

In Search of the Intellectual Infrastructure of Studies of International Relations: Changing Characteristics of the International Relations Program by the Rockefeller Foundation and its Expectations

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Abstract:

This paper elucidates the role of the philanthropy — particularly the role of the Rockefeller Foundation (RF) — as a facilitator in constructing the intellectual infrastructure of studies of international relations from the 1930s to the 1950s in the US. This analysis explains one essential factor: the institutional factor. The RF contributed to international relations as an autonomous and distinct field, International Relations (IR) later becoming known as the ‘American social science.’ This paper focuses on the RF’s International Relations program (IR program) and addresses the following questions: what kind of people were involved in this program?; what kind of institutions and individuals were funded?; how did the characteristics of the IR program change over time?; and to what extent did the IR program contribute to establishing the intellectual foundations of international relations? This paper, therefore, traces the changing characteristics and strategies of the IR program from the 1930s to the 1950s by using primary sources from the IR program at the Rockefeller Archive Center (RAC) in New York, including officials’ diaries, reports for the IR program and annual reports by the RF. It concludes that the Rockefeller Foundation and its IR program played indispensable roles in (1) the support of the primitive theoretical inquiry into international relations and the groups of the earlier ‘classical realist’ scholars in the US; (2) the creation of close governmental-academic relationships in the research area of international relations; and, (3) the formation of global intellectual networks emphasizing international affairs, including collaborative relationships of think tanks and universities around the world. These three elements played a major role in producing the intellectual foundation of the American social science of international relations.

Introduction: Re-describing the Evolving Process of the Studies of International Relations from Philanthropy Perspective

Traditional theories of international relations were not able to anticipate the end of the Cold War; since then, there has been a growing body of literature critically reinvestigating the history of inter-

national relations as an academic discipline, or as a historiography.¹⁾ For example, De Carvalho et al. have argued against the notion that 1919 was a foundational year in the disciplinary history of international relations.²⁾ Other scholars, such as Wilson and Long, have attempted to deconstruct the myth of the idealist-realist debate in the 1930s by demonstrating the diversity and complexity of scholarly thought at that time.³⁾ While this groundbreaking research was significant in revealing how the current disciplinary historiography of international relations has been dependent on socially constructed myth, it is difficult to describe exactly how the discipline of international relations has developed into what it is today.

With a different approach, Stanley Hoffmann coined the term 'American social science' to characterize the intellectual basis of the discipline of international relations after World War II.⁴⁾ He insists that this discipline had been developed as a unique and autonomous field of study in post-war America. He explains three factors for this development in addition to the US political dominance at that time: 1) intellectual factors, such as belief in scientific implementation to solve social problems and progress and academic contributions by refugee scholars; 2) political factors, such as the US becoming a great power after World War II and mutual interactions between scholars interested in making commitments to real international affairs, and practical demands from practitioners seeking some academic guidance for forming foreign policies; and 3) institutional factors, such as the direct and undoubtable connection between academia and political circles, active policy suggestions from foundations, and the development of an educational function of universities.

Several scholars have already tested Hoffmann's characterization in a variety of ways. Some have reexamined it statistically and identified a conservative tendency for certain scholars and theoretical positions to dominate.⁵⁾ Others have compared the academic situations of international relations in different countries, not only in the US and the UK, but also in some other continental European countries in order to demonstrate the extent of American dominance in the field of international relations.⁶⁾ Such research describes a social structure that consists of knowledge-power relations between 'mainstream' approaches of international relations, such as neo-realism and other variants.

Although these scholarly works have shed light upon the social structure of the discipline of international relations, they do not explain how a certain type of hierarchical structure between various approaches was produced and has been reproduced within the discipline of international relations over a long period of time. Particularly, they do not reveal much about how the three factors Hoffmann highlights are interrelated to the formulation of international relations as a discipline.

As one exception to previous research, *The Invention of International Relations Theory — Realism, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the 1954 Conference on Theory*⁷⁾ should be mentioned. In this series of essays, the various authors focused on the Conference on International Relations Theory, held on May 4 and 5 in 1954, sponsored by the RF. They investigated unpublished dialogue documents

and working papers submitted by participants, such as Hans Morgenthau, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Paul Nitze.

