CULTURAL DIPLOMACY AND CULTURAL RELATIONS
COLLABORATION/ DIVERSITY / DIALOGUE

KULTURNA DIPLOMATIJA I KULTURNI ODNOSI
SARADNJA / RAZNOLIKOST / DIJALOG

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edited by / urednice
Milena Dragićević Šešić, Raphaela Henze,
Ljiljana Rogač Mijatović

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INTRODUCTION

Milena Dragićević Šešić, Raphaela Henze,
Ljiljana Rogač Mijatović

Over the past decades changes within international relations have led to an interdependent world facing global challenges, with significant consequences on cultural diversity and peaceful relations among peoples. In the world of 'the complex interdependence' (Keohane; Nye, 2011), a fundamental way of perceiving the political reality has become culturally framed, while culture has taken a leading role in theoretical and practical consideration of political subjects and power relations. In many areas across the world, conflicts are developing rapidly, while at the same time, the need for strengthening collaborations is becoming obvious. Nevertheless, searching for cultural awareness at the political level might be somewhat of an ambitious task.

The field of cultural diplomacy as a practice and as an area for research and study continues to expand and shift focus, from the discourse of representative logic in international relations, towards collaborative logic in cultural policy and other cultural disciplines. This is of particular importance because cultural politics make salient issues of identity and expression, inclusion and exclusion, voice and silence, and the power of symbols (Singh, 2010: 2).

Cultural diplomacy is underpinned by cultural policy, using and sharing foreign policy strategies and instruments. In a traditional sense, cultural diplomacy is about representing national cultures abroad. However, the classic model of cultural diplomacy as an activity of a nation-state is rapidly developing and broadening in its scope, with new actors and approaches becoming more and more important in

the international arena. However, more scholars are emphasizing the necessity for cultural diplomacy to go beyond a national perspective, toward more cosmopolitan issues that will become significant in the Anthropocene era, advocating for "cultural relations and exchange (…) as critical contributions towards adapting to climate change" (Durrer & Henze, 2020: 16) and many other interrelated issues of contemporaneity.

What complicates the definition of cultural diplomacy is the fact that unlike in other areas of diplomacy, the state cannot do much without the support of nongovernmental actors such as artists, curators, teachers, lecturers, and students. The moment these actors enter the fray, the desires, the lines of policy, the targets, and the very definition of state interests become blurred and multiply. What is more, these actors frequently assume a responsibility and an agenda of their own, regardless of the program or organization to which they are assigned. While the degree of state involvement remains negotiable, the criteria of "state interest" – defined in the broadest possible terms and to the extent that informal actors likewise represent the state – remains stable' (Gienow-Hecht, 2013: 5).

The notion of cultural relations transgresses the exclusive position of states and their policies to focus on the interactions between societies and interactions among non-state groups. Thus, trends like fair collaboration, sustainability and decolonization appear foremost in the cultural relations field.

> 'The preferred mode of cultural relations is one that induces mutuality through exchange and co-operation. Whatever the relative political significance of any two countries, they will best succeed in their cultural relations if they operate according to this mode. If neither country assumes a position of superiority towards the other, and if they consider long-term understanding between them to be more important than short-term advantage.' (Mitchell, 2016: 88).

In the context of cultural relations, cultural exchange appears as a common way of interaction among states, societies, groups and individuals. In its ideal form, cultural exchange involves a balance of the reciprocal flow of symbols, artifacts, genres, rituals, or technologies between cultures. This is exemplified in the very definition of cultural diplomacy as "the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects

of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding' which '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, 2003:15).

However, it is highly relevant to refer to the imperial roots and notions, in which cultural exchanges occur in the context of unequal power relations. Multiplicities of power and constraints on agency complicate determinations of the voluntary nature of cultural exchange, thus the identification of "pure" cases of cultural exchange may be difficult insofar as intercultural communication occurs in contexts in which power imbalances are always relevant (Rogers, 2006: 495).

The book *Cultural Diplomacy and Cultural Relations: Collaboration/ Diversity / Dialogue* consists mainly of papers presented at the international scientific conference held at the University of Arts in Belgrade in 2022. This book offers an inter-disciplinary insight into reflections on the part of cultural policy that relates to the establishment of contemporary international cultural relations, from conceptual reflections to case studies that demonstrate the complexity of the concepts of cultural diplomacy and cultural relations, as well as their practices. The book addresses several questions, such as: How is cultural diplomacy understood and constructed in the contemporary context? How is cultural diplomacy perceived beyond the notions of soft power? Why are cultural representations of high significance for contemporary cultural diplomacies and cultural policies as such? Is culture an instrument in the promotion of foreign policy interests or is it a field that enables inter-social and inter-cultural connections at different levels? What are the possible strategies of identity politics in the context of cultural diplomacy representations?

