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Abstract and Keywords

Cultural diplomacy springs from two premises. First, that good relations can take root in the fertile ground of understanding and respect. Second, cultural diplomacy rests on the assumption that art, language, and education are among the most significant entry points into a culture. Cultural diplomacy sits on a spectrum of ideational approaches to diplomacy. Alongside it on this spectrum one can locate soft power, branding, propaganda, and public diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy is on the soft-power side of the hard power–soft power equation, since it functions by attraction and not coercion. This article discusses the context of cultural diplomacy, the role of governments in cultural diplomacy, club and network diplomacy, ways to engage in cultural diplomacy, and the limits of cultural diplomacy.

Keywords: cultural diplomacy, international relations, government, club diplomacy, network diplomacy

There are certain actors and activities that immediately come to mind when we think of diplomacy. The ambassador, the diplomatic mission, and the consulate are good examples. It is difficult even to imagine the conduct of diplomacy in the absence of these things. The same cannot be said for cultural diplomacy. Scholars have given cultural diplomacy little sustained attention.[1] Governments have experimented with cultural diplomacy, but their commitment to it tends to be uneven.[2] Cultural diplomacy is not typically the first avenue that officials pursue. Yet in this era characterized by globalization, the information society, and network diplomacy, cultural diplomacy is an important tool.

Of course, to assert that cultural diplomacy can be an effective tool is somewhat abstract. In more concrete terms, what are the specific practices that comprise cultural diplomacy? Under what conditions might they be effective? Answers to these questions are more complicated because they are multiple. There is no single formula for what works. Different cultural diplomacy approaches work in different places at different times. What works in a major capital may not work in a smaller city. What works with a close ally may

not work where ties are more tenuous. What worked twenty years ago may not work now. Cultural diplomacy is, by its very nature, contingent and ad hoc. This chapter seeks to shed some light on the nature and usefulness of cultural diplomacy. In particular, I argue that cultural diplomacy can be helpful in bridging difference and in opening new avenues of communication. It cannot change outcomes where policies are entrenched, but it can soften, clarify, complicate, and provide expanded opportunities for connection in the hands of an adept diplomat.

Cultural diplomacy springs from two premises: first, that good relations can take root in the fertile ground of understanding and respect. These latter two do not always flow from official policy exchanges; they need to be cultivated. As Cavaliero puts it, 'human exchanges are recognized as being the most effective solvent of prejudice or disinformation'.[3] Cultural diplomacy can facilitate such exchanges. Second, cultural diplomacy rests on the assumption that art, language, and education are among the most significant (p. 420) entry points into a culture. They are fundamental and distinctive for individual societies. Yet there is also a universal aspect that can transcend and neutralize polarizing political elements. Culture and education can draw people closer and accentuate commonalities whereas official policy can appear adversarial or accentuate differences.

There is a cultural component to many policies that governments undertake, but not all policies with a cultural component count as cultural diplomacy. While it is relatively easy to generate examples of cultural diplomacy, it seems much more difficult to arrive at an uncontested definition of the concept. As Mark puts it,

> there is no general agreement among scholars about cultural diplomacy's relationship to the practice of diplomacy, its objectives, practitioners, activities, timeframe, or whether the practice is reciprocal or not. Some regard cultural diplomacy as a synonym for public diplomacy, others for international cultural relations, or a state's foreign cultural mission, and others regard these as distinct practices.[4]

Cultural diplomacy sits on a spectrum of ideational approaches to diplomacy. Alongside it on this spectrum one can locate soft power, branding, propaganda, and public diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy is on the soft power side of the hard power–soft power equation since it functions by attraction and not coercion in Joseph Nye's famous distinction.[5] Although cultural diplomacy predates public diplomacy, it has in some significant ways been eclipsed by it. Public diplomacy shows up as a hot button term in many government policy statements. Academics have also been drawn to public diplomacy. Yet cultural diplomacy is distinctive in ways that I explore in greater depth in this chapter.