One of the authors, Inderjeet Parmar, critically argues that the RF was a facilitator of an 'elite project' by rapidly developing the foreign-policy establishments on the East Coast of the US who were promoting 'the American century' and the 'realist scholars' who were still pursuing their decisive position within the academic field of international relations.⁸⁾ Another contributor to this volume, Nicolas Guilhot, describes the impetus of the RF towards funding theoretical research on international relations after 1945 as 'the need to train policy personnel for the State Department and other policy institutions' and the purpose of 'assistance to the growth of young men in the field.'⁹⁾ In that sense, the Rockefeller Foundation has frequently been described as 'a state-oriented and imperialistic institution.'¹⁰⁾

Based on these arguments, this paper examines the evolving process of the studies of international relations and the development of intellectual institutions for the studies of international relations through the lens of the IR program, the RF officials' networks, aims, and strategies. These were hardly taken into account by the authentic disciplinary historiography of international relations.

To these ends, this paper proceeds as follows. In the first chapter, it focuses on the inter-war IR program including the activities of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial as the first promoter of social science among the Rockefeller related foundations and support of institutions acting in the area of international relations. This chapter also explores how the IR program had been defended by the promoters within the RF and what kind of institutions were initially supported, based on the changing strategies employed by the RF officers. The second chapter starts from how the IR program was reoriented during and after World War II. In addition, the emerging interests in and demands on theoretical research into international relations will be discussed in relation to the efforts to seek an autonomous discipline of international relations and the attempt to tackle the inescapable issues on morality posed for both the US and the RF. In this context, the Conference on Theory of International Relations in 1954 will be discussed, but slightly more attention will be paid to the discussion on morality and the subsequent consequences of the conference.

1: Inter-war IR Program as Emerging Strategic Focus Area

1-1: The Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial - Intellectual Background of the Rockefeller Foundation and its Heritage

The Rockefeller Foundation (RF) was originally established in New York State on May 14, 1913, by the owner of Standard Oil, John Rockefeller Senior, along with his son, John Rockefeller Jr., and Frederick Taylor Gates, Rockefeller Senior's principal oil and gas business and philanthropic advisor.

With the aim of ‘promoting the well-being of humanity throughout the world,’¹¹⁾ the RF carried on various programs including health and medical ones both domestic and foreign. However, according to Raymond Fosdick, president of the RF from 1936 to 1948, ‘[t]he Rockefeller Foundation was admittedly slow in entering the field of social studies,’ because Gates opposed ‘social studies’ such as industrial relations and ‘economics’ compared to scientific programs such as medicine, which could gain more tangible achievements such as the eradication of certain diseases or improvement of health condition.¹²⁾

It was not until 1928 that the RF started programs on social science when the RF incorporated a related Rockefeller philanthropy, the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial (Memorial). Therefore, in order to understand the fundamental characteristics of social science programs, which later the IR program was also categorized as, a brief history of the Memorial will be investigated. The Memorial was founded in 1918 in memory of Mrs. Rockefeller, Sr.. Although the Memorial originally had been planned to implement her interests in social-studies programs, such as those designed to improve the welfare of women and children, in 1923, Beardsley Ruml, the then director of the Memorial, proclaimed a bold plan for economics, sociology, political science, and other related subjects.¹³⁾ In his memorandum in 1924, he asserted the importance of social science projects by stating ‘[a]n examination of the operations of organizations in the field of social welfare shows as a primary need the development of the social sciences.’¹⁴⁾

Throughout the decade of its existence, the Memorial received approximately \$40 million, over half of which was spent on supporting social science research. This allowed the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) to play a seminal role in the development of IR over two decades by their leading organized problem-oriented committees — specifically the Committee on International Relations, which was initiated in April 1931 — and in their identifying new research directions and talented scholars. The other Memorial contributions in this field were grants to Harvard University and Radcliffe College for research in international relations, the Graduate Institute for International Studies at Geneva, the Institute of Pacific Relations, and the Council on Foreign Relations.¹⁵⁾

1-2: Birth of the Division of Social Science and the Early Stage of the IR Program from 1929 to 1935

After the incorporation of the Memorial within the RF in January 1929, the programs by the Memorial became a part of the RF’s program, under the new Division of Social Sciences (DSS) directed by Edmund Day, Professor of Economics at the Harvard University. Day faced the financial difficulty of the RF as a result of the financial crisis in 1929 and less support from the Foundation Trustees who were long familiar with works in public health and medicine. However, thanks to the combination of earlier efforts by the Memorial and emerging frictions between nations in the early 1930s, the importance of supporting the area of international studies gradually became appreciated.

