

Zeitschrift: Traverse : Zeitschrift für Geschichte = Revue d'histoire
Herausgeber: [s.n.]
Band: 13 (2006)
Heft: 1

Artikel: Challenging elite Anti-Americanism in the Cold War : American foundations, Kissinger's Harvard seminar and the Salzburg seminar in American Studies
Autor: Parmar, Inderjeet
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-29554>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. [See Legal notice.](#)

Download PDF: 17.02.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

CHALLENGING ELITE ANTI-AMERICANISM IN THE COLD WAR

AMERICAN FOUNDATIONS, KISSINGER'S HARVARD SEMINAR AND THE SALZBURG SEMINAR IN AMERICAN STUDIES

INDERJEET PARMAR

Philanthropic foundations are a significant force in the American political-ideological system. Their formation at the turn of the 20th-century marked a key development in three ways. First, they were part of a set of east coast elite responses to rapid social transformations – industrialisation and increasing concentration of corporate wealth, mass immigration, and urbanisation – that threatened to spiral out of control and lead the US into a more collectivist direction. Philanthropy, as a source of intellectual and experts' mobilisation – a technocratic response to change – aimed to manage and direct social change into “safer” channels.¹

Secondly, the foundations' formation represented a key step in the gradual rise of US federal executive branch power because philanthropy – along with the rising universities, national church organisations and reform movements – aimed to root out the corruption and parochialism associated with party politics, electoral competition and Congress. Foundations acted as para-state organisations: their self-concept was state-oriented, seeing the problems of the state as their own, despite their “private” voluntarist character. In Gramscian terms, foundations embodied “state spirit” – a feeling among certain leading private figures and associations that they bear a grave responsibility to promote an historical process – state-building – through positive political and intellectual activity.² Considering the United States in national, rather than local, terms, they sought to build federal institutional power upon a supportive national public opinion and to undercut parochially-oriented party organisation and political representation.³

Thirdly, foundations' formation marked the rise of a global consciousness in the east coast elite and of the United States as a potentially great world power. Foundation leaders saw their role in addressing problems of world peace, tackling disease and underdevelopment, and spreading the benefits of the American dream to the world.⁴ As the 20th century progressed, the relationship between state foreign policy-makers and philanthropy broadened and deepened, blurring the already vague distinction between private actors and public power. By

116 ■ the end of the Second World War, the foundations were well ensconced at the

heart of the foreign policy establishment, assisting America's rise to globalism by constructing university foreign affairs institutes, foreign policy think tanks, international studies and area studies programmes, graduate training courses for US Foreign Service officers, and enhancing the research and analysis capacity of the Department of State. Such efforts coalesced with the expansionist objectives of the American state with which the foundations were inextricably connected both ideologically and personally.⁵

Promoting Americanism and combatting anti-Americanism were among the foundations' key contributions to constructing post-war American hegemony. The foundations financed privately-funded public diplomacy that sought to counter foreign elites' "anti-Americanism". This paper briefly examines two influential initiatives to show how those programmes operated and to indicate their effects. But first, it is important briefly to examine the concepts of "Americanism" and "anti-Americanism" as they provided at least part of the underlying rationale of American post-war globalism.

Foundation leaders, as part of the east coast foreign policy establishment, saw the United States as a world power whose time had come, a power superior to all others – moral, advanced, anti-colonial, exceptional. The American system was, they believed, ready for export. Its scientific, industrial and military achievements were evidence of its superiority over all other systems, including inegalitarian Europe and communist Russia, not to mention the "under-developed" post- or neo-colonial world. Only the United States – born out of an anti-colonial democratic revolutionary struggle – was fit to lead the world out of the mire of European imperial domination and to defend it against communist "aggression". In this regard, foundation leaders were squarely within the American exceptionalist tradition.⁶

Yet, the leaders of American philanthropy saw numerous threats to their globalist aspirations: European envy and resentment of American power and wealth, as well as ignorance or misunderstanding of the new superpower's society, culture and politics. Opposition to US foreign policy, therefore, was seen as based on emotion, ignorance, and nostalgia. The solution for liberal internationalist Americans was cultural or public diplomacy specifically targetted at European elites to persuade them that the United States was a force for good in the world, defending freedom and fighting tyranny; that its culture was deep and not shallow, that its material wealth was not alone the obsession of its culture, that it had an abiding and serious interest in abstract problems and ideas – in art, music, and philosophy. In short, the aim was to show that US power was not the naked expression of a dangerously shallow society, a volatile political system prone to witch-hunts led by demagogues, or a hollow political elite. They wanted to promote the image of a national leadership that was cultured, sophisticated, ■ 117

educated, serious, rational, sober, reflective and thoughtful. It was a leadership that could be trusted to use its power wisely in the interests of the world system, not purely in its own narrow national interests.