Perhaps the most oft-cited definition comes from Milton Cummings, who argues that cultural diplomacy is 'the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples to foster mutual understanding'.[6] In a similar vein, Laqueur characterizes cultural diplomacy as 'the use of creative expression and

exchanges of ideas, information, and people to increase mutual understanding'.[7] Mark offers a more overtly political view:

> Despite the semantic confusion, it is nevertheless possible to conceive of cultural diplomacy as a diplomatic practice of governments, carried out in support of a government's foreign policy goals or its diplomacy (or both), usually involving directly or indirectly the government's foreign ministry, involving a wide range of manifestations of the culture of the state which the government represents, targeted at a wider population as well as elites.[8]

Mark's definition is emblematic of the challenges associated with gaining consensus on cultural diplomacy. This excerpt from his discussion suggests that cultural diplomacy is simultaneously 'this and that'. The foreign ministry may be involved directly or indirectly. Efforts may be directed at elites or the general population. This resistance to easy categorization may be a strength of cultural diplomacy. To be sure, language instruction, academic exchange, and tours by artists are the hallmarks of cultural diplomacy. However, an effective cultural diplomacy need not be constrained by these traditional parameters.

(p. 421) Cultural diplomacy is first and foremost about bridging differences and facilitating mutual understanding. Cultural diplomacy can tell another story about a country (or province or state or regional grouping). This may be a story that differs from what official policy would imply. It may be a story that counters what opponents are recounting. In so doing, cultural diplomacy can offset negative, stereotypical, or overly simplistic impressions arising from policy choices or from hostile portrayals. It may also fill a void where no stories of any kind exist.

Cultural diplomacy can explain aspects of a culture that might otherwise be difficult to grasp for foreign populations. Student exchanges provide one-on-one opportunities for transmission of this type of deeper knowledge about why a particular society favours certain practices or espouses certain beliefs. Cultural diplomacy can also reach constituencies that might not otherwise be engaged by traditional diplomatic activity. There may be no official relations between two governments, but artists can communicate with each other and forge meaningful ties. The United States and Cuba have been involved in artist exchanges—many high profile—including the New York Philharmonic, the New York City Ballet, and the Jazz at Lincoln Center musicians, despite chilly official diplomatic relations between the two governments. These exchanges arguably create fertile ground for traditional diplomacy; maintain links when official relations are imperilled; and remind citizens of the two countries that they have things in common despite official policy to the contrary.

Cultural diplomacy can provide context for policy decisions or official actions. It can humanize. Official lines of communication can transmit a one-dimensional message. Cultural diplomacy opens up other lines of communication that can supplement and complicate the official message or the prevailing image. One common example of this is travel by American jazz musicians to the Soviet Union during the cold war. Soviet officials

and citizens had a reductionist understanding of the United States. However, encountering African-American musicians who spoke openly and critically of the racial history of the United States, while simultaneously celebrating a quintessentially American musical form and expressing their pride as Americans, complicated the Soviet view of the United States. Another recent example is a carefully-timed loan by the Vatican to the Victoria and Albert museum in London. On the occasion of a papal visit to Great Britain, amidst controversies over church policies, the Vatican loaned 16th-century tapestries depicting scenes from the Acts of the Apostles. These priceless works of art, rarely seen outside of the Vatican, tell another story about the Catholic Church, thus complicating its image, and provoking engagement through a less politically charged medium of exchange.

What is the relationship between cultural diplomacy and public diplomacy? To be sure, there are many similarities and overlaps. Each shares a fundamental ideational essence. Each targets audiences beyond official diplomatic circles. A report commissioned by the US Department of State calls cultural diplomacy 'the linchpin of public diplomacy; for it is in cultural activities that a nation's idea of itself is best represented'. The report goes on, 'the values embedded in our artistic and intellectual traditions form a bulwark against the forces of darkness . . . Cultural diplomacy reveals the soul of a nation.' Cultural diplomacy

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> helps create a 'foundation of trust' with other peoples, which policy makers can build on to reach political, economic, and military agreements . . . demonstrates our values . . . creates relationships with peoples, which endure beyond changes in government; can reach influential members of foreign societies who cannot be reached through traditional embassy functions; provides a positive agenda for cooperation in spite of policy differences; creates a neutral platform for people-to-people contact; serves as a flexible, universally acceptable vehicle for rapprochement with countries where diplomatic relations have been strained or are absent; . . . counterbalances misunderstanding, hatred, and terrorism.[9]

Cultural diplomacy is also distinguished by the fact that it is not unidirectional. Public diplomacy and branding tend to involve the outward projection of one's message. As Berger puts it,

> the difference in approach between public and cultural diplomacy: while public diplomacy is unilateral with an emphasis on explaining one's policies to the others, cultural diplomacy takes a bi- or multilateral approach with an emphasis on mutual recognition. Cultural diplomacy is therefore explicitly not meant to be the promotion of a national culture. Cultural diplomacy focuses on common ground, and the condition thereto is that one needs to know what makes the other tick.[10]