Its first five-year program on international relations (1929–1933) indicates several general characteristics of the IR program in the earlier period. Firstly, from its inception, the RF's IR program had a global scope. The RF financially supported institutions not only in the US, but also in Switzerland, the UK, and Germany. In addition, the support for inter-governmental organizations such as the League of Nations and the Institute of Pacific Relations (IPR), clearly demonstrated this approach. This increasing global characteristic of the IR program was reinforced in the late 1930s as the funding expanded to Canada, France, Norway and Denmark, which will be discussed below. Such program operations were based on a certain belief that "there are large possibilities of improving relations between nations by the study and dissemination of information upon the specific causes of friction."¹⁶⁾

A second interesting feature is that the major parts of the programs were being developed by 'non-academic' institutions. As Sydnor Walker, Associate Director of the DSS at that time, noted, in 1933, 'the most vital work' was done by national non-academic organizations such as the Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA), the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), the Foreign Policy Association (FPA), and the American Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations (AC-IPR).¹⁷⁾ Another point that should be highlighted here is that Walker evaluated the RIIA as being the most effective and sophisticated institution, while she described the CFR, the FPA, and the AC-IPR as 'three different groups, not at all closely affiliated,' simply carrying on research to which the RF contributed financial support. She continued, 'the area of specialization of each organization is not sharply drawn, and there is evidence of substantial overlapping in the publications produced.'¹⁸⁾ She also pointed out two problems with these three institutions: (1) the lack of present provision for adequate educational and practical work, and (2) few direct or indirect connections with those who shaped policy in international affairs. In this sense, under the IR program in its earlier stage, universities did not receive much funding at that point and the main focus remained on international interactions for the sake of enhancing international understanding. These two aforementioned problems would be addressed in the following years through the reconfiguration of the strategies of the IR program largely due to the gradual degradation of international affairs.

1-3: The Strategic Focus in the IR Program from 1935 to 1939

1935 was a turning point for the IR program because there were further integrations of the global research network, the increased coordination of domestic research, the increased fund for public education, and the development of university departments. All of these four actions were meant to serve more effective US foreign policies.

Firstly, in terms of international research collaborations, a financial commitment to the International Studies Conference (ISC) through the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation

(IIIC) in Paris (\$30,000 for two years)¹⁹⁾ was essential. The ISC had held biennial meetings since 1927, involving groups from twenty-five different countries and five international organizations.²⁰⁾ They focused on a particular interest chosen as the Conference subject, so as to enhance cooperative relationships among the participating groups and to foster the popular interest in international affairs. The IIIC, which was established by the League of Nations, was responsible for organizing the ISC. The RF funded the IIIC in 1935 to support its administration of the conference and the research preparation.²¹⁾ In 1936, the RF added grants for the ISC itself (\$40,000 for two years). This was to facilitate participation by membership countries in the ISC by establishing a permanent center of international affairs and contact with the ISC.²²⁾ As a result of the RF grants in 1935, committees were established in a number of countries including Norway, Sweden, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, the UK, Poland, Rumania, Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Bulgaria, and Denmark.²³⁾ Until the ISC disbanded, the RF continued to deliver this kind of assistance. For example, through grants for the Institute of Economics and History in Copenhagen (in 1936, \$8,500 for one year);²⁴⁾ the Norwegian Committee for International Studies (in 1937, \$25,000 for three years);²⁵⁾ and the Swedish Institute of International Affairs (during the period between 1938 and 1944, \$ 74,750 in total).²⁶⁾ These groups soon became national centers of research on international problems and leading scholars and policy makers in the countries played important roles, which helped pave the way for the fundamental research infrastructure of international affairs after World War II.²⁷⁾

Furthermore, in regard to global research coordination, domestic research collaboration also rapidly developed. The American participants in the ISC set up the American Coordinating Committee, which was made up of representatives of the CFR, the FPA, and the AC-IPR, the American National Committee on Intellectual Cooperation, and six members appointed by the SSRC from universities or research institutes,²⁸⁾ for the purpose of expanding the platform for lively policy debate. A committee of experts was gathered to prepare the American report and select the delegation for the meeting of the ISC. This mobilization by the RF was based on the realistic observation about the ISC that ‘only strong national organizations are likely to effect practical changes in policy.’ On October 9, 1936, in her report to Fosdick, President of the RF, Walker warned of the changing characteristics of the ISC. She observed that although ‘the ISC originally began its career with emphasis upon the value of objective research upon international problems,’ ‘[r]ecently, the Conference has become less academic in make-up and more desirous of dealing with current problems in realistic fashion.’²⁹⁾ This required the robust capacity to discuss US foreign policies.