Although the book might still look "Euro or Western-centric", it offers a critical approach to Eurocentrism and tries to shine a light on inequities or patronage in the processes of international collaboration, whether led by the Global North or initiated by the Global South to "please" investors and tourists. It identifies discrepancies between discourses and policy instruments through analysis of cultural diplomacy practices, it indicates contributions of new agencies such as social

networks, media, citizens or artistic collectives and artivism that are happening in a cultural counter-public realm (Dragićević Šešić, 2018) or within a sphere of cultural and creative industries. Thus, the book looks at issues that are absent in usual cultural diplomacy narratives and theories. The European worldview, based on a European cultural tradition, used to be instrumental in understanding and describing cultures of other continents, thus distorting and neglecting the values of Asian, African, Latino-American or any other culture. As Paul Ricoeur wrote:

> The fact that universal civilization has for a long time originated from the European centre has maintained the illusion that European culture was, in fact and by right, a universal culture. Its superiority over other civilizations seemed to provide the experimental verification of this postulate. (Ricoeur, 1965: 277)

Thus, this book would like to offer a small contribution to the concept of a pluriverse in international relations (Reiter, 2018), in order to contribute to more equity and fairness in international relations. It underlines the importance of the EU, both its narratives and policies, but also some of the individual EU country's practices (Austria, Spain…) and their cultural diplomacy efforts, taking into account that most of them consider foreign relations as their sovereign right. The countries of the Western Balkan and most specifically Serbia, considering the changed context of its global surroundings and specific actors that influence their ideas, values and narratives within foreign policy (Rogač Mijatović, 2011) deserved a specific attention in this book.

But, the scope of the book goes far beyond Europe, covering global topics of cultural diplomacy and fairness in international collaboration, from Quebec and Cuba in the Americas to China, Japan, Vietnam, Bangladesh from the Eastern hemisphere… And one of the pressing African concerns of decolonization is also addressed: the restitution of stolen heritage in the example of Benin.

The keynote lecture at the conference was given by Ambassador Dr. Emil Brix under the title: *From Vying for Values and Power towards Cultural Diplomacy as a Global "Common Good"*. Starting from the rise of conflicts in Europe and the world (focusing on the war in Ukraine),

the decline of democracies and the return of national identity politics on the international scene, he gave a precise framework for studying international relations and, more specifically, cultural diplomacy challenges at this very moment. This argumentation reminds us of those used in the book *Clash of Civilisations* by Samuel P. Huntington. Emil Brix showed how cultural diplomacy was used in a negative way, denying the right to a specific cultural identity to people and nations of the "Russian world". Showing that cultural diplomacy is a political instrument for telling stories about values and power, Emil Brix stresses its role in this multipolar world order, analyzing problems that are challenging the EU. Underlying this, all EU member states still believe that international relations are a matter of the nation states (competence of national government). Member states leave to the European Union only additional competencies in coordinating and uniting EU countries when they are working together in the field of culture and education with the countries outside the EU. At the same time, understanding cultural values as European but seen as universal, the EU allocates to itself the task of the transmission of "our" (universal/European) values to the rest of the world. It leads to certain clashes in establishing relations with China, Russia, or even the USA (i.e., the case of the death penalty). Thus, the idea of human rights based on cultural values, promoted within cultural diplomacy of the EU, is seen as controversial in numerous programs of international cultural cooperation. In the last part of this paper Emil Brix confirms that the role of states and nations is more and more limited as new agents are coming on the scene: which can be cities, regions, supranational organizations, or even NGOs, religions, and/or powerful individuals. Underlying that national actors still have an important role to play, limited to national narratives, it is clear that it is difficult to write a history book that would go beyond the national narrative among neighboring countries whether in the Balkans or EU. On the other side, he stresses the importance of companies that rule the internet, like Google or Facebook, showing to what extent globalization had not reduced the idea of identity but increased the need for separate identity building. Finally, this text stresses the importance of visibility of the national identity and national branding, especially for small countries. However, there is still a need to support the global common good through cultural diplomacy. Digitalization and climate change issues

might be those global common goods where cultural diplomacy can play a role, as well as a fair approach to cultural relations, preventing a "recolonisation in cultural relations" of the big countries, giving more relevance and visibility to the small ones.