From this perspective, listening to others' messages with an eye to understanding their views is integral to cultural diplomacy. 'This cultural policy demands that one enters a

relationship on the basis of equality and reciprocity. It also demands a genuine interest in the other: where does it stand, what does it think, and why does it think that way?'[11]

Therefore, sending French academics on exchange to Arab countries is cultural diplomacy. But so is the *Institut du monde arabe* in Paris, which seeks to familiarize the French with Arab history and culture on French soil. Similarly, Katzenstein argues that post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy, which relied mostly on high culture and language teaching abroad, focused on ' "explaining" to others the unique features of the Japanese polity that foreigners simply cannot grasp'.[12] However, it soon evolved to include the importation of ideas. 'Haltingly in the 1980s and more rapidly in the 1990s gaining a better understanding of and respect for foreign cultures became part of the government's official cultural diplomacy.'[13] Such examples evoke the definitions offered at the beginning of this chapter that emphasise mutual understanding. While many experienced diplomats may know the importance of listening and learning, these components of diplomatic practice receive less attention in descriptions of public diplomacy. Yet they are central to effective cultural diplomacy.

23.1 The Context of Cultural Diplomacy

It is a cliché to note that we have entered the era of the information society. Global media outlets among other components of globalization ensure that we have more information about each other than ever before. What we think about each other and the meanings (p. 423) that we attach to actors, practices, etc., is a crucial determinant of support for or opposition to policies and policy-makers. The Internet democratizes the sharing of information in new ways. Intellectual property occupies an important role in the economies and societies of countries at all levels of development. All of these arguably emerge from the fact that information flows so much more freely across borders.

These phenomena have an impact on the world of diplomacy. Partly this manifests itself in what Heine describes in Chapter 2 of this volume: 'globalism, a prominent feature of our time, involves networks of interdependence at intercontinental distances. It implies multiple flows of products, services, or capital, and signifies the shrinkage of distance on a large scale. It also triggers the emergence of global issues and a global agenda to a degree that we had not seen before.' It also affects the exercise of power. As Tardif puts it,

> power, rivalries and conflicts are no longer played out within the framework of a physical territory as they were when the main concern was the control of natural resources. Power is now tied to the ability to manipulate symbols in the mediatised global space. . . . Culture (values, symbols, world representation, language, art . . .) and its modes of expression structure relationships between humans and societies at every level of human activity, including the global level.[14]

Ironically, we have more information about each other, but we may not know more about each other. Traditional notions of cultural diplomacy presume an ability to project a distinct and distinctive national culture. But this is increasingly difficult to do, if indeed it ever was possible. There is no singular cultural message emanating from countries. Today, the nearly constant flow of ideas and images through media and popular culture complicates matters. These flows, which are largely outside the hands of diplomats, provide a resource and a foil that cannot be ignored. Multiple depictions—some accurate and some not, some well intentioned and some not—have an authoritative veneer. Cultural diplomacy can provide a welcome corrective, 'sharpening the picture where you think the picture may be blurred, fuzzy, or wrong'.[15]

In this era of globalization, the cultural flashpoints of global politics have also shifted. Today, the global landscape is characterized by rising powers like India and China, as well as perceived civilizational encounters between and across multiple Wests[16] and the so-called Muslim world, among others. The challenges and the possibilities of cultural diplomacy in this context are great. In some ways, the advent of globalization and the redistribution of power signify great change. But there is also continuity. If September 11 is a defining referent of the current diplomatic era, the cold war provided the backdrop for the previous one. Both conflicts played—or are playing—out on military *and* ideational battlegrounds, making cultural diplomacy relevant to both. If winning 'hearts and minds' was the goal of cold war cultural diplomacy, reaching Thomas Friedman's 'Arab Street' is one aspect of contemporary cultural diplomacy. As Laqueur notes, traditional diplomacy is of little use in the face of the new, post-cold war, 'anti-Western onslaughts' while 'cultural diplomacy, in the widest sense, has increased importance'.[17]

(p. 424) The contemporary era of globalization also gives unrivalled prominence to popular culture. Traditional cultural diplomacy rested on high culture as a foundational pillar. Thus, simultaneously exploiting the possibilities of popular culture while ensuring that one's preferred message is heard above the din is a new challenge for cultural diplomats. Schneider goes so far as to argue that 'popular culture is the greatest untapped resource in the cultural diplomacy arsenal'.[18] She is speaking about the United States in her statement since, as she notes, 'products of popular culture—films, TV, music —are America's largest export'.[19] It is true that Americans can most urgently benefit from reflection on how to incorporate popular culture into an effective cultural diplomacy strategy. But they are not alone. Japan, India, Brazil, and France are just some of the countries that export cultural products in great number and, thus, have the potential to use popular culture to their advantage. To be sure, it is not immediately evident how popular culture might be harnessed. As Schneider observes, there are obstacles to diplomats making effective use of popular culture. Why? As she puts it, 'distributed according to the rules of the marketplace, popular culture does not make the best ambassador'.[20]

