A WORLD OF EXCHANGES

Conceptualizing the History of International Scholarship Programs (Nineteenth to Twenty-First Centuries)

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In 1986, Robert Marjolin, a former militant at the Section Française de l’Internationale Ouvrière (SFIO) in the early 1930s, and later Secretary General of the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) and Vice-President of the European Commission, stated in his autobiography the importance of the year he spent in the United States in 1932–1933 at Yale University under a scholarship granted by the Rockefeller Foundation:

What can be said of the effect of this American stay upon me? It was above all a liberation. Less than two years before, I was an ordinary employee in a stockbroker in Paris, locked up in a narrow frame, without any perspective. Suddenly I was thrown into an environment over which reigned great professors whom I venerated and who treated me as an equal. Above all, I was learning something new every day. I had an impression of being continuously enriched … When I made contact with the United States, it was not, at first, without a certain reservation … This reservations soon vanished … My ideas, not only about America, but about the world in general, were shaped during this stay … Though they were not coherent yet, they had something in common: a deep admiration for the United States, which accompanied me for the rest of my life, and is still part of me today. It is one of the most intimate components of my thought, which, I am sure, will never disappear.¹

This text tells us a lot about the role played by scholarships of any kind in the formative years and professional itineraries of generations of students, teachers, researchers, businessmen, politicians, journalists and many other professions all around the world. However, the study of scholarships and their historical development has hardly
been addressed by historians. The purpose of this book is to redress that gap.

The State of the Art

In the contemporary world, social circulation via scholarship programs is so common that one does not realize how novel they were at the time of their introduction in the second half of the nineteenth century. The diversity of scholarships makes an all-inclusive definition almost impossible, and so for the purposes of this book they refer to official initiatives by individuals and/or institutions for organizing and structuring regular transnational circulations over a period of time, with some form of learning as the principal goal. This encompasses everything that would also normally be referred to under exchanges and fellowships. Scholarships of one kind or another, especially in the academic world, have existed since the Middle Ages, yet their institutionalization only began just over a century ago. Since then, the number of programs has expanded throughout the world, the most well-known being the Rhodes Scholarships, Erasmus, Fulbright and, more recently, Confucius. These represent a vast circulation of people and knowledge, yet, despite their obvious relevance for international relations, the field has so far not received the historical attention it deserves. Scholarship programs have rarely been taken as a topic worthy of investigation. Whereas the social sciences (in particular, psychology, sociology, communication research, business administration and pedagogy) have produced a wealth of data on utility, transfer, impact and best practices, it is only with the increasing popularity of transnational and global history that historical studies have come into vogue.

Until recently, results from historical research were somewhat superficial, hagiographic and Western-centric. First, they were superficial because historians have often only mentioned exchanges in passing and with little analytical depth. The topic falls between different fields of enquiry: international relations, history of science, cultural history, history of higher education, history of philanthropy and migration history. For a long time, none of these fields considered scholarship programs as a topic of serious study in their own right. The history of international relations has generated important work on (predominantly US) cultural diplomacy, and there is a wealth of scholarship on international education, but there is little on the actual history and practice of exchanges themselves. The recent Cold War anthologies from Oxford and Cambridge do not address them in any detail.
The *Global Interdependence* anthology refers to “official exchange programs” only in passing. The *Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History* refers to scholarships in half a page under the heading of “Temporary Migrations.” Public diplomacy studies often follow Nicholas Cull’s typology, which sets scholarships apart as a separate field of study, but rarely does public diplomacy research actually devote them sufficient attention. The history of philanthropic organizations (the most important funders of scholarship programs) has been well-covered, but this has tended to concentrate on the institutional development and strategic outlook of the large American foundations, with little attention for the intricacies and microhistories of their scholarship and fellowship programs. The history of science has mostly concentrated on the institutionalization of disciplines and the construction of national scientific policies. Migration history has mostly focused on mass movements of people and the social and economic causes and consequences of this, whereas scholarship programs, with their temporary character and comparatively small numbers, have remained outside its scope, with a few exceptions. In the field of cultural and intellectual history, important contributions have focused on transnational networks of academics and experts, especially in the first half of the twentieth century, but they have not specifically addressed the contribution of scholarship programs.

