

*Anna Mazurkiewicz**

Pragmatic idealism and academic autonomy: Stephen P. Duggan and the American model of international education, 1919–1946

Pragmatyczny idealizm i autonomia akademicka. Stephen P. Duggan i amerykański model edukacji międzynarodowej, 1919–1946

ABSTRACT:

In an era of deepening geopolitical rivalries and growing suspicion towards international exchange, when education diplomacy is increasingly viewed through the lens of national security or economic profit, the legacy of Stephen P. Duggan offers timely insight. As the founder and director of the Institute of International Education (IIE) from 1919 to 1946, Duggan led an ambitious effort to expand U.S. expertise and promote mutual understanding through academic and professional exchanges. His model of “pragmatic idealism” advocated proficiency in world affairs while navigating through a period marked by war, revolution, and American retreat into isolationism. Today, international education exchange programs face some of the same challenges, such as visa restrictions, suspicion of foreign influence, and declining public support. Yet, other elements further complicate the process, such as governmental interference in academic autonomy. These factors disrupt the original idea of enabling exchanges based on principles of academic freedom, with the dominant role of non-state actors. In the article, Duggan’s legacy of expanding American expertise in global affairs is based on a case study from East Central Europe. This example shows that Duggan’s work prefigured modern concepts of “soft power” and educational diplomacy. Duggan’s vision was neither utopian nor apolitical; it was grounded in the belief that durable peace and effective diplomacy begin with

* Anna Mazurkiewicz – University of Gdańsk, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6599-2755>, e-mail: anna.mazurkiewicz@ug.edu.pl.

informed people-to-people ties. For these to be genuine and lasting, openness and partnership cooperation remain *sine qua non*.

KEYWORDS:

Stephen P. Duggan, international education, research autonomy, educational diplomacy

STRESZCZENIE:

W epoce pogłębiającej się rywalizacji geopolitycznej i rosnącej podejrzliwości wobec wymiany międzynarodowej, gdy dyplomacja edukacyjna coraz częściej postrzegana jest przez pryzmat bezpieczeństwa narodowego lub zysku ekonomicznego, spuścizna Stephena P. Duggana nabiera szczególnego znaczenia. Jako założyciel i pierwszy dyrektor Instytutu Edukacji Międzynarodowej (Institute of International Education, IIE) w latach 1919–1946, Duggan kierował ambitnymi działaniami na rzecz poszerzenia wiedzy w Stanach Zjednoczonych poprzez wymianę akademicką i programy wymiany specjalistów. W tym okresie, naznaczonym wojnami i rewolucjami, ale też przyjęciem przez USA polityki izolacjonizmu, Duggan proponował model „pragmatycznego idealizmu” w międzynarodowych wymianach edukacyjnych. Współczesne programy wymiany stoją w obliczu podobnych wyzwań, takich jak ograniczenia wizowe, podejrzliwość wobec wpływów zagranicznych czy malejące poparcie społeczne. Dodatkowo ingerencja rządu w autonomię badań naukowych komplikuje ten proces i podważa oryginalną ideę wymiany opartej na zasadach wolności akademickiej, z dominującą rolą podmiotów niepaństwowych. W niniejszym artykule dziedzictwo Duggana w zakresie poszerzania amerykańskiej wiedzy specjalistycznej w sprawach globalnych oparte jest na studium przypadku z Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej. Ten przykład pokazuje, że praca Duggana zapowiadała współczesne koncepcje „miękkiej siły” i dyplomacji edukacyjnej. Wizja Duggana nie była ani utopijna, ani apolityczna – opierała się na przekonaniu, że trwały pokój i skuteczna dyplomacja wymagają relacji międzyludzkich zbudowanych na podstawach merytorycznych. Aby były one autentyczne i trwałe, otwartość oraz partnerska współpraca pozostają warunkiem *sine qua non*.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:

Stephen P. Duggan, międzynarodowa edukacja, autonomia badawcza, dyplomacja edukacyjna

1. Introduction

Contemporary American debates on the internationalisation of academic research seem to resemble the tenor of the interwar period. Concerns related to foreign espionage, radicalism, and un-American activities affect this area

of discussion¹. While these fears related to the country's security are not new, a fresh element emerging from the comparison is the issue of the autonomy of research. Today, governmental control over the research agenda seems to replace American leadership in advancing academic freedom on a global scale². What further sets the two periods apart is the level of governmental control over the mobility of program participants. The problems with border securitisation and the administration of student visas were always inseparable components of international student and teacher mobility³. Yet, the governmental use of immigration policies to implement its partisan ideological agenda in research appears to be a new element in the history of American international education⁴. The effects of these changes on America's ability to inform its foreign policy, develop public diplomacy programs, and train cadres for foreign policy assignments are yet to be observed.

This text aims to revisit the origins of American international education models, to diagnose the initial strengths that made the U.S. a leader in global exchanges over the past century. What drove international exchanges during

¹ Presidential Proclamation on Restricting the Entry of Foreign Nationals to Protect the United States from Foreign Terrorists and Other National Security and Public Safety Threats, 9 June 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/06/restricting-the-entry-of-foreign-nationals-to-protect-the-united-states-from-foreign-terrorists-and-other-national-security-and-public-safety-threats/> [4.07.2025]; C. Wang, "International students have long been a policy tool for U.S. leaders", *The Washington Post*, 20 July 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/07/10/international-students-have-long-been-policy-tool-us-leaders/> [4.07.2025].

² A. Kavi, E. Wong, "Workers Forced to Leave Foreign Policy Center as Trump Presses Shutdown", *The New York Times*, 3 April 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/04/03/us/politics/wilson-center-shutdown-musk.html> [4.07.2025]; A. Kavi, E. Wong, "Musk's Task Force Begins Shutting Down Foreign Policy Research Center", *The New York Times*, 2 April 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/04/02/us/politics/doge-wilson-center.html> [4.07.2025]; A. Kavi, "Judge Rules That Trump Administration Takeover of Institute of Peace Is Illegal", *The New York Times*, 19 May 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/05/19/us/politics/institute-of-peace-trump.html> [4.07.2025].

³ W. W. Melati, *History of Federal International Education Policy (1900–2024): A Four-Dimensional View in Action*, PhD Dissertation, West Virginia University, 2024, 280–281, DOI: 10.33915/etd.12572.

⁴ E. Wong, "Fulbright Board Resigns After Accusing Trump Aides of Political Interference", *The New York Times*, 11 June 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/11/us/politics/fulbright-board-resign-trump.html> [4.07.2025]; O. Blum, Alexandria, VA, Letter To the Editor, Re: "Fulbright Board Resigns, Citing Political Interference" (news article, 12 June 2025), part of: "Dimming America's Beacons to the World", *The New York Times*, 13 June 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/13/opinion/fulbright-program-voice-of-america.html?smid=url-share> [4.07.2025].

the isolationist period in the U.S.? Who tried, when, and why, to centralise the administration of American international exchange programs? Furthermore, by means of a case study-exchange programming centred on East Central Europe (1919–1939), this article offers inspiration for policymakers in areas related to building regional expertise, personal networks, and intergovernmental partnerships. East Central Europe is used as a case study for two reasons. First, it was an unknown area with little to no American expertise before World War I. Second, as a region of the world where the long-term impact of American “soft power” (cultural diplomacy, academic and professional exchanges, economic assistance) contributed to strengthening the alliance, it serves as an example of cultivating U.S. national interest in a larger European context. How were regional programs initiated? What was the role of non-state actors in establishing bilateral partnerships? What mistakes were made? Furthermore, this analysis ponders the question of when and how the American cultural and academic international exchanges were affected by governmental domination over non-state actors. Retaining research autonomy as the centre of attention, this text seeks to illuminate contemporary policies regarding international exchanges through historical thinking.

The focus on Stephen P. Duggan (1870–1950) results from his role in leading the creation of the Institute of International Education (IIE) – the agency administering U.S. foreign exchanges. A non-profit entity that describes itself as “the first private organization facilitating international exchanges”, proudly advertises its trademarked slogans: “The Power of Education” and “Opening Minds To The World”⁵. Today, it is an administrator of more than 200 exchange programs with over 180 countries. Among these are government-sponsored exchanges, including the flagship U.S. Fulbright program⁶.

Duggan, a son of immigrants from Northern Ireland, grew up in a working-class immigrant neighbourhood in New York. He benefited from both educational opportunities and the cosmopolitan atmosphere of the city. He

⁵ Institute of International Education, Inc., <https://www.iie.org/scholarships-programs/?-pag=1> [4.07.2025].

⁶ “Since the program’s inception, Fulbright recipients have gone on to win 62 Nobel prizes, 96 Pulitzer Prizes and 17 Presidential Medals of Freedom. Eighty-two have been named MacArthur geniuses and 44 have become heads of state. C. S. Warren, “Senator Fulbright had a vision. His Successors Must See it Through”, *The Hill*, 21 June 2025, <https://thehill.com/opinion/international/5361173-fulbright-program-bipartisan-support/> [4.07.2025].

studied at the City College, where he later taught the history of education⁷. Duggan obtained his PhD from Columbia University, based on a dissertation, “The Eastern Question. A study in diplomacy”⁸. He is the author of an impressive number of articles on educational challenges in the interwar period⁹. Yet, his name is too often neglected or confused with his son’s – Laurence (1905–1948), a State Department official, who replaced his father as the director of the IIE in 1946¹⁰.

2. The origins of U.S. international exchanges

In the United States, international education in the form of exchange has been in existence since the mid-nineteenth century, as American students travelled to Europe to complete their degrees in European universities, most commonly in Germany¹¹. In 1867, the U.S. Office of Education within the Department of the Interior was established and soon became “a key player in the early development of international education policy, [which] has studied and reported on foreign education”¹². In the years immediately preceding World War I, the international exchange of academics was dominated by

⁷ Duggan, *A Professor at Large* (Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1943, reprint of 1972), 1–7; E. Contreras et al., *100 Years of IIE: A Century of Hope. A Future of Promise* (New York: Institute of International Education, 2019), 7, https://issuu.com/ullman_design/docs/iie_centennial_book [4.07.2025].

⁸ Duggan, *The Eastern Question. A study in diplomacy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1902).