Matina Magkou, Avril Joffe, Sudebi Thakurata, and Katelijn Verstraete, in their text *Exploring Fairness in Cultural Relations through the Lens of Dilemmas*, are debating power imbalances and continued domination of the so-called big countries, former colonial powers, as major challenges for cultural relations. They ask questions: Will fairness as a concept provide a more adequate framework for practicing cultural relations? What are the main dilemmas when putting fairness into practice? This paper is one of the side results of an action research project on fair collaboration in cultural relations that EUNIC (European Union National Institutes for Culture) commissioned in March 2021 from a team of six experts (text authors with Cristina Farinha and Anna Steinkamp) that resulted with the book *Not a toolkit! Fair collaboration in cultural relations: a reflAction* (providing concrete ideas, recommendations, and instruments to collaborate across borders in a fairer way). The whole research was based on a participative methodology and an iterated research process engaging both practitioners and EUNIC stakeholders inside and outside of Europe. The authors identified situations of unfairness and imbalances, asymmetries of power and resources that influence decision-making in different international cultural cooperation projects. They confronted the experiences of cultural relations operators when they practiced fairness in their projects, underlining numerous dilemmas that they faced when collaborating internationally. Each operator had to confront and reflect on their own positionality, bias, influences, purpose, and choices, but also key values that underpin the notion of fairness, such as ethics, human rights, mutuality, solidarity, equity, equality, sustainability, decolonization, inclusivity and care. Demonstrating that the cultural cooperation field became multidimensional, embracing complexity in itself (as three major forms of cultural diplomacy have different agents: state actors, non-state actors, people-to-people exchange; etc.) and focusing on EUNIC strategies and modalities of operation, the authors have shown to what extent the reflection on fairness marked an important step in putting a new form of cultural relations into practice. The authors studied different UNESCO, EU, and

national strategic texts that tried to rethink international collaboration, considering structural inequalities and cultural differences in relation to fairness, values of solidarity, equity, and conditions of fairness, the proposition of instruments towards fairer and unified arts ecosystem (with the concrete suggestion of a solidarity tax) as well as climate justice across the cultural community. The text has shown to what extent the Not a Toolkit tool tries to approach fairness in cultural relations by acknowledging inequalities and injustice not only in the past but in the current way of implementing international cultural projects. They have shown to what extent cultural operators have to acknowledge different positionalities and respect for each other – "having more 'ubuntu' in all that we do".

In his text, *Questions and Concepts toward a Blurred Future: A New Role for Culture?*, Serhan Ada discusses key issues that are facing contemporary men in this society of acceleration according to the German sociologist Hartmut Rosa: "unemployment, poverty, oblivion, and desocialization". All these pessimistic prognoses have been underlined during the pandemic but Ada discusses the issue of uncertainty, which came during an unprecedented state of confusion. The pandemic re-inversed some pictures of the rich and of the poor, of those who are giving or who are receiving help. Thus, Italy asking for help is the first picture that Ada is "showing" as this call was met with a wall of negative responses (Germany and Netherlands) while the most impoverished neighbor, Albania, was sending its doctors and nurses. For the first time, roles were re-inversed from south to the north. Ada discusses further limits to growth, and how growth was affecting the realm of the cities of culture (the creative city, the creative class), that "have exploited, sucked up, and depleted the resources produced by all the people living in those countries". Developmental visions should be closer to people, their beliefs, values, and needs, such as Agenda 21 for culture, the 2020 Rome Charter, or the culture summit in Izmir with the concept of circular culture. As the relevant cultural diplomacy tool, Ada quotes the *Declaration from Izmir Culture Summit*, a possible tool for development based on micropolitics, inviting "all cities and local governments to place culture at the center of local development, including the local achievement of the SDGs, the strategies on resilience and the plans on equity and the climate emergency…". This text is calling to radically rethink

values and to call into question the world system proposing a replacement of Nietzsche's *Will to Power* with the *Will to Thought*.

Ljiljana Simić, in her text *Construction of EU Narrative in External Cultural Relations*, discusses the construction and dissemination of the European Union's cosmopolitan narrative focusing on its development and its applications linked to cultural diplomacy and international cultural relations. Starting with the hypothesis that narratives give meaning to practices and experiences by mediating between the world of thoughts and the world of actions, Ljiljana Simić demonstrates how external cultural relations, values and the ideas embedded in them, are endorsing a desired narrative that could be expressed by the slogan *United in diversity*. It is also a narrative to unite as it appears on all official websites and in official rhetoric. At the same time, EU cultural diplomacy narratives represent values such as freedom of expression, human rights, the rule of law, and peace. Showing that every image has a memory, repeating former actions and expressions, Ljiljana Simić underlines that visual political communication plays a vital role in political rhetoric. She has identified five overarching narratives: EU as a peacekeeper, as a democratiser, as good neighborliness, as a security provider, and as a well-being entity. Discussing all controversies around national and EU identities, including European colonial memories, Ljiljana Simić claims that external EU cultural relations would help improve the decolonial narrative from a macro perspective with a new push to the EU narrative. This way, the new EU narrative might become more inclusive and closer to the *United in diversity* motto.

Aleksandra Krstić, in her text *Cultural Diplomacy from the Perspective of the Audiovisual Service of the European Commission*, presents an overview of the activities of this service. She starts with the hypothesis that the audio-visual service of the EC is one of the main tools of cultural diplomacy that is particularly active towards the Western Balkans countries and Serbia. The text analyzes the content of the video material published online on the EU Commission audio-visual service's website during 2021 (qualitative analysis). EU Commission is seen as the source of information and creator of media content. The accent is on how the Commission creates its own institutional image and a wider representation of the EU, and on how organizational and editorial aspects impact created media content in relation to the topic of cultural diplomacy.

