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Inderjeet Parmar

## Foundation Networks and American Hegemony

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Inderjeet Parmar

# Foundation Networks and American Hegemony

## Introduction

- 1 Thomas Risse-Kappen suggests that the impact of transnational groups is too infrequently researched. That is, more study is needed of the domestic and international conditions in which such groups succeed/fail.<sup>1</sup> While there are more such studies since 1995,<sup>2</sup> there remains a failure to consider the significance of American philanthropic foundations to building and embedding American hegemony. There are insights provided by studying foundations' roles in US hegemony building that we do not perceive when we neglect those organisations. In particular, the foundations constructed and sustained the rich texture of cooperative social, intellectual and political relations between key actors and institutions supportive of specific modes of thought that promoted US hegemony. Foundations also fostered and developed the attractive power-knowledge networks that not only radiated intellectual influence but also attracted some of the most creative minds. Finally, liberal internationalist foundations fostered globalism even when the American state was 'isolationist', and when US influence abroad unwelcome.
- 2 "Hegemony" here is understood as a set of processes by which a group, class or state – through a combination of persuasion and coercion – is able to attain "buy in" from other groups, classes or states for its own objectives, values and interests. In order to establish hegemony, the hegemonic power or group normally culturally, intellectually, financially, or militarily penetrates the target group or society/state, thereby providing significant impetus in socialising elements in the target group. While there is a bargain struck between hegemonic forces and target groups, it is normally characterised by inequality of rewards. This is a broad concept of hegemony that is supported by Gramscians and liberals.<sup>3</sup>
- 3 This article makes two empirical claims about the processes of American hegemony-construction and draws significant theoretical conclusions that undermine conventional ways of viewing state-private relations as well as blurring the distinction between domestic forces and international factors as determinants of political outcomes. Bridging both sets of relations – state/private and inside out/outside in – is the "elite network", a technology of power, in the present case, funded, fostered and sustained by philanthropic foundation largesse. The first and general empirical claim is that philanthropic foundations were/are significant forces in American society and, equally importantly, their significance in American hegemony building lay in their sustained, long-term cooperative relationship with the American state. The second, more specific, empirical claim is that through such sustained cooperation, the foundations helped to build national, international and global institutions and networks through which American hegemony was, at the very least, attempted. The latter process evidences the most significant impact of US foundations – the building of the domestic and international infrastructure for liberal internationalism which has transformed into a kind of "social neoliberalism".<sup>4</sup> The theoretical conclusions follow from these claims: the sustained and deep cooperation between the state and foundations suggests that we must revise our views of "how power works" in the United States and therefore influences its foreign relations. Realist and neo-Realist accounts of power are undermined by the long-term mutual dependence of state and foundation in building/attempting American hegemony, a relationship within which the state has benefited significantly from the apparently private character of the foundations. The evidence presented below also challenges other accounts of state-private relations that posit either sharply-drawn boundaries between state/society or adversarial relations – most specifically realism/statism, neopluralism and instrumental Marxism.<sup>5</sup> Instead, the evidence suggests the greater usefulness of accounts that blur public-private boundaries. Although there are several such approaches – parastates, epistemic communities, corporatism, and foreign

policy establishment - a neo-Gramscian approach offers a more comprehensive understanding of state-private relations and American power. This approach sees power as increased through cooperation. Although international factors played key roles in changing the external and domestic behaviour of the American state, domestic elite internationalist groups also played vital roles, in cooperation with the state, by building the preconditions for US globalism: mobilising elite/mass opinion, promoting the intellectual bases, institutions, and networks that undergirded globalism, creating/improving the state's knowledge/research capacities at critical times, and building international institutions in which they worked to embed American values/interests.<sup>6</sup> This tends further to undermine realist accounts without suggesting that state power is irrelevant or unimportant. Finally, the "elite network" concept, in addition to showing how interpenetrated are the state and elite private groups, also shows how elite networks collapse or at least blur the distinctions between domestic society and international affairs. Therefore, the article shows that elite networks, consisting of state officials and private citizens are powerful means by which foreign policy shifts may be prepared, elite and mass opinion primed and mobilised, new consensus built, 'old' forces marginalised, and US hegemony constructed. In sum, the article builds on and synthesises the conceptualisations of Risse-Kappen – inside/outside, state-private, and the importance of transnational relations - and Haas – epistemic communities and networks,<sup>7</sup> but within a broader neo-Gramscian framework.

4 This article, first, suggests the foundations' significance; secondly, briefly discusses theoretical approaches conducive to understanding cooperative state- private relationships; thirdly, discusses the foundations' use of networks to promote their influence and to build hegemony. Thereafter, the article considers the empirical evidence of the foundations' roles in America's rise to globalism in three historical phases (1920s-1950s, 1930s-1970s, and since the late 1980s) and at three levels (domestic, international and global). Finally, it moves to a conclusion.

## The Foundations' Significance

5 American hegemony was neither attempted nor constructed only on coercive or corporate power but also, and in combination with, the nation's socialisation capabilities as embodied in various kinds of frequently-neglected but influential non-state actor.<sup>8</sup> Specifically, this article focuses on the role in America's rise to globalism of philanthropic foundations – especially the so-called 'Big 3', Carnegie, Ford and Rockefeller, the philosophies of which were formed at the turn of the twentieth-century. Rockefeller and Carnegie philanthropy led the way to "scientific giving", and Ford more or less followed when it became nationally and globally active in the early 1950s. Pragmatic and utilitarian, elitist and technocratic in outlook, the foundations aimed to invest in ideas and "put knowledge to work" to reform society, economy and politics at home and abroad. With endowments in the hundreds of millions of dollars, the Big 3 championed generating positivistic 'scientific' knowledge that would be of practical use to policymakers, urban planners, and state-builders. Self-confident, optimistic and armed with the findings of social sciences like sociology, economics and political science, foundation leaders rarely consulted those at whom their programmes of reform were targeted and on whose behalf they claimed to be acting.<sup>9</sup>

6 In effect, the major foundations played critical roles in constructing national, international and global institutional structures that first, boosted US federal executive power at a time when the federal government was weak and the individual states of the union strong, actively undermining and marginalising parochialism and 'isolationism' and promoting liberal internationalism; secondly, foundations played significant roles in promoting American power in and through newly-constructed informal and formal international organisations; and finally, since the 1980s, they promoted an increasingly 'global' set of institutions that may constitute a nascent 'global civil society'.<sup>10</sup> The latter represents at a global level the project of a century ago that the foundations embarked upon at home: at a time of weak federal/global institutions and strong states, to strengthen the former at the expense of the latter and build a sustainable national/global civil society. The reconstruction and partial transfer of sovereignty – from states of the union to Washington, DC, and from other national states to global institutions,<sup>11</sup> is

the underlying logic of these developments. The foundations' principal technology was, and is, the 'network', specifically the heavily politicised knowledge network.

7 Non-state actors have frequently been identified as critical to US power and to global politics.<sup>12</sup> Specifically, the roles of America's foremost philanthropic foundations have been neglected, even in studies that otherwise emphasise the importance of non-state actors. Yet, as this article makes clear, studying foundations provides insights into the 'mindset' and activities of America's hegemony- planners and –builders over time, and indicates foundations' strategic significance in mediating and articulating components of the US state and private elites, in cohering the foreign policy 'establishment'. Four characteristics – or “fictions” – of the Big 3 foundations account for their significance, all related to their apparent *independence*: first, the “non-state” fiction, at odds with their trustees' 'statist' mindset and their governmental connections; secondly, the “non-political” fiction, despite connections with both main political parties; thirdly, the “non-business” fiction, irrespective of corporate directorships and income- sources among trustees; and finally, the “scientific/non-ideological” fiction, despite attachment to the ideology of Americanism as liberal internationalism.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, their adaptability and sense of historic mission – changing tactics, same programme<sup>14</sup> – meant that they successfully negotiated their way through the frequently hostile environment and turbulence of American domestic politics and the equally turbulent wider world. Such ability during the isolationist 1920s and 1930s provides insights into how foundation programmes and tactics would successfully adapt in states designated as 'anti-American' during the cold war era. In each such case, foundations showed significant tenacity, tact and adaptability in allying with any non-hostile public agency that furthered their goals and prepared for a future more permissive climate.