⁹ His vision emerging from these was analysed in C. Brooks, “The apostle of internationalism: Stephen Duggan and the geopolitics of international education”, *Political Geography* 49 (2015): 64–73, DOI: 10.1016/j.polgeo.2015.05.007; see also: S. P. Duggan, “American Influence in World Education”, *Teachers College Record: the Voice of Scholarship in Education* 24/3 (May 1923): 1–2, DOI: 10.1177/016146812302400304. The IIE bestows the Stephen P. Duggan Award for Mutual Understanding to distinguished world leaders in the fields of government, education, and diplomacy in recognition of their lifetime of accomplishment and commitment to the causes that represent the underpinning of the Institute’s mission, <https://www.iie.org/about/awards/> [4.07.2025].

¹⁰ Laurence Duggan was accused (rightfully) of providing information to the Communists. By association, Stephen Duggan, a liberal internationalist, was under political suspicion (wrongfully) of being a sympathiser with communist Russia. H. Klehr, J. E. Haynes, “Harry Hopkins and Soviet Espionage”, *Intelligence and National Security* 29/6 (2014): 867–872, DOI: 10.1080/02684527.2014.913403; Brooks, “The apostle of internationalism”, 66, 69.

¹¹ Brooks, “The apostle of internationalism”, 64–73.

¹² Melati, 160.

leading universities such as Harvard and Columbia, which sent and received scholars mostly from Paris and Berlin¹³.

Initiating and developing frameworks for international exchanges is not unique to the Americans; since 1902, the University of Oxford (UK) has offered (Cecil) Rhodes Scholarships, initially enabling young people from the Commonwealth to undertake full-time postgraduate studies¹⁴. Cecil Rhodes, the South African magnate, provided a sufficient endowment to receive scholars from other countries, including the United States, to spend three years of study at Oxford. In 1925, Edward Harkness, an American millionaire aiming at reciprocity, funded the Commonwealth Fellowships for English students. By 1931, seventy-three fellows were studying in the research institutions and universities of the United States¹⁵. The early American models followed imperial Anglo-Saxon designs, intending to prepare cadres for U.S. leadership in world affairs.

Beyond the Anglosphere, the largest number of exchange students came to the U.S. from China. While international educational programs with the United States had existed since the 1870s, they intensified under the Boxer Indemnity Scholarship Programs. In 1908, the United States channelled the money that China had to pay following the Boxer Rebellion (1899–1901) into an educational fund. It was used for Chinese students to come to America. To prepare them for study in the U.S., China set up Tsinghua College in Beijing¹⁶. In 1925–1926 alone, there were 1,600 Chinese students who came to study in the U.S.¹⁷

While the process of organising international exchange was not new, the end of World War I marked a period of “astounding growth” in international academic exchange, with many American universities experimenting with

¹³ Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 61.

¹⁴ <https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/scholarships/history-of-the-rhodes-scholarship/>. One of them was William J. Fulbright (1925–1928). E. Brown, J. *William Fulbright. Advice and Dissent* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1985), 8–10.

¹⁵ Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 118–119.

¹⁶ Each year, approximately 400 students prepared for admission to an American University until World War II. R. B. Woods, “Fulbright Internationalism”, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 491 (May 1987), 24–25, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1045055>.

¹⁷ Melati, 182, cited from T. Brawner Bevis and C. J. Lucas, *International Students in American Colleges, and Universities: A History*, New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, 61. See also, Melati, 166–184.

programs to support student mobility¹⁸. The scope of international exchanges changed, though; due to anti-German sentiments, studying in Germany suffered a temporary blow. While in 1915, 25% of America's high schools offered German language classes, by 1919, only 1% continued to do so¹⁹. Other destinations for university-level education were gaining prominence.

America's second country-to-country exchange based on governmental funds was initiated by Herbert Hoover. In 1920, he established the Belgian American Educational Foundation on the basis of leftover relief funds of the Belgian Relief Commission. The fund covered the exchange of 762 Belgians and Americans during its 25 years of existence. By the outbreak of World War II, a quarter of the faculty at Belgian universities, one prime minister, and six cabinet members had studied in America²⁰.

In 1925, the Kosciuszko Foundation was established in New York thanks to the unwavering efforts of Stephen Mizwa (Stefan Mierzwa). It aimed to facilitate American-Polish exchanges and to train future leaders for Polish-American communities²¹. The same year, Germany established an organisation for administering educational exchanges – the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD). Almost a decade later, the British Council was established (1934)²². All in all, by 1925, more than 115 private organisations concerned with international education were established in the U.S.²³ 1925 presents itself as a particularly good year for international exchanges.

3. The Institute of International Education

The creation of the IIE fell into the period of “experimentation” in the history of U.S. international education²⁴. In the spring of 1917, Duggan met the

¹⁸ E. Contreras, Jr., “A Century of International Education: From Experimentation to Integration”, *IIE Networker* (Fall 2015): 22–23, <http://www.nxtbook.com/naylor/IIEB/IIEBo215/#/22> [4.07.2025].

¹⁹ Melati, 164.

²⁰ Woods, “Fulbright Internationalism”, 24–25.

²¹ *Reaching the Dream: The Kosciuszko Foundation and Its Polish Founder. Exhibition Catalogue*, ed. A. Rudek-Śmiechowska (Warka: Casimir Pulaski Museum, 2022).

²² Contreras, “A Century of International Education”, 22–23.

²³ Bevis and Lucas, cited by Melati, 163.

²⁴ Contreras, “A Century of International Education”, 22–23.

President of Columbia University, Nicholas Murray Butler²⁵. Butler was also the Director of the Division of Intercourse and Education of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. The Endowment planned a conference to consider various aspects of the question of war and peace, and Duggan, as “a man trained in international relations and functioning as an educator”, was invited to coordinate this effort²⁶. Following the armistice of November 1918, the Carnegie Endowment prepared a plan for an organisation which “should help develop goodwill between the American people and the citizens of other countries by promoting the study and understanding of our civilization and culture by them and of their civilization and culture by us”²⁷.

Besides Butler and Duggan (selected to direct this new organisation), a prominent role in establishing the IIE was played by Elihu Root. The latter served as the U.S. Secretary of War (1904–1909) and then as the Secretary of State (1905–1909) in the administration of President Theodore Roosevelt. From 1910 to 1925, he served as president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He helped to establish a solid network for the new Institute by bringing in his ties with government officials and the might of a major philanthropic organisation. “Using a borrowed typewriter, an old army desk, and second-hand filing cabinets which had been bought for two dollars each”, Duggan began his operations on 1 February 1919 from his New York office located near Columbia University²⁸. The formal commencement of the IIE occurred on 19 February 1919²⁹.

Initially, Duggan thought of an Institute of International Relations to study and disseminate information on conditions in foreign countries. Root decided it was “encroaching upon the domain of the State Department”, and, consequently, the focus was adjusted to international education. Eventually, the IIE became both a grant offering entity as well as a clearing house of information on study in the United States for foreign students, as well as

²⁵ Butler was the President of Columbia University from 1902 to 1945. He also served as the President of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace from 1925 to 1945. He received a Nobel Peace Prize in 1931 for his work to strengthen international law by means of international court that led to the expansion of the role of the international court at The Hague. Nicholas Murray Butler. Biographical. The Nobel Prize 1931, <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1931/butler/biographical/> [4.07.2025].

²⁶ Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 14–15.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 17–18.

²⁸ IIE, “Fortieth Anniversary Issue, 1919–1959”, *News Bulletin* 9/2 (February 1959), 5.

²⁹ Contreras et al., *100 Years of IIE*, 11.

study abroad opportunities for Americans, including fellowships awarded by private organisations not affiliated with the IIE. In short, the IIE became the central agency for coordinating American international exchanges.

As a non-governmental organisation, the IIE started with the support of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (est. 1910) as well as other philanthropic grants. In 1923, it was turned over to the Carnegie Corporation for funding. The Institute published pamphlets, guidebooks, and “News Bulletins” intended for both domestic and foreign audiences. It administered student fellowships, collected and publicised scholarship information, arranged lecture and debate tours, and planned itineraries for foreign professors and specialists, whether sponsored by the IIE or other organisations³⁰. The IIE also supported a network of international clubs scattered across the U.S.³¹ The Institute provided some eighty clubs, free of charge, with syllabi, bibliographies, books, magazines, and speakers so that “international goodwill may be realized”³². The IIE also brought visiting professors and international scholars to the United States to lecture. The number of visiting scholars grew over a decade from 10 in 1921 to 370 people in 1930³³. The IIE “News Bulletin” of November 1933 lists Albert Einstein among visiting foreign professors in the U.S.³⁴ The prestige of the Institute was boosted by the prominent Americans who sat on the Board of Trustees, among whom one finds the same people who advanced internationalist ideas in the inter-war period³⁵.

Duggan’s key job was to build networks with American universities and colleges as well as with government representatives of foreign countries to negotiate frameworks for international exchanges of faculties and students³⁶. Among the early exchange programs administered by the IIE were the American-Scandinavian Foundation Fellowship, Belgian Fellowship, French Government Fellowship, Society for American Fellowships in

³⁰ IIE, *News Bulletin* 9/2 (February 1959), 7.

³¹ Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 18, 67–68.

³² Duggan, “The Institute of International Education”, *Advocate of Peace through Justice* 83/4 (April 1921): 136–137.

³³ Contreras et al., *100 Years of IIE*, 13.

³⁴ IIE, *News Bulletin* 9/2 (November 1933), 8–9.

³⁵ Judge John Bassett Moore (formerly of the World Court); Henry Morgenthau, Sr. (formerly Ambassador to Turkey); Leo Baekeland (scientist), Virginia Gildersleeve (Dean of Barnard College). Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 83–84.

³⁶ Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 18.

French Universities, Amherst Memorial Fellowship, Kahn Foundation for Foreign Travel of American Teachers, and Pulitzer Scholarships. The IIE regularly published lists of foreign universities and individual departments accepting visiting scholars/students, as well as lists of visiting professors in the U.S., including information on who was available for guest lectures³⁷. Between 1928 and 1929, Duggan was also organising industrial and specialist exchanges in addition to academic mobilities. “At first, German youths, then Austrian, Czechoslovak, Polish, and Scandinavian students came to work in banks, commercial houses, and industrial firms. [...] In 1929, I established the IIE’s own Interamerican Department and planned a tour for 22 Argentine scholars to study the American educational, governmental, and industrial institutions”³⁸. By 1935, on its letterhead, the IIE advertised thirteen international fellowships³⁹.