Aleksandra Krstić presents a legal and institutional overview of the communication activities of the European Commission; analyzing the complex diplomatic activities of the EU and its communication strategies through specific EU institutions. Results show that the topic of cultural diplomacy is treated mostly protocolally. Most of the video materials on the EC's website relate to visits of high officials or ratification of agreements in-between the EU and different candidate states. The most important instruments are Brussels press conferences. Among the states that are the focus of attention were Bosnia and Herzegovina, Switzerland, Albania, and Turkey. The selection of countries depended on the visits of their officials. Apart from the purely protocolally representation of the European Commission, more as a political project than as a meeting place of different cultures, there is no original, innovative approach to this topic, nor an approach that, following all the strategies and regulations adopted by EU in the last 20 years would involve the media and citizens in implementation and promotion of activities in the field of cultural diplomacy and branding of the EU and culture; not only an important instrument of EU soft power but also a path of cooperation towards countries whose goal is a full EU membership.

Emilia Marić starts this second section – which looks more closely at the diverse cultural diplomacy initiatives undertaken by different countries or regions – with an examination of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative and the Confucius Institutes Network in her text *Chinese Cultural Relations and the Silk Road.* Through these initiatives, China is about to take a lead not only in cultural but also in heritage diplomacy for their own political and geopolitical interests particularly but not exclusively in Africa and South America. Marić makes clear that these cultural diplomacy initiatives, which are often accompanied by infrastructure investments, have the goal of changing existing power structures. That these initiatives are viewed with growing concerns, particularly from European organizations, becomes visible by an initiative of the German IFA e.V. (Institute for International Cultural Relations) that has recently launched a call for research into exactly these Chinese investments in South and Central America; since this is as well an area of (geopolitical) strategic interest. Interestingly the suspicion regarding these investments and initiatives is still relatively recent. When the first Confucius institutes were about to be established many

universities of reputation were eager to host one of the branches as early as possible. The enthusiasm seems to have faded and critical voices that were rarely heard before grow louder.

Thai Hoang Hanh Nguyen leads us into the important field of digital diplomacy whereby he understands digital diplomacy as all initiatives taken by a country to enhance and promote its image via diverse digital tools. In his text *Japan and Vietnam Cultural Exchange and the Application of Digital Diplomacy* he closely examines the digital initiatives taken by Japan with regard to Vietnam. Both countries seem to be united by skepticism towards China's expansion strategy. He provides concrete ideas of how such initiatives could be improved in order to reach out to a specific, in this case Vietnamese, population. That there is no one-size-fits-all solution in cultural diplomacy surely also applies in the digital realm.

Sarina Bakić also focuses on national cultural diplomacy that is driven by state-actors in her text on *Cultural Diplomacy between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina: Enhancing Culture of Peace, Trust and Dialogue.* State-actors unfortunately often neglect or ignore non-state actors and civil society initiatives that might be – for a variety of reasons – better suited to advance reconciliation processes because they have closer ties to the population and understand their various needs better. Sarina Bakić examines the cultural diplomacy policies of Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, countries that share a recent troubled past. While cultural diplomacy is mostly seen as part of the national diplomacy toolkit, initiates of regions and even cities to position themselves internationally are not equally considered in cultural diplomacy research.

Nina Sajić presents the case of Quebec, which is of particular importance given the specificity of language as exemplified in her text *Cultural (Para)Diplomacy of Federated Units: International Positioning of Quebec's Distinctiveness.* Despite this being a North-American example, it might serve well to also understand current debates in Spain or France and hopefully advance the necessary debate on the importance of language not only within cultural diplomacy and policy but also within cultural management. The importance of language as a component of what can be understood as cultural identity is too often marginalized and the potential of multilingualism is not always seen.

Esperá Donouvossi in his text *Restitution of Cultural Heritage: From a Claim to a New Cultural Strategy in Benin* starts by explaining the most