8 Holding such fictions as articles of faith permits foundations to act as unifiers of a political system divided by sovereignties, characterised by mass democracy, and group competition. Ford, Rockefeller and Carnegie philanthropies *mediate* between the concerns of state, big business, party politics and foreign policy-related academia; *articulate* a divided system; and constitute and create forums for constructing elite *consensus and forward policy planning*. Nevertheless, foundation networks did not always succeed and, importantly, were most successful in conditions of crisis<sup>15</sup> – such as the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the sudden outbreak of the Korean War, and after the end of the cold war. However, the foundations have been adept at network-building during non-crises and are well prepared to interpret and promote crises as opportunities to policymakers and public alike.<sup>16</sup>

9 America's journey to global leadership – hegemony – may be tracked through the rise of the major foundations through three overlapping but distinct stages/levels, with each stage socialising elites at home and abroad, and embedding liberalism into national and international institutions: stage 1, at domestic level, from the 1920s to the 1950s, during which the foundations helped construct the domestic hegemony of liberal internationalism, marginalised isolationism, and built up the institutional capacities of the federal government, especially in foreign affairs; stage 2 from the 1930s to 1970s during which foundations helped integrate American and foreign elites and, very significantly, developed formal and informal international organisations for elites' socialisation and integration; and stage 3 from the late 1980s when foundations have been strategically important in attempting to build 'global civil society' particularly in fostering 'democratic' forums 'challenging' neo-liberal globalisation.<sup>17</sup> Underpinning the century-long 'hegemonic project' is liberal internationalism though it is also clear that this school of thought and action represented a fairly '*nationalist internationalism*'.<sup>18</sup> The international/global orders constructed or aimed at were, and are, congenial to American economic and other interests.<sup>19</sup>

## Theoretical approaches

10 The indispensability of private elite organizations to state legitimacy are central to this study. The cooperative inter-relationship of the American state with elite foreign affairs organizations blurs the distinction between the public and private sectors and calls into question theories (such as neopluralism, statism, and instrumental Marxism)<sup>20</sup> that advance a zero-sum view

of power. Cooperative state-private elite networks have played a powerful historical role in mobilizing for US global expansionism and such network construction is best explained by concepts that emphasise shared and mutual state-private elite interests. The advantages to the state of such arrangements were/are that official policy objectives – overseas intelligence gathering, promotion of pro-American interests – could be advanced by purportedly unofficial means.<sup>21</sup> American foundations were/are, particularly close to the state and, therefore, provide illustrative cases of public-private “bridging” organisations.

11 According to Mann, one of the most significant powers of the modern *state* is its infrastructural capacity, in addition to its coercive power. That is, the state reaches deeply into its “own” society and draws upon popular legitimacy, in addition to tax revenues.<sup>22</sup> Gramsci, conversely, maintains that dominant *classes* establish private institutions fundamental to state power.<sup>23</sup> Elite self-organisation and the organization of private life by state agencies creates the basis of interpenetrated organizations and networks, with far-reaching consequences, forcing scholars to reconceptualise state-private relations to better understand “how power works” in democracies.

12 This article, therefore, explores four major conceptualizations that emphasise state-private cooperation and then goes on to suggest that, despite their strengths, their insights may be comprehensively subsumed within a neo-Gramscian analysis. The role of the following four conceptualisations, therefore, is principally to place a lot more empirical/historical flesh on what are broader, more abstract Gramscian categories.

## The Establishment

13 According to Hodgson, the “Establishment” works behind the scenes and is composed of three core groups: internationally-minded lawyers, bankers and corporate executives from New York; government officials from Washington, DC; and elite university academics and foundation heads. These three groups were united, Hodgson argues, by a common history (WWII /cold war), policy (internationalism), aspiration (world leadership), instinct (centrist), and technique (working through the federal executive).<sup>24</sup>

14 The US foreign policy Establishment is a self-recruiting bi-partisan group exercising practical influence on defence and foreign policy. Hodgson’s conceptualisation fits neatly the foreign policy roles of the Big 3 foundations, which saw themselves as bipartisan, ideology-free, opposed to isolationism but supportive liberal-internationalism, as well as working to attain and maintain American global leadership. Foundation leaders were drawn from similar elite backgrounds to those of Hodgson’s Establishment. Hodgson identifies the cohesive elite forces in American society that bridge the gap between state and society. Although neo-Gramscians – whose perspective is detailed below – would expect an historic bloc to be broader than Hodgson’s Establishment – for example, to include labour and racial minorities – they find Hodgson’s concept useful within a broader formulation because it permits specific historicisation of Gramscian abstractions. It also shows that non-Gramscians too recognise that there is indeed disproportionate power wielded by unrepresentative elites working outside the constitutional processes.

## The Corporatist School

15 Sharing common elements with this approach, corporatism offers a number of different insights to state-society relations. Corporatism is a variant of weak-state pluralist theory. However, corporatism emphasizes mechanisms for conflict-management and collaboration between functional blocs (corporations, government, organized labour). Functional blocs cooperate better to manage economic affairs and socio-political transformations, to promote political stability.<sup>25</sup>

16 The corporatist analysis fits within a neo-Gramscian framework. Indeed, corporatists such as Ferguson and McCormick, allude to the connections between the two perspectives. Ferguson actually uses the term ‘historic bloc’ for the New Deal coalition built by President Roosevelt.<sup>26</sup> The enlightened self-image of the “organisational sector” accords with Gramscian “state spirit” while corporatists’ emphasis on the coalescence of interests between internationally-

oriented, capital-intensive industries and financial institutions, as well as organised labour – are fundamental elements of Gramsci's historic bloc. What is missing, however, is any compelling account of the role of intellectuals in the American system,<sup>27</sup> a major advantage of Gramscian analysis.

## Para-states

- 17 The Progressive era witnessed the rise of a variety of reform-oriented organisations, including professional associations and foundations, which attempted to relieve poverty, promote moral renewal, reform government/politics, and transform America's world role.<sup>28</sup> Eldon Eisenach calls these organizations "parastates" because they stood for the "national public good", whereas the main political parties and legislatures were corrupt and parochial. Working outside the established channels of the party machine and electoral politics, parastates favoured extending federal executive authority.<sup>29</sup>
- 18 Parastates made no distinction between themselves and "the state" which they saw in Hegelian terms: the state, constructed by and of the people, and requiring obedience. The "good citizen", therefore, is "state-oriented", seeking to achieve a larger public good. But this, in the Progressive era, was the aspiration blocked by corrupt and parochial parties and legislatures, while the federal executive and a mobilisable public offered opportunities. The interests of a weak federal state and of active parastates coalesced around opinion mobilization: the parastates would educate public opinion behind a reformist agenda at home, through a strong federal state, and the export of American values abroad. "Good citizens" would staff the most statist public offices and exercise citizenship in publicly oriented private organizations.
- 19 Eisenach's approach resonates with the role of twentieth-century American foundations and with Gramscian theory: parastates' state-orientation is remarkably similar to Gramsci's state spirit, suggesting that Gramsci's concepts offer insights to analysing power in the US. However, the greater comprehensiveness of Gramsci's theoretical framework effectively subsumes but also effectively articulates the concepts outlined above, permitting thereby a more comprehensive, coherent, and critical study of power.
- 20 Establishment-men, corporatist organisational sector-ists, and parastates may *see* themselves as neutral and disinterested but Gramscian analysis allows us better to contextualise and interrogate such self-images, especially by assessing those individuals and groups within the structure of economic, political and ideological power.

