic power politics of US-contingent knowledge production, but also illustrates that this attempt at "high modernity" was at times deliberately unconventional and pluralist. Alternative ideological approaches that were not easily harmonised with the Western liberal consensus of the day were encouraged, if only to demonstrate the pre-eminence of the United States' capacity for tolerance and openness as compared to its closed and secretive rival.

The next three articles in this part of the book track crucial varieties of knowledge circulation and network building from the 1950s to the 1970s. John Krige revisits his earlier study of the Ford Foundation's support for European physics in Copenhagen and Geneva. This time, rather than reading the programme through the lens of the transmission of cultural values, he focuses on it as an example of the transnational circulation of sensitive knowledge. The approach privileges the role of the State Department and the CIA, alongside the Ford Foundation, in the awarding of these grants and demands an analysis of the foundation's articulation with the national security state. It also highlights the role of physicists themselves as fellows, rather than that of officers, trustees and laboratory directors, and invites us to understand international scientific exchange as the pursuit of sometimes less noble national interests, including informal intelligence gathering.

Giles Scott-Smith illustrates the core elements of hegemonic knowledge co-production in a study of Ford Foundation funding for international law institutions in the Netherlands. The Ford Foundation hoped these would become intellectual stepping-stones and multipliers for expanding the scope of US norms of jurisprudence and Atlanticism throughout Europe. A transatlantic convergence in legal practices would supposedly facilitate US relationships with a diverse and complex continent. Lastly, Nicole Sackley moves beyond this region and looks into Ford Foundation strategies for co-producing "development" knowledge in India via a specially installed field

office in New Delhi. This initiative had to contend with local circumstances, which differed substantially from those encountered in a post-war Europe under reconstruction. Co-operation with the Ford Foundation office allowed Indian elites to camouflage controversial decisions on development policies in a language of technocratic expertise. Notwithstanding the differences, the situation in India resembled that in European settings in the sense that potential and actual grantees could exploit their privileged position in order to gain strategic political influence within their respective local environments.

Sackley's is the only article that deals with America's relations outside of Western Europe. This partly reflects our determination to do a longitudinal study that throws into relief the changes in motivation brought about by the Cold War as well as the centrality of the situation in Europe in 1945 that triggered that change. Because the US emerged stronger than ever from the Second World War – and because Europe was in ruins – the American transformative project could move centre stage in the thinking of the foundations and successive US administrations: Their overriding goal was controlled modernisation and the construction of an American-led regime of world order, and they had the resources to make that goal meaningful. In the 1950s, as the process of decolonisation took off along with the rise of peasant power and the danger of Communism in the “Third World”, the transformative agenda became also a global struggle for the soul of mankind.<sup>12</sup> Even if this broader agenda is represented by only one article in this volume, we hope that the insights presented in the collection are portable to other regions of the globe and to other case-studies, and that they can be used to enrich the growing body of excellent work on issues like post-war population control and agricultural development.<sup>13</sup>

## 2. Foundations as Vectors for Circulating Modernisation Knowledge

Philanthropists had a characteristic way of legitimising their programmatic goals and action in their voluminous annual and official reports and, ever so often, when officially negotiating with potential grantees. They conveyed an often self-congratulatory altruism coupled with the claim that their efforts were driven solely by the desire to contribute to the social and moral progress of mankind. These actor-centred declarations of an allegedly disinterested liberalism (or even humanitarianism) need historically based critical deconstruction – albeit one that is free of the ideological commitments that

12 See Westad, *Global Cold War*; Leffler/Westad, *Cambridge History of the Cold War*.

13 See Cullather, *Hungry World*; Connelly, *Fatal Misconception*.

have often marked such critiques in the past.<sup>14</sup> It would be hard to deny that US philanthropy was not least a matter of geo-politics – the attempt at virtually buying loyalty and ultimately making the world a site for implementing the modernising fantasies<sup>15</sup> of foundations who always claimed to be acting independently of the US Administration. To identify such self-perceptions, however, is not to say that this defined the substance of their accomplishments, or, perhaps more to the point, that this was how foundations were contemporarily perceived by others. Indeed, the following articles reveal a wide spectrum of visions and modes of philanthropic operation that allow us to historically qualify and categorise the American philanthropists as (self-proclaimed) vectors of global stabilisation and modernisation. At the same time, many articles illustrate how this materialised in very different funding patterns of the “big three”, especially in Europe.

