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Tim B. Mueller's article on the Rockefeller Foundation (RF) and the mobilisation of humanities and social science scholarship for the purpose of American hegemony investigates a specific moment in the history of philanthropy and the knowledge-power nexus. Mueller argues that from about the late 1940s until the early 1960s, the RF relied on a high-modernist yet liberal-pluralist self-image which reconciled its philanthropic commitment to research excellence with the Cold War imperatives of American foreign policy. Drawing on extensive research in the RF's archives in Tarrytown, New York, and some State Department records, this article presents a number of findings of Mueller's German Ph.D. dissertation to an English-speaking audience.¹

After World War II, the RF significantly expanded its funding of the humanities and social sciences, with behavioralism as a significant target of investment. Area Studies became another new funding engagement, for example in the shape of Columbia University's Russian Institute. As they had already done in the interwar years, RF officers viewed themselves as "strategists in knowledge production and circulation" (114), intervening at moments when directed changes in epistemology and institutional landscapes seemed possible. Yet the needs of American foreign policy in the early Cold War were ever-present in the minds and funding strategies of foundation leaders. As is well known, the Russian Institute was extremely close to the United States intelligence community, and other intelligence bodies, such as the State Department's Office of Intelligence Research, became important interlocutors of the RF in the years since the war.

¹ Tim B. Müller, *Krieger und Gelehrte: Herbert Marcuse und die Denksysteme im Kalten Krieg* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2010).

According to Mueller, the foundation's priorities were aptly summarised by its Assistant Director of Humanities, John Marshall, in an RF document in 1950: "Obligations to American government and to American national interests are axiomatic for the Foundation and its officers. And it is within the limits they impose that the Foundation's reputation for disinterestedness in its international work has been established" (cited on 109). There was not only no contradiction between working for the national interest and promoting free intellectual inquiry and scholarly excellence. If Marshall were to be believed, the RF's focus on what the American government wanted had in fact *enabled* the foundation to support qualitatively better scholarship. An intellectual position which stifled dissent and stymied progress would have been a liability in the contest with the Soviet Union, and was not compatible with the kind of liberalism the Cold Warriors inside the Rockefeller Foundation, and indeed the American government, embraced.

This is not an entirely new point, as seminal studies such as Volker Berghahn's biography of Shepard Stone have argued before that free academic inquiry and intellectual diversity were recognised by American foundations as key assets to the United States in the Cold War struggle.² Yet Mueller's account adds a layer of complexity by insisting that the RF's stance was not only intended to shore up its intellectual credibility but amounted to a "political epistemology with strategic aspirations" (117). Methodologically, Mueller references John Krige's concept of the "co-production of hegemony," originally developed to analyse the complex ways in which Western European knowledge elites adopted, adapted and in turn redefined American values and policy aims.³ Although employed in a different context by Mueller, the concept usefully explains why the RF encouraged a certain open-endedness in the projects it funded, and it did this both for political and epistemological reasons. After all, hegemony could only be co-produced if outsiders had a chance to be heard, and in the early Cold War, these were often émigré scholars.

Rockefeller Foundation officers believed that the best scientific research and scholarship would yield results that would decide the contest with the Soviet Union in favour of the United States. Only a most confident set of people could make such an assumption. But then, this is an accurate description of RF foundation officers in the period under Mueller's consideration. Their confidence did not favour narrow thinking. It explains why the RF sponsored a programme in legal and political philosophy that funded scholars such as Herbert Marcuse and Otto Kirchheimer, whose works were later picked up by the New Left, as well as an international research project on Marxism-Leninism.

² Volker Berghahn, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe: Shepard Stone between Philanthropy, Academy, and Diplomacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001). See also Olivier Zunz, *Philanthropy in America: A History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 148.

³ John Krige, *American Hegemony and the Postwar Reconstruction of Science in Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2006), 4-9.

The firm belief in the political relevance of academic excellence also informed the foundation's rebuttal of McCarthyite attacks in the early 1950s. Mueller deftly teases out the sheer contempt the RF and its allies had for the congressional Select Committee to Investigate Tax-Exempt Foundations. Its scrutiny of the foundation was attributed to "the peasant-like suspicions growing out of ignorance and know-nothingism," as Dean Acheson put it in a 1954 letter to the RF's president (cited on 123). Mueller acknowledges that at the height of the anti-Communist hysteria the RF gave in to pressure, for instance by dropping the Institute of Pacific Relations from its list of grant recipients. Here, Mueller could have mentioned another casualty of McCarthyism from the foundations world, Alger Hiss, President of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace from 1946 until he was forced to resign in 1949. Clearly, the foundations took some accusations of Communist subversion more seriously than others. Nevertheless, Mueller's nuanced reading of the RF's relationship with American anti-Communism in the early Cold War qualifies those put forward by other scholars.⁴

There are some questions that the article does not answer. RF officers took it for granted that a committed Communist would make a bad scholar. In this context it would have been interesting to find out to what extent this view was informed by the RF's own experiences in Soviet Russia. The foundation had enjoyed contacts with Soviet scientists since the 1920s and was bound to be aware of American debates on Lysenkoism, the suppression of genetic science in the Soviet Union.⁵ More importantly, one wonders to what extent the RF's self-image was shared by other major actors in the American foundations world, such as the Ford Foundation or the Carnegie Corporation. Several of Mueller's key themes, such as the question of free academic inquiry and the openness to political diversity, were crucial issues in the most well-known episode of foundation funding for the 'intellectual' Cold War, the Congress for Cultural Freedom. Curiously, Mueller does not engage with the large body of scholarship on this topic.⁶ Finally, to what extent are Mueller's characterisations of the RF in the early Cold War valid for other periods? In the late 1940s, the RF already had a fine, more than three-decade long tradition of intervening in the production of knowledge. Did this history shape aims, attitudes and assumptions about epistemology later on? (This reviewer would argue that it did.)

⁴ See e.g. Inderjeet Parmar who argues that the foundations "were of the same anticommunist mindset as most of America's political elite in the 1950s – they just used more subtle methods." Inderjeet Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century: The Ford, Carnegie and Rockefeller Foundations in the Rise of American Power* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 103.

⁵ William de Jong-Lambert, "Hermann J. Muller, Theodosius Dobzhansky, Leslie Clarence Dunn, and the Reaction to Lysenkoism in the United States," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 15:1 (Winter 2013): 78-118; on the RF and Lysenkoism see Krige, *American Hegemony*, 137-138

⁶ For example Berghahn, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars*; Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New York: The New Press, 1999); Giles Scott-Smith, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture: The Congress for Cultural Freedom, the CIA and Post-War American Hegemony* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

Nonetheless, this is a clear, stimulating, and carefully argued article that historians of U.S. philanthropy, historians of American intelligence, and those interested in the intellectual history of the early Cold War will read with great interest.

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