## Epistemic Communities

- 21 Epistemic communities are networks of specialists with a common world view about cause and effect relationships which relate to their domain of expertise, and common political values about the type of policies to which they should be applied.<sup>30</sup> Epistemic communities are value/knowledge based special interests in the pluralistic mould, seeking to influence the state, with influence, if any, flowing from the private group to the state. However, a more nuanced version of the concept may be more helpful to this study.
- 22 One aspect of the concept of epistemic communities argues for a "two-tier" dynamic within knowledge groups: the first tier consists of government officials, international agencies, and corporate executives; the second of academics, lawyers, and journalists. Both tiers share a common conceptual framework but operate within an agreed division of labour: government officials have access to policymaking and use the second tier to publicise/disseminate their ideas and to legitimate them as "objective and scientific", as well as to elaborate on public officials' ideas. Additionally, the second tier's ideas were brought to government officials and decision-makers as evidence of a growing consensus.
- 23 When such interactions are successfully concluded, they lead to the institutionalization of the epistemic community's "policy paradigm" and incorporation of experts into direct state service.<sup>31</sup>
- 24 As intellectuals, think tanks and university research institutes were and are such key features of US foreign cultural affairs, it is clear that state-private networks may be conceptualized within the epistemic community model. In relation to Gramscian thought, however, the epistemic

communities concept is limited – it contains no general theory of power or the state nor of the interconnections of ‘multiple’ sources of power in the corporate economy, the academy, and so on. Placed in a Gramscian context, however, it becomes a more usable empirical concept that says something about the precise character of state-private networks.

### A neo-Gramscian perspective

- 25 Although the four concepts agree on most matters, they divide on the issue of locating the sources of the elite. Hodgson’s Establishment and the corporatists’ organizational sector are the most economistic; the former two favour the idea that elites are, in part, sourced from capital-intensive, international manufacturers and banks. By so doing, the two relevant concepts move closer to a more radical interpretation of power. In addition, Gramsci’s little-examined notion of “state spirit” – which is further explained below – offers a new insight into understanding state-society relations that, to be sure, is hinted at in several of the four concepts examined above but never satisfactorily articulated.
- 26 The Gramscian view, though founded on an economistic analysis of power, makes a radical departure by noting the existence of important protective layers of pro-bourgeois ideology and institutions that shape consciousness in favour of the status quo. Gramsci located ideological, political and cultural struggle more centrally into Marxist thought, thereby elevating the role of intellectuals.
- 27 Gramsci argues that there is no simple way objectively to define capitalist interests – in economic or political terms – and that interests are a matter of debate and interpretation. It is the role of “organic intellectuals” to develop and disseminate dominant ideas, to make “commonsense” what are, in reality, ideas that principally support the ruling class.
- 28 Politics and the state are not automatic reflections of unequal class relations but sites of struggle between rival ideas and regimes. Through bargaining and building enduring coalitions that cut across class and ethno- racial cleavages, is formed the dominant concept that underlies a particular set of political and economic arrangements, a regime. As political regimes – or hegemonic projects and alliances - are made up of cross-class coalitions, they require public opinion mobilizations to convince the masses – or at least a critical proportion of them – that they have a stake in current arrangements. In short, the coalition – or historic bloc – is generated and sustained by the “consent of the governed”, under the hegemonic leadership of politicians and intellectuals of the capitalist class.
- 29 As popular consent is so vital to political arrangements, it is engineered<sup>32</sup> by elites through numerous channels that involve the state and organizations that Hodgson’s Establishment, the corporatists’ organizational sector, Eisenach’s parastates and the epistemic communities would recognise: elite universities, the CFR, and the major foundations.
- 30 Hegemony is constructed by an alliance of state elites and private ruling class organizations in order to undermine the old order and to usher in the new. Central to the motivation of private elites is Gramsci’s concept of “state spirit” which infuses every successful social movement. State spirit inspires leaders to take personally the concerns of the nation and state, and to subordinate narrow interests to the broader interests of the state/nation. State-spirited leaders contextualize themselves in the broad sweep of national and global historical development: their outlook “presupposes ‘continuity’, either with the past... or with the future....”<sup>33</sup> Such leaders and intellectuals may even come to believe “that they *are* the State...”<sup>34</sup>

### Network building: the foundations’ principal function

- 31 Integrating elites behind particular hegemonic projects has been the foundations’ principal long-term function. Foundations have constructed domestic and international knowledge networks, both as ends in themselves and as means to their ends. Networks are a technology of power that produces significant hegemonic outcomes. Briefly, networks are “systems of coordinated research, disseminated and published results, study and often graduate level teaching, intellectual exchange, and financing, across national boundaries.”<sup>35</sup> Networks normally include official policy-makers and perform two broad but vital functions: internal and external.

- 32 Internal functions refer to what the network does as a system of scholar, knowledge, and money flows, inter-institutional connections, and as a source of attraction. For example, one of the functions of networks is to incorporate and socialise scholars through providing research funds and career-building structures such as professional societies, conferences, and journals. Networks build careers and as individuals progress through the ranks, the structural probabilities for radically different thinking rapidly diminish. Added to this is the increasingly policy-oriented or at least utilitarian character of academic knowledge production – favoured by foundations – that scholars are (structurally) socialised or incentivised to conduct. Therefore, such socialising structures tend to have politically-moderating effects on scholars, scholarship and political action.<sup>36</sup>
- 33 External functions refers to the external image of the network's members as sources of symbolic capital, producers of prestigious, legitimate knowledge taken seriously by all, especially policy-makers.<sup>37</sup> Foundation-funded knowledge networks clearly regulate the “free” market of ideas, the intellectual environment within which “thinkable thought” occurs<sup>38</sup> which affects the network's ability to reproduce itself by assimilating new generations of scholars, strengthen self-awareness, reinforce common language and codes and, importantly, to engage in intellectual combat with opponents. A key function – the ‘darker’ side of the publicly-declared purpose of philanthropy - is more controversial and is publicly unstated: to bolster US hegemony by promoting specific forms of cooperation and integration for achieving nationalistic, rather than philanthropic, ends.
- 34 Together, the internal and external functions of foundations were/are the basis of elite integration and of others' marginalisation. In periods of crisis, however, when old ideas appear inadequate in addressing problems, foundations incorporate critical thinkers to contribute to problem-solving. In the process, however, some radicals are incorporated, ‘domesticated’ and rendered “safe”.
- 35 Networks distribute material rewards and incentives, bestow status and prestige, that powerfully motivate particular kinds of research. Materially and honorifically, networks are hierarchical systems. They, therefore, become important sources of symbolic capital and radiate intellectual influence. Symbolic capital, in turn, helps strengthen the influence of networks in their role as gatekeepers of ideas, bestowers of legitimacy for certain kinds of thinking, implicitly or explicitly undermining others. This combines to produce political influence, moving network members and organisations closer to the centres of power.
- 36 The Big 3 behaved this way because they are a part of the American ‘power elite’,<sup>39</sup> especially significant within the east coast foreign policy ‘establishment’.<sup>40</sup> The major foundations are outgrowths of the corporate giants of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, organisations imbued with the ‘scientific spirit’ of the Progressive era.<sup>41</sup> They mobilised scientific knowledge to manage the potentially catastrophic socio-political effects of socio-economic change: industrialisation, mass immigration, urbanisation and the attendant rise of radical political movements.<sup>42</sup> They also pioneered scientific ‘giving’, management, and social engineering to inaugurate a reformed economic and political order.<sup>43</sup>
- 37 Additionally, the foundations are unrepresentative elite institutions: their trustees affiliated with Wall St. banks and law firms, service in the State Department, connections with the leaders of both main political parties, the national press, and ‘Ivy League’ universities.<sup>44</sup> Demographically, their trustees have been overwhelmingly male, white Anglo-Saxon protestants (Wasps), educated at elite schools and universities, and patrons of exclusive clubs.<sup>45</sup> By the 1920s, such groups believed that they, American elite, had ‘come of age’ and were fit to lead the world: America was more advanced industrially and socially, more open and democratic, and generally more dynamic. Opposed to moribund empires and atheistic communism, for east coast elites America represented a new way forward for a world of peace and prosperity.<sup>46</sup> American internationalism, embedded in American-led international organisations, was the way forward.<sup>47</sup>
- 38 This article provides examples to argue that foundations, in cooperation with the state, played critical roles in America's rise to global hegemony, and achieved this in part through building

coalitions that comprised intellectuals (academics, students), state agencies, corporation executives, organised labour, racial minorities, and others. Such networks bridged state-private and inside-outside divisions and show that state power *with* (rather than over or against) private elite action created the bases of American hegemony. The article is structured according to the periodisation presented above: 1920s-1950s, national/domestic network-building for liberal internationalism and marginalising isolationism; 1930s-1970s, international network-building; and 1980s-present, global network-building. Network-building as a socialising instrument did not, by itself, generate US 'hegemony' though it was a pre-condition of it. The flows of material incentives – grants, jobs, fellowships – integral to network-building clearly played a role. Both foundation network-building and the rise of America to globalism were also symbiotically connected to catalytic global events: the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December, 1941, for example; the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 and the adoption of NSC-68;<sup>48</sup> 9-11. Such catalytic events afforded precious opportunities to those forces that were best prepared to take advantage of the spaces opened up for 'new' thinking, often considered 'unthinkable' before the 'crisis'.