Together with the Rockefeller Foundation, the Carnegie Endowment was one of the first major philanthropies to engage in the European theatre in the 1920s. Programmatically speaking, the CEIP figured prominently as a harbinger of legal internationalism, meant to secure US governance of the post-First World War world by resolving interstate disputes with the aid of legalist strategies for conflict resolution. Its most prominent American leaders, such as James Brown Scott and Nicholas M. Butler, wanted to promote the internationalist rapprochement of Europeans based on intellectual exchange and (legal) knowledge transfers across the Atlantic. Their expectations bore witness to the contemporary faith, promulgated within elite circles, in the regulating potential of academic discourse and scientific knowledge, and more explicitly in the potential of international law for appeasement. At a time when post-war Republican administrations were backing away from associating with the League of Nations, the CEIP establishment advocated Wilsonian internationalism to fight anti-democratic ideologies. This would become the overriding mission of the Carnegie Endowment in the light of the withdrawal of the US Government from foreign entanglements.

The CEIP's inter-war activities reveal two important features of foundations' behaviour. First, outcomes could fall far short of expectations. The CEIP's strategy to provide allegedly neutral knowledge to investigate the cause of bellicose power politics ultimately failed to contribute significantly to the post-war political settlement. Tempers were still raw after the experience of 1914–18. The Paris Peace Conference also provoked persistent interstate conflicts and political instabilities.<sup>16</sup> To gain momentum in such unfa-

14 See Berman, *Influence*.

15 See Engerman/Unger, “Global History of Modernization”; Raphael, “Ordnungsmuster”.

16 See Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*.

vourable conditions – and almost in a move of defensive reaction – CEIP representatives resorted to strategies of adjustment.<sup>17</sup> They embarked on multilingual publications to secure the broadest possible reach for their activities; they gave up exclusive coalitions with European pacifists and reached out to the reinvigorated nationalist forces instead; and they became sensitive to European fears of being dominated by a mighty American player and therefore acted more discreetly, even if they were still as power-oriented as before. Once they encountered a politically charged situation in post-war Europe, philanthropists shifted to making practical arrangements that were responsive to the precarious morale of their European counterparts. In that sense, the CEIP leaders allowed European interests to modify philanthropic practice while they clearly insisted on American precedence.

If, in the inter-war period, the Carnegie agenda remained somewhat limited to issues of “international understanding”, the programmatic goals and funding activities of the Rockefeller Foundation were more widespread. One of the most important pioneering efforts of the Rockefeller Foundation was to transfer the practices of the natural sciences to the field of biological knowledge, deemed to be trapped in metaphysical speculation.<sup>18</sup> The attempt to reconfigure French biomedicine as part of its global involvement proved to be a rather smooth undertaking. The foundation’s engagement was facilitated by the basic congruency between philanthropist expectations and the aims of the majority of French researchers, who spoke out in favour of a more coherent science policy and who could easily be mobilised for multidisciplinary large-scale projects since they shared the philanthropists’ positivist faith in the progressive potential of fundamental research. It may well be that, in the period after 1945,<sup>19</sup> the Rockefeller Foundation’s preference for fundamental research resulted from the fact that it was conceived of as enriching the French research landscape while also generating action-oriented knowledge that could be useful for the United States as well.