FOUNDATIONS AND POST-WAR AMERICAN HEGEMONY

After 1945, foundation leaders developed a crisis mentality mirroring that within the American state. With the growing perception of a “communist threat”, foundation leaders increasingly saw the world in stark terms: America’s friends and foes, the forces of freedom versus the “evil empire” or the “slave state”, as the infamous NSC-68 (National Security Council paper 68) put it in April 1950.⁷ They saw “anti-Americanism” as a part of the communist threat or, at the very least, its fellow-traveller. Within the mindset of the national security state, criticism of American society or government was seen as “anti-American”. The Carnegie, Rockefeller and Ford foundations lined up behind a programme of hegemonic expansion: promoting Americanism and combatting anti-Americanism through public diplomacy were key dimensions of that project. This is an under-researched but fundamental aspect of the foundations’ activities during this period, rich in lessons about the nature of the foundations themselves in a time of global transitions – the rise of US power, relative decline of Europe, and the formation of post-colonial states – as well as about how American “soft power” – trying to persuade other powers to back US foreign policies, as opposed to coercion – operated in a world of rising anti-Americanism.⁸ The programmes contrast well with what critics argue is inadequate in public diplomacy today: the focus on “selling” or “re-branding” America, as indicated by the appointment of Madison Avenue advertising executive (and former CEO of the multi-billion dollar firm, Ogilvy and Mather), Charlotte Beers in 2001, rather than with engaging and debating with its European allies.⁹

HENRY KISSINGER’S HARVARD UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SEMINAR

As Scott Lucas argues, Kissinger’s Harvard Seminar illustrates the degree to which the United States’ hegemonic project integrated culture, the academy and American foreign policy, tightening the integration of a state-private network to wage a war “defending” the American way of life.¹⁰ The advantage of such state-private networks was that official policy objectives – promoting American

especially in “sensitive” areas or issues, by purportedly unofficial, non-governmental means.¹¹ American foundations – who claimed to be independent of the state, non-political and non-ideological – were ideal institutional mechanisms for the promotion of Americanism and combatting anti-Americanism. The Seminar was originally formed by Harvard’s William Y. Elliott, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) consultant and Kissinger’s doctoral supervisor, with initial funding (15,000 dollars) from the CIA in 1951.¹² From 1950, Kissinger became the linchpin of the Seminar, developing its ideological rationale and recruiting the participants. By 1953, Kissinger had obtained financial support from the Fairfield Foundation, a conduit for CIA finances. In 1954, the Ford Foundation began its sponsorship of Kissinger’s seminar, the beginning of a long relationship.¹³ Public and private finances, therefore, were inextricably bound up in the origins of Kissinger’s Seminar, fully exemplifying the state-private network concept.

The aim of the Seminar, Kissinger argued, was “to create a spiritual link between the younger generation of Europe and American values” as Europeans were frustrated with the collapse of “traditional values” and the rise of a seemingly unsympathetic United States, “a bewildering spectacle of economic prosperity and seeming misunderstanding of European problems.”¹⁴ This attitude opened the way for “neutralism” and communism to win European support. The Seminar would “assist in counteracting these tendencies, by giving inwardly alive, intelligent young Europeans an opportunity to study the deeper meaning of U. S. democracy”. The programme, however, would fail if it were merely one of “dogmatic indoctrination”; therefore, it had to be focused around *persuading* Europeans that Americans were genuinely concerned with “abstract problems” and not just “material prosperity”. The programme was to be a forum for “*disagreement and criticism*”, with a view to *demonstrating* that “self-reliance is a *possibility* despite the complexity of the present age and that the assumption of *personal responsibility* is more meaningful than unquestioning submission to an apparatus”. Just like communists, democrats needed to display “the strength of their convictions”.¹⁵

Hence, this Seminar was no blunt-edged attempt at indoctrination: the deeper abstract and philosophical meaning of life in American democracy animated the programme by examining the concept of freedom, “the striving for self-realization in art against the felt pressure of convention, the quest for a reconciliation of rationalism, personal responsibility and dogmatism in religion.” The Seminar aimed to produce no “absolute solutions” to policy and social problems but to generate an “*elucidation of fundamental issues*”, making “social problems [...] *challenges for normative concepts* [...]”.¹⁶