## National Networks, 1920s-1950s

39 This period witnessed a massive effort at national network-building by foundations in the United States. Rockefeller and Carnegie funded liberal internationalist/anti-isolationist think tanks, university research institutes, and publicity organisations: CFR (1921), Foreign Policy Association (FPA, 1918), League of Nations Association (1923), and numerous World Affairs Councils.<sup>49</sup> Such efforts of the interwar years indicate foundations' adaptability to hostile domestic political conditions: to zealously foster a counter-hegemony against isolationism and for internationalism, patiently awaiting the day when their message would be sympathetically received. By so doing, the foundations built an historic bloc behind the hegemonic project of liberal internationalist globalism (and anti-isolationism), that consisted of corporations, organised labour, intellectuals/students, and racial minorities, for example. Such groupings, with their varied interests, were leashed to the globalist vision that included an open trading system, full employment, anti-fascism abroad and anti-racism at home, and world peace underwritten by American power. Thus, their vision was global, paying little heed to the so-called domestic/international divide.

40 Concretely to promote liberal internationalism, Carnegie philanthropies supported numerous universities in establishing foreign affairs/international relations courses in the 1920s and 1930s, as well as local library 'international corners' and radio broadcasts across the country.<sup>50</sup> The crowning achievements of this 'movement' were the Yale Institute of International Studies<sup>51</sup> and the programmes established at Princeton under the leadership of Edward Meade Earle: together, Yale and Princeton led the way in establishing international relations as an academic discipline and, even more significantly, in establishing Realism – the centrality and *inevitability of power politics and the necessity of American global interventionism* – as the discipline's dominant postwar paradigm.<sup>52</sup> The Yale Institute's 'independent' status also helped legitimize its views. Specifically, there was little public acknowledgement of its continuous connections with either the Foundation or with the American state. The Institute trained hundreds of undergraduates and dozens of graduate students for state service or academia – furthering the influence of its Realist approach. By 1948, YIIS began a journal, *World Politics*, and ran one of the most prestigious programmes of postgraduate research and training in America.<sup>53</sup> Well-known IR alumni include Bernard C. Cohen, Lucian Pye and William C. Olson.<sup>54</sup> Other alumni went on to join important US foreign policy-related institutions such as the CFR, FPA, Foreign Service, and State Department.<sup>55</sup> The experience of the Yale Institute demonstrates the valued place of utilitarian knowledge-production in Rockefeller's priorities, as well as the importance of building powerful national networks based on "centres of excellence".

41 Additionally, the early stirrings of the massive postwar Area Studies phenomenon were the work of the big foundations from as early as the 1930s, in the case of Soviet Studies,<sup>56</sup> as

was their postwar development and maturity. Asian, African, and Latin American Studies thrived as those regions became objects of American attention due to their strategic location, raw materials, market potential, or place in cold war competition. For example, a Carnegie Corporation internal report by Columbia University historian, Nathaniel Pepper, concluded that, “the [Rockefeller and Carnegie- funded American] Institute [of Pacific Relations, AIPR] has been the means of increasing consciousness of the Far East in the United States.” Pepper credited the AIPR with having inspired the increased teaching of Pacific area studies and the establishment of Far Eastern departments in schools, colleges and universities, a claim also backed up by more recent scholarship.<sup>57</sup> After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the AIPR became an essential part of the administration’s war effort. Its research programme was increasingly “determined by Government needs” because the AIPR was the “only agency [with] considerable ... information about the area.”<sup>58</sup> As the Office of War Information, the Office of Strategic Services, and the armed forces increased their demand for the AIPR’s research and knowledge, the Corporation stepped up its support.<sup>59</sup>

42 Located at prestigious universities such as Harvard, Columbia and Chicago, area studies programmes featured funded chairs, departments, professional associations, conferences, doctoral students and research fellowships.<sup>60</sup> Relatively small investments had powerful ‘multiplier’ effects as the symbolic power of the Ivy league encouraged other elite and non-elite universities to invest in their own area studies programmes.<sup>61</sup> The foundations’ efforts in this area were assisted by regular advice and encouragement by an enlarged postwar State Department that yearned for trained graduate students for public service and a more internationally-conscious American public. The State Department more closely oriented the teaching of IR at Yale, for example, to the Department’s concerns. In 1944, a committee investigated “what the educational process can do to produce good decision-makers in the field of international relations”, mainly to improve the calibre of graduate students entering government service and to provide in-service training to practising diplomats.<sup>62</sup>

43 In addition, the strongly pro-interventionist foundations actively funded in the mid- to late-1930s campaigns to ‘educate’ various elements of elite opinion, particularly pacifist and isolationist students at leading universities, and regional notables in isolationist parts of the United States.<sup>63</sup> The League of Nations Association, for example, which was heavily funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, sponsored college-based Model League of Nations Assemblies and ran national competitions for school children.<sup>64</sup> The aim was “to train an elite to think, feel and act internationally.”<sup>65</sup>

44 By 1939, when the isolationist-interventionist debates were at their most fierce, the foundations’ funded organisations to press the case for American belligerence and to crush the case for isolation and neutrality, such as the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies (CDAAA) and the Fight For Freedom (FFF). The pro-interventionist and anti-isolationist CDAAA and FFF reached out to numerous groups in American society, including organised labour and, for the first time, African-Americans.<sup>66</sup> The warhawks organised black branches in Harlem and Chicago, alongside two chapters at historically-black universities (Howard and Lincoln). Having few connections with the black masses, they sought to mobilise the leaders of black opinion - trades union leaders (A. Philip Randolph), churchmen (Adam Clayton Powell), academics (Ralph Bunche), and newspaper editors.<sup>67</sup>

45 The CDAAA/FFF black mobilisation campaign linked the fight against Hitlerism with the struggle against domestic racial discrimination. The warhawks’ leaders were highly critical of America’s past record in racial matters, and hoped to wean black Americans away from perceived ‘indifference’ to Hitlerism or active support for isolationism and communism.<sup>68</sup> In addition, they saw continuing racial discrimination in the defence industries as divisive and inefficient as it diminished maximum production efforts. It was in this area that FFF, in particular, made a significant contribution by supporting President Roosevelt’s Executive Order 8802 (in 1941) banning such discrimination. It is also clear that the warhawks recognised the importance attached to domestic US race relations by the peoples of Asia and Africa, and used the opportunities offered by the War to try to promote civil rights reforms.<sup>69</sup>

- 46 The effects of work among black Americans provided elite blacks a forum to express their views, linked to a national organisation; made an important contribution to debate in the black press; established a potential channel for recruiting black leaders into the American state; and challenged community indifference and/or isolationism. Finally, the lesson learned by east coast elites from the experience must be appreciated: domestic racial matters were now considered in the context of America's global image, further undermining the 'separation' of domestic and global affairs.<sup>70</sup>
- 47 In combination, the above efforts – foundation investments in knowledge networks and their multiplier effects – helped to promote liberal internationalism and to marginalise isolationism, and helped boost the knowledge/research capacities of the Department of State. Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that those networks were the necessary pre-conditions for America's rise to globalism, not the 'cause': the 'causes' were in great part dependent on catalytic events and, even more importantly, the way national political leaders *interpreted* 'catalytic' events as opportunities for promulgating radical alterations to the foreign policy 'status quo'. It was, and is, the combination of prior preparation and organisational capacity, not to mention 'missionary zeal', with the successful 'selling' of a plausible interpretation of spectacular events, usually attacks represented as a longer-term existential threat that demands a response, that leads to radical foreign policy shifts.