Second, previous historical research have tended to be hagiographic, because many studies have been written by actors involved in exchanges celebrating the history and impact of their respective programs. This is particularly clear as regards those works covering the Fulbright Program, where archive-based (critical) studies are only now emerging. “Success” has often been measured in terms of the great careers of former grantees, the Nobel Prizes won, and the numbers of heads of state or university professors who participated. The list is indeed impressive: J. William Fulbright, Dean Rusk and Walt W. Rostow were Rhodes scholars; Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal and French biologist Jacques Monod were Rockefeller fellows; American composer Philip Glass and Spanish politician Javier Solana were Fulbright scholars; British Prime Ministers Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair, and French journalist Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber were Foreign Leader Program grantees. Yet how did these programs contribute to their success, if at all? How far can we generalize from these high-profile cases that all participants on these programs benefit from career-enhancing outcomes?

Third and finally, previous historical research has largely been Western-centric, with many of the studies so far produced concentrating...
on programs run by European and North American actors, whereas significant examples also exist elsewhere. India’s Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme, which has been active since 1964, is one such model of South–South cooperation in this field. Circulations within the communist world were also extensive, including countries like Mongolia and North Korea. Yet research on these areas remains scarce. More recently, universities and sites of religious learning in the Arab world, and particularly Saudi Arabia, have drawn a significant number of participants, and studies of this intellectual migration (and the patronage that encourages and supports it) are necessary for the future. In this sense, this book does not claim to be comprehensive. There are plenty of official exchanges and circulations that still need to be investigated. Instead, it provides a template for understanding the first century of official scholarship by covering the principal conduits of circulation and their organizational nodes. These stemmed predominantly from European imperial networks and, later, their variants as practiced by the United States, China and the European Union (EU). In doing so, the global scale of knowledge circulation via scholarships and exchanges can be brought into focus as the central hubs of this circulation shift over time, from European imperial metropolises to superpower capitals to new centers of power in the twenty-first century.

A New Framework of Analysis

In this context, there is valuable scope for rethinking the history of scholarships as a unique subject area that opens up access to dense networks of knowledge and cultural transfer between regions over many decades, some of which have never been brought into focus before. Until recently, most studies of scholarships have been constructed around two different epistemological perspectives. First (and mostly composed of the hagiographic works mentioned above), the programs are studied through an institutional perspective and seen as success stories. Second, programs are considered as instruments of (especially American) soft power. Yet neither of these perspectives has caught the complex nature of scholarships, because they both tend to interpret them in terms of simple success or failure, using famous grantees and statistics per country or area as unique indicators.

A broader and deeper perspective is therefore required to consider scholarship programs as a specific object of interest linked to technical, political, social, cultural and economic developments. For this,
the actors involved—both as administrators and participants—are the prime targets of investigation. As Patricia Clavin has rightly stated, “transnationalism, despite its early identification with the transfer or movement of money and goods, is first and foremost about people: the social space that they inhabit, the networks they form and the ideas they exchange.” It is exactly the human dimension and the human connections that this book wants to bring more into focus. Many of the chapters devote attention to personal itineraries and experiences, and significant examples of scholars, program administrators and alumni associations have been highlighted.

Historians now have the possibility to elaborate a holistic, multifaceted analysis of scholarship programs, combining insights on individual itineraries with the developing interests of institutions, in the context of changing local, national and global trends. Transnational history now offers many examples of the structural role of circulations in shaping knowledge, practice and politics on a global scale. The trajectory of scientific, social scientific and humanities disciplines through the twentieth century are now well-documented. Theoretical frameworks for analyzing the conditions of production, legitimation and circulation of knowledge exist. The recent historiography of philanthropic foundations has dissected the modus operandi of these major actors of scholarship programs in coproducing and circulating knowledge and practices together with local actors, thanks to a policy combining worldwide strategy and on-the-spot action. Cultural history has for a long time been investigating the coproduction and appropriation of knowledge and practices. Anthropological and sociological studies have shown how contemporary cultures were forged through complex articulations between the global and the local, and how they have continued to be “open spaces” in permanent reconfiguration through transnational circulations.

The goal is therefore to analyze how scholarships shaped career paths, disciplines, institutions and national cultures, and how they have in turn been shaped by them, combining a top-down approach centered on institutions with a bottom-up approach centered on actors. This will insert scholarship programs into the construction and circulation of knowledge through the twentieth century, which up till now has been a significant lacuna. It highlights the global circulation of individuals as bearers of knowledge on a large scale as a distinctly twentieth-century phenomenon, their experience testing our frameworks and categories of understanding “progress” and change. According to this framework, historical studies on scholarship should focus on four main dimensions.
How Scholarship Programs Function

The first is the technical and administrative dimension, in order to address the diversity of scholarship programs. The first field of activity that comes to mind is academic networks, forming as they do the mainstay of scholarship programs since the late nineteenth century. But this is only part of the picture; many other institutions have been involved. Governmental bureaucracies, the military, international organizations and private institutions, each with their own specific goals, have contributed to the scholarship landscape, and several examples are covered in the following chapters. In theory, there seems to be a clear division between privately and publicly funded programs, but in practice they tend to overlap. Funding for both often comes from diverse sources, and both public and private institutions actually organize the programs and host the grantees. Claiming to distinguish between “public” and “private” programs is therefore not always a pertinent basis for analysis, since the public and private have merged and diverged depending on the local, national and international circumstances.

