Cultural Diplomacy

Summary

Cultural diplomacy designates a policy field, in which states seek to mobilize their cultural resources to achieve foreign policy goals. The nature of those goals, and of the cultural resources mobilized to achieve them, has been subject to historical change, and a range of terminology has been used to designate this kind of policymaking in different national and historical contexts. Nevertheless, the term cultural diplomacy is a viable one for designating this particular area of foreign policy, which is often understood as one component of a state's broader public diplomacy or, following Joseph Nye's terminology, its 'soft power.'

Cultural display and exchange have arguably always played a role in the relations between peoples. With the emergence of the modern state system in the early modern period, such display and exchange became an expression of formal diplomatic relations between courts, yet it is only in the nineteenth century that we see the emergence of cultural diplomacy in the sense it is understood today: it is no longer a matter of communication between rulers, but rather an expression of national identity directed at an international public. Throughout the nineteenth century, cultural diplomacy was closely associated with the rivalry of the Great Powers, particularly in the colonial context. However, following the end of the First World War, cultural diplomacy increasingly came to be understood as a means to pursue ideological competition, a trend that became central to the cultural diplomacy of the Cold War. Nevertheless, scholarship's focus on the cultural dimensions of the confrontation between the two Cold War superpowers has drawn attention away from other varieties of cultural diplomacy in the 'Third World' or 'Global South', which sought to establish forms of solidarity between post-colonial nations.

The post-Cold War world has been characterized by a shift in the rhetoric surrounding cultural diplomacy, which now frequently contains an economic dimension, as states compete for markets, investments, and attention in the context of neo-liberal globalization. Nevertheless, we also see a pluralization of strategies of cultural diplomacy, in which a range of actors tailor their approach to cultural foreign policy according to their own perceived position in a multi-polar world. Nevertheless, despite the continued popularity of cultural diplomacy in policymaking circles and the significant attention it has received from researchers in the twenty-first century, the assessment of the impact of cultural diplomacy remains a challenge.

Introduction: Defining Cultural Diplomacy

In their important 2015 article, Ien Ang, Yudhishthir Raj Isar and Phillip Mar identify a number of key issues relating to the study and analysis of cultural diplomacy. As the authors point out, one of the chief challenges in addressing this topic is one of definition. While cultural diplomacy has enjoyed a resurgence in academic and policymaker interest in the 2000s, 'there

is often a distinct lack of clarity in the way the notion is used, on exactly what its practice involves, on why it is important, or on how it works' (Ang, Isar, & Mar, 2015, p. 365). One widely cited definition of the term betrays some of this uncertainty:

> The concept of "cultural diplomacy," refers to the exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding. But "cultural diplomacy" can also be more of a one-way street than a two-way exchange, as when one nation concentrates its efforts on promoting the national language, explaining its policies and point of view, or "telling its story" to the rest of the world. (Cummings, 2009, p. 1)

This characterization of cultural diplomacy combines notions of an open-ended intercultural dialogue with an apparently more interest-driven communication of national policy to others. Patricia Goff's definition of cultural diplomacy, in contrast, implies a greater distance from state policy, framing cultural diplomacy as a means to mitigate negative perceptions created by higher-level politics. For Goff, '[c]ultural diplomacy is first and foremost about bridging differences and facilitating mutual understanding': it is able to 'tell another story about a country' that 'may be a story that differs from what official policy would imply' (Goff, 2013, p. 3).

As Simon Mark points out, however, cultural diplomacy has also been associated with more instrumental approaches, in which the deployment of cultural means (however defined) is subordinated to the pursuit of other policy goals (Mark, 2010, p. 64).

This absence of clarity about the scope and purpose of cultural diplomacy is further complicated by the lack of consensus in the literature and among practitioners about the constitutive 'cultural' elements of such policy: apart from the arts in the narrow sense, the

'cultural' in cultural diplomacy has been understood to include radio and television, exchange programmes and language education. Perhaps for this reason, some researchers feel on safer terrain sub-dividing the unwieldy sphere of culture into more specific areas of policy, such as 'arts diplomacy' (Grincheva, 2010), 'language diplomacy' (Chaubet, 2004), or 'exchange diplomacy' (Bettie, 2019), for example. A very wide definition of the cultural element in cultural diplomacy also blurs the boundary between this kind of activity and public diplomacy, a term used to describe all those means by which a state can seek to address and influence foreign populations. Here, Nicolas Cull's assertion that cultural diplomacy is simply one facet of the broader field of public diplomacy, alongside elements such as exchange diplomacy and broadcasting, has been influential (Cull, 2008a, 2008b, pp. 487–493).

Without a hard and fast definition of cultural diplomacy, some boosters of the term and its associated practices are led to dismiss the necessity for clarity, while also insisting on cultural diplomacy's long pedigree. So, for example, former US ambassador Cynthia P. Schneider has described cultural diplomacy as 'hard to define, but you'd know it if you saw it' (Schneider, 2006) while pointing to Thomas Jefferson's enthusiasm for the value of arts to diplomacy; published the following year, a report by UK thinktank Demos acknowledged that the term is 'not easily defined', yet cited historical precedents as early as 'the reciprocal gifts of arts and manufactures between the Doge of Venice and Kublai Khan' (Bound, Briggs, Holden, & Jones, 2007, pp. 15–16); in his study from 2017, Michael Krenn (2017, p. 2) has argued that attempts to 'patrol the intellectual border crossing between what is and what is not cultural diplomacy' get in the way of the investigation of a rich field which, in the case of the United States, he sees as reaching back to the late eighteenth century.

There are two complicating factors that appear to make a generally accepted definition of cultural diplomacy difficult. Firstly, despite the claims by some writers for the transhistorical and transcultural applicability of the term, it is far from universally used. In the Western world,

the colocation 'cultural diplomacy' was established in US policy by the late 1950s (e.g. International Educational Exchange Service, 1959), albeit with reference exclusively to exchange programmes and educational programmes. However, even in the American context some still preferred alternative forms of words, such as 'cultural policy abroad' (Frankel, 1965). Elsewhere, Japan has used the term, although with shifting meanings, since the 1930s (Huttunen, 2017). By the 1970s, cultural diplomacy was a label that had gained sufficient recognition in international organizations to be the subject of an extensive report published by the Council for Cultural Cooperation within the Council of Europe (Haigh, 1974).

Nevertheless, it is also clear that many states have continued to use different language to describe activities that, in other national contexts, would be placed under the umbrella of cultural diplomacy: the term 'exterior cultural action' (Raymond, 2000) remains in use in France, which has historically also adopted the notion of 'rayonnement culturelle' (cultural projection); Germany, by contrast, still prefers the expression 'auswärtige Kulturpolitik' (cultural foreign policy). Equally, the expression 'international cultural relations' is widely used elsewhere (Wyszomirski, Burgess, & Peila, 2003, p. 9), despite the fact that some commentators prefer to make a distinction between cultural diplomacy as a matter of state policy, on the one hand, and international cultural relations as the more organic development of culture interactions between nations, on the other (Arndt, 2005, p. xviii; Mitchell, 1986). In short, as Mariano Martín Zamorano observes, 'the definition of cultural diplomacy is almost as varied as the number of countries that claim to use it' (Zamorano, 2016, p. 169).