## International Networks, 1930s-1950s

- 48 Foundations' national and international network-building initiatives were not clearly distinct as the typology/periodisation used here might suggest. Indeed, foundation leaders and their counterparts in their funded organisations agreed that their 'national' strategies dovetailed with their international hegemonic objectives. Herein lies a key point: that the Big 3 foundations and their networks were involved in a self-conscious hegemonic project for globalism and against isolationism; their domestic activities were aimed at promoting the idea that America was dependent on, and connected to, the world and could no longer ignore world affairs. If America – the self-evident good country of the 'chosen people'<sup>71</sup> – did not 'nip' global threats in the bud, it would suffer economic hardships and threats of (or actual) military attack, as the forces of 'evil' would dominate the globe.<sup>72</sup> Indeed, the overall US-stated aim in the definitive cold war justification, NSC-68, recognises a desire "to foster a world environment in which the American system can flourish", to be achieved through containing the USSR but also, "*a policy we would probably pursue even if there were no Soviet threat .... [a] policy of attempting to develop a healthy international community*" of US-dominated organisations, such as the IMF, World Bank, NATO, the Marshall Plan, and so on.<sup>73</sup> Interventionism made (common) sense as the world was getting smaller.<sup>74</sup> It was seen by US state and private elites that leadership of international organisations constituted "from an American vantage a desirable world order."<sup>75</sup> And in those world orders, international organisations were rarely permitted independent powers and the US always (and unsurprisingly) "sought to protect its interests." To Craig Murphy and Robert Cox, international organisations – such as the International Labour Organisation and the League of Nations, represent the international institutional architecture for capitalist accumulation regimes.<sup>76</sup> Relatedly, James T. Shotwell, Columbia University historian and Carnegie Endowment representative at the ILO, noted quite explicitly the pro-capitalist and anti-communist aims of the organisation, in an article entitled nothing less than, "The International Labor Organization as an Alternative to Violent Revolution". In it, he argued that the Bolshevik revolution, worker unrest, and political instability across Europe forced labour issues onto the Paris Peace Conference's agenda. Subsequently, peacemakers worked to "prove to the workers of the world that the principles of social justice might be established under the capitalist system".<sup>77</sup>
- 49 Those messages were relayed with all the skills and experience of modern advertising techniques, from the crucible of personal conversations to the radio, from the local library to the lecture theatre, from the board room to the factory floor,<sup>78</sup> from White mid-western isolationist heartlands to African-American enclaves in Chicago and New York City.<sup>79</sup>

- 50 The foundations' international network-building was as strategic as their national enterprises. As Rockefeller officials noted when selecting London-based colleges (such as the London School of Economics) for investment, that city's institutions were already part of a world-wide imperial network that offered significant advantages. Influencing the questions and methods of research at the heart of the British Empire meant multiplier effects across the globe.<sup>80</sup>
- 51 The major American foundations also played key roles in generating several international organisations in and through which their ideas and values could be expressed and the *idea* of international governance could be normalised, especially after the US senate's non-ratification of the League of Nations. Creating international forums for discussing labour conditions, scientific papers, trade, legal norms, war debts, reparations, war, and peace, provided opportunities for US elites to promote their own positions but also to try and cooperate in advancing non-nationalist, anti-colonial, and non-communist arguments. Despite the idealistic character of the declarations of American internationalists, and of their more recent supporters,<sup>81</sup> this was a bid for hegemony. As Ikenberry notes, "Hegemonic control emerges when foreign elites buy into the [potential] hegemon's vision of international order and accept it as their own..."<sup>82</sup> He further notes that "the ability to forge a consensus among national elites on the normative underpinnings of order is an important if elusive dimension of hegemonic power." Such persuasion is conducted by "direct contact with elites in these states, including contact via diplomatic channels, cultural exchanges, and foreign study."<sup>83</sup> He might have added private international organisations to that list. For American internationalists, building international organisations was for the purposes of what later became known as "track two" diplomacy, where state and other elites meet informally to air differences during protracted international negotiations between states.<sup>84</sup>
- 52 It is unsurprising, therefore, that the foundations funded the long-term cooperative efforts of the American CFR with its British counterpart, the Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA, also known as Chatham House).<sup>85</sup> Founded as two branches of one Institute of International Affairs, the CFR and Chatham House became national organisations in the early 1920s. Nevertheless, their cooperation developed and became 'special': they were champions of Anglo-American cooperation and, indeed, alliance, as the best way of combating 'aggressors' and securing world peace and prosperity. They established joint conferences and study groups from the 1920s right into the cold war, informal and semi-formal diplomacy that shadowed their official counterparts in their respective governments – for example, on naval matters, trade, war debts, postwar issues in the Pacific region, etc... While they did not 'resolve' problems, they created spaces within which policy-oriented elites were able frankly to air their grievances and indicate how much political room for manoeuvre their respective governments enjoyed. They also created and reinforced habits of Anglo-American cooperation and dialogue. During the Second World War – the high point of the CFR-RIIA's cooperation – the two groups' leaders together and with their respective governments planned the postwar international institutional architecture that became known as the Bretton Woods system: the International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD, or World Bank) and the United Nations.<sup>86</sup> In regard to the latter, the role of the CFR as an organisation, and of Isaiah Bowman, is well-documented. It is clear that, for Bowman and the CFR, the UN was for the maintenance of national security and international organisation would be the route to avoiding "conventional forms of imperialism."<sup>87</sup> American power would be exercised through an American-led "international" system.
- 53 Building, and modelled, on that core cooperation between CFR and RIIA, there developed from the 1920s momentum behind an institutes-of-international affairs 'movement'. Institutes developed in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa as well as Italy, Belgium, Holland, Germany and France. Adapted to their own domestic conditions, these institutes received funding from the major American foundations,<sup>88</sup> because their general aims were similar to the foundations' own conception of international affairs at a time of increasing nationalist rivalries, economic autarchy, and military conflict: to increase international dialogue to avert war and economic depression, and to build international habits of mind and

activity.<sup>89</sup> As Dobell and Willmott conclude, the institutes represented the founding generation of a “transnational elite” that went onto play important roles in laying the foundations of the contemporary world order.<sup>90</sup>

54 Even more than that, however, foundation elites aimed at building international associations of democratic countries as bulwarks against aggression and militarism. Their schemes are interesting as they have, since the end of the cold war, once again become fashionable. Today’s US-mooted ‘community/concert/league of democracies’<sup>91</sup> (and the less well-known but interesting ‘Anglosphere’)<sup>92</sup> had its 1930s counterpart: Federal Union. Championed by *New York Times* journalist, Clarence Streit, and Chatham House’s Lionel Curtis, Federal Union (FU, between Britain – and its imperial subjects, America, Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and the Scandinavian nations) was conceived of as a union of democratic, peace-loving, nations of ‘advanced’ peoples, a 1930s version of democratic peace theory in action.<sup>93</sup> Of course, despite high levels of sympathy among British and American elites, including Prime Minister Churchill, Federal Union never came about. Nevertheless, it provides an insight to what Anglo-American elites thought about the world and how they sought to act upon it. And the moving spirits behind the movement were part of the American foundations’ far-flung but well-connected networks. This was at a time of crisis for the League of Nations which had been powerless to prevent Nazi and other aggressions, and a time of exploration of various schemes for ‘world order’. When war-time discussions began – within and between CFR-RIIA and their respective foreign offices – the core ideas/values of FU played an important role.<sup>94</sup> The leaders of the institutes of international affairs movement and Federal Union overlapped, as did their funding sources. Together, they made more dense the elite international networks through which American foundation leaders sought to embed their values in the international system.<sup>95</sup>