At the same time, the RF granted individual national agency in the US in order to expand programs on non-tertiary education. For instance, the FPA, which aims at advancing research and international cooperation, and generally improving the public understanding of international problems, received an appropriation of \$37,500 from the RF to implement the experimental program

of popular education by the FPA in 1935. The FPA had already played a major role in public education on international affairs by 1935, through the publication of the Foreign Policy Reports, which were widely used in courses on history and international relations at many colleges and universities and were read by scholars and members of the FPA. In order to reach a wider public audience, this experimental education program began to distribute a new type of publication: the Headline Books, popular pamphlets of twenty to thirty pages written in plain English and illustrated by drawings or graphs.³⁰⁾ These publications were distributed through welfare organizations, agencies of adult and secondary education, political and religious groups, libraries, and newspapers. In 1936, eight series of the Headline Books were published.³¹⁾ In two years of evaluation, the Annual Report in 1937 by the RF argued that ‘the demand for the “Headline Books” and for supplementary material has been enthusiastic, . . . and [t]he question of the practicality of the experiment seems definitely answered.’³²⁾ In 1937, the RF decided to additionally allocate appropriations at the rate of \$25,000 annually for the next three years.³³⁾

Finally, the creation of the Yale Institute of International Studies in 1935 with the grants of \$100,000 for a five-year period was a watershed moment for the RF to establish a permanent program in international relations for the purpose of strengthening research and training capabilities. In May 1934, Nicholas Spykman, Chairman of the Department of International Relations at Yale University asked for grants to the RF.³⁴⁾ In addition to the achievements of the work on international relations during the first eight years at Yale University, the RF officers recognized that simply spreading a wider understanding of foreign policy was no longer sufficient and more fundamental research was urgently required.³⁵⁾ Based on such a background, the Yale Institute was established under the leadership of Spykman and the two other Executive Committee members, Frederick Dunn and Arnold Wolfers.³⁶⁾ The Institute focused on the clarification of problems of US foreign policy through the systematic investigation of the political behavior of nations.³⁷⁾ Such research should be achieved, according to Spykman, through the interdisciplinary ‘collaborations of Department specialists in the fields of history, economics, law, and politics on specific international problems,’³⁸⁾ and the resulting fruits should be practical in terms of formulations of US foreign policy.

Although the Institute made little progress in the first five years of its research due to the illness of Spykman and the physical handicaps of Dunn and Wolfers, the general evaluation by the RF was relatively high.³⁹⁾ In 1941, when the Institute faced a financial plight, the RF voted for another three-year grant, which in total reached \$51,500 to sustain its existence. Around that time, although there were few publications by the Institute, what made the RF continue its support was the high quality of scholarly works based on solid systematic observations such as *America's Strategy in World Politics: the United States and the Balance of Power* by Spykman in 1942.⁴⁰⁾ The RF officer evaluated this book, by citing the review of President Isaiah Bowman of Johns Hopkins University, as ‘so strong a case in

international politics for facing realities instead of reciting lullabies.⁴⁴¹⁾ In fact, in the report of November 1950 by Dunn, the then director of the Institute, he reflected on the works of the inter-war period and described the immaturity of research on international relations in the following: '[t]he available literature in the field at that time was generally non-scientific and was concerned more with the description of unique events than with revealing the common elements in classes of events. . . . Scholars were preoccupied with the static description of formal institutions and the elaboration of legal rules of international conduct. There was a tendency to ignore the bearing of political power upon the course of events.'⁴²⁾

In this sense, the Yale Institute established the fundamental basis of the systematic approach towards international affairs and invented the basis for 'realism' upon the utopian illusion. Although Spykman passed away in 1943, Wolfers, William Fox, who joined the Institute in 1943, and other scholars continued to lead the research and played an enormous role in orienting the discipline of international relations towards more systematic analysis, based on realistic views on the international scene.