The second difficulty of definition arises from the nature of the portmanteau term 'cultural diplomacy' itself. Culture is already a highly complex notion, which has come to encompass a wide range of phenomena, from the high arts to the everyday habits and values of particular groups in human society (Eagleton, 2000). Yet neither is there consensus about the nature and purpose of diplomacy, nor about its legitimate actors (Murray, 2008, p. 24), even

assuming that cultural diplomacy can be understood as a direct contribution to the diplomatic enterprise and that the term 'diplomacy' is not being used in some more metaphorical sense.

On closer examination, we can also see that understandings of both culture and diplomacy have been subject to significant change over time, which has reflected the conditions of the societies in which these concepts have been used. Just as culture in contemporary society is no longer likely to be understood in relation to a narrow definition of high art, so diplomacy is no longer an exclusive dialogue between a 'club' of elite actors (Cooper, Heine, & Thakur, 2013, p. 23). In this sense, to attempt to define the term cultural diplomacy is to seek to understand the relationship between two moving targets.

Despite these challenges, it is nevertheless possible to observe empirically that many contemporary states have developed a raft of policy instruments and institutions that, while not always identical in every aspect, do share a family resemblance, to use Wittgenstein's term (1998, sec. 65). Educational exchanges, dissemination and promotion of cultural products abroad, exhibitions, language education, book translation, and a range of other mechanisms deemed by their originators to be broadly cultural are administered by recognizable (although, again, by no means identical) configurations of departments within foreign ministries, embassy personnel such as cultural attachés, cultural and language-teaching institutes, state-funded cultural institutions, and non-governmental cultural organizations in receipt of state funding. States refer to these activities either as 'cultural diplomacy' or by some recognizably cognate term (Wyszomirski et al., 2003). This activity is directed primarily at foreign as opposed to domestic national audiences.

While the policy priorities that motivate such behaviour may vary in detail, these commonalities point to the existence of a field of policymaking and practice that we can usefully identify as that of cultural diplomacy. Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's field theory, Geir Vestheim (2012) has sought to understand the field of cultural policy as a space in which a

range of actors enter into a negotiation over the definition of key values. In the case of the field of cultural policy in its domestic context, the subject of negotiation is the both the definition of what constitutes arts and culture, and also the value of arts and culture to policy as they play a role in national society. If we apply this model to the field of cultural diplomacy, however, we see that what is at stake is again the definition of culture and its value to policy, but in this case in the context of international relations rather than domestic politics.

From this point of view, the lack of a clear definition of cultural diplomacy that concerns Ang, Isar and Mar is in fact symptomatic of the ongoing negotiation of the policy field, to which the practitioners, policymakers, diplomats, thinktanks and academics cited above all contribute. Equally, we can observe historical continuity in the existence of this policy field over time, even if the terminology of cultural diplomacy has not been used in every historical context. The struggle to define a national culture suitable for serving foreign policy goals gives coherence to the field, even if the understanding of what that national culture consists of and how it might produce effects in terms of international relations has changed.

Such an understanding of cultural diplomacy as a policy field is compatible with a discursive approach to public policy in general and to cultural policy in particular. Here discourse is understood as shaping how actors think about and name a problem (Considine, 2005, p. 82). In other words, where actors of various kinds intervene in the field of cultural diplomacy, their discourse both constructs problems of culture in international relations in particular ways and frames solutions to these problems according to their own interests and ideological commitments. In this respect, the field of cultural diplomacy has similar characteristics to the field of domestic cultural policy. As Nicolás Barbieri suggests (2012, p. 16), '[p]olicy discourses on culture are the representations of those involved in formulating policies in terms of what they understand, adopt and promote as "culture". These discourses, he argues, 'are used as guides to action by defining the concepts and norms to be applied,

identifying the problems to be solved, developing the policy instruments to be used and framing the national policy discussion within a given policy arena.' As Barbieri suggests here, while different actors may frame problems and solutions differently within the field, they nevertheless operate with certain shared assumptions about the overall purpose and scope of the policy area. For example, Jens Adam (2018, p. 47) makes the case that actors in the field of cultural foreign policy are bound together by their framing of culture as an identity-giving national asset that can be mobilized to specific ends in an international context populated by other national cultural entities; this has remained the case even as new conceptualizations of the nature of the cultural have emerged.

Nevertheless, we can also observe that the discourse around the purpose and likely success of cultural policy in the international context is far from static and is even subject to trends sparked by the dissemination of novel paradigms, such as in the recent popularity of notion of 'soft power', as long as there are actors in the field whose interests are served by the adoption of such discourse. Furthermore, as the policy field in one national context struggles to articulate a viable response to changing global conditions, policy mimesis, in which apparently successful models are adopted from other states, is likely (Ahearne, 2018, p. 706).

A further advantage of this approach is that it resolves another of the definitional conundrums highlighted by commentators on cultural diplomacy, namely the question of whether the diplomacy element of cultural diplomacy is defined by the involvement of the state, or whether it can be carried out without reference to state policy, for example by civil society organizations or independent cultural institutions. According to Jessica Gienow-Hecht and Mark Donfried, for instance, the involvement of such actors raises the question of whether 'cultural diplomacy [is] really diplomacy at all' (Gienow-Hecht & Donfried, 2010, p. 14).

In diplomatic studies it is increasingly recognised that, in the contemporary context, non-state actors tend to 'complicate and diversify' diplomacy, even as the state remains the 'key actor' (Murray, Sharp, Wiseman, Criekemans, & Melissen, 2011, p. 712). Equally, if we see cultural diplomacy through the lens of cultural policy, following Vestheim's model of the field, we can see that, although the state has a central role in terms of its power to make policy and its ability to deploy resources, other actors seek to influence the definition of culture and its value to the nation state within the policy field. Over time, such actors may be co-opted to provide services to the state in the delivery of policy or become beneficiaries of state funding for some of their activities.

In light of the above, one of the keys task of the study of cultural diplomacy is to understand how and why this policy field has developed over time, in terms of the discourse that frames and makes sense of its practices, and in terms of the actors involved in the field and their inter-relationship. Rather than attempt to see cultural diplomacy as a stable phenomenon that reaches into the mists of historical time, it should be a central concern of the study of cultural diplomacy to show how the discursive construction of the policy field has been subject to shifts in understanding, both of the nature of culture and its value to policy, and how such shifts have been negotiated by a range of actors. This kind of work requires detailed historical investigation of specific national contexts and (increasingly) international contexts in which, for example, organizations like the EU seek to carve out a cultural diplomacy policy (Carta & Higgott, 2020). While such analysis is beyond the scope of this contribution, the following historical overview draws on existing research to point to broad trends in culture diplomacy since the late nineteenth, when we can identify the emergence of this policy field. Research carried out thus far, particularly by historians of international relations and cultural policy specialists, shows how changes in dominant conceptions of culture and developing

understandings of the nature of the international system have shaped discourses about the role of culture in international relations.

The Emergence of Cultural Diplomacy as a Policy Field

Although the emergence of cultural diplomacy as a policy field can be located in the later part of the nineteenth century, it is worth considering earlier intersections between diplomacy and culture in order to more clearly distinguish the novelty of cultural diplomacy as a practice and a policy field. Commentators on cultural diplomacy are surely right to point out that the exchange of cultural artefacts as gifts between sovereigns or the display of cultural achievements in order to demonstrate power, wealth and sophistication have a much longer history (e.g. Arndt, 2005, pp. 1–24). However, if we turn to the emergence of the modern state system in the early modern period, which saw the development of formalised and permanent diplomatic representation between states, we can observe a number of ways in which culture played a role in the management of international relations.