THE ROLE OF THE FORD FOUNDATION

Given the leadership of Ford in the early 1950s – men such as Paul Hoffman, John J. McCloy and Shepard Stone (all connected with the State Department or CIA) – the Foundation provided a perfect source for privately financing the Harvard Seminar.¹⁷ Between 1954 and 1959, Ford awarded 170,000 dollars to the Harvard Seminar, bringing together leaders and potential leaders from across Europe and Asia, networking them with Americans and familiarising them with American values and institutions. In all, Ford contributed millions of dollars to the efforts of Kissinger and others to improve transatlantic relations between 1954 and 1971.¹⁸ For instance, the 1954 group of 40 – aged between 35–40 years (a group that often sought refuge in “a narrow nationalism”, according to Kissinger)¹⁹ – participants included a German diplomat, a British Member of Parliament, a French journalist, a Korean lecturer, and a Filipino lawyer, among others. Numbers were kept low enough to enable Seminar leaders “to pay personal attention to each participant”, the selection policy being based “as much as possible on the personal recommendations of reliable individuals”. It was clear to Kissinger that the success of the programme depended “to a large extent on its selection process”. The Seminar received around 700 European applications annually; final selection was based on recommendations by American and European elites – the contributors to Kissinger’s journal, *Confluence*, Seminar alumni, “Harvard faculty with European connections” and the recommendations of international societies such as the English-Speaking Union and various Institutes of World Affairs. Asians tended to be selected on the basis of recommendations by the US Information Service, Harvard alumni clubs, and university recommendations.²⁰ In Japan, a group of “private citizens” – headed by the president of the Harvard Club of Japan – made recommendations. All recommendations were assessed for short-listing by Kissinger, his assistant, and by a national of the applicant’s country of origin, interviewed in Europe by a trusted representative (in France by Reverend Gerardus Beekman of the American Pro-Cathedral; in Germany and the Low Countries by Juergen Weichert, secretary of the West German parliament’s Foreign Affairs Committee – a Harvard Seminar alumnus; in Italy, it was Gian Brioschi, head of the financial department at Olivetti whom Kissinger described as “an outstanding ‘alumnus’” of the Seminar).²¹ The final decision was made at Harvard, minimising the chances of any dangerous elements.

It was argued that the Seminar members were “prolific” writers and speakers upon return to their homes, spreading the Seminar’s message far and wide. State Department and Institute of International Education representatives, who had observed the Seminar at close quarters, also endorsed its importance.²² In

120 ■ 1956, Ford reported that the Seminar was yielding a number of positive effects

on participants and for the United States in general. For example, the Seminar seemed to be an excellent forum in which to “correct false impressions of the United States, notably among Asian visitors”; it attracted “influential or potentially influential people” from strategic areas; its effects were felt beyond Harvard as “responsible” press comments suggested; that other US universities were influenced by the Seminar through the participation of faculty and dissemination of Seminar publications; and the Seminar “helps to develop understanding and a sense of common purpose between Americans and influential foreigners and among the foreigners themselves [...]” some of whom had set up Seminar alumni clubs and a regional seminar in India. Ford funded many of the alumni meetings and circulated Seminar literature to all Seminar alumni, helping to sustain the network.²³

The Seminar was skilfully devised to provide a range of contacts with American life over a period of two months: seminars on politics, economics, philosophy, art, American democracy, and discussions on “America’s role in relation to other countries of the world”; evening lectures by outsiders and Harvard and other faculty, including a robust defence of the McCarthyite investigating committees by James Burnham; *foreigners’ presentations on their own nations’ problems*; visits to American business organizations, labour unions, newspapers, local families, and baseball games. Weaved into a complex programme aimed at appreciating America’s role in the world were numerous meetings devoted to such seemingly irrelevant topics as “the nature of the poetic”, French theatre, the German novel after World War II, and the revival of religious art in France.²⁴ Yet, herein lay part of the strength of the Seminar, designed to illustrate the fabric and depth of American life, helping to achieve the Seminar’s objective of overcoming “national prejudices”.