important international conventions and treaties that safeguard art-
works from illegal trafficking and that try to help the return of looted
artworks; despite being enacted after the colonial period and not being
retroactive. Furthermore, he also clarifies the exact origins of these
works in the Benin context. What might be unfamiliar to many in the
current debate on the so-called Benin bronzes, that can be found in arts
organizations, private collections as well as in churches in different
parts of the world (mainly Europe as well as the USA) and unfortunately
still on the black arts market, is that the kingdom of Benin, which the
British looted in 1897, is now part of Nigeria which is therefore in charge
of claims for restitution. Particularly Germany has had intensive discus-
sions with Nigerian representatives. At the beginning of 2023, German
representatives returned a multiplicity of artworks looted by the British
in what can be described as a well-staged ceremony that raised a lot of
(media) attention. The British Museum in contrast is still not willing
even to discuss the issue of restitution, which is unacceptable. The King-
dom of Danxomè was actually where the French army looted intricate
wood and ivory carvings as well as metalwork in 1892 and what is by
now the Republic of Benin (until 1975 known as Dahomey and from 1975
to 1990 as the People's Republic of Benin), neighboring Nigeria. Esperá
Donouvossi's text deals with the cultural strategy of this state, which
by now has around 12 million inhabitants, and has lost around 6.000
artworks according to UNESCO estimates; which have had a devastating
effect particularly but not exclusively on cultural identity. The cultural
policy strategy can be described as cultural diffusionism as it tends to
put in place instruments and mechanisms to enable cultural creation
and its diffusion as well as communication in order to build and con-
solidate the country's national and cultural identity and promote – as
we have seen throughout this book as very common – tourism. Despite
a variety of obstacles, among them funding, the restitution claims have,
according to Donouvossi, helped this process of setting up a concise
strategy for art, culture and heritage in the Republic of Benin.

Most countries in development have cultural diplomacy actions
aiming to raise their public image in the Global North, trying to enhance
the rise of investments but also tourism and specifically cultural tour-
ism. In their text *Cultural Diplomacy without Artistic Freedom? The Case
of the People's Republic of Bangladesh*, Zobaida Nasreen and Raphaela

Henze analyze this phenomenon in the example of Bangladesh, one of the Asian countries that has a fast-growing population but had also a traumatic experience in getting its own independence in 1971. This text explains, contextualizes and puts into question different public diplomacy initiatives that the People's Republic of Bangladesh implements inter alia through its embassies around the world and digital tools. The "Beautiful Bangladesh" campaign, realized through posters, videos, festivities, stamps, and websites, underlines cultural diversity as its most respective phenomenon. In an attractive manner, indigenous peoples are shown in their specific landscapes, dressed in national attire, although in reality, they are among the most vulnerable groups within the country (five million people belonging to 50 different groups speaking at least 35 different languages). The central part of the text is devoted to freedom of expression, showing to what extent the government represses any form of dissent, which even leads to a rebellion of the bloggers' community or to migration, especially of different ethnic and religious minorities. The authors further discuss to what extent artistic freedom is limited, how it is accused of insulting Islamic religious sentiments as well as freedom of sexual expression restricting those of non-binary genders. This text points out the dangers of misrepresentation and manipulation through cultural diplomacy tools that lead to a distorted "beautiful" image of the country with a repressive authoritarian system. The rise of tourism and foreign investments will further strengthen authoritarian governments and help to sustain the regime of deprivation of human rights. Zobaida Nasreen and Raphaela Henze therefore underline the importance of international stakeholders in safeguarding artistic freedom and in openly discussing contradictions between the image conveyed to the outside and the contrasting reality within the country.

Lea Jakob in her text *Cuba and Cultural Relations in Challenging Times: A Practice-Approach* reflects on the basics of international relations and how they can and should look like when dealing with a country like Cuba that is not only a country in crisis but also one that for a variety of reasons has a debatable approach towards artistic freedom amongst others. She elaborates on how music has been used as a cultural ambassador for Cuba for many years thus leading to stereotypes that until this very day generate interest as well as income e.g. through

tourism and the willingness of Western organizations to promote what is widely accepted as "original" Cuban music. This leads to the valid question of how international collaborations have to be designed and how audiences need to change in order to allow Cuban artists to move ahead in their artistic endeavors that go far beyond Mambo and Buena Vista Social Club.

Ana Milosavljević also puts music as a universal language in the focus of her research and investigates *Music Festivals in Spain and Their Role in Spanish Cultural Diplomacy*. This text falls in line with the fast-growing field of research into music festivals and adds the important facet of their use as a cultural diplomacy tool. Particularly due to the long history and huge variety of music festivals in Spain and their successful export to other countries – as can be seen by the Sonar Festival – they are supported by the government in order to promote intercul-turalism, openness, and tolerance to important stakeholders such as tourists. Ana Milosavljević considers Spain as a good practice example for other countries that could also use their music tradition for cultural diplomacy purposes; for example Serbia.

The third part of the book is devoted to different forms of Serbian and Yugoslavian cultural relations in different historical periods.

In his text: *On the Effectiveness of Cultural Diplomacy*, Darko Tanasković introduces his argumentation with a premise that the general perception and image of Serbia in the international community, since the nineties is a negative one. Thus, he points out the importance of cultural contacts, exchanges of arts and culture in between citizens and peoples. He suggests that the right modality could improve the present image, and guarantee stable cultural relationships, in a manner outside of daily politics and ephemeral political interests. However, long-term cultural relations are overshadowed by short-term interests and benefits. Processes of mutual recognition and collaboration demanding investments in the future are neglected and not supported enough. Professor Tanasković emphasizes three case studies of effective cultural diplomacy practices in the last twenty years, of China, Iran and Turkey toward Serbia, that have succeeded in spite of numerous prejudices and negative stereotypes in re-establishing cultural relations using different cultural diplomacy tools and measures. Together with

an analysis of history of the cultural diplomacy of Yugoslavia and Serbia, and finding in these examples possible ideas for present endeavors, Tanasković opens a discussion about possible strategies and tools for future diplomatic actions.