55 American foundations were major supporters of international cooperation in informal, private associations. Such associations took the form of institutes of international affairs; the Institute of Pacific Relations (IPR, backed by the Big 3 till its destruction by McCarthyites in the 1950s for allegedly “losing” China)<sup>96</sup> for discussions between the powers of the Pacific rim, including imperial Britain; supporting the social justice aims of the International Labour Organisation (ILO, Carnegie was particularly active in this respect),<sup>97</sup> and even building international legal institutions such as the Permanent Court of Justice (once again, a significant Carnegie-backed project). American philanthropy also supported the International Studies Conference (ISC) of the League of Nations’ International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC) which, by 1945, had developed into the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). While James Shotwell of the Carnegie Endowment served as the American committee’s chairman (1932-43), the ISC and IIIC both received generous funding from the Rockefeller and Carnegie foundations.<sup>98</sup>

56 The foundations were themselves international organisations or, rather national organisations with international reach. The CEIP, for example, had a European office in Paris as well as representation in Geneva (the headquarters of the League of Nations). The Rockefeller Foundation was internationally-oriented from its earliest days, particularly in relation to its work on illness and disease, but also its work with the American churches at home and overseas.<sup>99</sup> The Carnegie Corporation, which was particularly active within ‘British’ Africa, had offices right across the continent.<sup>100</sup>

57 Finally, the foundation-supported ‘area studies’ programmes provided an additional avenue for ‘thickening’ American elite networks with other countries and strategic world regions. John Ikenberry, referring to the building of the British empire in India, states that “A necessary condition for the emergence of both informal and formal empire is the explicit, physical penetration of peripheral society by metropolitan agents. Whether officials, soldiers, traders, financiers, or missionaries [to these add professors, research fellows and doctoral students] these agents serve as the medium through which socialization occurs.”<sup>101</sup> Postwar US-based area studies programmes provide an excellent example of such “socialisation”.

- 58 Building on American domestic area studies networks – with their attendant professional societies, journals, and conferences – foundations funded network-construction in target regions and countries. That is, foundations encouraged field-based studies by American scholars in Africa, Asia and Latin America, as well as building prestigious “centres of excellence” and expertise in those regions.<sup>102</sup> Doctoral and post-doctoral fellowships were established, beginning a flow or circulation of scholars and students around US elite university-based networks, with the usual multiplier effects.<sup>103</sup> Whole careers were built by the tremendous levels of funding from the Ford Foundation through its Foreign Areas Fellowship Programme, for example. These networks helped to create and sustain bonds of scholarly cooperation between elite American universities area studies (and other) programmes, the US Department of State, and strategic overseas regions.<sup>104</sup>
- 59 It was through such network flows – of money, scholars, and ideas – that “modernisation” theory was established as the paradigm for the economic development of “backward” countries during the 1950s to 1970s period.<sup>105</sup> Strongly driven by cold war competition, as well as the historic American desire for global hegemony, modernisers favoured market-oriented, non-nationalist and non-communist roads to economic development in the Third World. An excellent example of such thinking, and its underlying political assumptions, is represented in a confidential 1954 memorandum to CIA director, Allen Dulles, from Max Millikan and Walt Rostow. In it, they argue that the American economy can continue to grow only if the world economy grows. Specifically, the “underdeveloped” regions needed “the mobilization of capital; the development of ‘know-how’,” among other things. For the latter, Millikan and Rostow recommended “international collaborations between universities, management associations, medical societies, and trade unions for education, research, and training.” All this could only be achieved through a system of international organisation, including the UN and the ILO. Although denying any intention of interfering in other countries’ internal affairs, Millikan and Rostow added that the United States must develop “an [international] environment in which societies which directly or indirectly menace ours will not evolve.”<sup>106</sup>
- 60 Collaborations between Ford-funded American economists and Indonesian economists in the 1950s and 1960s, for example, had profound effects on that nation’s political and economic development, especially after the overthrow of the leftist-nationalist, Sukarno, in 1966.<sup>107</sup> Similar outcomes may also be noted with regard to Rockefeller and Ford funded social scientists in Chile before and after the military coup by General Pinochet in 1973.<sup>108</sup> The ideological, ideational, and institutional collaborations at the heart of these networks integrated Third World elites, or at least important sections of them, into American (and western) networks, promoting non-national, cosmopolitan logics among them as well as the promise of well-funded research programmes and prestigious careers.
- 61 American power advanced during the twentieth-century in large measure due to the indefatigable efforts of liberal internationalists to construct rules-based international associations that were frequently US-led but which also permitted the expression of others’ national interests and viewpoints. Writing about the 1950s, Ikenberry argues that the United States “turned power into order and domination into legitimate authority.”<sup>109</sup> It is argued here that the hectic programme of 1950s international organisation-building was conducted by many who had cut their teeth on building the ILO or IPR or ISC or Federal Union in the 1920s and 1930s or by foundation funded wartime planners attached to the CFR or FPA. They had been dedicated to this activity since the US Senate’s refusal to permit American membership of the League of Nations in 1920. Yet, they educated and socialised Americans at home for internationalism and committed money and time to fostering habits and institutions of international collaboration, a kind of counter-hegemony within the very heartlands of isolationism.<sup>110</sup> After World War I, the political space within the US, Britain and France for internationalism was indeed narrow: nationalism was the order of the day ideologically and economically. After 1945, however, the domestic space for internationalism – ideologically and economically – was broad: no return to the 1930s was considered possible, let alone desirable. Ideological preferences and material incentives lay in internationalism; hence

the success of post-1945 efforts at a rules-based international order. In effect, this process “embedded liberalism” into the very fabric of the international order.<sup>111</sup> The need of a hegemon, however, remained and the United States was willing to shoulder the “responsibility” of global leadership.

## Global networks

- 62 The historical experience of building national and international networks finds its contemporary expression in the hectic bid to create a global order that *suits, extends and defends* globalising capitalism, a system of “market democracies”, headed by the United States.<sup>112</sup> As Thomas Friedman argues, the world today is characterised by “integration and webs” as well as an unequal distribution of benefits. Effective globalisation requires a global institutional architecture as well as a supportive global civil society, more or less for the same reasons that an industrialising and ‘nationalising’ America 100 years ago required a national civil society – a series of densely networked publics composed of strategic minorities – to provide its social base. The Big 3 foundations, among other newer American foundations, are at the very heart of these developments today. They are actively supporting existing international organisations and promoting new organisations more suited to global conditions, as they see them and wish them to develop. The overall strategy remains unchanged, even as programmes and personnel change: Americanised or American-led globalisation remains the aim. It is also clear, however, that American foundations are not alone in this venture, though they remain the most significant.
- 63 American philanthropy, by virtually every measure, tops the world league, although foundations are now a feature of practically every continent. There has been a proliferation in the number of US foundations, the variety of grant-making activities, and total philanthropic assets. Since 1987 the number of foundations in the U.S. has grown from 28,000 to about 50,000. The new foundations hold some of the enormous growth in wealth that has been created recently in the US. Their assets have expanded from \$115 billion in 1987 to over \$300 billion today. Their international giving also topped \$3 billion in 2002. Record increases in international philanthropic giving have been recorded since the mid-1990s, due to a strong world economy and the rise of new fortunes, especially Bill Gates’s Microsoft Corporation, as witnessed by the formation of the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation. The terrorist attacks of September 11 2001, however, dealt a temporary blow to the trend, although they also focused greater attention among foundations to the global sources of domestic problems, especially the role of poverty and inequality.<sup>113</sup>
- 64 Increasingly, like their US counterparts, European, Japanese and Australian foundations are engaging in international activities. There are over 60,000 foundations currently operating in the “old 15” EU states. In Italy, of the over 3000 foundations surveyed by the European Foundation Centre (EFC), half were founded after 1999. Over 40% of German foundations were set up in the decade up to 2004. Their combined assets total over £100 billion, with the Wellcome Trust topping the league with assets of £10 billion. Increasingly, European foundations are engaging in cross-border and global activities, with 30% already doing so and 68% expressing an interest in doing so in the future. Further legal reforms to simplify and incentivise international philanthropy is the subject of reform campaigns backed by the major foundation networks. The EFC’s Europe in The World initiative – to project European philanthropic and political-cultural influence onto a global stage to compete with and complement the Americans – is the principal motor behind new developments that have seen increased linkages between European foundations and international organisations (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, United Nations Children’s Fund, UN Development Program), corporations (such as Shell), and an array of global networks such as Community Philanthropy Initiative, Transatlantic Community Foundation Network, the World Development Movement, and the Network of European Foundations for Innovative Cooperation. The world is dense with foundations, foundation networks, and networks of networks.<sup>114</sup>