The fact that popular culture is a thriving private sector activity complicates its contribution to cultural diplomacy. Popular culture can be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it can transmit an image of a place where one might otherwise not be

forthcoming or where a prevailing image can be opaque or negative. Japan is a good example of this. The export of Japanese popular culture, including Manga graphic stories, Animé video, and the acclaimed works of Japanese filmmakers has created access points to a culture that might otherwise be inaccessible to many. Popular culture can also reach audiences that might otherwise not be reached. While a symphony or a classical ballet company has wide appeal, it may not draw youth in the same numbers that a hip hop artist might. Malone reports in Chapter 6 of this volume that, 'Bollywood's more exotic charms have proved exportable to many countries, and facilitated an early diplomatic thaw with Moscow in 1953. More recently, the Bollywood comedy, "Three Idiots" is reported to have become a cult classic among Chinese students.'

While there seems to be enormous potential for products of popular culture to enter the cultural diplomacy conversation, the fact remains that popular culture is, at bottom, a commercial enterprise. This can be promising in a moment when diplomatic budgets generally, and cultural diplomacy budgets specifically, are decreasing. Popular culture offers resources that will be produced and likely made available to international audiences regardless of whether foreign ministries decide that they are valuable. On the other hand, popular culture can circulate images that are undesirable or that may need to be counteracted. For example, American Hollywood blockbusters that reach all corners of the globe often carry with them violent images or gender stereotypes that do not accurately portray the average American's experience.

The implication of recent studies, including this one, is that the use of popular culture for the purposes of cultural diplomacy is nascent at best. However, it is worth pointing out that broadcasting, which might justifiably be included in the popular culture category, has been a mainstay of soft power (though perhaps not cultural diplomacy) for some time. Governments have used broadcasting to their advantage, deploying state-run (p. 425) entities like Voice of America or the US-run Arab language television station, Al Hurra. Arms-length public broadcasting systems, like the BBC or France Info, have also served important soft-power roles. More recently, the broadcasting landscape has been complicated by the appearance of powerful commercially-minded actors with global reach. CNN, Al Jazeera, and the China Xinhua News Network Corp are just three variants on this model. Thakur notes that India may be an exception. 'In its desperation to control information, news and analyses, the Indian government has effectively aborted the rise of independent news services with the authority and credibility to command a global following. . . . The net result is that India does indeed lack a key agent of international influence and a crucial ingredient of soft power in the modern networked world.'[21]

On the other hand, the so-called twenty-four-hour news cycle makes cultural diplomacy difficult and necessary. Media coverage supplies many of the visual images that people have of a place and they are widely circulated in some instances. For example, the State Department study of cultural diplomacy confirms the dominance of media images in shaping perceptions.

The idea of an American ideal is drowned out by Arab media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian impasse and the war in Iraq; the fallout from the Abu Ghraib prison scandal—the photographs, broadcast repeatedly and circulated continuously on the Web, of hooded prisoners attached to electrodes, of leering American soldiers and so on—would long haunt the image of the United States.[22]

The 'CNN effect', then, adds another dimension at the intersection of cultural diplomacy and popular culture.

Much of this analysis implies that cultural diplomacy in an era of globalization still implicates national cultures primarily. But this is incomplete. Cultural diplomacy has since the Second World War included a multilateral dimension whereby states work through intergovernmental organizations like UNESCO. More recently, cultural diplomacy is refracted through regional and civilizational lenses. Cultural diplomacy has been deployed with great effect as a tool to cultivate mutual understanding and a sense of belonging among the members of the European Union. In addition, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations seeks to facilitate dialogue across religions and cultures, all the while transcending national borders.