2: The IR Program through the War and Post-war Periods and Attempts to Shape the Discipline of International Relations

2-1: The Transformation of the IR Program — through the Experience of War from 1939 to 1945

When Joseph Willits, who had been the head of the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce of the University of Pennsylvania, was appointed the director of the DSS in February 1939, World War II was imminent. Just as his predecessor had, Willits concentrated on programs related to international relations, albeit in a different context. What distinguished his programs from a 'peace-time' program was that the RF actively encouraged those trained in the area of social science to be involved in governmental collaborations, although he admitted that the interest of the RF should be based on long-term perspectives.⁴³⁾

One notable case of the further research integration between domestic institutes and government agencies led by the RF was the 'War and Peace Studies' project, which persisted until the end of World War II. In 1939, just after the outbreak of World War II, the CFR asked the State Department to expand the scope of its research activity in order to provide the government with analysis and recommendations on problems that the US would face as a result of the coming conflict.⁴⁴⁾ In order to make this research independent, the CFR received no subsidy or grants from the government, and instead the RF granted its project \$977,400 in total from 1939 to 1945.⁴⁵⁾ The research group was originally separated into four areas of problems; those concerning security and armaments, economy and finance, politics, and territorial issues.⁴⁶⁾ By 1945, the project had produced over 680 memoranda informing policy decisions, which were transmitted to the various departments of the Government,

such as to the War, Navy and the Treasury via the State Department.⁴⁷⁾ The Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, expressed his gratitude with the words “the excellent memoranda.”⁴⁸⁾

Intriguingly, the majority of the core members of this project had close connections with the RF. For example, Isaiah Bowman, the president of John Hopkins University, who was the first chief of the territorial group of the War and Peace Studies project, was the president of the American Geography Society between 1915 and 1935, when the Society received grants from the RF. James Shotwell, who played an essential role in the creation of the International Labor Organization and was the first chair of the advisory committee on international relations of the SSRC, and Leo Pasvolsky, who was once a researcher at the Brookings Institute and the State Department, and after World War II returned to Brookings as a research director of international relations, were also actively involved in this project. Another important feature of the core members of this study group was their continuous involvement in the creation of international organizations and the settlement of postwar problems through their participation in major conferences such as the Dumbarton Oaks Conference, the San Francisco Conference, and the Conference of Foreign Ministers in London in 1945.⁴⁹⁾

The example of the War and Peace Studies project illustrates not only how the community of the CFR was tightly connected with the government, but also how the RF contributed to its establishment of the community from the early 1930s and consistently played a substantial role after World War II.

2-2: Redefining the Post-war IR Program

In 1945, in the report ‘Postwar Policy in the Support of International Relations,’ Willits claimed that ‘our policies should evolve and advance with the needs of the times.’ He further observed that ‘the needs of the times in 1945 are not the same as those of 1930.’⁵⁰⁾ Behind his thinking, there was the changing new global order and the new position of the US as a great power. The US could no longer simply escape from the intensifying interactions with the rest of the world. In this context, Willits especially demanded a ‘mature and integrated foreign policy’ and ‘area studies.’⁵¹⁾

Firstly, Willits claimed that, in establishing a mature foreign policy, policy-makers should be accurately informed. In this context, area studies, which provide the information on particular regions, were much required at the time. One notable case was the establishment of the Russian Institute at Columbia University under the leadership of Geroid Robinson, who had been the head of the Russian Section of the Office of Strategic Services since its establishment in 1942.⁵²⁾ The RF funded the Institute initially with \$250,000 in 1945. The purpose of this Institute was the advancement of knowledge in the field of Russian study and also the training of students as American specialists.⁵³⁾ The institute offered courses in Russian literature, economics, law, history, government, ideology and foreign relations. Not only did the State Department send their staffs there to be trained, but so did the War Department and the Navy.⁵⁴⁾ In 1949, the RF assisted the establishment of

the East Asian Institute at Columbia with additional grants of \$120,000.⁵⁵⁾ In the early 1950s, this kind of support for area studies intensified into broader areas and regions, and diversified into universities and departments around the US.