Scholarship programs are also diverse as regards their structure, goals and geographic scale. Some programs award scholarships to send students for study abroad, but do not organize a return of foreign students. Others are bilateral and organized according to an equal exchange, involving the institutionalization of the principle of reciprocity between two countries or two institutions. Then there are the multilateral programs that organize the transfer of grantees on a global scale. The age of scholars also differs from one program to another, with some catering for secondary school students, others for undergraduates, graduates, young or senior researchers or professionals. Gender is another important criterion, as some chapters in this book demonstrate, since some programs are exclusively for men or women, while others are mixed. As to their duration, programs can vary from one or two weeks to several months or years, in which case grantees can be considered as temporary migrants who go to another country for a set period of time. Finally, some programs focus on a specific field of activity such as health, labor or the armed forces, while others are more diverse in their coverage. This diversity makes it compulsory to have a precise knowledge about the organization, structure and day-to-day functioning of the programs, in order to appreciate their underlying “philosophy.” A sufficient number of case studies is also required in order to draw appropriate conclusions on scholarships as a whole.
Scholarships and Politics

Second, there is the political dimension of scholarship programs. The creation and development of these programs is deeply embedded in transformations within global politics. The late nineteenth century saw the construction and affirmation of nation-states on the international scene, competing not only for political, military and imperial supremacy, but also for leadership in education, scientific research and economic development. Scholarship programs became part of this competition, with the international flow of students being from this moment onward a matter of actual political importance. Scholarships were a central part of cultural diplomacy, a new way for nation-states to reinforce their prestige by exporting the products of their national cultures and by attracting as many producers of knowledge as possible. This two-way process continued after World War I, when governments initiated national science policies in order to be prepared for a future war. It reached unprecedented dimensions during World War II, when the mobilization of scientific assets became central for ensuring victory. During the Cold War, the relevance of science and culture in international politics remained high in the context of the ideological struggle between the superpowers. Cultural diplomacy also became important for post-imperial powers looking to counterbalance a decline in international influence, and emerging powers aiming to assert themselves on the global stage. Post-Cold War scholarships have both (re)integrated intellectual pools on a trans-European or transatlantic scale and have seen the growth of alternative circuits centered on rising powers.

Scholarships are also implicated in global politics through the arrival of international organizations. From the 1920s onward, several organizations created and developed scholarship programs that differed in outlook from those run by nation-states, since they aimed at elaborating universal norms and fostering among their participants a sense of membership as part of a universal community. While the interwar period was the founding moment in this process, the intent continued through the Cold War and remains on the agenda of many agencies in the United Nations (UN) system. This has especially been the case in terms of UN activities in the Global South. This leads to important considerations concerning the extent to which they have succeeded in going beyond national interests and whether they have actually brought about new connections, practices or belief systems based on a “post-national” worldview.
A Long-Term Perspective

The third dimension of the study of scholarship programs is the analysis of grantees. The social, intellectual and institutional itineraries of the actors need to be engaged with over the longer term. So far, beyond the names of well-known grantees, what do we know about the many others who participated but never achieved fame? Where did they come from? What were their social and educational backgrounds? In what period of their lives did they benefit from the scholarship? Where did they go and what did they do? What influence did these travels have on their subsequent careers? Can we evaluate the influence of programs based on the itineraries of individuals or groups (academics, journalists, politicians, physicians or social scientists)? These questions are of fundamental importance if one wants to evaluate the in-depth and lasting impact, and move beyond vague generalizations or abstract statistics. Groundbreaking analysis along these lines has begun and can now be taken further.\(^{21}\) This necessarily follows the grantees before, during and after their interactions with the scholarship experience.

(1) Before: tracing the historical significance of scholarships requires a knowledge of the background of grantees and an analysis of the selection process. Selection is a crucial aspect of all scholarships, and deserves particular attention, not only for who was selected but also for who was rejected because they did not meet the program criteria. Archives do not always hold information on rejected applications, but this issue is important to break the traditional narrative of institutions that focus on the winners (the famous grantees). Moreover, studying what happened prior to the selection is a way to avoid overestimating the role of the scholarship as the founding moment of a personal career. Programs tend to claim that they have provided the “added value” that shapes the profile of a successful grantee, but this bypasses the fact that the selection process already chooses profiles that fit with their goals.