In terms of the direct contact between ambassadors and foreign rulers, for example, Ellen Welch has shown how spectacular theatrical performances at European courts, in which diplomats were audience members and sometimes participants, both served the function of displaying the wealth and power of the host and also gave allegorical expression to understandings of international relations (Welch, 2017, pp. 12–13). On a more practical level, ambassadors and other envoys played a significant role as cultural intermediaries sourcing cultural artefacts such as books and paintings to be sent back home (Levin, 2018, pp. 183–199; Um & Clark, 2016, p. 8). Gaining access to the work of foreign artists had significant power implications, given that, by the beginning of the seventeenth century, the authority of European princes relied in part on their achieving the status of 'promoters of cultural progress' able to

demonstrate connoisseurship (Auwers, 2013, p. 426). By the age of the Enlightenment, however, it was ambassadors themselves who could enhance their prestige as 'learned and cultured gentlemen of leisure' by acting as patrons to the learning and the arts (Mori, 2013, p. 183). While the professionalization of the diplomatic services in the nineteenth saw a decline in such behaviour, it also put an end to the appointment of 'men of letters' acting as diplomats on the grounds of their familiarity with the shared intellectual culture of European courts (Lane, 2014, p. 9).

What distinguishes these cultural dimensions to state diplomacy from the modern field of cultural diplomacy as it emerges in the nineteenth century, however, is their restriction to the interactions between political elites, and in particular between the courts of sovereigns. Culture was a means to represent and shape relationships, as well serving to display a ruler's prestige and claim authority, but the audience for such display was made up of other sovereigns and their courts. Welch notes, however, that by the time of the Congress of Vienna in 1815 cultural representation of international relations had begun to shift into the emerging public sphere, for example into the public theatres and into publications aimed at a general readership (Welch, 2017, p. 331).

This shift in culture's role from being a mediator of elite relations to more public forms of reflection on international affairs was amplified by the late nineteenth century by what Tobias Werron (2014, p. 63) has identified as a 'long-term trend toward public forms of competition' in international society, in which national communities and their political elites became increasingly conscious of an imagined global audience, in whose eyes prestige was judged against that of competitors. As Werron argues, advancing communications technology created 'a global media system […] that dramatically increased the possibilities of mutual observation between states and other agents' (2014, p. 67), so that nations became more acutely aware of how they appeared (or how they imagined they appeared) in the eyes of others. Culture

in this context was no longer merely a means by which princes and their emissaries could represent their relationships and enhance their prestige in the context of courtly diplomacy, but was rather a mirror in which the national community perceived its status relative to others.

It should be noted that deliberate reference is made here to the national community, rather than more narrowly to the state, as this development coincided with the emergence of modern forms of popular nationalism in which citizens were encouraged to concern themselves with and be sensitive to the power and prestige of the nation. By the last two decades of the nineteenth century, as the European Great Powers entered a second phase of intensified colonialism, this public pre-occupation could be seen in the formation of learned associations, public societies and philanthropic endeavours aimed at promoting overseas expansion and exploiting new territories and markets in the national interest (Stovall, 2015, pp. 209–210). Among such activists, and among governing elites, a view of international relations as characterized by a struggle for power prevailed (P. Kennedy, 1988, p. 252). However, this perception expressed itself not simply in the desire for access to markets and territory in purely economic terms, but primarily in the need for international prestige (Speitkamp, 2014, p. 35). It was in this context, too, that civil society organizations emerged intent on developing the cultural influence of nation abroad. However, as Gregory Paschadilis (2009, p. 279) has put it, we should not see nascent cultural diplomacy's coincidence 'with the age of neo-imperialism' as evidence that it was merely a tool of such imperialism, but rather acknowledge that, like the desire for overseas expansion, it was 'more related to the great European powers' nationalist aspirations and geopolitical rivalries.'

These new private organizations shared a range of interlocking motives. For example, the Alliance Française (founded in 1883), concerned itself initially with French language education as a means to more fully integrate France's colonial possessions in North Africa and to spread France's influence in the Middle East (Horne, 2017), yet these more straightforwardly

imperial goals were accompanied from the beginning by concerns to also conquer markets (Chaubet, 2004, p. 769). Similarly, the various 'foreign associations' (*Auslandsgesellschaften*) that emerged in Germany from around 1806 saw their function as the projection of German culture beyond the formal limits of Germany's relatively small overseas empire in order to gain political and economic influence (Kloosterhuis, 1994). A further concern, shared by both German organizations such as the Allgemeiner Deutscher Schulverein zur Erhaltung des Deutschtums im Auslande (General German School Association for the Conservation of Germanness Abroad, founded 1881) (Varga, 2013, p. 443) and the Italian Dante Alighieri Society (1889) (van Kessel, 2016, p. 39) was to maintain the cultural and linguistic identity of former citizens who had gone to live abroad as settler colonists. These motives overlapped in some cases with a concern for internal culture cohesion. For example, the founders of the Deutsche Akademie (1923), the forerunner of today's Goethe Institute, were at least initially as concerned within the promotion of a shared national culture at home as its projection overseas (Michels, 2005, p. 19). A further point of commonality between all of these organizations was the particular prominence given to defending and propagating the national language, which was symptomatic of a Romantic conception of national languages and, secondarily, their canonised national literatures as characteristic of the national 'soul' (van Kessel, 2016, p. 37).

While many such organizations remained private, there was nevertheless a trend towards the institutionalization of cultural diplomacy within foreign ministries, the earliest example being the French creation of a government agency with responsibility for coordinating French cultural and educational activities overseas in 1910 (Lane, 2014, pp. 12–13). During the First World War, the concern of the belligerent states turned towards propaganda of a more aggressive kind, and the emergence of fascist governments in the 1920s and 1930s, who aimed to use cultural institutions to spread propaganda abroad, led to shift in the nature of cultural

diplomacy: no longer only a vehicle for the projection of prestige in the context of an international system dominated by power rivalries, cultural diplomacy increasingly came to be regarded as a matter of ideological competition. The founding of the UK's British Council by the British Foreign Office in 1934 has been interpreted, for example, as a response to the rise of fascist influence in Europe (Paschalidis, 2009, p. 281), although concerns about the economic consequences of these rivals' cultural diplomacy seem to have played just as a significant a role (Michels, 2005, p. 127). Furthermore, it was the influence of cultural propaganda from Nazi Germany, and to a lesser extent from Italy and Japan, that motivated the United States to take cultural diplomacy seriously as a matter for the state, with the development of its Good Neighbour Policy in Latin America from 1933 (Krenn, 2017, pp. 56–60).