Social occasions were explicitly arranged in order to “encourage the establishment of personal friendships with Americans”, thereby creating emotional bonds between elites.²⁵ The genuine *engagement* between the participants and Seminar leaders provided a sense of *ownership* among the visitors.²⁶ Kissinger outlined the detailed programme to the Ford Foundation, showing the way in which political scientist Earl Latham had led a discussion of the pluralistic character of the American political system and MIT economist Charles P. Kindleberger had examined economic conditions in the world system. In detailed debates, issues such as communist China, neutrality, and world communism, had been thoroughly aired and discussed. The social programme, Kissinger claimed, led to greater appreciation of American society than any formal lecture or reading courses. For Kissinger, the programme’s most “decisive” impact was the “attitudes engendered in the minds” of participants in “*the crucible of informal conversations*”. It was noted, for example: “Seminar members found that an evening’s conversation with

an American couple and their friends resulted in a more profound appreciation of the American society than months of reading prior to coming here.”²⁷ Through the intensity and close contact over eight weeks, Seminar members discovered “a wealth of channels toward general international understanding [...]”. In these ways, the Harvard Seminar, Kissinger concluded, “provided them with a unique opportunity to assess the qualities of the nation, which bears the heaviest burden of responsibility in the Western World [...]. Each of them has carried away a deeper insight into what they had previously distrusted in America – an insight often resulting in elimination of their initial disturbance.” Working in the Widener Library at Harvard, participating in challenging discussions, and enjoying the performances of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, *dispelled participants’ initial ideas about the shallowness of American culture.*²⁸ In short, Kissinger declared the Seminar an unqualified success because it appeared to engender among elite Europeans and Asians empathy, understanding and appreciation of American society, its elite and its “burden of responsibility” to the West.

More sinisterly, Seminar participants were under surveillance and reported on by faculty. For example, Professor Earl Latham reported in detail to Kissinger on the 1955 participants’ personalities, attitudes, and impact. Overall, though he felt that the group had been “more pronouncedly leftistish (sic) [...] the voice of reason could be heard from time to time, speaking with a Chinese or a Korean accent”. On the other hand, many of the Asians had doggedly attempted to hold to their “neutrality”, though with little success against an onslaught from the rest of the group. One participant – Burk – was suspected of Trotskyite tendencies; his “outlook seems to be impenetrably rigid and narrow”, Latham noted.²⁹ According to the archival record, participants’ evaluations of the Seminar were overwhelmingly positive. Kissinger passed on to the Ford Foundation excerpts from hundreds of letters of appreciation from participants as evidence of the Seminar’s effectiveness. Participants reported that the Seminar was “exciting, informative, and remarkable for *candour*”; that the Seminar was “forming an [international] elite which is so badly needed” in building world unity; that the knowledge and understanding gained would help to *challenge* any “false accusation thrown against the American people”; that the Seminar exhibited little of the stereotypical American “conformism”; that “your method of recruiting [American] speakers who are *critical and who tell us the worst as well as the best is far more disarming and successful than any sort of traditional propaganda [...]*”. Alain Clement, a journalist with *Le Monde* – a leading neutralist newspaper (i. e. supportive a concept of an independent Europe wedded to neither superpower) – returned a convert to American culture, Harvard and Henry Kissinger.³⁰ Kissinger thought that the Seminar, despite his own growing responsibilities (with the US

ment Agency, and the RAND Corporation), was so effective and important that he would continue to organise it.³¹ Important alumni of the Seminar include such leaders as Japan's Yasuhiro Nakasone (1953), France's Giscard d'Estaing (1954), and Malaysia's Mahathir Mohammed (1968).³² In form and content, the Harvard Seminar differed radically from the public diplomacy of the post-1989 and post-9-11 periods.³³ It provided to Seminar members "a sense of actively participating rather than [...] merely being recipients".³⁴ The Seminar, however, was just one part of an impressive array of public diplomacy operations at the time.

SALZBURG SEMINAR IN AMERICAN STUDIES: "THE FAINT ODOR OF CULTURAL IMPERIALISM"³⁵

The Salzburg Seminar in American Studies was, in effect, the overseas counterpart of the Harvard Seminar:³⁶ it was targeted at European men and women at the cusp of leadership positions in their own society – in law, politics, business, academia – and was run on the basis of *candid exchange, criticism, and intellectual engagement*. It represented a kind of public diplomacy – as opposed to propagandistic advertising – that some today hope to restore, as the tide of anti-Americanism rises around the world.³⁷ It began in 1947 as a cooperative venture between the Geneva International Student Service and the Harvard Student Council to improve Europeans' understanding of American society. By the late 1960s, 6500 fellows had attended courses at the Seminar's castle, Schloss Leopoldskron.³⁸