The text of Aleksandra Kolaković: *Serbian Science Diplomacy in France (1894 – 1903)* discusses to what extent science diplomacy became only recently a part of cultural diplomacy in many countries of the world. She studied links and collaborative practices in between researchers of France and Serbia in different domains in the last hundred years. Claiming that research links had always been an important "engine" flywheel for development of humanity in general, Aleksandra Kolaković underlines their importance for mutual relations between states and peoples – focusing on a complex example of Serbian-French relations that had ups and downs, depending on the larger political interest and strategies of both countries. Conscious that changes in international relations are constant, she does not take historical facts as examples to be directly followed, but to show how, in different situations and different geopolitics, research and academic links can be a pillar of stability of bilateral relations, contributing to a wider understanding of mutual interests. As a basis of future scientific diplomacy of Serbia Aleksandra Kolaković identifies international research projects, a large number of academics living in diaspora, specific platforms for the financing of bilateral projects (le Partenariat Pavle Savić et Hubert Curien franco-serbe), and the readiness of domestic researchers to participate in scientific diplomacy actions, etc.

Before tourism, diplomats were privileged travelers around the world, and their writings were first testimonies about diplomatic efforts, but at the same time, about possible cultural encounters, and exchanges that confirmed or dismissed existing prejudices. Miloš Pržić's text: *Cultural Diplomacy in Three Travelogues about the Balkans* reveals stories written by three different travelers in the Balkans, who started their journeys with different motivations, and ended with similar outcomes. Alberto Fortis explored minerals and fisheries in Dalmatia for the account of Venice republic, while British sponsors tried to identify verses of one "primitive people". Bruno Barilli, came to Serbia privately but ended up as a war correspondent. Prince Božidar Karađorđević came

once as an exile under a false name, and another time as a member of the Royal Family, for the crowning of his relative King Peter. But all three had kept, in a different manner, the same, patronizing and polarizing approaches to domestic population and its cultural features, that could be described as a post-historical cultural diplomacy.

Understanding cultural relations and modalities of cultural diplomacy between two countries, can be analyzed the best in a concrete, relatively distant historical period. That is the case of the text: *Cultural diplomacy in the relations between Yugoslavia and Albania after the Second World War, 1945–1948*, by Igor Vukadinović. Although it was a period of the most intensive political relations, the author researched why cultural diplomacy was not an effective part of diplomatic relations. The experience of Yugoslav developmental aid to Albania just after WWII had revealed the weaknesses of the authoritarian model, that existed in both countries. The non-democratic character of one-party regimes had limited capacities of cultural workers in joint projects. Cultural and foreign policy had been submitted to ideological aims of communist parties of Yugoslavia and Albania. Contacts among artists were the result of party directives, thus political breakdown meant an immediate breakdown of those relations in 1948. During a collaboration process, two sides saw their roles differently: the Yugoslav side proclaimed international solidarity, while the Albanian side often saw in those projects' elements of political and cultural hegemonism. This text shows to what extent even cultural dialogue among neighboring countries can be burdened by prejudices and stereotypes.

The history of the use of state art collections within cultural diplomacy actions go beyond the compilation of artifacts that were acquired as diplomatic gifts, or deliberate acquisitions and commissions over the course of time. Thus, the text: *Arcadian and Yugoslav – (Re)shaping Cultural Identity in the State Art Collection in Belgrade* by Jelena Todorović and Biljana Crvenković shows to what extent this collection was created to be an idealized presentation of the state and throughout its history represented different political entities – two opposing regimes (Kingdom and Socialist republic) while remaining a notable art collection in its own right. The focus of the text is on the specific role that the State art collection played in the cultural diplomacy of both, and to demonstrate how its universal artistic vocabulary was reshaped through different

regimes. The Yugoslav government art collection lost a great part of its primary function acting as a dual mirror; reflecting the history of diplomatic relations through the exchange of gifts, while acting at the same time as a looking-glass through which the ideal state is envisioning and conceptualizing itself. In a concluding paragraph, Jelena Todorović and Biljana Crvenković express their wish that the state collection does not remain only in a ceremonial space or a complex monument, or a memento of Yugoslav countries that shaped it. "The future role of this important state collection is still to be determined. It is our hope, as scholars, curators and researchers that SAC will become a museum and that its treasures will become accessible to the wider local and European public", and thus be actively used in processes of cultural diplomacy.