- 65 In the era of America's *rise* to globalism, the foundations constructed and promoted, at home and abroad, *liberal-internationalist* versions of Americanism. In the era of *globalisation*, they promote a "transnationalised" Americanism that backs the neo-liberal project but seeks to blunt its harsher edges.<sup>115</sup> The foundations today are *replicating* their historical strategies at home and abroad; they seek to protect the existing system of power by engaging in activities to ameliorate the negative consequences of that very system of which they are a central component and beneficiaries.<sup>116</sup> As a "Break-out session [on] Globalization" at a meeting of the International Network for Strategic Philanthropy (INSP) concluded, "foundations portfolios have benefited from globalization."<sup>117</sup> At the beginning of the twentieth-century, the foundations targetted the alleviation of domestic poverty and the slum – brought on by American urbanisation and capitalist industrialisation; today they focus on the world-wide social fallout of neo-liberal globalisation strategies.<sup>118</sup>
- 66 The IMF and the World Bank are widely considered, along with the US Treasury, to be the motors of neoliberal globalisation.<sup>119</sup> The former two organisations – formed at Bretton Woods in 1944-45 with full support from the Rockefeller/Carnegie foundations – continue to garner sponsorship and sustenance from east coast philanthropy. As is shown below, the World Bank has received grants from the Ford Foundation, while David Rockefeller has been a consistent IMF stalwart.<sup>120</sup>
- 67 As was historically the case when American foundations often carried out programmes that the state would not or could not, it is also the case today – with the dramatic loss of state legitimacy associated with the rise of free market liberalism, privatisation, etc... - that non-state actors are scurrying to perform key functions. The proliferation of domestic and international non-governmental organisations, the rise of the "third sector", is partly explained by the "rollback" of state social support programmes in the wake of Reaganomics and Thatcherism. Offsetting the fallout of increasing gaps between rich and poor has become a key foundation task, especially by backing "pivotal institutions that can shape behaviour away from risk factors and *dangerous directions* [i.e., anti-Americanism and anti-globalisation protests]," according to the Carnegie Corporation.<sup>121</sup> Part of the solution is seen to lie in "promoting democracy, market reform and the creation of civil institutions..."<sup>122</sup>, that is, in the neo-liberal project itself. Carnegie actively promoted, during the 1990s, "Partnerships for Global Development", headed by prestigious academics, scientists and politicians, that promoted liberalisation of markets as a core concern. Contrary to Peet et al, neo-liberal globalisation's foundation-backers do not see a wide gulf between neo-liberalism and its critics: by their social amelioration policies, they hope/claim to promote the market *and* social justice.<sup>123</sup>
- 68 In the same vein, the Rockefeller Foundation declared in 1985 that social inequality reduction lay at the heart of its economic developmental concerns. In 1999, the incoming president of RF, former vice-chancellor of the University of Sussex, Gordon Conway, stressed that the foundation had two priorities: "first, to understand the processes of change spurred by globalization and second, to find ways that the poor and excluded will not be left out." Inherent in both foundations' attitudes is the taken-for-granted neo-liberal character of globalisation.<sup>124</sup> Therefore, it is unsurprising that the third of what some may call an "unholy trinity", the Ford Foundation, granted the Hudson Institute, a conservative think tank, \$150,000 to assist "economists and officials of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania [to] develop plans to transform their economies and integrate them into the world economy."<sup>125</sup> To examine the consequences of market reforms, the Rockefeller Foundation administered a project, at a cost of \$150,000, toward "an exploration on trade liberalization and its impacts on poor farmers."<sup>126</sup>
- 69 The American foundations are important supporters of the key engines of the globalisation process, as their records show. For example, Ford awarded a grant of \$400,000 to the World Bank to fund the latter's "Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest to develop the capacity of microfinance institutions and improve member donor practices in supporting microfinance."<sup>127</sup> Microfinance is a strategy for lifting into the marketplace those too poor to get loans from mainstream commercial banks. In 1999, RF granted \$800,000 to the World Bank's Economic Development Institute for economic growth acceleration strategies.<sup>128</sup>

Further Ford grants were made in 2003 to institutions that try to build interconnections between large Western corporations and small enterprises in the third world.<sup>129</sup> During the 1990s, the head of the Rockefeller family – David Rockefeller – offered unconditional support for the International Monetary Fund’s global programmes: without the IMF, the world would return to the economic crises of the 1930s and the threat of global economic and military conflicts.<sup>130</sup> A grant of \$250,000 aimed to finance “strategic workshops and meetings among Asian government officials, academics and civil society groups on the governance of the World Trade Organisation”, another motor of globalisation processes.<sup>131</sup>

70 The American foundations are globalising forces in their own right too – historically and today.<sup>132</sup> They consciously finance and strengthen global knowledge networks between universities, think tanks, research centres, government agencies, and philanthropies.<sup>133</sup> The International Network for Strategic Philanthropy (INSP) – set up by the German Bertelsmann Foundation – with US foundations’ support – encourages the global spread of philanthropy. The (American) Philanthropy Initiative, Inc., aims to ensure the “strategic and systematic investment of private philanthropic resources to address complex, interconnected manifestations of chronic underdevelopment” At the forefront of encouraging global giving are the American Big Three. RF has backed several initiatives to train a new generation of global givers, “promising leaders in the field of philanthropy and civil society.” Similar programmes are run by the Ford, Hewlett, Kellogg and Charles Stewart Mott Foundations. Even philanthropy-strengthening groups have access to a network of support groups such as the Council on Foundations and the European Foundation Center. The global givers are further networked with regional and national philanthropies, such as the Asia Pacific Philanthropy Consortium, and to international networks and associations, such as the World Economic Forum, which in turn, has its own global social investors programme.<sup>134</sup>

71 In that context, the grants information that follows proves to be just the tip of a very large iceberg. The Ford Foundation granted \$400,000 to the Academy for the Development of Philanthropy in Poland (ADPP) – which grew out of a USAID project - in order to strengthen foundations locally. A Ford grant of \$220,000 supports efforts to link-up Polish and Belarusian NGOs. Relatedly, Ford awarded \$500,000 to the Brazilian Association of NGOs to help organise the World Social Forum (WSF), a body that tries to develop “social and economic alternatives to current patterns of globalization.”<sup>135</sup>

72 The Ford Foundation is an enthusiastic though controversial supporter of the World Social Forum (WSF), an international network of liberal-reformist globalisers. Indeed, private corporate and philanthropic funders are the second largest donors to the WSF, acting as a brake on WSF’s critique of capitalist globalisation.<sup>136</sup> FF has invested well over \$1,000,000 directly in WSF to help it organise events and globally to disseminate its message.<sup>137</sup> At its third annual meeting, WSF attracted 100,000 delegates from 156 countries – feminists, trades unionists, church-men and so on. According to Michael Edwards, director of the Ford Foundation’s Governance and Civil Society unit, WSF has changed the “terms of the debate about globalization.... There’s [now] an inescapable public debate about the role of corporations and the distribution of globalization’s benefits.... largely due to the W.S.F. crew.”<sup>138</sup> WSF, with the FF’s and others’ sponsorship, promotes critiques of some of the “negative side effects of market liberalization: growing economic disparity, the privatization of health care and environmental degradation.” The ultimate aim, according to Ford’s Edwards, is a “global civil society” the influence of which would bear comparison to the impact of the Bretton Woods system formed in World War II.<sup>139</sup> WSF aims to construct “an alternative development model and to construct a new form of globalization,” as opposed to rejecting globalisation per se.<sup>140</sup> A Carnegie Corporation grant of \$25,000 assists “dialogue on globalization between representatives of the World Economic Forum and the World Social Forum.”<sup>141</sup> A Ford grant to the London School of Economics of \$500,000 aims to help scholars explore “the depth of global governance and its accountability to a polity,” another reformist measure promoted by all three major US foundations.<sup>142</sup>