(2) During: what grantees do during the time of their scholarship is of course of major importance. The influence of the host nation, the institution(s) they attend and the cultural exchange that takes place there can all be formative experiences. Scholarships can be a powerful factor for creating transnational networks and constructing and transferring knowledge. Yet what occurs during the scholarship often only appears in the memoirs of former scholars, in anecdotal form. The actual time of the scholarship itself is, paradoxically, often a blindspot in the history of scholarship programs.

(3) After: impact is probably the most difficult question, especially because it is often visible only ten, twenty or thirty years later, for the
career of the grantees, the institutions they visited, their home institution and the academic field in which they worked. What are the consequences of the grant on research tracks and career development? To what extent did scholarship programs contribute to the construction of transnational research networks? How did these networks develop and evolve over the longer term? How did this contribute to shaping particular disciplines or fields of study? In many cases, the relationship between the grantees and their host institutions does not end after the grant. Some benefit from several grants from the same institution, and former grantees are also frequently brought back as advisors. Sometimes they create alumni associations. There are multiple forms of long-term connections that provide clues for identifying the scale and scope of transnational networks. Such questions have so far mostly been neglected by sociological and political science studies on networks, which have tended to overlook their historical development to focus on structural aspects. Instead, historical studies of their origins, development and termination or transformation are needed.

_Scholarships are also about Money_

Lastly, scholarship programs are more than the circulation of culture, knowledge and ideas. Their history is also about economics, not only because they cost money to run (and so need to be justified in budgetary terms), but also because attracting students and researchers is considered a way to strengthen the national economy. Grantees spend money in their host countries. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the sum injected by international students into the US economy was estimated at US$24 billion annually. In her chapter, Carol Atkinson also reminds us that foreign governments spent more than US$447 million to send their personnel to US military schools in 2013. Scholarship programs are thus a good deal for host countries, because a significant part of the investment they make in awarding a scholarship is recouped, not to mention the added value of the grantees’ expertise and input into host institutions as a whole.

The circulation of scholars can also lead to the opening of foreign markets. It is significant that in the early years of the Fulbright Program, grantees coming to the United States were provided with a small budget for purchasing material goods (clothes, books, music, etc.) in order to partake in the “American way of life,” thus sowing the seeds of material desire for American products when returning home. During the Cold War, when the United States and the USSR competed in proselytizing their political and economic models, their
economic assistance programs to postcolonial countries were always underpinned by the idea of converting the recipients to liberal or state-run economies. The productivity missions of the Marshall Plan that brought more than 25,000 European engineers and managers to the United States between 1948 and 1955 were explicitly organized to transplant American methods to Europe in order to develop commerce between the two continents.23

Knowledge itself can also be considered to hold an economic value. Academia has always been a form of market, and the term “knowledge-based economy” has gained a growing relevance in policy-making circles.24 Countries compete in order to attract students and researchers. These economic impulses were already present when scholarships were established on a large scale in the late nineteenth century. The structure of the academic market was much more Eurocentric at that time, but no less competitive, as is noted in Guillaume Tronchet’s chapter. Nowadays, academic rankings have become very important for university marketing. The Academic Ranking of World Universities (also known as the Shanghai Ranking) was created in 2003, the Times Higher Education World University Ranking in 2004, the Global University Ranking (a Russian system) in 2009 and so on. In 2014 the European Union launched its own program, U-Multirank, in accordance with the ambition formulated in 2000 by the Lisbon strategy to develop a “knowledge-based” economy.

**Historical Epochs in Scholarship History**

In addition to adopting a new framework of analysis, historical studies on scholarship programs should also deepen their reflections about periodization. Since the nineteenth century, four major historical trends have provided the context and impetus for scholarships to be developed.

*National and Imperial Power Politics*

The first trend occurred in the second half of the nineteenth century. As stated above, scholarships were created in the context of a strong affirmation of and rivalry between national/imperial powers. Organizing the mobility of elites for scientific and economic gain became an instrument of foreign policy. From the late nineteenth century onward, scholarship programs of various types, from natural sciences to military training to nursing education, were implemented by great powers in
order to gain intellectual prestige and scientific strength. The importance of knowledge in international relations became evident from the World War I onward, not only because of the role of science in the elaboration of new weapons, but also because of the role of experts in determining the conditions of peace. From the Hague Conferences to today, experts have entered and shaped the political arena.25