Furthermore, in order to develop a mature foreign policy, the RF expanded support to university departments related to international relations such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Johns Hopkins University, and the Yale Institute.⁵⁶⁾ However, what is distinct and unique during this period was the support given to the University of Notre Dame. In 1949, with the aid of a three-year grant of \$69,900 from the RF, the university set up the Committee on the Study of International Relations. The focus of their research was the influence of ethics, philosophies and ideologies in world affairs, and the first concern of this committee was the ‘interrelations of religion, democracy and international order, with special attention to the rise of the political religions of the twentieth century and their relations with traditional religious groups.’⁵⁷⁾ The RF officers highly evaluated the committee and decided to award an additional grant in 1954 with \$69,000 for three years.⁵⁸⁾

Why did the RF value the research by the committee on the study of international relations so highly even though the RF had rarely supported this type of subject under the IR program? The next chapter will discuss this background in relation to another IR program on the theoretical investigation of international relations.

2-3: Discussion on the Status of the Discipline of International Relations, the Project of “Realism” and Incorporated Concept of ‘Morality’

After World War II, the RF remained wary of three potential threats. In their annual report of 1945, President Fosdick of the RF depicted the Soviet threats in comparison to the US as follows: ‘Although they both use many of the same words, like “freedom” and “democracy”, these words convey opposing concepts. Each country believes in its own system with passionate conviction; each believes that its values will contribute more substantially to cultural and economic advance.’⁵⁹⁾

In another context regarding the reconstruction from the war, the report observed that ‘the danger is that the totalitarian fashion of war — both spiritually and administratively — will carry over into peace and that the solution of social issues will continue to be too much resigned to central authority.’⁶⁰⁾ Lastly, the RF considered the consequences of nuclear war seriously since they had played a role in the development of the atomic bomb. Fosdick claimed that in order to avoid ‘the edge of the abyss’ of our civilization, moral as well as legal devices should be built through the help of ‘humanists,’ such as philosophers or the historians.⁶¹⁾ These three dimensions of threat which concern issues of morality, that is, the Soviet threat, the continuation of total war which potentially undermined internal freedom and democracy, and the issue of right uses of technologies, all stimulated the interest of the RF and eventually resulted in the maturation of US foreign policies.

With regards to the theoretical studies of the relationship between US foreign policy and morality during the early 1950s, the RF supported the two eminent 'realism' thinkers: George Kennan and Hans Morgenthau. In 1953, the RF provided a grant of \$15,000 for Kennan's study at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. His main research focused on the legalistic and moralistic trend in the United States foreign policy over the previous fifty years, and the structure of the party and government in Soviet Russia.⁶²⁾ In 1954, the RF decided to award an additional grant of \$15,000.⁶³⁾ The Center for the Study of American Foreign Policy at the University of Chicago, where Morgenthau served as the director, also received a grant of \$7,500 from the RF.⁶⁴⁾

On the other hand, in the early post-war period, there was an emerging debate on the course of the discipline of international relations. Within this debate, scholars at the Yale Institute particularly influenced RF officials' perceptions on the status of the discipline. For example, the article, 'International Relations Research in the United States' prepared by Fox for the Committee on International Research of the SSRC 1948-1949, which was also referred to at the luncheon with the RF officials,⁶⁵⁾ clearly illustrated the trend of the research in international relations. He indicated that 'international studies had moved from concern with formal organization and rational abstract points for world peace to the consideration of national interest and politics.' Those who desired the 'legitimacy and recognition' of international relations as a distinct and autonomous discipline, including Fox, had been central figures in redefining the field of international relations.⁶⁶⁾ Their efforts were mainly towards the shift from international law to international politics as the crux of the discipline.⁶⁷⁾ This intellectual shift into politics, in addition to the increasingly sophisticated systematic analysis of international affairs, which was later referred to as 'theory,' was largely shared by the Yale scholars.

Given the increasing demands and complexity of the 'discipline' of international relations, the RF recruited Kenneth Thompson, a consultant for international relations, who would be in charge of the program engaging in international relations.⁶⁸⁾ Thompson had been a student of Hans Morgenthau, who along with Quincy Wright at the University of Chicago, had evaluated him as one of the best students⁶⁹⁾ and a scholar who understood well the balance between 'realism' and 'idealism.'⁷⁰⁾ This good theoretical balance was demonstrated when he declared his sphere of interests in the field of international relations, such as studies on international organizations as 'a new means for conducting and operating national policies' and 'international law studies in more realistic terms.'⁷¹⁾ His views on international relations were clearly supported by the realistic understanding of power and national interest, but at the same time he greatly admired Reinhold Niebuhr and Arnold Woofers, which implied an interest in the issues of morality and theoretical research in international relations.