23.2 The Role of Governments in Cultural Diplomacy

Diplomacy has traditionally been the preserve of the state. By definition, diplomats are representatives of governments and their work is intended to advance the interests of a particular state.[23] A deeper look problematizes the role of the state in the conduct of diplomacy. Must state representatives be directly involved for diplomacy to be taking (p. 426) place? In the introduction to this volume, Cooper, Heine, and Thakur acknowledge this ambiguity by defining diplomacy as 'the conduct of business, using peaceful means, and among international actors, *at least one of whom is usually governmental*' (emphasis added). Harold Nicolson goes even further, defining diplomacy as 'an ordered conduct of relations between one group of human beings and another group alien to themselves'.[24] Among the major changes that have occurred in the world of diplomacy and diplomats, Thakur cites 'the rapidly expanding *numbers and types of actors*, from governments to national private sector firms, multinational corporations, NGOs and regional and international organisations' (emphasis in original).[25] The debate over the role of the state and of official state representatives in diplomacy is nowhere more trenchant than in cultural diplomacy.

Some analysts are unwilling to conceive of cultural diplomacy in the absence of state involvement. For example, Haigh defines cultural diplomacy as 'the activities of governments in the sphere—traditionally left to private enterprise—of international cultural relations'.[26] Similarly, Arndt posits that cultural diplomacy 'can only be said to take place when formal diplomats, serving national governments, try to shape and

channel this natural flow to advance national interests'.[27] Mark seems to corroborate this view, arguing that

> cultural diplomacy is a diplomatic practice of governments—mostly single governments, but also groups of governments such as the European Union and sub-national governments, such as the government of the Canadian province of Québec . . . Cultural diplomacy is carried out in support of a government's foreign policy goals or its diplomacy, or both. Because of its connection to foreign policy or diplomacy, cultural diplomacy usually involves directly or indirectly the government's foreign ministry, or, in the case of governments representing parts of a federation, that ministry responsible for international engagement . . . Naturally, cultural diplomacy's connection to a government's foreign policy goals, to its diplomacy, and to its foreign ministry varies between states, but the absence of any such link precludes an activity from being deemed cultural diplomacy.[28]

If the government must play a role, then what is the nature of that role? Must a government representative carry out cultural diplomacy programmes herself? Or is it sufficient for a government to provide funding or to serve as a catalyst that gets a particular programme in motion? Examples of all levels of government involvement exist. Britain, France, Germany, Spain, and China all operate what might be considered traditional mainstays of cultural diplomacy: the British Council, the Alliance française, the Goethe Institute, the Cervantes Institute, and the Confucian Institutes, respectively. These long-standing and effective initiatives function with varying degrees of input from their governments. The British Council and the Goethe Institutes are para-public entities operating at arm's length from the governments of Britain and Germany. The Alliances française are independent of the French government. The Confucian Institutes involve relatively greater state involvement. Each of these instances of varying degrees of state involvement would qualify as cultural diplomacy. Debate ensues, however, in cases where some feel government is—or should be—absent.

(p. 427) One aspect of this debate maps onto a distinction between official and unofficial activity. When academics travel abroad as part of the Fulbright Program, they are considered to be cultural diplomats. When these same academics go abroad independent of this government programme, have they relinquished their potential as cultural diplomats? When have we crossed the line from cultural diplomacy into quotidian cross-border relations? Is it useful to distinguish between official and unofficial cultural diplomacy or formal and informal cultural diplomacy? This line of questioning is not irrelevant to the discussion of popular culture in the previous section. Simply because messages and messengers that could promote mutual understanding are not doing so as part of an official programme in cultural diplomacy, does it mean that their contribution should be ignored?

An interesting example concerns the role of private philanthropists. Just a few years ago, Shelley and Donald Rubin founded the Rubin Museum of Art in New York City.[29] Long-time collectors of Himalayan art, they exhibit their own collection. But the museum also

runs extensive educational programming on Himalayan art, culture, and regional religions, among other things. The governments of Bhutan or Nepal, for example, had no formal role in the founding of the museum. Arguably, those governments would not be able to achieve what the Rubins have achieved, insulated from the politics of promoting national culture. The museum's very existence in a major world arts centre means that people who would not otherwise come into contact with Himalayan culture can develop a deeper understanding of it. How should Shelley and Donald Rubin be situated in a discussion of cultural diplomacy? As is the case for Bill Gates in discussions of development aid, globalized network diplomacy may necessitate new categories.