In the late nineteenth century, the colonizing Great Powers of Europe had all laid claim to be the primary representatives of civilization and progress in their dealings with the non-European world. However, they had implicitly understood other powers as their rivals for that pre-eminence, not as being outside of the bounds of a shared civilization. The advent of the First World War, however, saw the propagandistic framing of conflict in terms of an existential threat to one's own cultural identity: German intellectuals, for example, contrasted their nation's 'Kultur' to the degraded 'Zivilization' of its enemies (Trommler, 2014, pp. 195–202), whereas Germans' alleged love of killing and conquest was linked by British commentators to elements of German culture, such as the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche (Martin, 2003). An understanding of the enemy as a cultural threat, albeit in the broad sense of culture as a way of life, was also a feature of the Second World War (Iriye, 1997, p. 132). In the Cold War, however, the struggle for 'spiritual superiority' between the superpowers of the United States and the Soviet Union took centre stage, with both sides making an exclusive claim to the humanistic tradition and its values (Caute, 2003, pp. 3–4) and promising 'a definitive break

with the human tragedies of the past and exclusive access to universal happiness, social harmony, equality and freedom in the future' (Scott-Smith & Segal, 2012, p. 1).

In this context of 'ideological bipolarity' (Gould-Davies, 2003, p. 195), the cultures of the rival superpowers were also experienced as threats to the very identity of Western or Soviet society respectively, so that attempts at external cultural projection were often accompanied by worries about the influence of the enemy in the domestic sphere. Such concerns were not unjustified: although the superpowers still used cultural means 'to improve their relative power and position in areas not yet committed to either camp' (Gould-Davies, 2003, p. 196), for example in developing countries, and also focused considerable effort on maintaining their influence in countries already within their own blocs, their cultural diplomacy efforts also sought to weaken each other's population's commitment to their respective ideologies.

Cultural Diplomacy in the Cold War

The literature on the cultural Cold War is significant and ever-expanding, particularly in terms of its coverage of US policy, which has been extensively debated by scholars of international cultural history. Individual cultural forms, such as dance (Croft, 2015; Peterson MacDaniel, 2015; Prevots, 1994), music (Davenport, 2009; Fossler-Lussier, 2005), and visual art (Krenn, 2005), have all been the subject of major studies, and the institutional and political context of the policy relating to these and other aspects have been thoroughly documented, whether with specific reference to cultural diplomacy, or within the broader frame of public diplomacy. Rather than give a blow-by-blow historical account of the development of cultural diplomacy in the Cold War context, the following account will highlight key issues that emerge from these historical studies, many of which still have relevance for cultural diplomacy today.

The two superpowers were by no means newcomers to cultural diplomacy at the end of the Second World War. The pre-war USSR in particular understood culture as central to its revolutionary project, not only internally as a form of ideological persuasion and education cementing Bolshevik rule, but also in terms of the Soviet state's externally focused claim to be the heir and new representative of the European cultural tradition. As Katerina Clark (2011, pp. 1–30) has argued, by staking a claim to become the new leader of what was perceived as a 'world culture', the Soviet Union also insisted on its claim to global dominance, with cultural power framed as a necessary adjunct to emerging military and economic might.

Early Soviet cultural diplomacy focused particularly on cultural elites from the West, whose representatives were invited to visit the USSR, in the hope that it would be possible to win their admiration as externally verified proof of the superiority of Soviet culture and civilization (Barghoorn, 1960, Chapter 2; David-Fox, 2011, p. 25). Such cultural relations were managed by the All-Union Society for Cultural Ties (VOKS), founded in 1925, and its successor organization, the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Contacts (SSOD), from 1958. Within and beyond the cultural sphere, the USSR relied until the mid-1950s on front organizations either within the Soviet Union or internationally, including sympathetic fellow traveller groups in capitalist countries, to extol the virtues of the socialist system to foreign audiences. This led to a messaging that was both unilaterally propagandistic and lacking in a clear understanding of the expectations of the potential audience, particularly in the US (Magnúsdóttir, 2010, pp. 51–53).

The decade following the Second World War was marked by an intense distrust of cultural exchange between the two superpowers. While the US had hoped to use cultural relations as a means of strengthening the Grand Alliance with the Soviet Union in the war years, Stalin was motivated to immunise his own citizens as far as possible from contact with the West. On the US side, the growing McCarthyism of the early 1950s led to an outright

rejection of Soviet culture as inherently subversive of American values (Gould-Davies, 2003, pp. 197–198; Magnúsdóttir, 2019, p. 59).

The United States government was in comparison a late entrant into the field of cultural diplomacy: until the Good Neighbour Policy of the 1930s, it had allowed cultural relations to remain the preserve of civil society groups and charitable foundations (Krenn, 2017, pp. 54–56; Rietzler, 2011). In the context of efforts to roll back Soviet influence around the world in the post-war period, however, the US took steps to institutionalize its cultural diplomacy efforts, within the broader public diplomacy framework established by the founding of the United States Information (USIA) in 1953 (for a comprehensive history of USIA, see Cull, 2008b). The Voice of America broadcasting network, which also had its origins in the Second World War, became an important vehicle for the dissemination of American culture, and especially its popular music, beyond the Iron Curtain. Whereas the USSR continued to assert its superiority by focusing on aspects of high European culture, such as classical music performance (Tomoff, 2015), in which it could make a claim to out-perform the USA in terms of quality, the USA had a distinct advantage in terms of its status as the home of an increasingly globally dominant popular culture and an emergent youth culture. While the US initially focused on high culture in its own cultural diplomacy, by the latter stages of the Cold War, popular culture disseminated by the market played the most significant role in cementing US influence, as other nations engaged in a process of 'self-Americanization' (Stephan, 2006a, p. 78).

Despite the state's activism, the role of charitable foundations and independent private cultural organizations such as the Museum of Modern Art (Krenn, 2005, p. 19) or the Martha Graham Dance Company (Croft, 2015, Chapter 3; Prevots, 1994, pp. 45–52) continued to be highly significant for US cultural diplomacy, in contrast to the state control evident on the Soviet side. That said, there was a high degree of coordination between the US state and these

non-state actors, including in some cases covert funding to anti-communist cultural organizations in capitalist countries, which was funnelled through charitable foundations until embarrassing revelations in the early 1960s (Stonner Saunders, 2000). Researchers focusing on European responses to these initiatives have pointed to complex processes of cooperation, assimilation and resistance, with European intellectuals and ordinary consumers of culture responding to US cultural diplomacy, and US cultural imports more generally, in a variety of ways (Berghahn, 2001; Stephan, 2006b).

A key challenge facing both superpowers, however, was the question of how to gain access for their cultural output to each other's home territory. Following the death of Stalin, the Khrushchev era represented an opportunity for mutual exchange, with both sides willing to run the risk of allowing the other access to their own public sphere in exchange for the opportunity to exert influence. The 'Agreement Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on Exchanges in the Cultural, Technical, and Educational Fields' of January 1958, commonly known as the Lacy-Zarubin Agreement, covered (as its official title suggests) a wide range of exchange activity. Despite a later chilling of cultural relations during the 1970s under Brezhnev, various iterations of this agreement continued to provide the basis for artistic and educational exchange, which allowed Soviet citizens and US citizens the opportunity to visit exhibitions, performances and other cultural events showcasing the achievements of the other superpower, as well as gaining improved access to books and films (for a detailed overview, see Richmond, 2004).