The Rockefeller Foundation’s funding of anthropology in inter-war Europe suggests that philanthropic ambitions were partially inspired by the officers’ expectation that Europe and its overseas territories could serve as laboratory spaces.<sup>20</sup> While the American foundation, in line with the official foreign policy communiqués of the US administrations at the time, avoided taking a clear anti-colonial stance, Rockefeller observers were attracted by the idea of engaging in the production of anthropological expert knowledge that would potentially enrich American strategies for dealing with their do-

17 See Wegener in this volume.

18 See Abir-Am, “Rise of Molecular Biology”.

19 See Krige, *American Hegemony*, 12–13.

20 See Tilley, *Africa as a Living Laboratory*.



mestic and contemporary multi-ethnic society. There was no explicit philanthropic attempt to back up European colonial policies; rather, these were deemed objectionable as they were based on special and privileged economic relations between the metropolitan powers and their respective colonial possessions.<sup>21</sup> In view of its role as a global philanthropist, the Rockefeller Foundation's anthropology programme in inter-war Britain and France essentially testified to the technocratic vision of its representatives, who believed that such engagements would foster modern politics as well as social and political stability. Funding for both anthropology and biomedical research in France and Britain in the inter-war period illustrates the Rockefeller Foundation's outstanding position as a key player in what was conceived of as progress-oriented and politically adaptable research to foster social stability.

With the advent of the Cold War, the animating spirit behind philanthropic policies and engagement on a global scale, and more explicitly in Europe, became more combative.<sup>22</sup> Each of the major philanthropic players – the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations – approached the new situation in its own way. Skilfully combining inter-war attitudes with an international engagement that bore witness to the exigencies of the early Cold War, the Rockefeller Foundation consolidated its extensive involvement abroad in the 1950s and early 1960s. One of the hallmarks of its funding operations in Europe became support for research targeted at deciphering the ideological enemy. Some projects bore explicit witness to confrontational Cold-War thinking, like the Rockefeller patronage of Secret Service analyses of the Soviet Union by European emigrants and American social and humanities scholars. Others were less ideologically charged: Rockefeller representatives emphatically avoided aligning their grant-giving activities with the sort of politically desirable knowledge production that was deliberately financed by the State Department. For example, foundation officers gave ample scope to leftist thinking that was co-produced by former German-Jewish immigrants, such as Herbert Marcuse, and American intellectuals shaped by New Deal liberalism, notably Barrington Moore – and this at the very moment when the domestic politics of the Eisenhower Administration were obsessed by McCarthy's witch-hunt on Communism. In this respect, the Rockefeller Foundation became a vector of modernisation in a ground-breaking new sense of the notion: Its funding strategy lent weight to a kind of Cold-War social science and knowledge that included critical reflections on the self-confident expectations of a Western linear, teleological notion of modernisation that converged on the American social model. This does not mean

21 See Louis, "American Anti-Colonialism".

22 See Krige, *American Hegemony* and Berghahn, *Intellectual Cold Wars*.

that the Rockefeller Foundation was willing to dilute its clear alignment with the West. Quite the contrary, Rockefeller officers ostentatiously conceded intellectual latitude to their leftist grantees exactly because they were convinced that supporting cutting-edge research even at the systemic margins of Western science would further confirm the hegemonic potential of a vastly superior Western knowledge culture. In the long run, the Rockefeller Foundation basically patronised Western leftist critiques of Communism, which proved to be much more enduring than the McCarthyist hysteria of the 1950s that was quickly discredited.