The aim of the Seminar was simple: to improve transatlantic understanding (because even highly educated Europeans regarded the US in "a distorted and negative light")³⁹ through "*dialogue* between people who count and who are going to count". According to the president of Columbia University, the Seminar was designed to have its "greatest effect upon men [...] who must be counted upon by the public opinion-forming groups in their respective countries".⁴⁰ It was further noted for its attempt to put forward the "*unvarnished facts* about the United States," and to explore transatlantic issues "with *candour and in depth*". If a "true" picture were to be painted, "it is not always flattering". Great emphasis was placed on critical engagement among participants and American Seminar faculty, the flavour of which is captured by key terms recurring through every report on the Seminar: problems to "hammer out" between faculty and participants, "candour tempered by tolerance", "seeking together", "finding together", avoiding propaganda.⁴¹ For Grayson Kirk, a keen Seminar supporter, the value of American resources expended on "propaganda" was questionable.⁴² It was the concept of a "two-way avenue of learning" that motivated Seminar organisers, which was to bear fruit.⁴³ This was evidenced by a Czech Fellow's comment in ■ 123

1967: “Your propaganda is the best propaganda, because it is not propaganda at all.”⁴⁴ On the basis of that “non-propagandistic” propaganda, European elites were to spread their understanding far and wide through their organizations, newspapers, books and lectures.⁴⁵ As Salzburg officers argued in 1960, “in Europe, more than in America, public opinion is molded by a relatively small number of people. They disseminate their *reorientated* [in light of their education at Salzburg] ideas on American life through their newspapers and periodicals, schools and universities, trade unions [...]”⁴⁶

An analysis of Seminar Fellows by occupation (1951–1959) reveals its success in recruiting emerging elites in its aim to “educate” Europe’s opinion leaders: of the 2878 participants, there were 718 graduate students, 564 teachers/academics, 376 journalists, editors and writers, 343 government officials and civil servants, 260 lawyers and 60 union leaders. Fellows were drawn from a range of countries: the best represented were Germany (585), Italy (478) and France (411), all pivotal continental states.⁴⁷

In their grant applications, Salzburg officers consistently differentiated their (American) ideas, methods and outlook from those of their European Fellows. Europeans were elitist in attitude, while the Americans were more egalitarian. Europeans were constantly impressed by American openness in contrast to their own reticence. For example, even the open-access character of the library facilities and resources at Salzburg (10,000 books, 100 periodicals, a wide range of newspapers, etc.) was reportedly “a source of amazement to Europeans unused to such ‘open’ procedures and is, again, an experience for them with a basic American characteristic”.⁴⁸

The Ford Foundation began financial support for the Seminar in 1955, and covered 20 percent of its financial costs for the next 20 years – total funding of almost 1 million dollars. The State Department and the Fulbright programme furnished much of the rest. The Fulbright programme was inaugurated in 1946 to increase mutual international understanding through exchange of scholars across the world. Ford believed that the Seminar was “one of the most effective of all American Studies programmes”, affording opportunities to further connect East and West European leaders, as attested by State Department officials.⁴⁹ The Seminar’s board of directors included Harvard’s Dean (and later national security adviser to the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, and Ford Foundation president) McGeorge Bundy, Emilio G. Collado of Standard Oil, and MIT’s Walt Rostow.⁵⁰

In operation, the Seminar’s schedule was intense. Run over four weeks (thrice a year), the Seminar featured morning lectures, afternoon small group work, and evening discussions and private reading in its well-stocked library. The “*seemingly informal*” aspects of the programme, as organizers put it, were fundamental:

“The continual extra-curricular discussion among Fellows, faculty, and staff, all of whom live under the same roof throughout the session; the recreational activities in which everyone participates; in fact, the actual teaching method itself – the constant opportunity for questions during lectures and the close association with faculty which differs so radically from the European method, all give impressions in the understanding of America as a working democracy and, as such, are as important as the actual subject matters taught.”⁵¹

The specific effects are difficult to gauge. An internal Ford report surprised its own author as to the Salzburg Seminar’s effectiveness over a period of two decades. Sociologist Daniel Bell lauded the Seminar as educating and bonding together European intellectuals, and launching the careers of several young scholars such as Ralf Dahrendorf (author, most famously, of *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society* in 1959, and director of the London School of Economics, 1974–84) and Michel Crozier (author of *The Bureaucratic Phenomenon* in 1964). He also indicated that Seminar alumni were now teaching at Columbia and Stanford universities. For Bell, Salzburg alumni were immediately distinguishable at the Congress for Cultural Freedom seminars he had directed during 1956–57.⁵² Seminar president, Dexter Perkins, noted the formation of alumni clubs – “Salzburg Circles” – that held reunions to “discuss American society”. He also noted that alumni had a “conception of the United States that is more sympathetic – or, at least, more objective [...]”. The Salzburg Seminar also inspired the formation of the European Association for American Studies after the former’s 1954 conference of American Civilisation academics. The aim of EAAS was to “continue the work begun by the Seminar-sponsored conference”.⁵³