Initially, Duggan envisioned the student exchanges only at a graduate level. To be eligible, any individual (man or woman) had to have at least a baccalaureate degree so as not to “become denationalized or expatriated”⁴⁰. The intent behind the mobilities was to train future leaders for government service, academia, or international business. It influenced the recruitment process. For the scholarships it awarded, the IIE retained the right to make the final decision based on recommendations from the committees, established both in the U.S. and abroad. In the U.S., the members of the committees were appointed by the IIE from among academics. As Duggan observed, due to governmental sponsorship of higher education, “the European and Latin American method [of selecting committee members], however, occasionally permits the infusion of political considerations at the source”⁴¹. The American system was immune to such pressures, and Duggan took pride

³⁷ IIE, *Bulletin for Administrative Authorities of Universities and Colleges* (New York: IIE, 1920).

³⁸ IIE, *News Bulletin* 9/2 (February 1959), 10.

³⁹ American Czechoslovak, Hungarian, Italian, Spanish, Swiss, and Latin American, Austro- and Franco-American student exchanges, American Field Service Fellowships for French Universities, Inc., American German student exchange, Inc., Germanistic Society of America, Inc., and Junior Year Abroad. Jessie Douglass (Secretary, IIE) to William J. Tonesk, 12 March 1935, Hoover Institution Archives (HIA), William J. Tonesk Papers, box 13, f. 4.

⁴⁰ Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 49.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 51.

in the fact. Starting in the academic year 1926/1927, the IIE began to offer scholarships for American undergraduate students to study abroad as well⁴².

The IIE's administrative operations depended on philanthropic support to manage fellowships and scholarships and to represent American colleges and universities in dealings with international partners⁴³. To a large extent, the cost of the exchange programs it managed was borne by the colleges and universities in the form of tuition waivers and reciprocity in underwriting the costs of supporting exchange students. The American schools paid for the visiting students, and the European and Latin American governments paid for the American students. Between 1919 and 1939, U.S. colleges and universities granted, through the Institute, more than 2,500 scholarships to foreign students, with a value of 1,970,000 USD (adjusted for inflation, the purchasing power would amount to 45,784,500 USD in 2025)⁴⁴. The number of Americans sent abroad was 2,357, with an estimated value of 917,040 USD (21,312,801 USD in 2025). Duggan explained this difference in exchange costs by the lower cost of living in almost all foreign countries and by the fact that tuition fees in foreign institutions were practically negligible⁴⁵.

The number of Americans studying abroad continued to grow, but the incoming students were soon met with a serious complication caused by the adoption of the immigration quota laws. While Duggan has been credited with successful lobbying for special non-immigrant student visas⁴⁶, all incoming students were obliged to "post a \$500 bond [in 1922, in 2025 this equals \$9,614] to assure that they would leave the U.S. when their studies were completed" and were obliged to provide "a statement from the college or university in which he is studying, certifying that he has completed the year's work and that he intends to continue his studies in that institution in the next year". The IIE worked with immigration authorities along similar

⁴² Contreras et al., *100 Years of IIE*, 14; IIE, *News Bulletin* 9/2 (February 1959), 7.

⁴³ Brooks, "The apostle of internationalism", 64.

⁴⁴ CPI Inflation Calculator, <https://www.in2013dollars.com/>.

⁴⁵ Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 48–50. Isaac Kandel gives a bigger total number of interwar mobilities under the auspices of the IIE between 1922 and 1944: 5,564. Among them, 3,197 were students coming to the U.S. He also adds an extra 512 students exchanged under special grants administered by the IIE. I. L. Kandel, *United States activities in international cultural relations* (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1945), 44.

⁴⁶ "The Life and Work of Edward R. Murrow", An archives exhibit, Tufts, Murrow at the IIE, 1932–1935, <https://exhibits.tufts.edu/spotlight/edward-r-murrow/feature/murrow-at-iie-1932-1935> [4.07.2025].

lines that remind one of the contemporary SEVIS registration scheme. The IIE accepted responsibility “for keeping track of such students so that the immigration official may be put into communication with them at any time”. It also assisted the immigration officials with verifying academic transcripts. “Some 6,500 students immediately took advantage of these new arrangements, and by the end of the 1920s, nearly 10,000 foreign students were enrolled in the colleges and universities of the United States”⁴⁷. The Quota Laws affected international exchanges in one more area. As the steamship companies were losing steerage class passengers, they were open to suggestions to offer reduced rates to students. Again, Duggan gets the credit for negotiating the arrangement for American students and teachers to get “third class” tickets, which were later called “tourist class”⁴⁸. European companies, like Gdynia-America Line, also offered rebates to exchange students⁴⁹.

Duggan was driven by “pragmatic idealism”, a term used by IIE historians as a will “to promote mutual understanding and goodwill among people of different nations”. From the contemporary vantage point, from its inception, the IIE served American public diplomacy as well as aided coordination and capacity building in international exchanges⁵⁰. Duggan’s internationalism can also be interpreted as an original “brand of cultural imperialism, alongside a desire to construct a peaceful and cosmopolitan globalist future”⁵¹. Since World War I, Duggan’s involvement with New York internationalists (businessmen, professors, and journalists) had been growing, and thus the IIE’s ties with the American elite shaped the internationalist discourse, despite the U.S. entering its isolationist period⁵².

⁴⁷ A. E. Goodman, President and CEO, IIE, “Open Doors and Secure Borders: U.S. Student Visa Policy in the post 9/11 World”, *Columbia International Affairs Online: Case Studies* (January 2006), <https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/casestudy/case005/case005.html> [4.07.2025].

⁴⁸ IIE, *News Bulletin* 9/2 (February 1959), 9.

⁴⁹ A. Mazurkiewicz, “Launching the Career of William J. Tonesk of Schenectady, New York. A Case Study in Polonia’s Support of Academic Development of Talented Youth in the 1930s”, *Polish American Studies* 81/2 (Autumn 2024), 53.

⁵⁰ Contreras et al., *100 Years of IIE*, 6.

⁵¹ Brooks, “The apostle of internationalism”, 65.

⁵² Paul Kellogg (editor of the *Survey*), Norman Hapgood (editor of *Harper’s Weekly*), Charles A. Beard (professor of history at Columbia University), Joseph Chamberlain (professor of public law at Columbia), and Charles Howland (New York lawyer). Contreras et al., *100 Years of IIE*, 8.

Consequently, Duggan was involved in the work leading to the creation of the Foreign Policy Association in 1921⁵³. The same year, his engagement in research in foreign affairs also led him to join the group that founded the Council on Foreign Relations, “probably the most influential foreign policy body outside of the U.S. State Department and, in those years, backed liberally by John D. Rockefeller Jr.”⁵⁴. Duggan was elected as one of the Directors and joined the Board to represent international education⁵⁵. Archibald Cary Coolidge, a Harvard professor in Eastern European history, founded *Foreign Affairs*, which has remained the leading magazine for in-depth analysis and debate of foreign policy, geopolitics, and international affairs ever since⁵⁶. Duggan was also a member of the Board of Trustees of the World Peace Foundation and involved in the work of the Williamstown Institute of Politics and the Institute of Pacific Relations⁵⁷. He was a man with access to many internationalist networks, well-acquainted with the leaders of the era. This transpired in the area of international education as he lobbied and negotiated exchange modules. In the context of linking the American international education agenda with the ethnic world, it is important to emphasise that Duggan also served on the board of the Kosciuszko Foundation⁵⁸.

During the late 1920s and early 1930s, it became increasingly difficult to carry out international educational programs. Because of the economic depression, American universities were not in a position to hire foreign scholars, and the available scholarship aid had to be given to American students. The growth of militarism abroad caused many Americans to question the value of exchanges with some countries. Despite international uneasiness and the widespread economic depression, “the IIE continued to believe that

⁵³ Duggan was the Secretary of the League of Free Nations Association, which was transformed into the Foreign Policy Association. Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 13, 28; Contreras et al., *100 Years of IIE*, 9.

⁵⁴ “The Life and Work of Edward R. Murrow”.

⁵⁵ The members of the Board included: lawyers: Frank Polk, John W. Davis, Paul Cravath, George W. Wickersham and Norman Davis; business leaders: Otto Kahn, Paul Warburg, Russell Leffingwell and Owen Young; and scholars: John H. Finley, Isaiah Bowman, Edwin F. Gay, Archibald Coolidge, and Whitney Shepardson. Hamilton Fish Armstrong was appointed Executive Director. Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 25.

⁵⁶ C. A. Manning, *A History of Slavic Studies in the United States* (Milwaukee, WI: The Marquette University Press, 1957), 26; see also: *Foreign Affairs*, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/about-foreign-affairs> [4.07.2025].

⁵⁷ Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 31–33.

⁵⁸ Mazurkiewicz, 53.

it existed to encourage cultural relations among nations regardless of their form of government and way of life”⁵⁹.

4. Building American expertise on East Central Europe

America’s entrance into World War I revealed America’s lack of information and expertise in Slavic affairs⁶⁰. Centred on the Western Hemisphere since the adoption of the Monroe Doctrine, in the pre-World War I period, the Americans saw little use for the study of the Slavic World. The early history of Slavic Studies in the United States is commonly connected with Coolidge, the founder of the Slavic program at Harvard⁶¹. The first courses in Russian and Polish history (branded as Northern Europe), as well as Russian literature, were offered between 1894 and 1896⁶². Coolidge delivered “A plea for the study of the history of northern Europe” during the conference of the American Historical Association in 1895⁶³. At the time, the academics were beginning to pay attention to the writings of American explorers such as George Kennan⁶⁴. These, however, remained a niche interest for the few. The Slavic nations of Europe remained mostly of interest to internal U.S. security agencies surveying and policing migrant diasporas. While the origins of Slavic studies are rooted in academic interest, the field grew significantly due to scholarly interactions with the world of U.S. diplomacy and the political needs of the era.

⁵⁹ IIE, *News Bulletin* 9/2 (February 1959), 10.

⁶⁰ Manning, 34.

⁶¹ Coolidge, a Harvard graduate (1887), was inspired by his studies in Germany (PhD), as well as service to the U.S. diplomatic posts to Russia (Acting Secretary at the Legation in St. Petersburg 1890–1891) and France (private secretary to the Minister, who happened to be his uncle, 1892). Manning, 26.

⁶² Manning, 26.

⁶³ H. B. Adams, “Report of Proceedings of Eleventh Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, 1895”, American Historical Association, website, <https://www.historians.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/1895-Annual-Meeting-Program-Report.pdf> [4.07.2025].

⁶⁴ “A highly acclaimed exposé” of the Siberian exile system in the series of articles published in the *Century* magazine was turned into a book published in 1891 that increased the American interest in Russia. Kennan’s works gained prominence, especially with the outbreak of the February Revolution in 1917. F. F. Travis, *George Kennan and the American-Russian relationship, 1865–1924* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1990), xiv.

