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The Congress for Cultural Freedom, Minerva, and the quest for instituting "Science Studies" in the age of Cold War

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Abstract

The Congress for Cultural Freedom is remembered as a paramount example of the "cultural cold wars." In this paper, I discuss the ways in which this powerful transnational organization sought to promote "science studies" as a distinct and politically relevant area of expertise, and part of the CCF broader agenda to offer a renewed framework for liberalism. By means of its Study Groups, international conferences and its periodicals, such as Minerva, the Congress developed into an influential forum for examining the ways Big Science impacted the relations between science, society, and politics, thus constituting a semi-institutional niche for Science Studies before its professionalization within academia during the 1970s. I argue that the Congress contributed to the construction of public space in which the relations between science, society and politics were debated, and science was reconceptualized as a social activity. The vision of "science studies" the CCF-associated intellectuals promulgated was different from the science studies we know today. Yet, this alternative vision, in which the issues of science politics appeared inseparable from those of

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science policy, science organization, and science governance, constituted the 'pre-history' of science studies today. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)