The programs organized within the British Empire are a case in point. From the 1860s to the beginning of the twentieth century, a wide range of scholarships were established between Dominion universities in order to reinforce their connections with Great Britain. This created an “empire of scholars” that attracted the best colonial students to Britain and laid the framework for a global web of exchanges centered on British universities.26 The Rhodes program (see the chapter by Tamson Pietsch and Meng-Hsuan Chou) is the most famous and perhaps most influential as a model, but it was neither the only nor the first one. Largely conceived as a one-way process to bring Dominion elites to the British metropole, this movement of intellectual talent from the imperial periphery to the center also contributed to the modernization of the university system in Britain.27

The other European great powers also created scholarship programs and organized academic mobility during the same period. Germany’s prestigious academic system attracted students from all over Europe and the United States. France, following its defeat by Germany in 1870, initiated an ambitious form of “academic diplomacy,” which, by the beginning of the 1920s, had propelled the country into a dominant position in the international academic market. In 1931, out of around 80,000 students studying abroad throughout the world, 17,000 went to France (see Guillaume Tronchet’s chapter). This movement was organized by both public and private bodies (universities, Alliances françaises and local entrepreneurs) before the government began to coordinate through the Office National des Universités et des Écoles Françaises. Created in 1910, this bureau positioned scholarships as a matter of national policy.

The case of the United States is also interesting, since it demonstrates the importance of World War I in the evolution of scholarship geography. The United States was already sending and receiving students in the late nineteenth century, but it was not before the 1920s that it became a major player in the academic market. After World War I, a number of important scholarship programs were organized by universities and foundations (the Rockefeller Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation in particular), and new institutions such as the Institute of International Education and the Social Science Research Council were
created to monitor and encourage these transactions. The foundations played a crucial role by both running their own programs and funding the institutions that oversaw them. US scholarship programs were both global in scope and run on a massive scale. Already by 1923, the United States was the second most popular destination in the world for foreign students, with 8,357 at American universities, second only in number to France. This rose to 10,000 by 1930, with 5,000 American students going abroad in that year. By 1931, there were 457 university programs open to all categories of foreign students and researchers, mostly funded by private individuals, philanthropic organizations and/or businesses, while 320 programs were actively sending American students abroad. In less than ten years, the United States had become one of the most important protagonists on the international academic scene.

After 1945, the growing imbalance between the US and European powers became more evident. Scholarship programs were now more than ever instruments for strengthening national influence, but it was more difficult for European powers to successfully develop them. As Alice Byrne demonstrates in her chapter, British efforts to maintain ties with the former colonies did not succeed due to their reluctance to occupy a subservient position and their interest in developing their own policies. Byrne points out that the Commonwealth University Interchange Scheme was conceived during the interwar period, but was only launched in 1948, which led its hierarchical form of organization, with Britain at the center, to be totally out of sync with the conditions of the post-World War II period. For France, the destruction of the war and the consequent difficult economic situation prevented the country from regaining its leading position in the scholarship geography before the late 1950s. (West) Germany was a defeated nation and its educational system as a whole was discredited by the Nazi experience. But Germany did not give up on its ambitions, as demonstrated by the revival of the Humboldt Stiftung in 1953 and the global scope of its scholarship program. The Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange Program (see the chapter by Jacob S. Eder) is further evidence of the return of Germany to a significant place in scholarship networks, with its particular focus on building ties for the future.

Scholarship Programs, International Understanding and World Peace

A second major trend in the history of scholarship programs can be identified as the wave of internationalism. Indeed, from the 1910s onward, scholarship programs started to be used not only as instruments of national politics, but were also considered as a means for develop-
ing international cooperation and understanding. Internationalists considered the mobility of people and ideas as a way to promote peace through the emergence of an “international mind” resulting from repeated contacts between people of different countries and cultures. The notion of international (or intercultural) understanding emerged during this period. This idea developed on both sides of the Atlantic. In France, French banker and philanthropist Albert Kahn created the Autour du Monde Scholarship Program in 1898, which sent French students and professors abroad to represent French culture and (with not a little chauvinism) to promote the “culture of mankind” as a whole.

Similar rhetoric was also employed by US philanthropic foundations such as the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, which organized its first fellowship program in 1917 and promoted the norms of international law for resolving disputes, and the Rockefeller Foundation, whose officers were ardent promoters of internationalism. The Rockefeller Foundation began its first scholarships in 1914 and expanded its influence in the 1920s with the Fellowship Program, which would generate more than 10,000 fellows up to 1970. In all these cases, internationalism and nationalism effectively merged, but nevertheless the tone of internationalism is a definite characteristic of the 1910s–1920s period.