Perhaps most complicated in this debate is the concern that government involvement of any kind can interfere with the artistic, educational, or cultural mission. As Channick puts it,

> there is a fundamental difference between the official approach to cultural diplomacy—where the emphasis is on the diplomacy, and culture is merely a tool or, worse, a weapon—and the approach taken by artists. Artists engage in cross-cultural exchange not to proselytize about their own values but rather to understand different cultural traditions, to find new sources of imaginative inspiration, to discover other methods and ways of working and to exchange ideas with people whose worldviews differ from their own. They want to be influenced rather than to influence.[30]

Some instruments need distance from a government to be effective. There is a risk that the credibility of an agent and/or a patron of cultural diplomacy can be jeopardized if there is a clear affiliation with a government.[31] Kennedy provides an interesting example of this. The photographic exhibition *After September 11: Images from Ground Zero* was launched in February 2002 by then US Secretary of State Colin Powell. Kennedy explains that the exhibition featured images by the only photographer given full access to Ground Zero from 13 September 2001 onward to build an archive of photos. Not only did the State Department support the exhibition, but American embassies and consulates in over sixty countries promoted it.

(p. 428) US Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Charlotte Beers, explains the value of an exhibition like *After September 11*.

> As time has passed since last September, we found that we needed to give people a visceral reminder of the devastation and death in New York. We needed to depict —not in words, but in pictures—the loss, the pain, but also the strength and resolve of New York, of Americans, of the world community to recover and rebuild on the site of the World Trade Center . . . A message that—without words— documents that the World Trade Center was not a collection of buildings or a set of businesses—but a community, a way of life, a symbol, a place of the living and, now also, the dead. How do you do that? How do you tell such a sad, grim, shocking, and ultimately uplifting story? You do that in pictures.[32]

Kennedy notes that the cities where the exhibition would be shown were chosen with care. Most were in the Middle East and North Africa; fewer in Europe and South America. The exhibition was intended to show the emotional side of the American experience of September 11, but also to transcend this to touch a more universal empathy about human suffering. As Kennedy puts it, 'this later exhibit has been more overtly designed as propaganda, yet it also carries the cachet of "culture" (most obviously, via the signature of a renowned photographer) and is intended to transmit a universal message that transcends the politics of difference.'[33] Some responses to the exhibit were quite negative, precisely because it was received as a calculated attempt on the part of the US government to elicit sympathy. A similar response would be unlikely had the exhibit had no ties to official circles.

Huygens captures a widely-held view about the appropriate relationship between government and agents of cultural diplomacy.

> If arts—or a deliberate selection or combination of artworks—are made instrumental to goals other than artistic expression, they can no longer fulfill their distinctive role and merely reflect the official policy of a country or other cultural entity . . . It is especially its distance to power and issues of the day that makes art valuable in our understanding of societies and in international relations. It is the independence of arts that cultural diplomacy should cherish and support.[34]

Perhaps most radically, Berger maintains that cultural diplomacy encompasses not only those activities that governments execute or support—though it may include these—but activities that

> focus on understanding the other by looking at the variety of ways that the other expresses itself. . . . Evading the trap of cultural relativism and remaining in dialogue with the other party while at the same time not abandoning one's principles, *that* is why cultural diplomacy is called 'diplomacy.' Not because it is the work that diplomats should do, but because it is an interaction that requires diplomatic skills on a human level.[35]

Much of the preceding discussion captures the difficulty of navigating the intersection of art and power at the site of reception. If a participant in a cultural activity perceives (p. 429) close government involvement, she may experience it differently than art with none of these political or instrumental ties. Nonetheless, challenges can also emerge at earlier stages in the process, precisely because artists and government officials have different agendas and goals.

Even artists who consciously and voluntarily take part in official cultural diplomacy programmes may bump up against the ideological commitments of a ruling party or prevailing views on the role of art in society. Artists who challenge prevailing values or academics who stake out radical positions may not be embraced by a sitting government. Artists' peer review selection processes may conflict with what local embassy or consulate staff might have chosen to fulfil their mandate.[36] Ultimately, cultural

diplomacy's position at the intersection of government and the cultural world is both a source of strength and challenge.

23.3 Club and Network Diplomacy

As this volume demonstrates, the evolution from club to network diplomacy is one of the central shifts in modern diplomacy. As Thakur explains it, 'the four core tasks of the diplomat were to represent his country's interests, protect his country's citizens visiting or residing in his accredited country, inform his own and host government and people about each other, and negotiate with the host country. This was conducted in a world of "club diplomacy".'[37] Network diplomacy, on the other hand, 'has more players than club diplomacy, is flat rather than hierarchical, engages in multiple forms of communication beyond merely the written, is more transparent than confidential, and its "consummation" takes the form of increased bilateral flows instead of formal signing ceremonies.'[38]