Existing research on cultural diplomacy during the Cold War, and particularly in 1950s and 1960s, demonstrates the extent to which a neat division between external and domestic cultural policy needs to be questioned. In contrast to the Soviet Union, the appropriate form of American culture to be mobilized in the service of cultural diplomacy was at times the subject of considerable internal debate. As the nature and value of American culture continued to be

contested in domestic politics, cultural diplomacy could become a prism through which the struggle for the dominance of a particular understanding of that culture was refracted. The most famous and well-documented of these struggles related to the government-sponsored exhibition 'Advancing American Art' of 1946 (Krenn, 2005, pp. 52–66), which was designed to tour throughout Europe, including some of the states then coming under Soviet domination. This selection of modernist works was accused by conservative US congressmen of presenting a distorted and degraded view of America's culture and way of life, whereas its supporters argued that it was the challenging nature of some of the paintings that powerfully demonstrated the US's status as the home of freedom of expression. Overall, the latter argument eventually carried the day in US policy, although 'Advancing American Art' did fall victim to the initial backlash. In the case of fine art, abstract impressionism and other avant garde work that did not in fact represent the mainstream of American taste came to play an important role in the USA's cultural diplomacy, precisely because it provided a contrast with the repressive orthodoxies of the Soviet Union.

The difficulty of balancing domestic priorities with the effectiveness of cultural diplomacy was also evident in the role of cultural practitioners in US policy, an area that has attracted considerable attention from scholars. Well-known creative individuals, such as internationally known writers and musicians, had the potential to act as effective cultural ambassadors, but were also people with their own political standpoints, which were not always in harmony with the official position of the United States government or mainstream political opinion. This could lead to such paradoxical situations as, for example, when the playwright Arthur Miller becoming (involuntarily) a significant cultural asset for the US abroad at the same time as he faced political ostracism at home as a potential communist (Abrams, 2012). The case of Leonard Bernstein, as analysed by Jessica Gienow-Hecht, provides another example of the tension the US experienced between harnessing the star power of critical artists

and concerns about keeping such ambassadors on message (Gienow-Hecht, 2012, pp. 23–26). In the final analysis the mobilization of critical figures did reinforce the US's status as the home of cultural freedom, and, as Andrew J. Falk (2011, p. 211) observes of a range of less well-known progressive cultural figures who contributed to US cultural diplomacy efforts, the state ironically came to see them as a significant pool of creative talent that could be co-opted to the anti-communist struggle.

This does not imply, however, that the benefit was only on the side of government. Apart from the possibilities of employment, travel, and exposure to new audiences, artists and intellectuals co-opted to work in US cultural diplomacy programmes brought with them their own understandings of culture and its purpose in the international context. Gienow-Hecht's (1999) study of German émigré writers who returned to Germany in the post-war period to work on US-sponsored publications, for example, shows how these writers brought their own understandings of German culture to the enterprise and used their platform to promote the need for a dialogue between that culture and the US, rather than merely acting as a mouthpiece for American re-education of the German populace.

A good deal of attention has also been paid by scholars to the tensions between role of African American musicians (paradigmatically, Louis Armstrong) as both ambassadors for American culture and reminders of its poor record on racial equality (Davenport, 2009; Fossler-Lussier, 2005, Chapter 3; von Eschen, 2006). Even though black musicians like Armstrong largely refrained from publicly raising this issue when undertaking state-sponsored tours abroad, international audiences were only too aware of the civil rights struggle of the 1950s and 1960s. As Gary Rawnsley (2018) has recently argued, this points to a key issue with all varieties of public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy included: namely, that the state's actions at home and abroad speak much more loudly than its efforts at self-presentation via cultural

means. Indeed, where that self-presentation is perceived as being in contradiction with unpopular aspects of state policy, this may lead to accusations of hypocrisy.

The USSR was shorter on such internationally renowned stars, and there were also prominent cases of cultural figures defecting from the USSR and from the Soviet bloc more generally, most famously in the case of the ballet dancer Rudolf Nureyev in 1961 (Caute, 2003, pp. 483–489), which called into question the Soviet system's claims to superiority. At the same time, at least during the years of the post-Stalin thaw, the act of opening up to the West and encouraging more visitors to the Soviet Union pushed the state, as Gleb Tsipurksy (2017) argues, to develop its own new expressions of popular and youth culture at home, in the hope that the USSR could compete with the West for excitement and appeal without the supposedly damaging ideological baggage of these originally Western forms. However, it was ultimately for its excellence in longer established artistic forms, such as ballet, classical music and literary fiction that the USSR was best known to audiences in the West. Particularly among literary authors, it was a reputational problem for the Soviet Union and the communist world more widely that those authors that were celebrated in the West were precisely those who achieved dissident status, most famously in the case of Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who was deprived of his Soviet citizenship in 1974.

The overwhelming bulk of research in the field of cultural diplomacy has concentrated on the two Cold War superpowers, with a particular emphasis on the United States. Other countries within the two ideological blocs of the conflict, however, developed unique positions according to their perceived foreign policy priorities. A case in point is the United Kingdom, which, while an ally of the United States, was rapidly being eclipsed by it as a world power. In the early Cold War, when the UK was seeking to contain potential unrest in its colonies, its cultural diplomacy efforts chimed in with the overall anti-communist frame, while seeking to preserve its own global influence. For example, J. M. Lee (1998, p. 116) has argued that the

British identified communism primarily as a potential source of subversion among subject (or formerly subject) peoples. James Vaughan's research demonstrates that cultural diplomacy was seen as a means to counter the rise of Arab nationalism in the Middle East and draw Arab peoples towards the UK as a major Western power (Vaughan, 2005). Alice Byrne (2016) has shown how in India, which moved inevitably towards independence after the Second World War, British efforts at cultural diplomacy followed a comparable logic. While concerned at the potential impact of communist propaganda on the newly independent state, the UK hoped to maintain cultural ties in the face of the US's better-funded efforts and remain India's key partner in the West.

France provides another example of a post-war power seeking to manage the process of de-colonization is such a way as to maintain influence as a Western partner to post-colonial nations, as for example Jennifer M. Dueck (Dueck, 2010) shows in her study of the last decade of the French mandate in Syria and Lebanon. What distinguished the French position from the British, however, was a determination to preserve the predominance of the French language in France's former colonies, with *Francophonie* replacing the empire as a cultural space for French influence (Maack, 2001, pp. 81–82; Stovall, 2015, p. 402).

What all of this demonstrates is that states within the capitalist world who were aligned with the United States had to negotiate a distinct identity for themselves in their cultural diplomacy, which they believed would allow them to maintain advantageous cultural and, ultimately, economic relationships with others, even as they contributed to the overall anti-communist effort. We can see a very different form of self-distinction in the case of a neutral state like Sweden, on the other hand: it sought to create a cultural diplomacy niche for itself in the 1950s and 1960s by emphasising the role of its Swedish Institute as a voice of 'honesty and reason' that sought to overcome chauvinism and promote progress in international relations (Glover, 2011, pp. 59–60).

Apart from the emphasis in the existing scholarship on the US experience, researchers' interest in the communist world has tended to focus on the Soviet Union, leaving aside the question of whether the USSR's satellite states could develop a cultural diplomacy identity for themselves in pursuit of distinct national interests. Dean Vuletic (2012, p. 131) suggests that researchers need to pay more attention to cases where 'small states […] could […] act as a cultural force in their own right', although his analysis of Yugoslavian popular music as a cultural export is situated in the context of a state that had attained the status of a renegade in the communist bloc. Analysing the case of Hungary, by comparison, Anikó Macher (2010, p. 76) has argued that it remains an open question

> to what extent […] the people's democracies [were] exploited by the USSR and used as extensions to, or even substitutes for, Soviet diplomacy; or, conversely, to what extent were they developing hidden policies designed to promote their own national interests [.]