CONCLUSIONS

Taken together, Ford’s American Studies programmes were a powerful means by which global elites’ “anti-American” prejudices and concerns were addressed through initiatives that *directly* touched thousands, probably tens of thousands of men and women. Indirectly, especially through the Congress for Cultural Freedom, Ford’s public diplomacy struggle against “anti-Americanism” affected millions of students, academics, journalists and the newspaper and magazine readers.⁵⁴ The Kissinger and Salzburg Seminars were integrated, coherent, focused, well-organised and profoundly engaging. They engaged their participants in total dialogue, disputation, argument and debate. They appeared to be authentic educational programmes designed for two-way exchange and learning – and were, thereby, not seen as condescending propaganda or, even, *any* kind of propaganda, or as

the “best” kind of propaganda. The programmes at Harvard and Salzburg created enduring nuclei of scholars and other opinion-formers, networked with American institutions and faculty, and with each other, functioning effectively long after the short seminars were over. The message of the Seminars was not only in the spoken and written word; it was in the very texture of the whole experience: members *lived* Americanism when they criticised and debated race relations or foreign policy. Both Harvard’s Kissinger and Salzburg’s leaders recognized that the social aspects of the interactions made possible by the seminars were as vital as the formal programme. As Herzog noted, “The most lasting product of the Salzburg Seminar often is the by-product”.⁵⁵

The Harvard and Salzburg seminars were successful for one other reason: they were directed at elites whose national and world orientations were not *fundamentally* antagonistic to the aims of American power. After all, most Europeans were products of a colonial culture constructed over centuries. As post-colonial powers, their world-view transformed into a neo-colonial “developmentalism” to re-define their relationship with the Third World. Their problems with the United States broadly sprang from resentment at their own nations’ fall from global grace alongside America’s ascendance as well as a fear of the consequences of American power in the nuclear age. That is, overall, despite their scepticism, they were not beyond persuasion by a sophisticated elite diplomacy set in prestigious Harvard Yard or an 18th-century castle to lend a patina of antiquity to the United States, and significant gravity to the proceedings. They were susceptible to the exercise of “soft power” precisely because European elites had a vested interest in the world system the management of which had passed largely into American hands after the Second World War.

The Harvard and Salzburg programmes supplemented and supported at the level of sub-state and private elite leadership what states were trying to achieve in this period: alliance-formation as a way to greater western penetration of the Third World in a period of rising anti-colonial nationalism and global competition with communism. Indeed, the programmes were integrated into the objectives of the State Department, which worked with Harvard and Salzburg “intimately but unofficially”.⁵⁶ Ford Foundation funding helped construct the infrastructure – the institutional settings, organisations, professional societies, conferences and seminars, alumni networks, publications – that enabled the formation and endurance of elite networks – that influenced the climate of intellectual and popular opinion – in an era of emerging American global leadership.⁵⁷ Ford – inextricably linked with the official makers of US foreign policy, major American corporations, and prestigious universities – claimed to be acting non-politically, non-ideologically and independently of the state. Yet, its outlook as

126 ■ demonstrated by its own archival records, shows that Ford operated with a rather

formal notion of “independence” of the state, behind which lay a philosophy saturated with Gramsci’s concept of state spiritedness. In practice, the Ford Foundation was a strategic part of an elite state-private network, a power elite that united key elements of a cold war coalition – an historic bloc – behind an imperial hegemonic project.