While much philanthropic energy was directed towards Europe, the Rockefeller Foundation also became active in a wide area of non-Western countries, funding an enormously broad range of what was defined as modernisation expertise.<sup>23</sup> The Rockefeller International Health Board proved to be a pioneer arm of Rockefeller philanthropy, initiating pilot programmes mainly targeted at hookworm, yellow fever and malaria eradication. Beginning in the inter-war years, it sought to bring modern Western medicine and especially American tropical medicine to the Southern hemisphere. Yet such top-down techno-politics of health could not prevent local agents from asserting their own views of how health policies could best be realised.<sup>24</sup> In addition to the self-declared humanitarianism, anxieties about regional instability as a result of poverty and social unrest in the areas of intervention engaged philanthropic concerns. All the same, in 1951 the Rockefeller Foundation unexpectedly closed down its International Health Division. This structural disruption of inter-war practices has been the subject of diverse scholarly interpretations, and it reveals the myriad internal and external exigencies and pressures upon philanthropic elites which had accumulated at the outset of the Cold War. It is argued here that the restructuring was less an indication of the unreserved positive appraisal of a successfully completed programme than a sign of internal institutional weaknesses in the division's approach to medical intervention along with a widespread disillusionment with international health activities. The alarmist tone of the neo-Malthusian narrative in the early 1950s, pointing to imminent global decline as a result of cataclysmic population growth,<sup>25</sup> figured prominently in marginalising philanthropic interest in what was now conceived of as an outdated approach to public health. Some even insisted that it was irresponsible to save lives if one could not properly contain population expansion and feed the

23 See Berman, "Educational Colonialism in Africa".

24 See Amrith, *Decolonizing International Health*; Solomon/Murard/Zylberman, *Shifting Boundaries*. On the issue of local agency in Rockefeller Foundation health policies, see also Borowy, *World Health*.

25 See Connelly, *Fatal Misconception*.

teeming (saved) millions. Thus, the competing claims of newly emerging expert communities from both within and without traditional philanthropic domains of intervention catalysed major adjustments of the Rockefeller Foundation's agenda.

The combative spirit of Cold-War philanthropy was especially present in the positioning of the Ford Foundation, which emerged as one of the staunchest strongholds of American Cold-Warriors, while not necessarily being congruent with each and every move of US foreign policy of the day.<sup>26</sup> We must be careful not to take the self-proclaimed agendas of the foundations at face value: They could engage other domestic actors who had their own motives for supporting a particular initiative. The foundations did not act alone during the Cold War, particularly when the projects they supported could be understood as contributing in important ways to the anti-Communist struggle. In this case, their grant-giving activities catalysed the interest of other arms of the Administration, and their motives for making awards had to be combined with the quite different and sometimes contradictory demands placed on them by the administration in Washington. Indeed, the Ford Foundation could not act autonomously when promoting international exchange with two major Western European physics research laboratories in the 1950s. The knowledge that would circulate through these nodes was at first deemed too sensitive by the State Department and the CIA to allow scientists from the Communist bloc to become part of the programme. The Ford Foundation adjusted the meaning of "international" accordingly, as did the directors of the two laboratories in question. Later this position was reversed, and the promotion of the noble ideal of international scientific co-operation was subverted by the opportunities it provided for informal intelligence gathering through American encounters with Soviet and Chinese physicists. In cases like these foundation rhetoric, while not empty, certainly served as a smoke-screen for the performance of typical Cold-War rivalry and the pursuit of American scientific and technological pre-eminence. The promotion of international peace and mutual understanding that provided the major public rationale for the Ford Foundation's intervention went hand in glove with the informal circulation of insights into Soviet and Chinese physics back to the CIA and the FBI – apparently with the willing consent not only of the officers and the President of Ford, but also of much of the American physics community.

The Ford Foundation's activities in the Netherlands described in this volume were part of their effort to promote the practices of American law as a universal model of organising and regulating Western democratic societies. Their choice of partners only testified to the philanthropists' intimate

26 See Berghahn, *Intellectual Cold Wars*; Krige, *American Hegemony*.

knowledge of the European terrain, which made the Netherlands appear as an exceptionally appropriate stage for such endeavours. Thus, the Ford Foundation targeted a joint law summer school at Leiden and Amsterdam universities as well as Dutch legal institutions such as the Hague Academy of International Law as strategic “beachheads” into Western Europe. By introducing legal expertise at critical nodes of knowledge formation, the foundation hoped to increase the possibilities of transferring an American awareness of problems and models for conflict resolution to the very heart of European political practice. In addition, by training emerging administrative, political and economic elites from Africa and Asia at privileged Dutch law institutions, the foundation also hoped to sponsor “beachheads” to the “Third World”, which was emerging as fertile ground for enthusiastic philanthropic modernisation campaigns.