Marina Simić and Miloš Ničić in their text: *Culture as a Manifestation: International Positioning of Serbia through Creative Industries*, departs from the Raymond Williams concept of culture as a manifestation, using it as a theoretical framework for understanding the contemporary positioning of different countries in the domain of international relations. They have shown to what extent it is relevant when it comes to the concept of creative industries (a segment of a culture as a manifestation). Cultural content is widespread, comprising popular culture as well as the arts, including elements of everyday culture; it allows diversification of potential audiences for content spread within cultural diplomacy tools; finally, this inclusive model of cultural diplomacy includes content characterized by flexibility, relevance, intertextual and intercultural capacity, especially when compared with established art forms usually used within cultural diplomacy practices. The authors analyze the case of the platform Serbia Creates, and its diverse activities, that enable the re-positioning of Serbia on the international scene, using first of all creative individuals from Serbia. These activities include traditional arts (folklore), and high scientific-technological achievements on one side, and different forms of music and popular culture on the other. Thus, the re-positioning of Serbia on a world cultural scene contributes to wider repositioning on a political scene. Through creative industries, popular culture of everyday life connects with traditional domains of high art and science and become, together part of state cultural diplomacy actions, that include domains such as gastronomy, fashion, and cultural

tourism. Thus, with creative industries in the focus, Serbia realizes its potential for equal participation in contemporary cultural programs, and receives positive impacts of such endeavors.

The last text in this final part, Nenad Vasić's analysis of *Cultural Diplomacy on the Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia*, presents a critical comparative study of the two web-platforms and their ways of communication. The author concluded that Serbian arts and culture, and its different manifestations should be much more present on the Internet related to foreign affairs and diplomacy, as it allows quick search and information. The old website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2013) was of contemporary design, enabling easy search and quality content, compared to the present website (2022), characterized by old fashion design, a non user-friendly search and lack of cultural content. Neither presentations were regularly updated, new content was not added, especially not content related to arts in the newest web presentation. The author further concludes that arts and culture, and specifically news related to cultural heritage have to be regularly updated and presented on the official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, showing more complex and more relevant images of Serbian cultural identity and of the relevant public policies of the State of Serbia.

This brief introduction suggests that we need to broaden the cultural diplomacy and cultural relations calls for examining both the instrumental and the transformative logic of these fields. Acknowledging cultural differences is a key issue for cultural relations, on all levels of the cross-cultural discourse, be it conceptual, methodological, policy or/ and practical. We need more awareness of propaganda, of the misuse of culture and those that produce it, we need to make aware of the vulnerability of artists and strengthen our international organizations and those working within them to address exactly these issues. We strongly hope that this book can be a small contribution in this direction.

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I
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FROM VYING FOR VALUES AND POWER TOWARDS CULTURAL DIPLOMACY AS A GLOBAL "COMMON GOOD"

Emil Brix

I see the situation for cultural diplomacy globally in flux at the moment and this has to do with the rise of conflicts, the decline of democracies (we only have about 20 to 25 percent of democracies at the moment globally), and the return of identity politics – national identity politics mainly – on the international scene. This changes how we should look at and analyze cultural diplomacy, and how cultural policy really works in the political field. Here is already my first conclusion – we have to differentiate between the growing number of policy areas, where cultural diplomacy and cultural relations are being used. I am using the word *used*, in the instrumentalized sense mainly: what sort of model of international relations should we use for analysis? Should we use the constructivist model or the model of realists or neo-realists?

I do not think that one can deliver a keynote speech at this very moment in Europe without mentioning the war in Ukraine. Even in the field of cultural diplomacy and cultural relations, this is a moment in European history, which may be called, as the German chancellor Scholz did, a change of time or a paradigm change ("Zeitenwende"), and when we look at cultural diplomacy, we see immediately this conflict, what it can do and what it cannot do. Cultural diplomacy is, when we have a look at the very difficult definitions, a non-coercive power, and at the moment what we see in Ukraine is coercive power. It is simply a war – a territorial, very traditional war, with a lot of missiles being shot, tanks being used, and real-time fighting in the cities of Ukraine. But still, cultural diplomacy is behind this war, because when we look

at the Russian side, what was the motivation that Mr. Putin himself and his people in the Kremlin used to argue for this war – they have used cultural arguments. The main arguments that Mr. Putin brought forward in the summer of 2021 and again when he started the war, were two cultural things – one of them was that there are Nazis, there are national socialists in Ukraine, and we have to de-nazify Ukraine; an obvious cultural argument. The second cultural argument was that Ukraine is an invention, the identity of Ukraine is an invention of the Soviets after the First World War, and in reality, the cultural identity of Ukraine does not exist but it is simply part of the "Russkiy Mir", of the Russian World. This is a very strong cultural argument that reminds us of the book "A Clash of Civilizations" by Samuel P. Huntington. So this is the Russian perspective, but as we see, normally, you use cultural diplomacy in situations of crisis in a positive way. At least you try to use it in a positive way, you speak about how it can foster mutual understanding, and how it can help to create a dialogue.