Notes

- 1 Robert F. Arnove (ed.), *Philanthropy and Cultural Imperialism*, Boston 1980.
- 2 Quintin Hoare, Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (ed.), *Selections From the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, London 1971, 146–147.
- 3 Eldon J. Eisenach, *The Lost Promise of Progressivism*, Lawrence (KS) 1994; Inderjeet Parmar, *Think Tanks and Power in Foreign Policy: A Comparative Study of the Role and Influence of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1939–1945*, London 2004.
- 4 Inderjeet Parmar, «American Foundations and the Development of International Knowledge Networks», *Global Networks* 2/1 (2002), 13–30.
- 5 Inderjeet Parmar, ««To Relate Knowledge and Action»: The Impact of the Rockefeller Foundation on Foreign Policy Thinking During America’s Rise to Globalism», *Minerva* 40/3 (2002), 235–263; Id., «The Carnegie Corporation and the Mobilisation of Opinion in the United States’ Rise to Globalism, 1939–1945», *Minerva* 37 (4) 1999, 355–378; Id., «Engineering Consent: The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the Mobilization of American Public Opinion, 1939–1945», *Review of International Studies* 26/1 (2000), 35–48.
- 6 Seymour Martin Lipset, *American Exceptionalism. A Double-Edged Sword*, New York 1996.
- 7 Melvin P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, Stanford 1992; Kathleen D. McCarthy, «From Cold War to Cultural Development: The International Cultural Activities of the Ford Foundation, 1950–1980», *Daedalus* (Winter 1987), 93–117.
- 8 “Soft power lies in the ability to attract and persuade rather than coerce. It means that others want what the United States wants, and there is less need to use carrots and sticks. [...] Soft power arises from the attractiveness of a country’s culture, political ideals, and policies. When U. S. policies appear legitimate in the eyes of others, American soft power is enhanced.” Joseph S. Nye, *US Power and Strategy After Iraq*, http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/news/opeds/2003/nye_usiraq_foraffairs_070103.htm.
- 9 Jeffrey Gedmin, Craig Kennedy, «Selling America, Short», *The National Interest*, Winter 2003; Richard T. Arndt, *The First Resort of Kings*, Washington DC 2005.
- 10 Scott Lucas, «A Document From the Harvard International Summer School», in J. C. E. Gienow-Hecht, F. Schumacher (ed.), *Culture and International History*, New York 2003, 258.
- 11 Inderjeet Parmar, «Conceptualising the State-Private Network in American Foreign Policy», in Helen Laville, Hugh Wilford (ed.), *The US Government, Citizen Groups, and the Cold War: The State-Private Network*, London 2005; see also, Liam Kennedy, Scott Lucas, «Enduring Freedom: Public Diplomacy and U. S. Foreign Policy», *American Quarterly* 57/2 (2005), 309–333.
- 12 George Kennan endorsed the Seminar plan as having “a worthy, dignified and useful purpose” when he forwarded it to the Ford Foundation for support; Memorandum, John B. Howard to Joseph M. McDaniel, jr., «Harvard Summer School Foreign Students Project», 24 May 1951, PA55-9, reel 0942, Ford Foundation Archives (FFA), New York.
- 13 Lucas (cf. note 10), 259. Kissinger was Director of the Seminar, 1951–1971.

- 14 Kissinger was involved in recent similar activities in behalf of the German Marshall Fund's transatlantic understanding programmes; *Annual Report 2003*, 1–6.
- 15 Henry Kissinger, «Report of the Sub-committee on Academic Programs» (undated, October/November, 1950), in Lucas (cf. note 10), 261 f. (emphasis added).
- 16 Lucas (cf. note 10), 263 (emphasis added).
- 17 In one letter concerning grant applications to Ford, Kissinger offered to provide supporting references from Allen W. Dulles (CIA Director) and C. D. Jackson, head of the Congress for Cultural Freedom initiative; Kissinger to Don K. Price (FF associate director), 10 December 1953, PA53-159, reel 1118, FFA; see also Volker R. Berghahn, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe. Shepard Stone Between Philanthropy, Academy, and Diplomacy*, Princeton 2001.
- 18 Ford Foundation annual reports; see also, Ford Foundation, *American Studies Abroad*; report 004642, April 1969; in total, FF granted Kissinger over \$ 390,000, FFA.
- 19 «Docket Excerpt. Executive Committee meeting September 27, 1956: International Programs: International Affairs: Harvard University International Seminar», PA 55-9, reel 0492, FFA.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 «Excerpt from Docket: International Affairs: Harvard International Seminar», 29–30 October 1954, Grant file, PA 55-9, reel 0492, FFA.
- 23 «Docket excerpt, Executive Committee Mtg. September 27, 1956: International Programs: International Affairs. Harvard University International Seminar», Grant file, PA 55-9, reel 0492, FFA.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 Inter-Office Memorandum, Bernard L. Gladieux to Joseph M. McDaniel, «Harvard International Seminar (-A351 Revised)», 13 August 1952, PA55-9, reel 0492, FFA.
- 27 «Docket excerpt, Executive Committee Mtg. September 27, 1956: International Programs: International Affairs. Harvard University International Seminar», Grant file, PA 55-9, reel 0492, FFA (emphasis added).
- 28 Henry Kissinger, report on 1955 programme, PA 55-9, reel 0492, FFA.
- 29 Letter, Latham to Kissinger, 25 August 1955, PA55-9, reel 0492, FFA.
- 30 «Extracts of letters from past participants», attached to a letter, Kissinger to Harold Swearer (FF), 4 November 1968, PA69-134, reel 2248, FFA.
- 31 Letter, Kissinger to Harold Swearer (FF), 4 November 1968, PA69-134, reel 2248, FFA.
- 32 Walter Isaacson, *Kissinger*, London 1992, 71.
- 33 Gedmin/Kennedy (cf. note 9).
- 34 Inter-Office Memorandum, «Harvard International Seminar», Bernard L. Gladieux to Joseph McDaniel, 13 August 1952, PA 55-9, reel 0942, FFA.
- 35 Inter-office memorandum, Richard C. Sheldon to W. McNeill Lowry, «American Studies», 5 March 1968, 2, PA69-134, reel 2248, FFA.
- 36 Indeed, this was precisely how Kissinger and Elliott contextualised their own efforts, letter, Elliott to Don K. Price (Ford Foundation), 13 February 1954, PA55-9, reel 0942, FFA.
- 37 Gedmin and Kennedy (cf. note 9).
- 38 David E. Bell, McNeill Lowry, Grant Allocation to Salzburg Seminar in American Studies, Inc., 20 January 1970, 3, PA55-216, reel 2081, FFA.
- 39 Dexter Perkins, «A Proposal to Strengthen the Salzburg Seminar in American Studies», March 1960, PA55-216, reel 2081, FFA. The Fellows were selected by “responsible” men in Europe and officers of the US Information Service; many alumni subsequently went on to take up Commonwealth Fund study scholarships in the United States, becoming networked in a tightly organised set of US east coast establishment organisations.
- 40 Letter, Grayson Kirk to Dexter Perkins (President, Salzburg Seminar), 8 March 1960, PA55-216, reel 2081, FFA.