Though American philanthropy was already engaged in the Southern hemisphere during the inter-war years,<sup>27</sup> the struggle for allegiance and the competing social models for “development” that emerged during the Cold War – and the fear of political blowback if the Administration intervened too conspicuously – encouraged the foundations to redirect their resources. They scaled down expenditures on Western regions while dramatically increasing investments in the Southern hemisphere beginning in the late 1950s. In doing so, they were not simply arms of the US foreign policy establishment, determined to cut the ground from under Communism. For the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations, the invention of, and intervention in, the “Third World” was undoubtedly a matter of securing an American presence and influence in the region. The mutually reinforcing politicisation and scientisation of discourses on population, poverty and hunger that had begun to take root in the mid-1940s dovetailed with the emergence of the Southern hemisphere as a new laboratory where philanthropists could experiment with technocratic social engineering utopias and extraordinary large-scale projects that would transfer supposedly modernising knowledge from the advanced US metropole to the “backward” periphery.<sup>28</sup>

Excessive rates of population growth against the backdrop of increasing poverty and hunger – and the threat posed by Mao Zedong’s model of development – turned democratic India into a major crisis region in the view of the self-proclaimed development experts of the day. It was thus also an attractive theatre for philanthropic and especially Ford Foundation commitment. Although the market-driven Green Revolution enthusiastically pro-

27 See Bell, “American Philanthropy”.

28 See Speich/Nützenadel, *Global Inequality*; Cullather, *Hungry World*; Frey, *Asian Experiences of Development*; Connelly, *Fatal Misconception*; Escobar, “Worlds and Knowledges Otherwise”; Amrith, *Decolonizing International Health*.

moted by the Rockefeller Foundation in India in the 1960s brought no long-lasting relief from rural poverty, philanthropic strategies on the ground revealed a remarkable responsiveness to intricate local conditions. The Ford Foundation representative in Delhi, Douglas Ensminger, was adept at engaging with the Indian elites' decision-making beginning in the early 1950s. He was careful to distance himself from US government policies by couching his office's highly political choices in a language of technocracy and humanitarianism. This rhetorical tactic was indispensable for the Ford Foundation to gain access to a highly complex field of minor and major political players in Indian domestic politics in the 1950s and 1960s. When the foundation's Indian counterparts associated with Jawaharlal Nehru picked up on the same language, the strategy seemed to work at least temporarily. The Delhi field office acted not only as a facilitator to ensure philanthropic influence, however; it was of immense importance when it came to diverting initiatives emerging from Ford headquarters in New York that Ensminger deemed controversial or unenforceable in the light of the opposition that he expected them to produce if they were implemented. The New Delhi office became a filter preventing exuberant planning utopias by metropolitan foundation elites from being rejected outright by sceptical Indian actors, with the associated de-legitimation of the foundation's activities that that would entail.

In sum, the following articles convey the notion that, while the big three perceived themselves as vectors of stabilisation and modernisation, their claims of transferring understanding and modernisation abroad for the benefit of all mankind involved a precarious balancing act. Their programmatic self-assessments were more than simply declarations of intent: The increasingly asymmetrical power relationships between US grant-makers and European and Asian grantees enabled the foundations to leverage resources for producing knowledge in domains of their choosing. Their self-perception drew a veil over the many political and academic, infrastructural, institutional and individual, as well as local, regional and national preconditions that were necessary to co-define and consolidate their role as vectors of enlightened modernisation.