The internationalist credo was also used by organizations focused on youth. The Young Men’s Christian Association (1844) and the Student Volunteer Movement (1886) promoted the mobility of young people throughout the world as a way to evangelize non-Christians. In order to achieve this goal, they created worldwide organizations such as the World Alliance of YMCAs, with multiple local sections through which the circulation of grantees could be organized. The scout movement was structured on the same pattern, and by the 1920s, Rotary International and the Lions Club were also organizing youth mobility, a trend that has continued until today. As Stefan Hübner’s chapter shows, students awarded a YMCA scholarship were trained at Springfield College on the condition that they would spread the Association’s philosophy following their return to their home country. This ensured that the YMCA would spread its model abroad, but it also allowed national sections to construct their own methods under their own leadership that did not simply replicate the American version. This method had several advantages: it reduced costs with fewer YMCA officers sent abroad; it spread influence through US-trained ambassadors who possessed more local credibility; and it was a way to avoid accusations of imperialism by anticolonial movements that were increasingly active in the countries where the YMCA was present.
The Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship Program best exemplifies the internationalist credo (and the notion of scholarships as a form of global circulation). Based on the Rhodes Scholarships, it was extended to the whole world, and although the United States was the central node of the program, it was not the only destination for grantees. The chapters by Judith Syga-Dubois and Pierre-Yves Saunier demonstrate how the foundation adopted specific selection criteria and stayed in contact with the fellows in order to keep updated on the realities they faced on the ground. The program also promoted connections between present, future and former fellows in order to encourage multigenerational transnational networks over time.

From the 1920s onward, a new type of actor entered the field of global mobility: international organizations (IOs). The League of Nations is paramount here. Soon after its creation, the League established programs to overcome national boundaries and rivalries, and to create the mutual understanding that was considered indispensable for maintaining world peace. There was also the motivation to encourage the standardization of international norms in various domains such as economic statistics, healthcare and disease control, and bibliographical methods. The Hygiene section of the League, in cooperation with the Rockefeller Foundation, organized multinational group study tours for public health officials from 1922 to 1937 for the exchange of ideas and methods. Scholarships were from the beginning essential instruments of IO policy, developing approaches that are still in use by UN agencies today: individual scholarships; collective study tours; “problem-solving” conferences between grantees; training courses; and technical assistance missions. In 1943 the newly created United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) organized a fellowship program for public health officers in order to assist the reconstruction of war-devastated countries. This was continued by the World Health Organization (WHO) Fellowship Program after World War II (see the chapter by Yi-Tang Lin, Thomas David and Davide Rodogno). From 1948 to 2014, the WHO awarded grants to over 1,000 fellows per year, with the total number reaching 120,000 for that period. Other UN agencies have also created scholarship programs, such as UNESCO and the International Labor Organization (see the chapter by Véronique Plata-Stenger). Scholarships are therefore an important chapter in the history of international organizations, not only because of the numbers involved, but also because the organized global mobility of people and ideas has always been a founding principle of these organizations.

One other important characteristic of the internationalist moment is the notion of exchange as reciprocity. The early programs were not...
conceived to exchange students, but to demonstrate national prowess and strength. The notion of reciprocity appeared during and immediately after World War I (see the chapter by Guillaume Tronchet) and following the war, many bilateral exchanges were created. In the case of the United States, the Institute of International Education (IIE) created bilateral programs with France (1921), Czechoslovakia (1922), Germany (1924), Hungary (1925), Switzerland (1926), Austria and Italy (1929), Spain (1930) and Argentina (1931). These bilateral programs were administered either by universities, the IIE or binational foundations, as was the case with the Commission for the Relief in Belgium Educational Foundation (1919) and the China Foundation for the Promotion of Education and Culture, created in 1925 by the Chinese government with the remaining funds from the indemnity due to the United States after the Boxer Rebellion.38