At the time of the U.S. declaration of war on Germany in April 1917 and on Austria-Hungary in December 1917, Washington had no particular vision for the region under the reign of doomed European monarchies. The State Department had no separate division to deal with East Central Europe either⁶⁵. In September 1917, Edward M. House was tasked with assembling a group of experts, and busy as he was with his duties advising President Woodrow Wilson, he did not look far. He put his brother-in-law in charge; Sidney E. Mezes was the President of the College of the City of New York⁶⁶. As a philosopher of religion, Mezes “was a fine gentleman but was wholly unqualified to do this by training, experience, and temperament”, – assessed Stephen P. Duggan⁶⁷. Duggan, who taught at the City College, was prevented from working for this group due to his contracting influenza amidst the pandemic⁶⁸. Mezes was aided by Dr. Isaiah Bowman (Director of the American Geographical Society of New York) and Dr. James T. Shotwell (Professor of History at Columbia University). Upon Wilson’s request, Walter Lippman, by 1917 a 28-year-old Harvard graduate and an assistant to the Secretary of War, was tasked with secretarial duties⁶⁹.

This initiative set the “precedent for government employment of a group of scholars whose special talents were directed toward the shaping of American foreign policy”⁷⁰. The Council on Foreign Relations (est. 1921) which traces its origins in the work of The Inquiry, described it as “a working fellowship of distinguished scholars [...] gathered discreetly in the hideaway at 155 St. and Broadway in New York City, to assemble the data that they thought necessary to make the world safe for democracy”⁷¹. Shotwell, the Director

⁶⁵ A. Zorin, “American policy towards Czechoslovakia, 1918–1945”, in *Great Power Policies Towards Central Europe 1914–1945*, ed. A. Pihlman (Bristol, U.K.: E-International Relations Publishing, 2019), 107–128.

⁶⁶ Mezes was the Dean and President of the University of Texas before coming to NY. House’s son-in-law Gordon Auchincloss was the Assistant to the Counsellor of the State Department. Nepotism did not bother Wilson. L. E. Gelfand, *The Inquiry: American preparations for peace, 1917–1919* (New Haven, Ct: Yale University Press, 1963), 38.

⁶⁷ Duggan knew Mezes through his work at the City College of New York, and the Inquiry. Gelfand, 50, 83.

⁶⁸ Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 16.

⁶⁹ Gelfand, 38, 50.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, xi.

⁷¹ The original group of New York financiers and international lawyers was established in June 1918. It was headed by Elihu Root. It began with 108 members. “They wanted to convene dinner meetings to make contact with distinguished foreign visitors under

of Research who evaluated all reports, took the credit for calling the group The Inquiry, explaining that the name provided a blind spot to the general public but “would serve to identify it among the initiated”. The headquarters were located, innocently enough, at the New York City Public Library and were known only to the head librarian and one associate. In November 1917, The Inquiry headquarters were moved to larger offices at the American Geographical Society, of which Isaiah Bowman was the director⁷². Secrecy was supposed to prevent the scholars and experts from outside lobbying and interference. However, the work of The Inquiry was not concealed from London, or Paris as “reports and maps were freely exchanged”, and cooperation was maintained with the official preparatory commission⁷³. The scholars of The Inquiry relied upon the books, maps, and documents they could locate, principally in the Library of Congress and the Columbia University library⁷⁴.

The Inquiry was an autonomous administrative bureau responsible only to the President, but it was bound by strong ties to the State Department. About 30% of all reports were written by persons employed by the Department at home or abroad. Source materials were generally made available to the Inquiry scholars by the Secretary of State and his staff. The Inquiry dispatched agents overseas to procure desired information, and “arrangements were always peered through the State Department”⁷⁵. The Department of State under Secretary Robert Lansing was also working on recommendations for peace terms in “Eastern Europe”. In July 1917, Albert Putney, head of the State Department’s Near Eastern Division, was put in charge⁷⁶. At the Inquiry, the East Central European affairs were put under the care of Coolidge, the author of the “Origins of the Triple Alliance” (1915). The book earned him the acclaim of an expert on Central European affairs. The group he chaired was called the “Eastern European division comprising Russia and its European

conditions congenial to future commerce. The scholars of inquiry returning from Paris saw an opportunity. The diverse interests and egos of the two groups had a preliminary encounter in February 1921. In July a New York certificate of incorporation and CFR came into being”. P. Grose, *Continuing the Inquiry. The Council on Foreign Relations from 1921 to 1996* (New York: Council on Foreign relations: 2006), 1, 9.

⁷² Gelfand, 39–41.

⁷³ Ibid., 317.

⁷⁴ Grose, 3.

⁷⁵ Gelfand, 54.

⁷⁶ M. B. Biskupski, “Recreating Central Europe: The United States ‘Inquiry’ into the Future of Poland in 1918”, *The International History Review* 12/2 (May 1990): 260–261.

provinces”⁷⁷. After Coolidge’s departure to Europe in April 1918, his place was taken by a fellow Harvard scholar, Robert H. Lord⁷⁸. The Inquiry group was the first organised attempt at information collection, analysis, and planning, including on a regional basis.

This group of experts prepared recommendations for the American delegation, not all of which were accepted at the peace conference. Worse still, with the U.S. Senate’s rejection of the Treaty of Versailles, the momentum for building an American-informed presence in world affairs seemingly had passed. However, during the postwar years, many Americans were engaged in work in the Relief Administration, and Peace Commissions, and thus “drawn into the very vortex of the convulsions that agitated the Slav world from 1914 to 1924”⁷⁹. The Slavic Studies and international expertise, despite America entering the isolationist era, were not dead. The regional expertise was not lost. Internationally minded individuals continued their efforts via organisations such as the Council on Foreign Relations or the Foreign Policy Association⁸⁰.

In the meantime, courses related to the Slavic languages, literature, and history were gradually introduced on university campuses across the country⁸¹. During this time, Columbia University in New York emerged as an important hub for Slavic Studies. Much credit is due to John Dyneley Prince, a professor of Semitic languages, who also spoke Polish, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Turkish, and Hungarian. His early efforts to add courses in Russian and Slavonic [as the Slavic studies were commonly referred to at the time] philology were stalled by his departure to Europe to undertake diplomatic duties⁸². However, between 1909 and 1914, Russian, Polish, and Czech instructors were hired, and classes were offered in some twenty languages. In 1915, Prince organised the Slavonic Department, and two years later hired his eventual replacement, Clarence A. Manning, an expert in Russian literature

⁷⁷ Gelfand, 54.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 55.

⁷⁹ A. P. Coleman, “Slavonic Studies in the United States, 1918–1939”, *The Slavonic and East European Review* 17/50 (Jan. 1939): 372.

⁸⁰ Foreign Policy Association was established on the basis of League of Free Nations, an organisation created in 1918 to promote the League. Grose, 5–9.

⁸¹ Coleman, 372–388.

⁸² Prince was the U.S. ambassador in Copenhagen (1921–1926), and in Belgrade (1926–1933). Robert F. Byrnes, *A History of Russian and East European Studies* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1994), 201; Coleman, 383–384.

(PhD awarded by Columbia University in 1915) as a lecturer in Slavonic languages⁸³. Manning, an expert in Greek and Latin, grew interested in Russian during his travels in Europe (Bayard Cutting Fellowship)⁸⁴.

In 1923, the Department of State established a new Division of Eastern European Affairs, focused on Soviet Russia. From 1925, it was led by Robert F. Kelley, who worked on a program of regional training and specialised policy studies. Kelley had previously studied Russian history at Harvard and benefited from an international exchange to the Paris School of Oriental Languages, where he studied under Russian exiles⁸⁵. He worked on training his team as the professionalisation of the U.S. diplomatic service was underway. Following the Rogers Act (1924), gradually, a career in diplomacy also became more egalitarian⁸⁶. From this moment, the American Foreign Service was a “career organisation based on competitive organisation and merit promotion [...] In 1925, the Foreign Service School was founded to provide specialized training in languages and other necessary skills”⁸⁷.

However, in order to train, one needed both experts (academics or émigrés graduates of the Slavic Studies programs) as well as on-site cultural immersion in the region in which one wished to specialise. One way to address the latter need was to send new hires for an 18-month probationary term as consuls to U.S. diplomatic posts. Such was the career path for George F. Kennan⁸⁸. The other way was to take advantage of available

⁸³ Prince returned to Columbia in 1933 and retired in 1937. Manning was “a lecturer in Slavic languages from 1917 to 1921, an instructor from 1921 to 1924, an assistant professor from 1924 to 1935, an assistant professor of European languages, 1935–47, assistant professor of Slavic languages, 1947 to 1952, and then associate professor of Slavic languages” at Columbia University. He retired in 1958. Manning, 31; “Dr. Manning Dies, Slavic expert, 79”, *The New York Times*, 6 October 1972, 46, <https://www.nytimes.com/1972/10/06/archives/dgannindies-i-slavic-expert-79-columbia-language-teacher-wrote.html> [4.07.2025].

⁸⁴ William Bayard Cutting travelling Fellowships for 1914–1915, *Columbia Spectator* 57/164 (5 May 1914), 7. <https://spectatorarchive.library.columbia.edu/?a=d&d=cs19140505-01.1.7&> [4.07.2025].

⁸⁵ F. L. Propas, “Creating a Hard Line Toward Russia: The Training of State Department Soviet Experts, 1927–1937”, *Diplomatic History* 8/3 (Summer 1984): 209–226.

⁸⁶ J. R. Moskin, *American Statecraft. The Story of the U.S. Foreign Service* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, imprint of St. Martin's Press, 2013), 342–355.

⁸⁷ The Rogers Act, <https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/short-history/rogers> [4.07.2025].

⁸⁸ Propas, 213.

international exchanges, which was also a part of Kennan's training⁸⁹. Facilitating international exchanges for American trainees in Russia was impossible because of the breaking of diplomatic relations in December 1917. Thus, since the early 1920s, the academic training was conducted in Paris (and in the case of Kennan, in Berlin), while the diplomatic training was moved to the Baltic states (notably to Riga)⁹⁰. Only after the American-Russian (Soviet) relations were reinstated in November 1933, could young diplomats be dispatched to U.S. diplomatic posts in the USSR.