The fact that cultural diplomacy is 'people-to-people diplomacy' suggests that it has a natural resonance with network diplomacy. The synergies seem even more clear in light of Thakur's assertion that, 'in attempting to navigate the shoals while exploiting the opportunities of a globalised and networked world, the diplomat must cultivate all manner of constituencies in home, host, and sometimes even third countries. That is the key to network diplomacy: cultivating all relevant constituencies.'[39]

To be sure, cultural diplomacy is an effective way for ambassadors to connect with each other and to build relationships. As David Malone argues in Chapter 6 of this volume, 'targeted hospitality remains extremely useful: securing the ear and sharing the analysis of leading personalities over lunch or dinner rather than during an often hurried and inconvenient office meeting, with note-takers hovering, often yields dividends'. Nonetheless, Malone also notes that 'important people [are] busier than ever', with numerous demands on their time. Cultural events of any kind have the potential to cut through the list of invitations and have an unmatched appeal. Nonetheless, cultural diplomacy also provides a means to reach constituencies beyond elite, ambassadorial types.

As Heine puts it in Chapter 2 of this volume, (p. 430)

> in the 'club model', diplomats meet only with government officials, among themselves and with the odd businessman or woman, and give an interview or speech here or there. By and large, however, they restrict themselves to fellow members of the club, with whom they also feel most comfortable, and focus their minds on 'negotiating agreements between sovereign states'. By definition, those practising this approach find it difficult to tap into the many trans-border flows of our time, since they regard them as beyond their purview.

He continues, arguing that network diplomacy 'means engaging a vastly larger number of players in the host country—including many who would have never thought of setting foot in the rarefied atmosphere of the salons and private clubs the diplomats of yesteryear used to frequent'. Cultural diplomacy can very effectively connect diplomats under the 'club' model. But it also easily transitions to the network diplomacy age.

23.4 The 'How To' Guide

To suggest that there is one right way to engage in cultural diplomacy would be unwise. Indeed, depending on the cultural resources available to a given actor, as well as the goals and objectives of that actor in a particular place at a particular time, there may be as many ways of practising cultural diplomacy as there are diplomats and governments. One useful distinction is between the official cultural diplomacy framework policies that are put in place by a central government on the one hand, and the cultural diplomacy efforts that are undertaken by a given staff in a consulate or embassy, on the other. The former is more enduring, more consistent over time and space, evolving with a change of government. It can be quite costly. The latter is more contingent, ad hoc, the product of individual creativity. It is reactive and dynamic and can be effective on a shoe string. With this in mind, some strategies present themselves.

Connection. The effective diplomat is always looking for ways to connect and culture can provide an effective mode for doing so, especially if the diplomat has listened and internalized the areas of interest and points of resonance that are meaningful to her interlocutors. As one former Canadian High Commissioner to India recounts, he realized early on that exposure to what Canadians perceive to be their great artists was not of paramount interest to many of his Indian contacts. However, drawing on the Indo-Canadian artistic community, as well as the links between Bollywood and the Toronto International Film Festival, afforded valuable opportunities to connect across cultural, linguistic, religious, and other differences.[40] Such an approach is arguably more likely in this era of globalization, characterized in part by flows of people across borders. Diaspora communities can offer unique opportunities for connection.

A former Chilean ambassador to South Africa tells a similar story. Finding 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 (p. 431) Chileans and South Africans shared in common.[41] Similarly, Canada's former ambassador to Bhutan describes a film festival held in the capital. Embassy staff knew that a film set in Bhutan had been screened at the Banff Mountain Film Festival. The staff arranged an event around this film, in the process bridging difference, creating an opportunity for dialogue and deeper mutual understanding.

These are stories of success. It is reasonable to assume that the outcome will not always be as auspicious. There may not be a resonant cultural bridge or a good faith effort may fail. Nonetheless, the savvy diplomat will get to know both his or her home and host

cultural communities well and be on the lookout for opportunities to connect. These diplomats were able to create successes because they were intimately aware of what was going on in their home and host countries. As Canada's former ambassador to Bhutan puts it, 'know what your assets are and capitalize on them. Don't spend all your time with other ambassadors. Embrace a society and figure out what they need.'[42]