Since his appointment as an RF official in 1953, Thompson played an instrumental role in operating and further expanding the IR program. Although he led a number of different programs concern-

ing international relations, what is particularly intriguing in terms of the earlier formation of international relations theories, is the series of grants for those who were later labeled as ‘classical realists,’ the conference on international political theories in Washington D.C. in 1954, and the subsequent seminar at Columbia University.

Among these projects, the conference in May 1954, which ran for two days, was particularly important because major participants had interests in the intersection of theories of international relations, foreign policy and morality. Moreover, major attendees received financial aid from the RF for their research. Thus, the conference influenced, directly or indirectly, the participants and a certain group of scholars. The participants ranged from theorists such as Morgenthau, Wolfers, Fox, Niebuhr, and John Herz,⁷²⁾ to practitioners such as Paul Nitze⁷³⁾ and Dorothy Fosdick.⁷⁴⁾ In addition, there were people from the media industry such as Walter Lippmann as well as officials from the foundation including Dean Rusk and Thompson.

The original idea was proposed by Wolfer at the beginning of 1954 based on an earlier conversation among Wolfer, Thompson, and Niebuhr.⁷⁵⁾ He insisted on the urgent need to explore the possibilities for the theory of foreign policy. Within two weeks, Fox also suggested the necessity of theoretical inquiries into international relations⁷⁶⁾ and urged Thompson to be the ‘entrepreneur’ of such a seminar on theory.⁷⁷⁾ Dean Rusk, who was on the RF Board of Trustees, doubted the benefit of the conference given such a short duration for which to discuss the complex and controversial themes. However, Thompson decided to take the responsibility for holding this event, and he contacted the potential participants and coordinated the schedule with them.⁷⁸⁾ The RF provided a \$3,000 grant for the event.

As a preparation for this conference, attendees including Morgenthau, Niebuhr, Fox, Nitze, and Wolfer submitted papers. Based on these papers, the conference participants debated a wide range of themes from the relationship between theories and practices, and the difference between the theoretical approach and the historical approach to the status of international relations as a social science. Although participants shared the consensus that the focal point of international theories ought to be the concept of ‘power’ and ‘national interest,’ interestingly, most of the time, when they referred to these concepts, the participants argued them in relation to the concept of ‘morality.’ For example, Morgenthau argued that since ‘[n]o single nation is powerful enough to pursue its own ends without including the interests of others, i.e., national interest of other nations,’ moral principles had to be applied to the materialization of national interest.⁷⁹⁾ On this matter, Thompson shared Kennan’s view that, as the emerging power, the US tended to state its interests as if they were universal moral principles for all nations.⁸⁰⁾ Nitze also confessed that, from his experience as a practitioner, when it comes to the important decisions, he had no choice but to consider the ontological and moral questions.⁸¹⁾ On the other hand, Niebuhr warned of the danger of moral pretension as a cause of conflict between

nations by citing Herbert Butterfield. Niebuhr critiqued the Marshall Plan and its pretense at benevolence, which had been criticized as imperial hypocrisy, particularly from France.⁸²⁾ He added that national morality was often overemphasized and ambiguous, and asked where the line was to be drawn between emphasizing the moral factor and overemphasizing it.⁸³⁾ He suggested, 'any theoretical studies solving some of the vacillation between idealism and realism would be of value' for the future research agenda.⁸⁴⁾ Shortly after the conference, Thompson issued a paper summarizing the conference discussion, describing how participants had agreed that the scientific approach blunted the fact that moralities and political purposes were interconnected. Thus, the participants had agreed on the need for a framework for evaluating 'moral discrimination' and to develop criteria with which foreign policies could be measured as good or evil in the peculiar context of international relations. Therefore, in 1954, national interest and morality were closely entangled and theorists endeavored to balance the two and elucidate their interaction.