### **3. Local Grantees Beyond “Receiving-End” Logics: Interest Constellations, Tactics and Potentials**

Throughout the twentieth-century history of international philanthropy, agency was not confined to the United States, but also performed by prospective and actual grantees in different regions of the world. US philanthropy never worked as a mere one-way street, a mechanism for spreading neat modernisation knowledge packages unilaterally from US philantro-

pists to passive, receptive actors in Europe – and the world for that matter. Rather, US modernisers were often put to the test in a series of local encounters with scientists, intellectuals, expert advisors and knowledge brokers in their respective civil societies. Identifying professional interests and individual characters, political, economic, social and cultural backgrounds and particular knowledge “demands” on the “receiving end” of the historical encounter is vital to completing our focus on agency and to exploring the possible dimensions of knowledge co-production.

In the case of the CEIP activities in post-First World War Europe, the political situation and discursive atmosphere hardly nurtured the sort of transnational understanding envisioned by the programme’s elites. Instead, the national antagonisms of the war years in Europe largely undermined philanthropic ambitions. International and more explicitly European power structures that characterised the First World War and persisted well into the 1930s seemed to work to the detriment of philanthropically induced knowledge circulation. Lacking a shared language, prone to conflictual nationalist divisions and concerned about being patronised by the United States, European infrastructures and actors were not quick to embrace the solicitations of Carnegie representatives. On the contrary, such factors served as barriers that could easily stifle American-led initiatives – as when the European members of the Comité d’Administration of the CEIP withheld approval of a pioneer project in the Balkans on the grounds that it was politically impossible.

The impact that local internal dynamics could have on philanthropic action is especially visible in the case of anthropology funding in inter-war Britain and France, where the interventions brought the Rockefeller Foundation to the limits of its ambitions when it came to financially supporting knowledge production in Europe that would fit into US expectations about colonial planning expertise. Of course, inter-war anthropology had been a core discipline among the sciences advanced by European colonial powers to consolidate core parts of their empires at the high noon of late colonial emergencies.<sup>29</sup> Thus, the Rockefeller Foundation encountered both political and academic, institutional and individual situations on the spot that partially facilitated, but also partially thwarted, its goals. Most notably, it met with intricate networks both in political and scientific *milieux* in London and Paris that complicated the dynamics of US patronage. Actors in both localities competed for recognition as experts on a field of knowledge that was just then taking disciplinary shape as academically institutionalised “anthropology” or “ethnology”: Both pursued their own specific interest agendas. Colonial administration elites, claiming that there was a crisis of colonial

29 For more general contexts see Stuchtey, *Science*.

government, called out for anthropologically informed expertise that would prevent imperial decline. British and French social anthropologists tried to establish themselves as expert advisers to scientifically informed colonial governments. Thus, the driving force behind allegedly politically adaptable anthropological knowledge was in fact the demand from within European political and academic circles – not the intervention of the United States. This tended to reduce the big project of knowledge circulation to instances of funding that bore the signs of local conditions and relationships rather than the imprint of some philanthropic programme. The foundations could not, nor did they want to, impose an agenda on the “receiving end”; on the contrary, the polycentric network of local actors transformed the philanthropic offer to fit into their own respective agendas.

In a similar vein, the funding activities of the Rockefeller Foundation in France during the 1920s and up to the 1940s in the field of biomedicine suggest that US philanthropy did not leave more traces on the shape of the field than French scientists and scientific managers found acceptable at the time. Local dynamics clearly pre-structured the foundation’s options to engage in the field. Their French counterparts were actively professionalising their fields: They spoke out in favour of concentrating biomedical research in multidisciplinary institutions and, maintained a close relationship both with French political elites and private patrons of biomedical science such as the Deutsch de la Meurthe family. To that extent the soon-to-be grantees were already equipped with considerable experience in collaboration and negotiation at a national level before they established closer contacts with the Rockefeller Foundation. Genetics, research on nervous diseases and on radioactivity proved to be the most prominent fields of Rockefeller funding – all knowledge sectors carefully chosen by the foundation in accordance with contemporary French research trends in the 1920s and 1930s, and thus funded in order to secure rapid progress by expeditiously generating new, co-produced expert knowledge.