World War I and the Revolution in Russia introduced East Central Europe to the areas of American interest as a region that constituted a gateway to approach the changed geopolitical makeup of Europe. Before 1933, this was the region in which to gain expertise on Russia. Hence, the field of Slavic Studies in the U.S. grew significantly. Between 1934 and 1939, only two departments of Slavic languages, at Columbia and the University of California, Berkeley, awarded doctoral degrees in Slavic language and literature, and five in Slavic Studies. By 1935, "Columbia was offering the largest number of East European languages of any American or Canadian institutions" (Russian, Polish, Czech, Slovak, Serbo-Croatian, Romanian, Hungarian, and Albanian)⁹¹. In 1945, one of the faculty members specialising in Polish studies, Arthur P. Coleman, calculated that "there were 150 institutions of collegiate level which offer courses dealing with the East European area, 81 also present instruction in Russian, and 12 provide training in Polish"⁹². Between 1923 and 1940, a relatively large number of visiting students from East Central Europe and Russia came to the U.S, with the most intensive exchanges taking place in the academic year 1932 to 1933. At the time, the majority of students were coming from Russia (479 students). The largest number of students from Czechoslovakia arrived in the U.S. in the academic

⁸⁹ William Dawson, who taught George F. Kennan at the Foreign Service School (Department's training program), recommended a program for language training in Eastern Europe. J. L. Gaddis, *George F. Kennan, An American Life* (New York: Penguin Books, 2012), 44.

⁹⁰ Propas, 215–218.

⁹¹ M. J. Mikoś, "Polish Language and Literature at Columbia University in New York: Early History (1915–1948)", *The Polish Review* 61/3 (2016): 102–103.

⁹² Coleman, "The Teaching of Area Language Courses in the Field of Slavic and East European Studies. A Directory of U.S. Collegiate Institutions", *The American Slavic and East European Review* 4/1–2 (August 1945): 185–208.

year 1941/42 (127 students). The largest number from Poland came in the year 1930/31 (166 students)⁹³.

Another area of increasing American expertise was to engage with ethnic communities within the U.S. Partnership was the key to recruiting students for the Slavic programs at places like Columbia. What we now call “internationalisation at home” included integrating incoming students but also teachers and exiled scholars, to expand U.S. knowledge on East Central Europe. However, nothing could surpass the cultural immersion available via study abroad. To achieve linguistic fluency, cultural literacy, and to network – all required elements for building cadres for American presence in global affairs – spending time abroad was essential.

5. IIE exchanges to East Central Europe

There was only one IIE-administered exchange program in East Central Europe: Czechoslovakia. Duggan personally met Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk during the latter’s visit to the U.S. in 1918 and provided him with the opportunity to speak at meetings of various organisations⁹⁴. Tomáš Masaryk was married to an American citizen, Charlotte Garrigue, adding her last name to his. He had visited the U.S. a few times before World War I and lectured at the University of Chicago. He also had close ties with wealthy Chicago businessman Charles T. Crane, a major sponsor of Wilson’s presidential election campaign, a philanthropist, and patron of the University of Chicago’s Slavic Program. The association between the two men became very close, as Jan Masaryk, the President’s son, married Frances Leatherbee Crane (Charles T. Crane’s daughter). John Crane, son of Charles, became Masaryk’s secretary. Even more importantly, Crane’s older son, Richard T. Crane, became the first U.S. Minister to Prague⁹⁵. The connection becomes even more intertwined considering that Jan Masaryk was appointed the first Czechoslovak

⁹³ Some of „the Russians” listed here might have been ethnically non-Russian, some were definitely of Ukrainian ancestry, but the data collected makes it impossible to discern. J. Brožek, “European Slavs and Student Exchange with the United States”, *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* 29/3 (June 1943): 388, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40220450>.

⁹⁴ Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 14.

⁹⁵ Zorin, 108.

charge d'affaires to the U.S. in December 1919⁹⁶. Alice Masaryk, his sister, negotiated international exchanges directly with the Rockefeller Foundation for medical students from Czechoslovakia as early as 1920⁹⁷.

Lewis D. Einstein, Duggan's friend⁹⁸, who was the U.S. ambassador to Czechoslovakia from 1920–1930, gave Prague a central position, considering it a key location between the West and the East; "Here it was possible to maintain an overview of Central Europe: Czechoslovakia was the 'furthest point of Western democracy'"⁹⁹. The leaders of Czechoslovakia skilfully crafted the image of their young, successor state as a stronghold of order and stability. In the task, they were assisted by American academics, intellectuals, pacifists, and internationalists. Both Edvard Beneš and Tomáš Masaryk appeared on the pages of *Foreign Affairs*¹⁰⁰. The American presence in Prague was somewhat hampered by the behaviour of Einstein's wife, who, according to Duggan and the Colemans, publicly made comments not complementary of the Czech people¹⁰¹.

The U.S. was consistently among the largest Czechoslovak trading partners; however, the relationship was troubled by both countries' protectionist policies, and Czechoslovakia imposed quotas on American car imports and American cinematography¹⁰². Czech authors ascribe this to a growing national pride and the maturity of the interwar culture rather than anti-Americanism. Quite to the contrary, the sympathy towards the U.S. paralleled Francophilia, and President Wilson was commonly celebrated across the country¹⁰³. Duggan recalled his visit of 1925: "When I arrived from Dresden at the Wilson Station at Prague, it was a heartening sight for any American to see the fine statue of Woodrow Wilson opposite the station. All Czechs revere the memory of Wilson, who was one of the first statesmen to be won

⁹⁶ V. P. Polách, *Americký ústav v Československu (1931–1950) jako součást česko-amerických kulturních vazeb* (Praha: Nadace Nadání Josefa, Marie a Zdeňky Hlávkových, 2023), 19; Zorin, 113–114.

⁹⁷ Polách, 26; H. Parafianowicz, "Czechosłowacja w polityce Stanów Zjednoczonych po I wojnie światowej", *Białostockie Teki Historyczne* 4 (2006), 152.

⁹⁸ Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 268.

⁹⁹ M. Polišínská cited in: Polách, 20.

¹⁰⁰ Parafianowicz, 154.

¹⁰¹ Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 268; A. and M. Coleman, *Journey Into Another World, Part 1: First steps*, (Cheshire, CT: Privately Printed, 1974), 122.

¹⁰² Parafianowicz, 156; Polách, 21.

¹⁰³ Polách, 21.

over to the idea of a free Czechoslovakia”¹⁰⁴. For the young Americans, the city’s charm and vibrant cultural life were captivating. The Colemans called it: “Our Golden Prague”¹⁰⁵.

Prague’s location at “the crossroads of Europe”¹⁰⁶ was also important and attractive because of multiple opportunities to immerse foreign artists and intellectuals in “modernist dreaming”. From architecture to film, theatre, literature, music, or the visual arts, Prague emerged as “a fitting capital for the 20th century”¹⁰⁷. This, along with a stable political system and the economic growth of Czechoslovakia, provided for a smooth negotiation of the student and professor exchange framework. The Czechoslovak Ministry of Education (Ministerstvo školství a národní osvěty) agreed to underwrite the costs involved in hosting the American visitors.

Fellowships for studying in Czechoslovakia were organised under the name: American-Czechoslovak Student Exchange, and administered by the IIE, operating from its office in New York (2 West 45th Street). The American students could choose from several participating institutions: Charles University, University of Technological Sciences, Arts Academy, and Commercial College – all in Prague. There were also opportunities to study at the Masaryk University and the Institute of Technology at Brno (focus on Moravia), and various faculties at the Comenius University of Bratislava (focus on Slovakia)¹⁰⁸.

The first exchanges took place in 1922, with five students from Czechoslovakia arriving in the U.S. The following year, an equal number of Americans went to Czechoslovakia¹⁰⁹. Besides the exchanges coordinated by the IIE, there were also mobilities based on bilateral agreements signed by individual universities. In the academic year 1922–1923, 47 students from Czechoslovakia went to study in the U.S. In 1930–1931, 11 Americans came to Czechoslovakia,

¹⁰⁴ Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 267.

¹⁰⁵ M. Moore Coleman, *Journey into Another World, Part 2: Exploring that other world* (Cheshire, CT: Privately Printed, 1974), 155.

¹⁰⁶ A quote from Karl Capek introducing the Pen Club Congress in June 1938 in: D. Sayer, “From Prague, capital of the twentieth century”, *New Perspectives* Special Issue 26/2 (2018): 10.

¹⁰⁷ According to the author, the notion transpired throughout the 20th century. A part of Sayer’s 2013 book published in: *New Perspectives* Special Issue 26/2 (2018): 10.

¹⁰⁸ American Czechoslovak Student Exchange, Institute of International Education, Brochure, HIA, Tonesk Papers, box 4, f. 9.

¹⁰⁹ IIE, *News Bulletin* 9/2 (February 1959), 8.

and 10 Czechoslovak citizens left for study in the U.S., which amounted to one-sixth of the entire pool of students from Czechoslovakia in America that academic year¹¹⁰.

The student exchange with Czechoslovakia was the first established by the IIE with any foreign country, and “it wielded a fine influence from the beginning”¹¹¹. It was also the first program that offered a chance to study not just East Central Europe but, up to 1934, also Russia¹¹². It was only in 1934 that the IIE conducted the first Russian summer school¹¹³. The following year, however, it had already experienced problems with conducting planned events due to Communist meddling¹¹⁴.

Prague was important for that reason. In the early 1920s, the city became one of the key centres for Russian emigres, one of the important centres for the Russian academic diaspora. The popular mood in Prague was neatly described by Marion Coleman, who recalled that at the time of Lenin’s death in 1924, “one day the Stars and Stripes would fly from the Domuv [student centre] pole, the next day it would be the Hammer and Sickle”¹¹⁵. The Czechoslovak government extended assistance to the Russians as well as to international Slavic undertakings such as the London School of Slavonic and East European Studies. There were Russian schools, including a university and a separate Ukrainian university in exile. Faculties, institutes, and archives emerged in the city, which prompted the American plan to establish an American Institute in Prague specialising in Slavic Studies, with a special focus on the Russians. Lewis Einstein and Archibald Coolidge did not succeed in the opening of this Institute at first, despite having secured 10,000 USD for its initial operations in 1924 (188,916 USD in 2025)¹¹⁶. The attempts continued.

New York’s Columbia University led the way in organising exchanges with Czechoslovakia, often via contacts with individual Czech and Slovak

¹¹⁰ Polách, tables 2a, 2b, 27.

¹¹¹ Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 270.

¹¹² While in 1922 the IIE secured 15,000 USD [288,435 USD in 2025], to create a Russian student fund, mobilities to Russia were not possible due to the lack of diplomatic relations. E. Lisowski, “A Russian Summer School”, *The American Scholar* 3/2 (Spring 1934): 245; Contreras et al., *100 Years of IIE*, 16.

¹¹³ Lisowski, 245.

¹¹⁴ Brooks, “The apostle of internationalism”, 69.