73 The WSF, however, is the subject of much criticism. For example, MumbaiResistance, a radical Indian organisation opposed to capitalist globalisation, argues that the WSF is funded by western agencies “to mitigate the disastrous projects of development cooperation and structural adjustment programmes” they have themselves organised.<sup>143</sup> It is claimed that the sponsors of the WSF have co-opted anti-globalisation forces and channelled them away from “direct and militant confrontation... into discussions and debates that are often sterile, and mostly unfocused and aimless.” Some participants at WSF meetings complain that they are expected mostly to “listen” to WSF leaders rather than to participate; the aim was “putting a human face on globalization.” The World Bank refers to the WSF as “a maturing social movement” and the Bank’s officials have been granted observer status at WSF meetings. WSF’s supporters include Brazil’s President Lula, head of the Workers’ Party and proponent of IMF policies and US free trade agreements, and opponent of peasants’ land struggles. WSF is, ultimately, a “safety valve” trying to blunt the harsher edges of capitalist globalisation.<sup>144</sup> The 2004 organisers of WSF meetings, in Mumbai, India, refused Ford’s donations because of Ford’s role in India’s Green Revolution which created and exacerbated the problems of poor farmers.<sup>145</sup> Gramscians argue that the major states, global corporations and philanthropies and other forces are a “a nascent historic bloc” that develop policy and “propagate the ideology of globalization”, even within organisations that are promoted as alternatives to it.<sup>146</sup>

## A New American-led Networked World Order

74 Though the foundations’ vision and operations may be more ‘transnational’ today, their attachment to US global leadership remains undiminished. Therefore, recognition of the power of global networks – an aspect of America’s ‘soft power’ – is now central to American foreign policy, especially noticeable since the inauguration of President Barack Obama, who appointed Princeton’s Anne-Marie Slaughter to the directorship of the State Department’s Policy Planning Staff. Slaughter has been advancing the networked power concept, in which America has the edge over other powers, since the 1990s. Her book, *A New World Order* (2003), leadership (with John Ikenberry) of the, in part, Ford Foundation-funded<sup>147</sup> Princeton Project on National Security (PPNS, 2004-06) which promoted to policymakers intergovernmental networks as a means of global influence, and article in *Foreign Affairs* (2009), suggests that the Obama administration will formalise a long-standing practice: state-led networks that collaborate with and mobilise elite private networks. “[T]he measure of power is connectedness,” Slaughter contends, and “... the state with the most connections will be the central player, able to set the global agenda.... Here, the United States has a clear and sustainable edge... The twenty-first century looks increasingly like another American century....”<sup>148</sup>

75 Unsurprisingly, in the Princeton Project’s Final report, Slaughter and Ikenberry urged the United States to mobilize the power of its global networks: “We should establish and institutionalize networks of national, regional, and local government officials and nongovernmental representatives to create numerous channels for [democratic] nations and others to work on common problems and to communicate and inculcate the values and practices that safeguard liberty under law”.<sup>149</sup> The aim is to intersect “international institutions and domestic governments... institutions providing incentives and pressure to help conquer dysfunctional levels of corruption and bolster the rule of law...”<sup>150</sup> State-private networks in deep collaboration – a development that the foundations have been fostering for decades. As Ford’s Michael Edwards notes, though states make treaties, “transnational networks are essential to enforce compliance....”<sup>151</sup>

76 There is an expansive sense of “America” in the Princeton Project’s report when it argues that “U.S. borders [should] be defined for some purposes as extending to the port of shipment rather than the port of entry....[American officials should also]... strengthen the quality and capacity of a foreign government to control its territory and enforce its laws,” a necessary corollary to “defining our borders beyond those established by land and sea.”<sup>152</sup>

## Conclusion

- 77 Networks are powerful instruments that produce hegemonic results. Foundations' networks have played powerful roles in their own right, merely by virtue of being. Powerful systems for socialising and integrating intellectual talent, they are also the producers of prestigious knowledge as well as strategic gatekeepers. They draw people in and marginalise others. They give full meaning to the expression that "knowledge is power".
- 78 American hegemony, or at least concerted attempts at it over the past nearly 100 years, is in part built on the focused and systematic work of foundations' network-building activities, alongside the material incentives that network funders offer, and the prestige membership in them confers. Even so, the role of crises or catalytic events is critical; it provides the impetus for policy shifts or for the allocation of even larger resources behind a particular programme.
- 79 Within those contexts, foundation network building developed from national, through international, to global proportions. The foundations are now trying to do at the global level – a system of relatively strong states but weak international institutions and global civil society – what they successfully achieved (in alliance with other social, economic and political forces) within the United States over the course of the first half of the twentieth century. The United States was at that time characterised by strong states and a weak federal centre with little that could be called a 'civil society' at the national level. At the core of their activities remains their attachment to networks, their master technology that, they claim, stands above business interest, politics, the American state, and ideology. Their fictions remain intact to this day. Of course, they also remain American organisations, wedded to the largest American global corporations, the American state, and to an enlightened, but nevertheless, selfish approach to world politics, attempting still to promote and consolidate American hegemony within what they consider "a benign international environment".
- 80 This article shows the degree to which American power is best understood as an intense collaboration between the state and private elites, thus undermining Realist and pluralist accounts of power. The former's focus on state power and the latter's on the power of private special interests does not sit well with the evidence presented above. This is not to argue that state power has withered away; it is rather to emphasise that the operation of power pays little heed to either/or propositions. Herein lies the significance of Gramsci's concept of state spirit that transcends the state-private divide and coheres the American hegemony-building project. State spirit also speaks to the issue of "inside/outside" factors in political outcomes. This article shows increasingly internationally and globally oriented groups, rooted in an American liberal vision of a seamless domestic and global order, actively constructing US hegemony, blurring the so-called state-private divide. Realism is undermined to a degree as domestic forces – state and private – develop a vision and build an international order in line with Americanism, and not only the 'logic' of the interstate system.<sup>153</sup>
- 81 Network power coheres the American hegemonic project and has also permitted/furnished the institutional agility required to navigate crises. The state-private network operations discussed above show how foundations coped with the isolationist 1920s and 1930s, when they were politically marginal, to the extent that they fostered counter-hegemonic networks capable of taking advantage of political opportunities afforded by crises, such as the 1930s depression and the Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, as well as during the Cold War and post-Cold war periods. That is, they have proved adaptable, successful organisations essential to the development and exercise of American hegemony.

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## Notes

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**Abstract**

The major American foundations constructed and sustained the rich texture of cooperative social, intellectual and political relations between key actors and institutions supportive of specific modes of thought that promoted US hegemony. Foundations also fostered and developed the attractive power-knowledge networks that not only radiated intellectual influence but also attracted some of the most creative minds. Finally, liberal internationalist foundations fostered globalism even when the American state was 'isolationist', and when US influence abroad unwelcome. Their significance in American hegemony building lay in their sustained, long-term cooperative relationship with the American state through which they helped build national, international and global institutions and networks. *The latter process evidences the most significant impact of US foundations* – the building of the domestic and international infrastructure for liberal internationalism which has transformed into a kind of "social neoliberalism". Theoretical conclusions follow from these claims: the sustained and deep cooperation between the state and foundations suggests that we must revise our views of "how power works" in the United States and therefore influences its foreign relations. Therefore, the article shows that elite networks, consisting of state officials and private citizens are powerful means by which foreign policy shifts may be prepared, elite and mass opinion primed and mobilised, new consensus built, 'old' forces marginalised, and US hegemony constructed.

**Index terms**

**Keywords** : Philanthropic foundations; US hegemony; elite knowledge networks; Rockefeller; Ford; Carnegie