If the Rockefeller Foundation was able to leave its imprint on the construction of the Caisse Nationale des Sciences, the newly emerging centre co-ordinating French science policy, it was only to the extent that it was expressly asked to do so by leading organisers of science in France who oriented themselves towards the foundation’s divisional structure as a model to compartmentalise academic research on a national level. The major impetus for this (mainly French-inspired) transfer was the perception (commonly shared with many contemporaries in Europe and the United States) that the institutional streamlining of science policies was, both in war time and beyond, a matter of mobilising national strength and – more explicitly in the French case – of gearing up to enter into intense national(istic) competition with the much-mistrusted German science

world in particular.<sup>30</sup> Thus, when turning to the Rockefeller divisional model, the French, determined to get ahead in their fierce competition with their menacing German neighbour, appealed to what they believed to be the most modern version of science policy organisation in the United States at the time.

With the advent of the Cold War, power relationships between philanthropists and – in this volume mainly Western European – grantees became more pertinent compared to the inter-war period. If Europeans lacked resources after the First World War and therefore turned for support to the United States as world creditor, fiscal and power imbalances were even more distinct after 1945.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, the wide-ranging task of reconstruction to compensate for political, economic and moral devastation (above all in Germany, but also in neighbouring countries affected by National Socialism) created widespread European demand for US support. While it would be hard to identify an overall pattern of grantees' inclusion into philanthropic activism, there is every indication that the Rockefeller philanthropy of the early Cold-War period and up until the mid-1950s tolerated a diverse range of prospective grantees' political leanings. This happened notwithstanding the constraints imposed by the Cox Congressional Committee and successive reports in the early 1950s that chided the foundations for being lax in supporting Communists and left-leaning grantees, threatening to remove their tax-exempt status as a result. A significant case in point is the Rockefeller Foundation's international Marxism-Leninism project and its programme on legal and political philosophy during these years. These offered massive intellectual space to non-conformist émigré scholars and Leftist grantees such as Herbert Marcuse. Marcuse, who had been recruited to work for the Office of Strategic Services when he came to the United States in 1941, and who was transferred to the State Department after the war, eventually became embedded in informal transnational networks.<sup>32</sup> Against the tide of McCarthyist anti-Communist paranoia, the Rockefeller Foundation sought to provide a sheltered sphere for research that allowed these grantees to reorient and adjust their analytical approaches – previously directed towards the critique of National Socialist rule – towards Communism and Marxism in order to better know the Cold-War enemy.<sup>33</sup> Eschewing the simplifications of current theories of totalitarianism that collapsed Communism into National Socialism, they insisted upon the modernity of the Soviet Union and found the humanistic ideals of Marxism attractive. Moreover,

30 See Rausch, "Scientific Philanthropy".

31 See Leffler/Westad, *Cambridge History of the Cold War*.

32 See Wheatland, *Frankfurt School in Exile*; Krohn/Schildt, *Zwischen den Stühlen*.

33 See Engerman, *Know Your Enemy*.



they provided justifications for the policy of détente rather than of containment towards what was considered to be a defensive Soviet Union. The room they had to manoeuvre intellectually resulted from the fact that early Cold-War philanthropists at the Rockefeller Foundation clearly sided with foreign policy elites on issues of national interest and security while being convinced of the value of a liberal social model that prized openness and intellectual flexibility as defining marks of Western liberal capitalism (as opposed to the closed world of state-driven socialism). That said, in the mid-1960s this period of ostentatious openness of mind towards alternative modes of reasoning was stretched to its limits as an embattled US elite came increasingly under assault from the Left for its engagement in Vietnam.