In Ukraine, the Russian side has a very difficult job to use cultural diplomacy in a positive way. The only option they have in the state media is to say that they are liberating Ukraine from fascists, and from wrong ideas about identity and then to show pictures where you can see Russian soldiers giving food and other material, maybe even books, about the real culture of Russia to the so-called liberated Ukrainians, in the South or in the East of Ukraine. Otherwise, cultural diplomacy is only seen through Western eyes as a negative element of how Russia wants to destroy the culture of Ukraine. On the Ukrainian side, cultural diplomacy has a better chance in this crisis, because Mr. Zelensky and his team have decided from the very first moment, that if they want to win this war or to save the identity of Ukraine, they have to use culture. They have to use the idea that there is a united Ukrainian nation, irrespective of the mother tongue of the Ukrainians. And it is obvious that you have a lot of Russian-speaking Ukrainians in the East, especially around Kharkiv and the Northeast, are strongly pro-Ukrainian, which means being pro Ukrainian cultural identity. The Russians are having a hard time finding enough people in the so-called liberated areas, from the Russian point of view, who can run the politics in these regions they have occupied.

So for the Ukrainian side, using cultural relations, cultural diplomacy is the strongest point they have, when we are not talking about

weapons, which is a different story. As a non-coercive power, as a soft power, cultural diplomacy is being used very successfully by strengthening the Ukrainian national identity and the will to defend this identity on the Ukrainian side. When we look at the images which play an important role in cultural diplomacy, as well as stories and narratives, this is the story the Ukrainians want to tell the rest of the world: that they defend their cultural identity and they are successfully doing so by also using pictures that not only show how civilians have been killed, but also how they have to defend their cultural identity, and their monuments; how the monuments from the Baroque period and other periods have to be secured with sandbags against Russian missile attacks. So these are again very strong images. Saying we want to save our cultural tradition against aggression from abroad – can be easily transformed into pictures, stories, and narratives about defending culture by using these sort of images. Especially on the issue, which always plays a role in the European heritage, of antisemitism and the issue of the Holocaust. The Ukrainians are skillfully and, I think, rightfully using cultural relations and cultural diplomacy to say the Russians have even attacked one of the monuments against the killing of Jews during the Second World War, with their grenades and their missiles. And around the globe you could see pictures of this destroyed monument to the Holocaust, and later on, they even succeeded in showing Mr. Lavrov speaking about Hitler maybe having some Jewish blood, and Mr. Zelensky, despite of being Jewish, being an anti-Semite and so on.

So you see how political cultural relations and cultural diplomacy can become in a situation of conflict. And this is something one has to study, because we are going into an age of identity politics, or maybe we are already in the middle of an age of identity politics, as this conflict is actually proving. So this is not a harmless instrument that we are talking about – cultural diplomacy, cultural relations – it is a very political instrument, which is always about telling stories, and it is about values and power. Even in the European Union, the idea that we discuss now is the role of the European Union in this coming multipolar world order. Most of the analysts are saying it is about European values and the way of a pluralist European culture, how we managed to work together in spite of all our differences on the European continent, by means of overcoming the view of culture as being an element which can only divide

us or which can only create national identities; isolated and defending themselves against other national identities.

In the Balkans, we can see how difficult this match is between seeing culture as a national identity, a building element that should be separated from other national elements, and seeing culture as an element of a pluralistic cultural environment, which helps us to define the common good and helps us to foster mutual understanding. I understand that in Serbia this is one of the big cultural issues that one has to discuss – how much pluralism is allowed in society, how Serbia positions itself in the Balkans, and how strongly national identity, cultural identity, is being used. I myself was just recently in Belgrade and in the other cities of the Balkans with a group of 50 students. As I said, I have to be provocative: I and even my students could immediately see, how different culture is perceived in Serbia, than for instance at the moment in North Macedonia, or even in Albania for that matter. And this plays a very political role. Analyzing cultural diplomacy and cultural relations, one has to take this sincerely into consideration and look into historic developments in all parts of Europe, where culture had to go a long way from being an element of division, of what was called by the 19th century's Habsburg monarchy *the emancipation of nations or emancipation of language groups*, into a community. In the 19th century, in the European context, culture including religion was mainly an element of creating national identity and not of overcoming these differences. When we look at the discussion of the 20th century, we see how this dilemma between the two sides has even become part of the two world wars and the following Cold War.

Discussing historical developments of cultural diplomacy and cultural relations should be a central part of any form of educating cultural policy experts, cultural managers or people who work in the international field of culture. I could give you many examples from the time when I was responsible for Austrian foreign cultural policy – I struggled with overcoming this idea that cultural diplomacy is working only in the national interest and not also trying to create a common understanding and a common global code in various aspects. When I started my job as director general for foreign cultural policy, we had a written instruction for Austrian cultural diplomats which said that you are supposed to speak only positively about your nation or if you cannot do that, then