In terms of the lasting impact of the conference, it stimulated the participants, resulting in further interaction and collaborative research, which led to subsequent seminars at Columbia University from 1957.⁸⁵⁾ In these seminars, not only the senior scholars who originally participated in the 1954 conference, but also younger scholars such as Kenneth Waltz,⁸⁶⁾ also joined. In 1955, besides the additional fund for Wolfer, the RF offered Ernest Lefever,⁸⁷⁾ who later established the Ethic and Policy Center, a grant for his study on ethics and foreign policy at the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS).

It was Niebuhr who was most stimulated by the 1954 conference. He was thrilled by Kennan's suggestion on the use of theories for application to 'the great issues of our times.'⁸⁸⁾ Therefore, he made up his mind to enter the relatively unfamiliar subject on the ethics of foreign diplomacy, which he confessed to find thrilling and frightening to Robert Oppenheimer, the then director of the Institute for Advanced Study.⁸⁹⁾ A \$15,000 grant from the RF allowed Niebuhr to explore the topic of morality and strategy in U.S. foreign policy at the Institute for Advanced Study and to finally publish *The Structure of Nations and Empire*.⁹⁰⁾

Moreover, the RF continued to assist SAIS, the Center of International Studies at Princeton University, the Institute for Advanced Study, and Columbia University, to which the majority of participants at the 1954 Conference belonged.

Conclusion — The Advancement of the Studies of International Relations by the RF

The RF has pursued an ambitious vision on 'the promotion of well-being of mankind through the world' and its general method, the advancement of knowledge, since its inception. As this paper has

examined, in order to achieve this goal, the RF has consistently supported the major institutions and capable individuals in the field of international relations from their primitive stage of development. However, the RF's support was never unbiased. As Bryce Wood observed in his report in 1947,⁹¹⁾ the IR Program frequently enforced its reorientation according to the ever-changing international affairs and shifting the RF's interests. As he had claimed, there was no clear-cut distinction between propaganda and 'the advancement of knowledge,' and the RF officials have always struggled with a dual standard: the advancement of knowledge for human being or for the US.

At the beginning of the IR program, which was taken over from the previous programs run by the Memorial, the Trustees hoped that the program would acquire a 'scientific' status. However, until the mid 1930s, the basis for systematic research in international relations was not sufficiently established and the RF mainly concentrated its support on inter-governmental organizations, such as the League of Nations and the IPR or domestic institutions, such as the RIIA and the CFR. As one official confessed, studies of the highest standard could be done at the national research centers, not at universities. This period was also characterized by the promotion of 'international understanding' between nations. Primary sources on the IR programs suggest that the RF officials, to some extent, believed in the rational understanding based on the dissemination of information between nations.

This naïve view, so to speak, gradually changed around the late 1930s. The term 'enhancement of international understanding' or a belief in the maintenance of peace was gradually replaced by the purpose of serving to a more efficient US foreign policy and the public education. This gradual transformation can be recognized in the intensifying organizational integration among the CFR, the FPA, and the AC-IRP and the expanding scope of public education such as the FPA. At the same time, so as to engage with more systematic studies about US foreign policy based on 'reality,' the Yale Institute was founded with the help of the RF.

World War II reinforced the demands for the further support from the RF. The War and Peace Studies under the collaboration between the CFR and the State Department and the 'invention' of area studies were notable cases, which indicated the close connections among the private sector, the government, and the research community hugely supported by the RF money. The interactions between practitioners and scholars were continuously facilitated by the RF, such as the case of Kennan and Nitze. At the same time, the incremental interest in morality and the needs of a mature and integrated US foreign policy reflected the new orientation of the IR program. The selective support for the early 'realist' thinkers is a good indicator of this phenomenon. All things considered, the RF and its IR program played an instrumental role in establishing the intellectual platform for the earlier stage of academic international relations.

This paper has focused on the IR program from the 1930s to 1950s operated by the RF in order to illustrate the process of the earlier formation of the intellectual foundation in the field of interna-

tional relations. This is largely because the role of the RF in the development of the studies of international relations has remained unexplored despite the increasing interest in the critical review on the historiography of international relations as an academic discipline. The 25-year period (approximately) as the time range of focus for this research can be justified in terms of providing an overview of the IR program and making sense of the changing characteristics of the program. However, more extensive research on individual cases of grants and the detail of the interactions between the RF and grants recipients should be further conducted in order to know more precisely the effect of the RF and its intentions and expectations upon the academic field of international relations.

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