If only as a result of fierce inter-European factionalism, possible foundation grantees tried to use their prospective and actual entitlement to enhance their international position. It comes as no surprise that this was particularly true for smaller countries like the Netherlands, whose elites were eager to invite the Ford Foundation into their networks and thus showcase their attractiveness especially to their German and French neighbours. Accordingly, a majority of Dutch intellectuals at the Hague Academy of International Law and the Institute of Social Studies were anything but fearful of an attempted takeover if they received substantial grants – on the contrary, they argued strongly for major philanthropic engagement. If the level of resistance remained low, this was as much a sign of the Ford Foundation's strategy to widen the purview of US legal thought and practice as it was a consequence of the strategic openness of these Dutch academics. The symbolic capital the Dutch hoped to gain from their closeness to the Ford Foundation swamped other concerns. It is also plausible to argue that advancing the professionalisation of Dutch experts by adopting American models was expected to help deal with the challenges posed by European integration, enabling Dutch legal authorities to better position themselves and the Netherlands in a supranational community, a "United States of Europe".

Ford Foundation support for physics was also warmly welcomed at major research centres in Copenhagen and Geneva. No matter how it was justified at foundation headquarters in New York – or configured to meet the demands of the national security state in Washington – the grantees made sure that their interests were respected.<sup>34</sup> What they sought above all were the resources to invite leading American physicists for extended in-house sojourns, thus benefitting from their deep experience and cutting-edge knowledge. Ford could make sense of this programme in terms of its transformative ambitions and its desire to strengthen Western science with an injection of American ideas and practices, and it found the perfect partner in

34 See Krige, "Die Führungsrolle der USA".

two established laboratories in Europe, which already defined themselves as nodes for international scientific exchange and sought exactly what Ford wanted to give (even if that meant accepting unpalatable terms). And if the marriage ran so smoothly, it was also because of a complicity between the directors on both sides of the Atlantic, a complicity that accepted that international collaboration was also a strategy for enhancing national pre-eminence, and that the pursuit of mutual understanding went hand in glove with national rivalry, above all in a sensitive field of research like physics.

The determination that grantees had to profit from their status and use their closeness to American foundations as a trump card in internal local power struggles was by no means confined to the European setting. All the same, their tactics on extra-European terrain had very specific characteristics. In the field of international health campaigns, the official programmatic wording saw the Rockefeller Foundation's stimulating the general advancement of humankind as an ongoing project that had already led to its engagement in non-Western regions in the inter-war period. Philanthropic practice on the ground was messier. The endeavour was often characterised by bringing top-down, donor-driven, Western knowledge transfers to what were treated as backward peripheries.<sup>35</sup> Local medical professionals had, however, started mapping and treating some diseases long before the philanthropies became involved, so that the Rockefeller public health work could build on already available local awareness and knowledge potentials. This occasionally compelled philanthropists to negotiate their prerogatives on the spot.<sup>36</sup> If, under these auspices, the foundation managed to operate as a flexible vector of modernisation processes, this was due more to its remarkable responsiveness to local exigencies and prevailing claims *in situ* that obliged it to refashion a top-down approach to health reform policies.

The Ford Foundation's commitment in India in the 1950s and 1960s confirms that "peripheral" grantees could hope to reconfigure the philanthropic agenda. Development plans legitimised through rhetoric based on scientific and technological knowledge had been mobilised in Indian political debates since late colonial times. This was even more relevant after 1947, when decolonisation was no longer anticipated but formally enacted, and it provoked a new sense of urgency. Although fighting unchecked population growth and blatant poverty by central planning schemes and industrialisation figured prominently in development debates, Indian anxieties about securing an "indigenous" presence in domestic politics and avoiding foreign

35 See Page/Valone, *Globalization of Scientific Medicine*; Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies*; Birn, *Marriage of Convenience*; Farley, *To Cast Out Disease*; Cueto, *Missionaries of Science*.

36 See Palmer, *Launching Global Health*; Amrith, *Decolonizing International Health*.

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The Twentieth Century has often been called the »American Century«, and no small part in this distinction was played by the major US foundations Carnegie, Rockefeller and Ford. Their global networks were coveted resources for transporting American ideas and values abroad. This volume reveals how US philanthropy became a political stage for the ever-changing conceptions of knowledge and organization, particularly in the time between and immediately after the world wars.

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