¹¹⁵ A. and M. Coleman, *Journey into Another World. Part 1*, 62, citation: 114.

¹¹⁶ M. Filipowicz, *Emigranci i jankesi. O amerykańskich historykach Rosji* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2007), 52–53.

academics or politicians. Quite surprisingly, according to Marion Coleman, Vassar College (N.Y.) occupied a particular prominence in Czechoslovakia as well¹¹⁷. Dedicated to teaching young women, Vassar College was considered a prestigious school, but the fact that it had its own Central European Association of Vassar College Alumni, and since 1922, had conducted international exchanges with Czechoslovakia, was quite impressive. President of the College, Henry MacCracken, who sat on the boards of both the IIE and the Kosciuszko Foundation, was among the first Americans to speak at Prague University, in December 1922¹¹⁸. Duggan visited Prague in August 1925, and in October of that same year, Butler also came¹¹⁹. Their visits advanced the cooperation, but still did not result in the creation of an American Institute in Prague. When it finally came into being, after almost a decade-long process, Butler, Duggan, and MacCracken were named as honorary members.

The American Institute in Prague was formally established in April 1931, primarily for promoting student, academic, cultural, and technological exchanges. For the IIE, it served as a partner in administering mobility and taking care of Americans visiting Prague¹²⁰. It was directed by an American journalist, Brackett Lewis, concurrently serving as the director of the Prague YMCA¹²¹. By the early 1930s, the scholarship recipients were selected by the New York-based IIE, based on recommendations coming from the Czechoslovak Ministry of Education. The role of the American Institute was to represent the IIE in Czechoslovakia, extend daily care for the American fellows, organise summer schools of the Czech language, prepare Czechs and Slovaks for their departure for study in the U.S., and offer advice to the IIE. Its official headquarters were in the YMCA building¹²².

6. The IIE and the U.S. Government

Participants in the exchanges administered by the IIE were required to submit confidential reports of their stay abroad, one at the close of each semester.

¹¹⁷ A. and M. Coleman, *Journey into Another World. Part 1*, 98.

¹¹⁸ Polách, 26.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 32.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 29–30.

¹²¹ Ibid., 37; Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 270.

¹²² Polách, 39–41, 49.

These reports reflected not only the students' academic records at the university but also "the life of the community and public opinion on the current problems of the country". "It is largely from these reports that the Institute staff secures fairly unbiased information concerning conditions in the foreign countries"¹²³. The IIE was not just building expertise among exchange participants but was also gathering useful information of interest to the Department of State. Duggan acknowledged the link to the government: "Most of my relationships with the European countries, except Great Britain, have been with governmental officials. Most of them in the United States have been with private agencies. But naturally, anyone continuously engaged in international activities will sooner or later come into contact with the State Department"¹²⁴. Edward R. Murrow, who accepted the offer to serve as Assistant Director of the IIE in 1932, called the Institute: "sort of [an] unofficial embassy"¹²⁵.

The IIE was also a source of useful intelligence. Since the beginning of its operations, the IIE has collected data on all exchange participants, sharing some of it in the form of statistical data published in annual reports and student censuses. During World War II, in 1942, Duggan responded to the request of Herbert Lehman, as Director of the Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations in reoccupied territories. Lehman was "in great need of able men to go to North Africa". Duggan provided him with "the names of 27 who had studied in French universities, 14 of whom had taught in lycées in different parts of Algeria. This list was followed by the names and addresses of our former students, and comments as to their comparative competency for the work to be done. [...] we were asked to render a similar service to the Red Cross, the State Department, and the Office of Strategic Services of the War Department"¹²⁶. During World War II, the IIE granted unrestricted access to its files to the War Department, the Navy, and the FBI¹²⁷.

¹²³ Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 53.

¹²⁴ Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 37.

¹²⁵ "The Life and Work of Edward R. Murrow".

¹²⁶ Duggan, *A Professor at Large*, 87.

¹²⁷ During Murrow's term as head of the Board, the IIE repudiated the State Department's request to turn over scholarship applications of unsuccessful foreign candidates for the purpose of general information gathering by the State Department (March 1948). "The Life and Work of Edward R. Murrow".

Before World War II, the IIE was useful for coordinating, monitoring, and information-gathering activities as one way to identify, but also to counter the threat of Nazi and Fascist espionage and propaganda. Thus, the role of the Institute increased. The IIE worked with many foreign governments and foundations, so institutionally it was also of great use. Not all of the foreign scholarship administrators wanted to work with the IIE, though. Operating independently or not cooperating with the Institute was an unwelcome operation. The German case, again, seems to be particularly evident. In January 1939, the Department of State requested the German embassy to wrap up the operations of the New York Office of the German Student Exchange Agency, led by Dr. Rettig. In a circular letter addressed to German exchange students in the U.S. and Canada (1938–1939), Rettig had asked for political reports on the universities where they were placed. While Americans were doing the same via IIE, it was not part of the U.S. governmental operation and thus was rendered acceptable. The Department emphasised the role of the IIE as the clearing house for international exchanges: “a private American organization supported by private funds and having no relationship whatever with the American Government”¹²⁸.

Unsurprisingly, for the IIE, the country’s security interests came first. Work in strategic industries, research in security-related areas was monitored, also by domestic security services. This has not changed since World War I. However, at no time was there a mention of reviewing research agendas to ensure these matched the ideological position of the country’s incumbent administration. While the Department of State took a close note of the activities of the IIE since its founding, especially in the areas of sensitive programs such as the Russian student fund (1922) or the Jewish refugee scholars (1933–1935), it wasn’t until the merging of the IIE with the U.S. public diplomacy programs regarding Latin American countries that the bond became solid¹²⁹.

¹²⁸ James Clement Dunn (Adviser on Political Relations) to Acting Secretary of State, 9 January 1939, *Foreign Relations of the U.S., 1939, General, The British Commonwealth and Europe* Vol. 2 (Washington: GPO, 1956), doc. 550, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1939vol2/d550>.

¹²⁹ Contreras et al., *100 Years of IIE*, 17–18, 23; citation from: S. M. Halpern, “The Institute of International Education: A History”, PhD Thesis, Columbia University, 1969, University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1971, 146.

The embedding began in 1936 when Duggan worked with the State Department after the convention for the promotion of inter-American cultural relations, designed to counter Axis propaganda by stimulating North-South American friendship¹³⁰. As the Department of State established the Division of Cultural Relations in 1938, Duggan and IIE became its “key interlocutors”. The director of the IIE chaired the Advisory Committee established within the Division¹³¹. Duggan was also a member of the Executive Committee of the International Education and Cultural Relations of the American Council on Education¹³². The Advisory Committee recommended a greater role to be played by non-state actors in dealing with the Latin American audiences by “entrusting government projects to private administration”, as it “would arouse less suspicion of the political purposes behind government action”¹³³. Consequently, starting in the late 1930s, the IIE worked closely with the United States government developing student exchange programs. The connection continued and extended to other areas of the world after World War II. The IIE became an operating agency for the State Department in exchange activities, integrating both the public and private sectors¹³⁴. Thus, the state-private network emerged to advance American public diplomacy via international exchanges.

After World War II, the IIE remained the key contractor for the U.S. government to administer international exchange programs. The Ford Foundation became the Institute’s largest philanthropic supporter and, through it, funded strategic exchanges matching Ford’s ideas of global modernisation

¹³⁰ Halpern, 7; see also: Mazurkiewicz, *Uchodźcy polityczni z Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej w amerykańskiej polityce zimnowojennej* (Warszawa–Gdańsk: IPN, 2016), 41–42.

¹³¹ J. Dumont, M. Suzarte, “From ‘Mutual Understanding’ to Anti- Communist Propaganda? The Institute of International Education and Chile (1919–1961)” in *Educational Internationalism in the Cold War: Plural Visions, Global Experiences*, ed. D. Matasci, R. Ruppen Coutaz (New York, Routledge Studies in Modern European History, 2025). The Division of Cultural Relations at the Department of State was later renamed the Division of Science, Education, and Art, and by 1945 became the Division of Cultural Cooperation. Together with the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, it operated through private agencies in the fields of exchanging of students and professors, supporting cultural institutes, grants, expert service, libraries, translations, etc. Its scope was as wide as the U.S. Information Agency (est. 1953). Kandel, 85–87.

¹³² Kandel, 40–48.

¹³³ L. Bu, “Educational Exchange and Cultural Diplomacy in the Cold War”, *Journal of American Studies* 33/3 (1999): 393–415, <https://static.cambridge.org/content/id/urn:cambridge.org:id:article:S0021875899006167/resource/name/S002187589900616Xa.pdf> [4.07.2025].

¹³⁴ Halpern, 153–180; Bu, 393–415.

and progress. Not just incidentally, these also matched the American geopolitical Cold War agenda¹³⁵. Duggan left the IIE in 1946. The same year that the Fulbright program was initiated, based on governmental funds¹³⁶. Fulbright became the flagship program, officially recognised as a government-sponsored program (by the U.S. Congress), but often co-sponsored by the foreign governments participating in exchanges. Until recently, the autonomy of decision-making by the Fulbright Boards appointed by respective governments was not questioned.

7. The legacy of "internationalists"

During the Cold War, the IIE monitored and advertised international exchanges, tied to the country's government, for the sake of both reporting and monitoring, as well as guidance and administration. International exchanges became a tool of U.S. foreign policy, a psychological warfare mechanism. People who had served on the Boards of the IIE, Council on Foreign Relations, and Foreign Policy Association (like Whitney Shepardson, Hamilton Fish Armstrong, or Virginia Gildersleeve) during the Cold War were involved in shaping the U.S. soft power tools, such as the Free Europe Committee (part of American political warfare). Some, like the Dulles brothers, led U.S. diplomacy and intelligence, and Edward R. Murrow became the director of the United States Information Agency in 1961.

Based on previous studies examining the state-private network behind the Free Europe Committee (facilitating the U.S. government's indirect use of exiles for political warfare), the current study illuminates how, in an earlier period, the state-private network was already behind an effort to build up American expertise. However, the change in the nature of the state-private relationship was that some of the relationship was concealed from the public eye. During the Cold War, anti-Communism worked as a guiding rationale behind the government channelling money into private foundations, without proper acknowledgment, in order to advance the U.S. political

¹³⁵ Brooks, "The ignorance of the uneducated: Ford Foundation philanthropy, the IIE, and the geographies of educational exchange", *Journal of Historical Geography* 48 (2015): 36–46.