The answer to this question will undoubtedly be dependent on the nature of the state to be analysed, especially in terms of its pre-war cultural ties and the development of its relationship to Moscow over the length of the Cold War. For example, the case of the German Democratic Republic discussed by Christian Saehrendt (2017) shows how its cultural diplomacy efforts in Africa and the Middle East in the 1960s both served the Soviet Union's broader interest in gaining influence in these regions, and allowed East Germany to pursue its own foreign policy priorities in terms of gaining international recognition, which had been hampered by the Hallstein Doctrine promulgated by its West German rival. Furthermore, as Macher (2010, p. 95) notes, rivalries between Soviet bloc countries were a further factor, with individual socialist states at times competing with each other for the prestige of extensive Western cultural

exchanges. By the 1970s, Zsolt Nagy (2017, p. 302) has proposed, cultural relations as an aspect of foreign policy had gained a 'relative autonomy' from Moscow, yet there is certainly room for more research into the specific uses that individual socialist states were able to make of this opportunity.

The focus evident in existing scholarship on the US-Soviet cultural rivalry in the Cold War has also had the disadvantage of drawing attention away from other experiences of cultural diplomacy in what has variously been termed the 'Third World' or the 'Global South'. Broadly speaking, those states that had experienced European colonialism, albeit in different periods, and which were not integrated into the two post-war blocs are more often studied as recipients of cultural foreign policy than as originators of it. However, through processes such as the emergence of Non-Alignment Movement in the 1950s or the development of Pan-Arabism in the Middle East, culture became a vehicle for exchange and solidarity between states who sought an identity for themselves beyond the bipolar confrontation of the two superpowers. While the scholarship on the cultural dimensions of these relationships remains relatively limited, it does already point to alternative histories of dialogue and self-positioning by cultural means that complicate the narrative of the two-bloc cultural competition of the Cold War.

For example, in the context of the development of the Non-Aligned Movement (1961), whose beginnings are often associated with the Bandung Conference of 1955 (C. J. Lee, 2010), researchers have demonstrated the importance of Indonesia as a case study of a post-colonial nation that accepted the cultural overtures from the Soviet and the US side as a means to 'develo[p] flexible mutual relationships with both blocs' (Isabella, 2018, p. 95), while also pursuing its own programmes of culture exports to other post-colonial nations. In doing so, post-independence Indonesia asserted its status as an equal partner in 'a new, young and moving world' (Lindsay, 2012, p. 207). This was of particular importance, as Matthew Cohen

proposes (Cohen, 2019, p. 256), for a country 'burdened with Orientalist images' from the colonial era.

Among the other non-aligned countries, India was equally a state that invested significantly in cultural diplomacy, developing its own brand of cultural foreign policy that stressed internationalism and mutual exchange, rather than foregrounding the need for influence in the national self-interest. This 'internationalist idealism' (Isar, 2017, p. 706) was particularly marked by the influence of Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister and foreign minister, for whom the principle of free cultural exchange was closely tied to ideals of anti-imperialism and peaceful cooperation with other Asian nations (Mark, 2008, pp. 182–183).

In the Arab world, Gamal Abdel Nasser's Egypt sought to take advantage of its 'pronounced cultural and intellectual preeminence in the region' (Dawisha, 2016, p. 143) in order to promote pan-Arab solidarity, as well as encouraging anti-colonial sentiment across Africa (Brennan, 2010). While Nasser envisioned the achievement of Arab cultural unity through the pursuit of Egypt's own 'cultural supremacy' (Dawisha, 2016, p. 150), other Arab nations sought in the further course of the Cold War to contribute to such unity in a variety of different fields (Mermier, 2016).

The case of China in the early Cold War world also warrants further attention from the point of view of cultural diplomacy. Contemporary scholarship on Chinese cultural diplomacy has focused largely on China's activities in this sphere in the 21st century (e.g. Barr, 2011), with researchers showing particular interest in the Confucius Institutes programme (Hartig, 2016; Liu, 2019). However, relatively little attention has been paid to the People's Republic before the Cultural Revolution. Early Maoist China has often been perceived as culturally isolationist, as Emily Wilcox (2017, p. 519) notes. However, her own study (2017, pp. 219–220) demonstrates how China sought to engage with the Bandung movement and develop relationships of mutual cultural exchange with other Asian countries in a spirit of 'anti-

colonialist internationalism'. Earlier analysis by William E. Ratliff (1969) also shows how China promoted cultural exchange with Latin American countries at the time of the 'Great Leap Forward', offering itself as a model of modernization and encouraging anti-US sentiment in defiance of USSR's turn towards co-existence.

The cases outlined above add further layers of complexity to the function of cultural diplomacy in a Cold War world that cannot be reduced to the competition of two ideological blocs. Publications on the role of visual arts in exchanges among countries of the Non-Aligned Movement (Margarit, 2019; Moderna galerija Lublyana, 2019) and of biennials as forums for dialogue between nations of the 'Global South' (Gardner & Green, 2013) offer further intriguing insights into Cold War cultural diplomacy beyond bipolarity, which would be worthy of further investigation.

Cultural Diplomacy since the End of the Cold War

The end of the Cold War saw not only the disappearance of one of its superpowers in the dissolution of the Soviet Union, but also the abandonment of cultural diplomacy by the United States, which disbanded the USIA in 1999. There had always been American politicians who had been suspicious of state intervention in the cultural sphere, as the historical accounts by Cull (2008b), Arndt (2005) and Krenn (2017) testify; and with the disappearance of the US's Cold War rival, the most significant justification for the mobilization of culture in the context of foreign policy had evaporated. This turn away from public and cultural diplomacy in the US case was also of a piece with the more general mood of ideological triumphalism often associated with Francis Fukuyama's (1992) thesis on the 'end of history', which assumed that liberal capitalist democracy had proven itself to be the most successful model of social organization, towards which others would inevitably progress. Nevertheless, other voices

warned that, as globalization gathered pace, driven by the opening up of markets and the spread of new communications technology, cultural difference in the broad sense would become a key factor in new conflicts, superseding the previously dominant role of ideology (Huntington, 1996).

The 9/11 attacks on the United States appeared to give credence to this latter notion, forcing a re-consideration of the role of culture in communicating US positions to the wider world. For many Americans, a key question after 9/11 was to understand, as George W. Bush (2001) himself put it, why others appeared to 'hate' the United States. Alongside Bush's 'war on terror', attempts were made to counter these negative perceptions, including a touring exhibition of Joel Meyerowitz's Ground Zero photographs, which sought to develop sympathy for the US, particularly in Muslim countries (L. Kennedy, 2003). The danger here was of appearing openly propagandistic.