- 41 All quotes are from: Paul M. Herzog (President, Salzburg Seminar), «Application to the Ford Foundation for a Grant for the Period 1970–1975», October 1969, PA55-216, reel 2081, FFA.
- 42 Letter, Grayson Kirk to Dexter Perkins (President, Salzburg Seminar), 8 March 1960, PA55-216, reel 2081, FFA.
- 43 Perkins (cf. note 39).
- 44 Cited by Herzog (cf. note 41).
- 45 Bell and Lowry (cf. note 38).
- 46 Perkins (cf. note 39).
- 47 Ibid., Exhibit IV.
- 48 Perkins (cf. note 39).
- 49 Bell and Lowry (cf. note 38).
- 50 Perkins (cf. note 39), Exhibit XIV.
- 51 Perkins (cf. note 39).
- 52 Letter, Daniel Bell to Dexter Perkins, 1 March 1960, PA55-216, reel 2081, FFA.
- 53 Perkins (cf. note 39).
- 54 Ford Foundation, *American Studies Abroad*, April 1969, report 004642, FFA.
- 55 Herzog (cf. note 41).
- 56 Letter, Elliott to Price, 13 February 1954, PA55-9, reel 0942, FFA. Ben Whitaker argues with conviction that American foundations rarely, if ever, considered a course of action without first consulting the State Department, providing further succour to the state-private network concept; *The Foundations: An Anatomy of Philanthropy and Society*, London 1974.
- 57 Inderjeet Parmar, «Institutes of International Affairs: their roles in foreign policy-making, opinion mobilization and unofficial diplomacy», in Diane Stone, Andrew Denham (eds.), *Think Tank Traditions*, Manchester 2004, 19–34; Parmar (cf. note 4), 13–30. See also, Lewis Coser, *Men of Ideas*, New York 1965.

ABSTRACT

CHALLENGING ELITE ANTI-AMERICANISM IN THE COLD WAR. AMERICAN FOUNDATIONS, KISSINGER'S HARVARD SEMINAR AND THE SALZBURG SEMINAR IN AMERICAN STUDIES

This article considers the role of the Ford Foundation in promoting Americanism and combatting anti-Americanism during the Cold War through two case studies: Kissinger's Harvard International Seminar and the Salzburg Seminar in American Studies. The article uses previously unpublished archival evidence to examine the two Seminars' role and influence in constructing pro-American elite networks in Europe and Asia as part of the east coast American foreign policy establishment's post-war imperial drive to replace Europe as manager of the global system. Highlighting some of the principal features of the Seminars' public diplomacy, the article shows that their effectiveness lay in their authentic attempts to *engage* with their target audiences and in their careful selection of Seminar participants. The article concludes that the Ford Foundation backed such initiatives because of its own immersion and inter-connections with the American power elite.