¹³⁶ O. Avramchuk, *Budując Republikę Ducha. Historia programu Fulbrighta w Polsce w latach 1945–2020* (Warszawa: PWN, 2024), 19–20.

agenda¹³⁷. The Big Three: Ford¹³⁸, Rockefeller¹³⁹, and Carnegie¹⁴⁰ effectively served as brokers between the government and private entities involved in implementing the American “soft power”.

Today, there seems to be an absence of any guiding ideological principle for U.S. international exchanges. Moreover, the governmental attitude changed significantly. According to Kristi Noem, Homeland Security Secretary, “it is a privilege, not a right, for universities to enrol foreign students and benefit from their higher tuition payments to help pad their multibillion-dollar endowments”¹⁴¹. Therefore, the attention has shifted to the economic value of foreign students in the U.S. Originally, advancing American presence globally was partially also intended to strengthen its economic ties, but monetising on the exchanges themselves, making business on foreign students, is a rather recent concept, causing much resentment among the native student population. Indeed, in the academic year 2023 to 2024, 1.1 million international students attended colleges and universities in the United States. This is four times the number of international students as in the academic year 1979. Within the same period, the total enrolment of American universities increased by 50%¹⁴². This causes concerns related to accessibility to higher education by American students. Regardless of conflicting interpretations of which student cohort is marked by wealth and privilege, the anti-foreign student component became part of the anti-immigration debate¹⁴³.

The public discourse oscillates between two positions. On the one hand, the universities “benefit from the economic growth, from income from tuition, from brain drain, and thus they are able to offer their alumni good jobs”, while on the other hand, in the popular narrative, “the Chinese students are

¹³⁷ Mazurkiewicz, *Uchodźcy polityczni*, 89, n. 307.

¹³⁸ Brooks, “The ignorance of the uneducated”, 36–46.

¹³⁹ L. Tournès, “The Rockefeller Foundation and the international funding of science (1920s–1950s)”, *Transatlantic Cultures* (April 2022), DOI: 10.35008/tracs-0266.

¹⁴⁰ J. Wegener, “Creating an ‘international mind’?: The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Europe, 1911–1940”, PhD Thesis, Florence: European University Institute, 2015, DOI: 10.2870/035326.

¹⁴¹ D. A Bell, “Don’t Let Trump’s Brutality Fool You. The Internationalism of America’s Schools Is a Real Issue”, *The New York Times*, 1 June 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/01/opinion/international-students-harvard-trump.html> [4.07.2025].

¹⁴² Bell, “Don’t Let Trump’s Brutality Fool You”.

¹⁴³ “Op-Letters from Readers: What International Students Bring to Campuses”, *The New York Times*, 14 June 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/14/opinion/foreign-student-college.html> [4.07.2025].

stealing the know-how”, and technological, STEM, and new technologies dominate, while humanities remain “in the back seat”¹⁴⁴. The philosophy behind the exchanges departed from Duggan’s “pragmatic idealism”. By focusing on financial gains, it also departed from the Cold War ideological grounds which relied on the IIE early years, including appreciation of the humanities¹⁴⁵. In the aftermath of World War II, the American cultural program to win “people’s minds” was rooted in the image of the United States as a beacon of freedom, including academic freedom. Today, as the American understanding of international and cultural exchanges has changed, a historical reflection on the origins of the idea could inform university administrators in their dealings with the government. While the country leaders must engage in training future cadres for foreign affairs to avoid sliding into parochialism, the universities must maintain international immersion programs to ensure quality and genuine engagement with peers. A century-old Duggan model seems to be in line with Lucia Brajkovic’s opinion published in the American Council on Education: to achieve success in global internationalisation, “institutional autonomy plus national support seems to be the key combination”¹⁴⁶.

Instead, in May 2025, the U.S. government proposed a cut of 691 million USD from the Educational and Cultural Exchanges. The reasons for the drastic cut were explained by the results of the Inspector General’s reports, which “have documented insufficient monitoring for fraud and inefficient, wasteful programming at the expense of U.S. taxpayers”. An additional explanation followed: “Foreign students receiving technical and high-demand training leave to take those skills overseas, including back to near-peer rivals, having

¹⁴⁴ Bell, “Don’t Let Trump’s Brutality Fool You”.

¹⁴⁵ “Poland at the close of the war must also use the university and its laboratories for purposes of industrialization. Its chief possession is its brains, and by using its brains it can become strong. But if it neglects the library and the humanities, it may, like Germany and Japan, lose its soul and “what doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul”. Q. Wright, O. Halecki, S. P. Duggan, A. Senn, “General Development of the Institute”, *Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America* 1/2 (1943): 230, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24725314>.

¹⁴⁶ L. Brajkovic, “A Winning Recipe for Successful Internationalization Worldwide”, *Higher Education Today* (American Council on Education), 25 October 2017, <https://www.higheredtoday.org/2017/10/25/winning-recipe-successful-internationalization-worldwide/> [4.07.2025].

deprived American students of places to acquire those skills. This program is no longer affordable”¹⁴⁷.

Concurrently, legislation proposals related to the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) contain a provision that raises concerns related to the autonomy of American study abroad programs. In a section related to the student loans, individuals “pursuing a course of study pursuant to a graduate fellowship approved by the Secretary” were subjected to the following rule:

The Secretary shall approve any course of study at a foreign university that is accepted for the completion of a recognized international fellowship program by the administrator of such a program. Requests for deferment of repayment of loans under this part by students engaged in graduate or postgraduate fellowship-supported study (such as pursuant to a Fulbright grant) outside the United States shall be approved until completion of the period of the fellowship¹⁴⁸.

The final version of the OBBBA, adopted by Congress on 3 July 2025, does not contain the provision from the Report of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives¹⁴⁹, but the sole idea that Americans who study abroad could be subject to governmental scrutiny as to the academic programs reflects contemporary threats to scholarly autonomy. Moreover, the tensions are elevated by the recent press enunciation of Fulbright scholars who were denied grants on the basis of research topics. According to *The New York Times*, topics eliminated by the Department of State included: “climate change, environmental resilience, migration, gender, race and ethnicity, and

¹⁴⁷ Russell T. Vought, Director, Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, to: Susan Collins, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate, 2 May 2025, Attachment: “Major Discretionary Funding Changes”, 2, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Fiscal-Year-2026-Discretionary-Budget-Request.pdf> [4.07.2025].

¹⁴⁸ Sec. 428. Federal Payments to Reduce Student Interest Costs, Special rule sec. 428 (b) Insurance Program Agreements to qualify loans for interest subsidies, (4) Special Rule “The Secretary shall approve any course of study at a foreign university that is accepted for the completion of a recognized international fellowship program by the administrator of such a program”, One Big Beautiful Bill Act, Report of the Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives [to accompany H.R. 1] together with minority views, 119th Congress, 1st session, HR, 20 May 2025, 291, <https://www.congress.gov/119/crpt/hrpt106/CRPT-119hrpt106-pt1.pdf> [4.07.2025].

¹⁴⁹ Statue at Large 139, Statue 72, Public Law no. 119-21, 4 July 2025, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/1/text> [4.09.2025].

homelessness”¹⁵⁰. While immigration control, public diplomacy components, or even information gathering, have been there for the past century, vetting the topics of research by politicians (in all disciplines) is quite unprecedented for the U.S.¹⁵¹ One retired senior Foreign Service Officer, and a former chair of the binational Fulbright commissions in Poland and Colombia commented: “Overriding merit-based selections. Subjecting scholars to unauthorized reviews. This isn’t how you lead the world. It’s how you lose it”¹⁵².

Conclusion

As of this writing, in July 2025, a hundred years after a pretty good year for international exchanges, the academic community both at home and abroad observes the unfolding events with astonishment, disbelief, and disappointment. American science and innovation can suffer from declining interest. 40% of U.S. Nobel Prize winners in Chemistry, Medicine, and Physics between 2000 and 2023 are immigrants¹⁵³. According to one estimate, “one-quarter (143 of 582, or 25%) of U.S. billion-dollar startup companies have a founder who came to America as an international student”¹⁵⁴.

Moreover, revisiting the origins of U.S. expertise building in a region previously largely unknown or ignored due to strategic irrelevance for the U.S. underscores the value of working with regional partners. Even in East Central Europe, a region traditionally favourably disposed towards the United States, the attitudes as well as the direction of research destinations can change¹⁵⁵.

¹⁵⁰ Wong, “Fulbright Board Resigns”; The resignation memorandum of 11 June 2025 is available at the channel by former Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board: FrmrFFSB <https://substack.com/inbox/post/165673358?r=17cemi> [4.07.2025].

¹⁵¹ This corresponds with domestic policies. See: Eliminating Teacher Quality Partnerships in “Major Discretionary Funding Changes”, 7.

¹⁵² Blum, “Letter to the Editor”.

¹⁵³ “Immigrants and Nobel Prizes: 1901–2023”, National Foundation for American Policy, Policy Brief, October 2023, <https://nfap.com/research/immigrants-and-nobel-prizes-1901-2023/> [3.07.2025].

¹⁵⁴ S. Anderson, “Most Billion-Dollar Startups In The U.S. Founded By Immigrants”, *Forbes*, 26 July 2022, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/stuartanderson/2022/07/26/most-us-billion-dollar-startups-have-an-immigrant-founder/> [4.07.2025].

¹⁵⁵ “American students consider staying in Europe due to political circumstances”, Czech Universities, 26 June 2025, <https://www.czechuniversities.com/article/american-students-consider-staying-in-europe-due-to-political-circumstances> [4.07.2025]; J. Rubin-

Restricting the free flow of ideas can be perceived as repressive, precisely what the academics and students sought respite from for four decades after World War II, and what they seek to defend at home¹⁵⁶.

Reminding us of the origins of America's international exchanges, with careful indication of all the weak points of the early efforts (imperial attitudes, nepotism, favouritism, and eventual giving in to governmental leadership), offers a valid insight into the role of international exchanges and universities as non-state actors. Steven Duggan's term as the Director of the IIE illustrates how non-state-led exchanges can become instruments of national influence and how easily their autonomy can erode. In the past century, the U.S. international exchanges became a globally respected and imitated model. Curtailing the autonomy of exchange programs on an ideological basis can reverberate globally and undermine trust in the U.S. educational diplomacy.