The Cold War: A “Golden Age” of Scholarship Programs

The third moment in the history of scholarship programs is the Cold War, which can be considered a golden age due to the large-scale American and Soviet programs used to promote their socioeconomic and political models across the globe. More than ever, scholarship programs were instruments of national power politics, but the novelty of the Cold War moment is that they were part of polarized strategies developed on a global scale by two superpowers fighting to impose their respective models. Both tried (and partly succeeded) to organize, control and benefit from the flow of scholarship program laureates to an unprecedented degree. In a sense, this was a form of ultra-politicization of scholarship programs. The US programs are better known than their Soviet counterparts, with the Fulbright and Foreign Leader Programs among the most important examples of US cultural diplomacy on a global scale.39 Knowledge for, of and as global power became central to superpower status.40 Between 1948 and 1975, 39,000 US Fulbright grantees went abroad and 78,000 from 110 countries went to the United States.41 These American programs had two key goals: first, to strengthen the ties between the United States and its allies by developing a sense of community through the circulation of people and ideas; second, to use these channels to internationalize American opinion and promote understanding among American citizens of their place in the world (see the chapters by Lonnie R. Johnson and Peter Simons). From the late 1950s onward, various scholarship channels were used to establish ties with the communist world. From 1973, the Fulbright Program was also extended to the Soviet Union, which opened up the possibility
of introducing liberal ideas into Soviet society. Between 1966 and 1991, the Fondation pour une Entraide Intellectuelle Européenne, funded by the Ford Foundation, awarded 2,536 fellowships to East European artists, writers, academics, translators, journalists and intellectuals to enable them to undertake short periods of study, research and conference attendance in the West. The grantees were often Polish, Romanian and Hungarian, and came predominantly to France, West Germany and Britain. The IREX program (see the chapter by Justine Faure) also contributed to the formation of transnational networks that crossed the East–West divide. As Cold War historians are increasingly demonstrating, that divide was permeable, and the complexity of these two-way relationships ensures that simplistic notions of democratic ideas flowing eastwards are mistaken. On the Soviet side (see the chapter by Julie Hessler), major investments were also made to use scholarships for the purpose of fostering socialist unity, particularly with the postcolonial world. The Lumumba University in Moscow became an international hub for those from the Global South seeking alternative paths to development based on equality.

However, it would be simplistic to consider that the Cold War programs were merely a product of the political and ideological superpower struggle. As we have seen, the genealogy of these programs can be traced back to the interwar years and the rise of the United States (and the Soviet Union) as “beacons of progress” in the global arena. This allows us to use scholarships and their networks as a way to view the Cold War differently. The Fulbright Program may have been launched in 1946, at the prime moment of US dominance, but it drew heavily on the interwar experience. It was based on the principle of reciprocity and thus on prewar internationalist culture, and its administrative organization (and financial formula) was based on that of the binational foundations from the aftermath of World War I. As with the Commission for the Relief in Belgium Educational Foundation, the creation of the Fulbright Program was a pragmatic way to use US assets located abroad without losing money in the process of repatriation and exchange. The Fulbright was also geared toward training local leaders, an approach practiced and perfected in the interwar years by the Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship Program and the YMCA. Finally, the Fulbright Program was partly based on the concept of technical assistance. Rockefeller fellowships had already pioneered this with the aim to assist in the reform and modernization of public health and medical education around the world, and the same mentality was adopted by UNRRA fellowships from 1943 to 1947, before the first generation of US Fulbright grantees went abroad to teach agronomics, public health,
city planning and tropical medicine. In the Philippines, following independence in 1946, American grantees were also invited to act as technical advisors in order to help restructure the local education system at the secondary, tertiary and vocational levels. The Fulbright Program was therefore a synthesis of different models of scholarship programs practiced before World War II. Its bilateral administrative organization made it very adaptable to different national contexts, another reason for its success beyond the attractiveness of US higher education and the money it had at its disposal.

The Globalization Moment: New Geography and New Challenges

From the 1970s onward, the Cold War framework of scholarship programs has undergone a gradual transformation and the geography of transnational circulations has entered a new phase. To begin with, there has been a transformation in American policy, even before the collapse of the Communist Bloc. From the 1970s to the beginning of the twenty-first century, there has been a relative retreat of the United States from the landscape of scholarship programs. There are several reasons for this. Lonnie R. Johnson’s chapter emphasizes the impact of President Nixon and the considerable decrease of federal funding for the Fulbright Program; this coincided with growing international criticism of the war in Vietnam and the relative decline of US soft power during the 1970s as a whole. But the weakness of scholarship programs was also a consequence of US domestic controversies: Patricia L. Rosenfield’s chapter explains the causes and consequences of the 1969 Tax Reform Act, which led to the decline of some existing scholarship programs and certainly prevented a number of foundations from creating new ones, and how the new rules passed after 11 September 2001 have considerably increased the administrative burden for foundations managing scholarship programs. Additionally, new approaches to evaluation have tended to emphasize short-term results, in contrast to the long-term philosophy that was the cornerstone of foundation policy since the interwar period. Finally, the evolution of the geopolitical context undermined the argument for scholarship programs. The end of the Soviet threat weakened the perceived need to justify a strong cultural diplomacy, especially with a critical Republican-controlled Congress after 1994. However, the attack on the World Trade Center on 11 September 2001 led to another reorientation and the co-optation of all forms of public diplomacy under a counterterrorism imperative. Funding was increased, but so were concerns about openness and reciprocity. In contrast, national security interests have seen the United
States consolidate its role in military programs (see the chapter by Carol Atkinson). While this does not mean that the United States has replaced academic scholarships with military programs, the growth of the latter has demonstrated how this country now concentrates more on security matters than on intellectual cross-fertilization with the rest of the world.