Responding to the ongoing decline of the US's image abroad in the wake of the invasion of Iraq in 2003, Congress authorized the creation of a new Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy to advise the Secretary of State. Its report subsequently declared cultural diplomacy to be the 'linchpin of public diplomacy' (U.S. Department of State, 2005). Rather than returning to Cold War paradigms of showcasing the cultural freedom of the US, this document emphasised that cultural exchange between peoples could have the function of sustaining dialogue and relationships, even where disagreements over policy in other areas might exist. If the US was to exercise its power in the world, there would always be those who would resent this, but this could be mitigated by cultural contacts that would allow others to feel positively about America even if they disapproved of particular foreign policy decisions. Importantly, however, the report argued that cultural diplomacy must be dialogue, not a one-way communication:

Listening is central to this effort. To practice effective cultural diplomacy, we must first listen to our counterparts in other lands, seeking common ground with curators and writers, filmmakers and theater directors, choreographers and educators—that is, with those who are engaged in exploring the universal values of truth and freedom. The quest for meaning is shared by everyone, and every culture has its own way of seeking to understand our walk in the sun. We must not imagine that our attempts to describe reality hold for everyone. (U.S. Department of State, 2005, p. 5)

Rather than a model of cultural diplomacy that seeks to generate admiration and perhaps imitation, the authors of this report therefore sought to reframe cultural diplomacy as a means to build mutual understanding and trust, based on the acknowledgement of cultural difference, in which culture in the sense of the arts and education is taken to express a unique worldview. Published in the same year, Jan Melissen's influential account of the 'new' public diplomacy adopted a similar position, emphasising dialogue, mutually and the building of trust rather than transparently self-interested messaging (Melissen, 2005, p. 21)

This approach implicitly acknowledges a shift in the discourse around the definition of culture in the field of cultural policy that had begun to take hold, as Frank Trommler (2014, p. 690) has pointed out, in the 1960s and 1970s in international organizations such as UNESCO and the European Council (on UNESCO, see Grinell, 2018). This view combined a broad understanding of culture as encompassing a much wider range of expression than the high culture of that dominated established cultural policy, an emphasis on the parity between cultures, and a conception of cultural exchange in the broadest sense as a means for dialogue and relationship-building. For example, in his report for the European Council in 1974, already cited above, Anthony Haigh (1974, p. 246) argued for an evolution of cultural diplomacy away

from a 'primitive' phase of cultural propaganda towards the ultimate goal of 'collective cultural cooperation' as a means to strengthen international relationships.

The discourse of cultural diplomacy as dialogue was not the only policy trend of the 2000s, however. As states came to terms with the increasing pace of globalization, the reframing of domestic cultural policy in terms of 'cultural industries' or 'creative industries' policy sought to offer solutions to a number of issues that particularly impacted Western countries. Whereas post-war traditions of domestic cultural policy had tended to focus on issues of quality and intrinsic value outside of market considerations, with a bias towards high culture (Bell & Oakley, 2015, p. 21), the inter-related phenomena of culture and creativity were now deemed relevant to wider sectors of the economy, from arts and leisure to commercial design and computer software (Flew, 2012; Hesmondhalgh, 2007). The United Kingdom is often cited as a pioneer of this kind of policy discourse (Bell & Oakley, 2015, pp. 27–31; Flew, 2012, pp. 9–32), which has nevertheless attained a global reach (see, for example, Wuwei, 2011) .

The attraction of the notion of creativity to post-industrial societies like Great Britain was threefold. Firstly, it promised a reinvigoration of economies whose productive capacity was increasingly outsourced into global supply chains, with negative consequences for domestic employment. In this context, engagement with culture (in the sense of the arts) was understood as a means of developing the kinds of creativity necessary to develop the new ideas and creative goods that would drive economic growth. Secondly, for citizens struggling to cope with the challenges of a rapidly changing globalized economy, artists and other 'creatives' were proposed as a model for innovation and adaptability; to the extent that, as Olly Mould (2018) has argued, no individual was exempt from providing 'creative' solutions to the economic challenges they faced. Indeed, engagement with the arts came to be seen as a pathway to social inclusion, which would develop the creative attitudes necessary to thrive in the new economy (Hewison, 2014, pp. 32–62). Thirdly, by projecting creative vibrancy abroad, a positive context

would be created for market expansion, inward investment, tourism and, therefore, economic prosperity.

Clearly, these three aspects were interlinked: only a creative workforce would be able to generate the national profile that would, in turn, make the nation and its products more attractive to others. In this way, cultural diplomacy was increasingly perceived by policymakers as a contribution to the development of a national 'brand' (Hurn, 2016; Iwabuchi, 2015; Varga, 2013; Zamorano, 2016, p. 173). The notion of the nation as brand was itself a response to the dynamics of neo-liberal globalization, in which 'competition states' (Cerny, 2010) began to perceive one of their key responsibilities as the development and maintenance of the international profile deemed necessary for economic 'attention' (Ham, 2010, p. 140).

In this same period, the notion of 'soft power' became an increasingly popular term for those trying to explain the purpose of cultural diplomacy. Coined by US international relations scholar Joseph S. Nye, who also advised the Obama administration, the term soft power relies on notions of attraction and influence to allow states to be able to set agendas in the international arena and shape others' preferences (Nye, 2004, 2011). Although the means to achieve this are not only cultural in Nye's account, since he regards the foreign policy of states and their political values as equally important elements of a nation's image, soft power is frequently cited as a framework for understanding the logic of cultural diplomacy, both by academics and in policymaking circles.

As we have seen above, the discourse around the field of cultural diplomacy has shifted considerably over time, from a preoccupation with national prestige in an international environment characterised by power rivalries, to a focus on ideological struggle, to a growing emphasis on culture as a means of dialogue and relationship-building among equals, to an economically instrumental approach. It would be tempting to see this as an evolution in which earlier paradigms are progressively superseded, but it is rather the case that today such

discourses have become sedimented in the policy field and can be drawn on by its various actors as a means to frame specific approaches to managing cultural relations with others. In many cases, as exemplified by a report for the British Council in 2013, policymakers, think tanks and cultural institutions are able to acknowledge that cultural diplomacy may serve a variety of purposes simultaneously, from peacebuilding and the fostering of international understanding, to the promotion of tourism and the expansion of trade (Holden, 2013, p. 33). The task then becomes to keep these various goals in balance.

At the same time, it must be acknowledged that the present moment is bearing witness to a pluralization of approaches to cultural diplomacy, depending on the particular priorities and contexts of individual states. So, for example, Germany has sought to balance the promotion of the national brand with the fostering of intercultural dialogue as a means to promote post-national values such as human rights and democracy in the world (Weigel, 2019, p. 21), whereas China has attempted to integrate cultural policy into its infrastructural investments, which seek to expand its economic and political power, both regionally and globally (Winter, 2019). In contrast, Qatar, a small but wealthy state, has invested in contemporary art at home and educational programmes abroad in order pursue a range of policy goals, combining its desire for international prestige with domestic concerns over the definition of Qatari identity (Eggeling, 2017). While the ideological divisions of the Cold War by no means led to uniformity in the cultural diplomacy of states in the capitalist and communist blocs, as shown above, they nevertheless provided a broad frame within which specific national interests could be expressed. The multi-polar world of the twenty-first century, however, sees considerable divergence in the priorities, approaches and discursive framing of cultural diplomacy, depending on the perceived needs of the states in question. This variety emerges in the context of the broader trends outlined above.