Lessons of the twentieth century, collected from Latin America and Asia, should inform the current administration that trade alone, and a unilateral profit-driven approach, may lead to the formation of unfavourable stereotypes¹⁵⁷. East Central Europe may be prone to becoming another world region disenchanted with American unilateralism at a time when global solidarity is needed more than ever. Universities can play a critical role in maintaining the goodwill and alliances based on cultural literacy and competence. Resilient international exchange programs, particularly with contested or strategically significant regions, can be aligned with broader national values beyond party ideologies. As policymakers debate the future of U.S. global engagement, Duggan's interwar efforts offer a compelling historical precedent and a strategic imperative for renewing America's commitment to international education based on the ideas of academic freedom and institutional autonomy. A simplified recommendation could be that the U.S. should double down on non-state-led international education diplomacy before its adversaries monopolise the global "soft power" stage.

-Sobolewska, "Myślałam, że złapałam Pana Boga za nogi i czeka mnie przygoda życia", TVN24 Biznes, 5 April 2025, <https://tvn24.pl/biznes/ze-swiata/usa-departament-stanu-usa-tymczasowo-wstrzymal-wydatki-na-programy-edukacyjne-miedzy-innymi-fulbright-st8380836> [4.07.2025].

¹⁵⁶ A. Rzhavkina, "Academics in eastern Europe warn of risks to academic freedom", Science Business, 7 September 2022, <https://sciencebusiness.net/widening/news/academics-eastern-europe-warn-risks-academic-freedom> [4.07.2025].

¹⁵⁷ W. J. Lederer, E. Burdick, *The Ugly American* (New York-London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999). First edition published in 1958.

References:

Sources

- [archives] Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, USA, William J. Tonesk Papers.
 [printed] *Foreign Relations of the U.S., 1939, General, The British Commonwealth and Europe* Vol. 2 (Washington: GPO, 1956).
 [online] www.whitehouse.gov; <https://www.congress.gov>; www.history.state.gov
 [periodicals]
 IIE, *Bulletin for Administrative Authorities of Universities and Colleges* (New York: IIE, 1920).
Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America 1/2 (1943).
Columbia Spectator (1914).
 IIE, *News Bulletin* (1959).

Publications

- “A Directory of U.S. Collegiate Institutions”, *The American Slavic and East European Review* 4/1–2 (August 1945).
 “American Influence in World Education”, *Teachers College Record: the Voice of Scholarship in Education* 24/3 (May 1923), DOI: 10.1177/016146812302400304.
 Anderson S., “Most Billion-Dollar Startups In The U.S. Founded By Immigrants”, *Forbes*, 26 July 2022.
 Avramchuk O., *Budując Republikę Ducha. Historia programu Fulbrighta w Polsce w latach 1945–2020* (Warszawa: PWN, 2024).
 Bell D. A., “Don’t Let Trump’s Brutality Fool You. The Internationalism of America’s Schools Is a Real Issue”, *The New York Times*, 1 June 2025.
 Biskupski M. B., “Recreating Central Europe: The United States ‘Inquiry’ into the Future of Poland in 1918”, *The International History Review* 12/2 (May 1990).
 Blum O., “Letter to the Editor”, *The New York Times*, 13 June 2025.
 Brajkovic L., “A Winning Recipe for Successful Internationalization Worldwide”, *Higher Education Today* (American Council on Education), 25 October 2017.
 Brawner Bevis T. and Lucas C. J., *International Students in American Colleges, and Universities: A History* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).
 Brooks, C., “The apostle of internationalism: Stephen Duggan and the geopolitics of international education”, *Political Geography* 49 (2015), DOI: 10.1016/j.pol-geo.2015.05.007.
 Brooks C., “The ignorance of the uneducated: Ford Foundation philanthropy, the IIE, and the geographies of educational exchange”, *Journal of Historical Geography* 48 (2015).
 Brown E., *J. William Fulbright. Advice and Dissent* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1985).

- Brožek J., "European Slavs and Student Exchange with the United States", *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* 29/3 (June 1943), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40220450>.
- Bu L., "Educational Exchange and Cultural Diplomacy in the Cold War", *Journal of American Studies* 33/3 (1999).
- Byrnes R. F., *A History of Russian and East European Studies* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1994).
- Coleman A. P., "Slavonic Studies in the United States, 1918–1939", *The Slavonic and East European Review* 17/50 (Jan. 1939).
- Coleman A.P., "The Teaching of Area Language Courses in the Field of Slavic and East European Studies.
- Coleman M., *Journey Into Another World, Part 1: First steps*, (Cheshire, CT: Privately Printed, 1974).
- Coleman M., *Journey into Another world, Part 2: Exploring that other world* (Cheshire, CT: Privately Printed, 1974).
- Contreras E., "A Century of International Education: From Experimentation to Integration", *IIE Networker* (Fall 2015).
- Contreras E. et al., *100 Years of IIE: A Century of Hope. A Future of Promise* (New York: Institute of International Education, 2019).
- Duggan S. P., *A Professor at Large* (Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1943, reprint of 1972).
- Duggan S., *The Eastern Question. A study in diplomacy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1902).
- Duggan S., "The Institute of International Education", *Advocate of Peace through Justice* 83/4 (April 1921).
- [Ed.] "Dr. Manning Dies, Slavic expert, 79", *The New York Times*, 6 October 1972.
- [Ed.] "Op-Letters from Readers: What International Students Bring to Campuses", *The New York Times*, 14 June 2025.
- Filipowicz M., *Emigranci i jankesi. O amerykańskich historykach Rosji* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2007).
- Gaddis J. L., *George F. Kennan, An American Life* (New York: Penguin Books, 2012).
- Gelfand L. E., *The Inquiry: American preparations for peace, 1917–1919* (New Haven, Ct: Yale University Press, 1963).
- Goodman A. E., President and CEO, IIE, "Open Doors and Secure Borders: U.S. Student Visa Policy in the post 9/11 World", *Columbia International Affairs Online: Case Studies* (January 2006).
- Grose P., *Continuing the Inquiry. The Council on Foreign Relations from 1921 to 1996* (New York: Council on Foreign relations: 2006).
- Halpern S. M., "The Institute of International Education: A History", PhD Thesis, Columbia University, 1969, University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1971.
- Kandel I. E., *United States activities in international cultural relations* (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1945).
- Kavi A., Wong, E., "Workers Forced to Leave Foreign Policy Center as Trump Presses Shutdown", *The New York Times*, 3 April 2025.

- Kavi A., "Judge Rules That Trump Administration Takeover of Institute of Peace Is Illegal", *The New York Times*, 19 May 2025.
- Klehr H., Haynes J. E., "Harry Hopkins and Soviet Espionage", *Intelligence and National Security* 29/6 (2014): 867–872, DOI: 10.1080/02684527.2014.913403.
- Lederer W. J., E. Burdick E., *The Ugly American* (New York–London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999).
- Lisowski E., "A Russian Summer School", *The American Scholar* 3/2 (Spring 1934).
- Manning C. A., *A History of Slavic Studies in the United States* (Milwaukee, WI: The Marquette University Press, 1957).
- Matasci D., Ruppen Coutaz R., eds., *Educational Internationalism in the Cold War: Plural Visions, Global Experiences*, ed. (New York, Routledge Studies in Modern European History, 2025).
- Mazurkiewicz A., "Launching the Career of William J. Tonesk of Schenectady, New York. A Case Study in Polonia's Support of Academic Development of Talented Youth in the 1930s", *Polish American Studies* 81/2 (Autumn 2024).
- Mazurkiewicz A., *Uchodźcy polityczni z Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej w amerykańskiej polityce zimnowojennej* (Warszawa–Gdańsk: IPN, 2016).
- Melati W. W., *History of Federal International Education Policy (1900–2024): A Four-Dimensional View in Action*, PhD Dissertation, West Virginia University, 2024, DOI: 10.33915/etd.12572.
- Mikoł M. J., "Polish Language and Literature at Columbia University in New York: Early History (1915–1948)", *The Polish Review* 61/3 (2016).
- Moskin J. R., *American Statecraft. The Story of the U.S. Foreign Service* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, imprint of St. Martin's Press, 2013).
- "Musk's Task Force Begins Shutting Down Foreign Policy Research Center", *The New York Times*, 2 April 2025.
- Parańianowicz H., "Czechosłowacja w polityce Stanów Zjednoczonych po I wojnie światowej", *Białostockie Teki Historyczne* 4 (2006).
- Piahanau A., ed., *Great Power Policies Towards Central Europe 1914–1945* (Bristol, U.K.: E-International Relations Publishing, 2019).
- Polách V. P., *Americký ústav v Československu (1931–1950) jako součást česko-amerických kulturních vazeb* (Praha: Nadace Nadání Josefa, Marie a Zdeňky Hlávkových, 2023).
- Propas F. L., "Creating a Hard Line Toward Russia: The Training of State Department Soviet Experts, 1927–1937", *Diplomatic History* 8/3 (Summer 1984).
- Rubin-Sobolewska J., "Myślałam, że złapałam Pana Boga za nogi i czeka mnie przygoda życia", TVN24 Biznes, 5 April 2025.
- Rudek-Śmiechowska A., ed., *Reaching the Dream: The Kosciuszko Foundation and Its Polish Founder. Exhibition Catalogue* (Warka: Casimir Pulaski Museum, 2022).
- Rzhevskina A., "Academics in eastern Europe warn of risks to academic freedom", *Science Business*, 7 September 2022.
- Sayer D., "From Prague, capital of the twentieth century", *New Perspectives Special Issue* 26/2 (2018).

- Tournès L., “The Rockefeller Foundation and the international funding of science (1920s–1950s)”, *Transatlantic Cultures* (April 2022), doi: 10.35008/tracs-0266.
- Travis F. F., *George Kennan and the American-Russian relationship, 1865–1924* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1990).
- Wang C., “International students have long been a policy tool for U.S. leaders”, *The Washington Post*, 20 July 2020.
- Warren C. S., “Senator Fulbright had a vision. His Successors Must See it Through”, *The Hill*, 21 June 2025.
- Wegener J., “Creating an ‘international mind’?: The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Europe, 1911–1940”, PhD Thesis, Florence: European University Institute, 2015, DOI: 10.2870/035326.
- Wong E., “Fulbright Board Resigns After Accusing Trump Aides of Political Interference”, *The New York Times*, 11 June 2025.
- Woods R. B., “Fulbright Internationalism”, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 491 (May 1987).

Internet websites

<https://www.czechuniversities.com>
<https://www.iie.org>
<https://exhibits.tufts.edu>
<https://www.foreignaffairs.com>
<https://substack.com>
<https://www.historians.org>
<https://www.in2013dollars.com/>
https://issuu.com/ullman_design/docs/iie_centennial_book
<https://nfap.com>
<https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/>
<https://sciencebusiness.net>
<https://www.nobelprize.org/>