The next transformational development in the contemporary world has been the emergence of new actors on the scene. China is a case in point: following the isolationist radicalism of the Cultural Revolution and Mao Zedong’s death, the rise to power of Deng Xiaoping saw China turn positively toward international exchange. The US–China Fulbright Program was revived in 1979, thirty years after its cancellation following the communist takeover, and it contributed greatly to the influx of Western ideas and educational methods during the 1980s. As the chapter by Guangqiu Xu argues, this fed into the rising desire for democratic reforms, and ultimately the tragic events of Tiananmen Square in 1989. More recently, in 2004, China’s affirmation as a global power has seen the creation of the Confucius Institutes, a global network of language and cultural centers that use scholarships to expand Chinese influence abroad.

Likewise, other actors have emerged as major scholarship providers, as shown in the chapter by Ludovic Tournès. This is the case with the EU. Partly propelled by the end of the Cold War and the opening up of the European continent, the EU has pursued an ambitious but discreet cultural diplomacy campaign since the 1980s. In contrast to the elitism and professional focus of early twentieth-century scholarships, the Erasmus Program operates on a massive scale to generate, if not European citizens, at least a sense of community among the younger generations. In the context of global competition, it also seeks to enhance the intellectual influence of Europe. The case of the Erasmus Program is another sign that the history of scholarship programs entered a new phase before the end of the Cold War in 1989–91. Primarily an outgrowth of the Single European Act (1986) and launched in 1987, it grew spectacularly in the post-Cold War period, partly through the integration of the former communist countries in 1990, 1995, 2004 and 2007 (which brought both new candidates and new destinations), and also partly due to factors that accelerated the circulation of people in Europe, such as the deregulation of air traffic in 1997 and the growth of low-cost transport. With three million students and 350,000 professors and administrators having taken part between 1987 and 2013, the Erasmus Program has imposed itself as the most important scholarship program in history. Its goal is not
only to strengthen the relationship between EU members in order to pave the way for a European identity, but also to improve competition with the United States and other new powers such as China in the so-called “knowledge-based economy” sectors. As Jose Manuel Barroso once said in a 2007 press conference, Europe is in a sense “the first non-imperial empire,” pooling sovereignty and working toward the creation of a single socioeconomic and political Eurosphere. Erasmus has contributed greatly to that goal.48

There are many other examples of new actors in the scholarship scene. Japan is one of them, and Jesse Sargent’s chapter confirms how scholarship programs are still today a way to strengthen national position in the international arena. India is another particularly interesting example (see the chapter by Ludovic Tournès), since this country’s long tradition of creating scholarship programs only became visible in the international arena from the 1990s onward. One of the main reasons for the absence of this country in the existing literature on scholarship programs lies in the fact that most Indian programs are oriented toward the Asian world. But India, with its huge academic system, its ambitious scholarship policy and its rapid economic development, might become during the course of the twenty-first century one of the main destinations of scholars in the world.

The mushrooming of newcomers in the landscape of scholarship programs suggests that the story is not coming to an end. In 2000, 1.8 million students were studying in a country other than their own (compared with the figure of 70,000 in the 1920s), and there are many reasons to think that this movement will continue in the following years. Scholarships and the networks they create are now a vast, global phenomenon. Whereas Western countries, especially the United States and Europe, have long dominated the field and will continue to hold considerable leverage in terms of quality and prestige, there is no doubt that the geography of scholarships has changed, and so have the circuits of exchange (see the Conclusion). It is striking to note that the technological revolution of the 1990s, and in particular the development of the Internet, has not stopped this expansive trend. Whereas many disgruntled commentators warned of the terrifying prospect of a world obsessed with forms of digital and virtual communication, in fact the circulation of people through scholarship programs has only increased. It remains to be seen how geopolitical developments in the 2000s, in particular the instability in the Middle East, the return of nationalist tensions and xenophobia to the Eurasian space, and the rise of China will influence this trend toward another period of growth of exchanges or, conversely, a cycle of “deglobalization.”50

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Notes


33. See Jessica Reinisch, “Agents of Internationalism,” and the articles collected in the special issue of *Contemporary European History* 25(2) (2016).


44. See the French case in Tournès, Sciences de l’homme.

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