Assessing the Outcomes of Cultural Diplomacy

A major issue for research in cultural diplomacy lies in the assessment of its outcomes. In other words, to what extent can we talk about successful cultural diplomacy? Much of the evidence provided in the existing literature tends towards the anecdotal, suggesting how cultural diplomacy has apparently been effective in meeting policy goals in specific circumstances. So, for example, Yale Richmond (2004, p. 127) reports on the experience of a Russian cellist in the Cold War who was led to question Soviet ideology on the decadence of capitalism when he saw the quality of Western orchestras visiting the Soviet Union. Goff, by way of contrast, underlines the potential of culture to create shared understanding when she cites the example of a Chilean ambassador, who found

> himself faced with South African interlocutors with little knowledge of Chile, he built an event around the Chilean writer, Ariel Dorfman. Many South Africans were familiar with Dorfman, but unaware of his Chilean roots. A bridge was created, accentuating what Chileans and South Africans shared in common. (Goff, 2013, pp. 142–143)

Such individual experiences are not insignificant, but are also not obviously generalizable in such a way that it would be possible to establish a causal relationship between the claims made by actors in the field of cultural diplomacy and broader policy outcomes. Specifically, they do not allow us to understand what changes in behaviour, attitudes or beliefs were brought about for the individuals in question in the long-term: moments of connection, inspiration and cooperation can be observed; however, as Mark (2010, p. 63) points out, effects beyond the momentary are difficult to trace with any certainty.

Some commentators have dismissed the need for hard evidence of the efficacy of cultural diplomacy. For example, an early treatment of the issue in the 1960s by Charles Frankel, at that time Assistant Secretary of State in charge of education and culture in the US State Department, admitted that the link between any particular cultural activity abroad and policy outcomes remained 'dim', yet nevertheless persuasive based on his own experience (Frankel, 1965, pp. 87–88). This tends to make the assessment of cultural diplomacy outcomes more a matter of personal belief. Robert Albro (2015) has also pointed to what he calls 'folk theories' developed by cultural diplomats, that is to say justificatory structures of reasoning that apparently obviate the need to evidence the efficacy of policy. In light of such difficulties in assessing the outcomes of cultural diplomacy, Isar has written of cultural diplomacy as 'an overplayed hand' (Isar, 2009).

An additional difficulty in terms of judging the effectiveness of cultural diplomacy is evident when greater attention is paid to the work of creative individuals who become the agents of such policy. We have already seen above in relation to the Cold War that the ideological and professional motivations of US cultural figures who became involved in American cultural diplomacy did not align precisely with those of the state. In today's cultural diplomacy, in which many states rely increasingly on an arm's-length approach to cultural policy abroad, the institutions and individual creative personnel who benefit from the funding provided by government may understand their engagement in this activity in quite different terms. As Melissa Nisbett's work has shown (Nisbett, 2011, 2013), individual artists and employees of cultural institutions such as museums may value the artistic, professional or institutional goals that work in cultural diplomacy may allow them to achieve, while at the same time strategically adopting the policy discourse of the state. When assessing the outcomes of cultural diplomacy, it is therefore problematic to judge success only from the point-of-view

of policymakers. Rather, we need to acknowledge that other agendas will be in play (Clarke, 2016).

A further difficulty to be addressed in the contemporary context concerns the limitations placed on the influence of policy, when set against the backdrop of cultural globalization, driven by digital technologies. For instance, whereas the national cultural institutes of the twentieth century might have given interested audiences access to cultural products that were sometimes difficult or costly to access, for example by providing libraries of books or organizing showings of films, worldwide digital distribution of such material at relatively little cost potentially undermines the function of such intermediaries. Commercial media markets will, in fact, always outweigh the output curated by institutions of cultural diplomacy, especially in the case of the United States. This has lead both to optimistic accounts that suggest that commercial culture can do the work of cultural diplomacy (Fraser, 2003), but also to concerns about the negative images of the nation that are sometimes portrayed in media products destined for a global market (Bayles, 2014).

The digital age also brings challenges in terms of the shift from one-to-many communication to many-to-many communication (Castells, 2013, p. 55). Briefly, whereas the age of analogue media saw the power to produce and distribute cultural products in the hands of a relatively small number of gatekeepers, whether those were media corporations or state-funded cultural institutions, Web 2.0 technology allows anyone with an internet connection to access potentially large audiences. So, for example, anti-US feeling was stoked throughout Arab world in 2012 when a Los Angeles-based filmmaker produced an inflammatory 12-minute video called 'Innocence of Muslims' attacking Islam and posted it to Youtube (Bradshaw, 2012). While the US government was in no way responsible for the film, it was the American embassy in Cairo that was attacked as a consequence of the backlash.

Despite these questions about the measurability of the outcomes of cultural diplomacy and doubts about the state's ability to 'wield' (Ham, 2010, p. 54) culture in the context of contemporary globalization, nations show no signs of withdrawing from this policy field. One explanation for this, which has not yet been sufficiently explored by researchers, is that the process of self-definition and self-projection that is implicit in cultural diplomacy may serve other ends than simply the instrumental ones of influencing foreign publics, advantageous relations with others, or even selling the national brand. In this regard, it is notable that existing research on cultural diplomacy has produced few contributions that seek to engage with international relations theory (an exception here is Rivas, 2007, 2018). Over the last three decades constructivist approaches to international relations have become interested in the extent to which states seek recognition of their identities as particular kinds of (positively connoted) actors in the international system (e.g. Ringmar, 2002; Wendt, 1999, pp. 236–237), which has clear relevance to the question of cultural diplomacy.

Here we can potentially draw on the work of critics of Nye's conceptualization of soft power working within the discipline of international relations, who have argued that an actor's attempt to communicate a particular image of itself to others will bear the traces of its own socially constructed identity (Bukh, 2014; Mattern, 2005, p. 600). This would seem to provide a useful starting point for the consideration of the phenomenon of cultural diplomacy in more than simply instrumental terms: the argument would be that policy tells us about the kind of identity an actor seeks recognition for, even if outcomes are hard to assess (cf. Clarke, Cento Bull, & Deganutti, 2017). It is also potentially compatible with the broadly discursive approach to cultural diplomacy as a policy field outlined above, in that it should be possible to consider how the mobilization of particular policy discourses expresses the identity of states whose approaches to cultural diplomacy are becoming ever more differentiated in the contemporary world.

Conclusion

The study of cultural diplomacy remains a rich area of enquiry, covering a wide range of phenomena in a variety of historical and contemporary contexts. Ultimately, what allows us to regard these phenomena as belonging to a coherent policy field are the shifting discourses by which policymakers, practitioners and analysts of cultural diplomacy have sought to understand the benefits of defining and mobilizing culture, often defined in national terms, in the international arena. However, in the policymaking community and among practitioners, there is at times a tendency to promote cultural diplomacy's efficacy on the basis of relatively scant and often anecdotal evidence. Historical scholarship, by contrast, provides a wealth of detailed case studies, but does not always look beyond those case studies to make broader theoretical claims. In my own work (Clarke, 2016), I have noted the absence of engagement with the traditions of Culture Studies theory in the literature on cultural diplomacy. As such theory offers insights into the mediation and expression of identities through cultural consumption, it may be particularly useful for addressing audience responses to cultural diplomacy, but may also prove applicable to other actors in the field. As noted above, constructivist approaches to international relations are also promising in terms of their focus on states' quest for recognition of their identities in their dealings with others. The challenge for the study of cultural diplomacy, an inherently interdisciplinary endeavour, will be to develop more coherent theoretical models that can be applied to the historical data available and that will allow us to draw more robust conclusions about the multiple functions and effects of policy in this field.

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