Consistency. It would appear that many perceive cultural diplomacy to be most useful when more traditional or official channels are unsuccessful or unavailable. It is clear that cultural diplomacy can fill a void. Even when relations are at their worst, a cultural exchange can take place. In 2008, at a low point in US—North Korea relations because of the North Korean nuclear programme, the New York Philharmonic accepted an invitation to travel to Pyongyang. They closed their programme with a beloved Korean folk song, leaving the audience and the musicians deeply moved.[43] This is the strength of cultural diplomacy, the possibility of human connection even where official relations are strained. However, the fact that cultural diplomacy is perceived by some as being most useful as a last resort means that it does not always get the consistent support that it deserves. It is more commonly the case that, in moments of crisis, the cultural diplomacy machine is activated. This was apparent following September 11 when the American government quickly put in motion an attempt to connect with the Muslim world. By all accounts, these efforts were, at best, only partially successful, in part because they were seen to be an emergency measure and not a genuine effort to cultivate mutual understanding. Interestingly, a subsequent State Department fact-finding mission discovered that, to the degree that constituencies in the Middle East sought to engage with the United States in a cultural diplomacy exchange, they welcomed training and equipment—exchanges of technicians, directors, animators, web designers, special effects, and music preservation consultants—that would allow their own cultural communities to thrive.[44]

This and other experiences of this kind suggest that it is important to have a cultural diplomacy framework in place at all times. A more consistent commitment must be made so that the fruits of cultural diplomacy are in place when crisis hits. It is in those moments when people are exposed to negative images, policies, and impressions that one hopes that they have also encountered at some point more positive, sympathetic ones. It is upon the release of the images from Abu Ghraib prison that one hopes that people in the Arab world have met that sympathetic Fulbright scholar or benefitted from the heritage preservation fund or had the opportunity to study in the United States. These latter experiences can provide a bulwark against an otherwise wholesale indictment of the American (p. 432) government, its policies, and its way of life. Cultural diplomacy is an insurance policy of sorts. There is no point in activating one's policy after a car accident. Instead, one is grateful to have paid one's premiums in full as one watches the car be towed away.

Innovation. While language, education, and the arts arguably still lie at the heart of cultural diplomacy, they cannot be mobilized in exactly the same way that they were in previous historical periods. Language provides a good example. In the past, language instruction provided an entry point into cultural understanding. Learning a language

allowed people to understand cultural products hitherto inaccessible to them. Also, contact with native speakers afforded opportunities to learn about the values, beliefs, and practices of the language teacher and learner. These activities can still be very powerful. Nonetheless, globalization has led to the elevation of some languages for commercial purposes and the downgrading of others. How, then, might language be used to make a culture accessible if foreigners are not interested in acquiring your language? Some studies suggest that translation may be one answer. 'Translation is an inexpensive form of exchange, the fruits of which—the dissemination of information and ideas, the inculcation of nuanced views of foreign cultures, increased empathy and understanding, the recognition of our common humanity—will be on display for a very long time.'[45] Yet translation is not an automatic reflex in many countries. The 2002 UN Arab Human Development Report reports that

> translation is one of the most important channels for the dissemination of information and communication with the rest of the world. The translation movement in the Arab world, however, remains static and chaotic. On average, only 4.4 translated books per million were published in the first five years of the 1980s (less than one book per million people per year), while the corresponding rate in Hungary was 519 books per one million people and in Spain 920 books.[46]

The point of this discussion is not to establish that translation is a panacea for cultural diplomacy. Rather, it is to suggest that the context of cultural diplomacy is evolving and one cannot cling to old instruments that may have lost their edge. The same goals can be achieved through different means.

23.5 The Limits of Cultural Diplomacy

As I have argued in this chapter, cultural diplomacy can achieve many things. But it is neither unambiguously effective nor necessarily a force for good. It has its limits. First, cultural diplomacy requires a long-term commitment. The dividends of cultural diplomacy may not be paid for a decade or two.[47] As Laqueur notes with regard to public diplomacy —and the same applies to cultural diplomacy—'the bureaucratic queries about tangible achievement that can be measured at the end of the budgetary year simply do not apply'.[48] Cultural diplomacy plants a seed. As such, it may take root over time. It is possible that cultural diplomacy efforts will yield no fruit whatsoever.

(p. 433) Assessing whether cultural diplomacy has had any sort of effect is similarly challenging. 'No metric or language exists by which to gauge the success of a cultural initiative. As Milton Cummings notes, "a certain degree of faith is involved in cultural diplomacy".'[49] It is certainly possible to track the number of people who attend a music performance or participate in a student exchange programme. But it is extremely difficult to determine what effect, if any, the experience has had on the participant. You cannot control the reception of a piece of art or the quality of human interaction. While you may

Subscriber: Goldsmiths College, University of London; date: 08 March 2019

hope that the experience of a particular event will evoke a certain reaction, you can never be sure.

Cultural diplomacy cannot work magic. It cannot change policy outcomes or compensate for their harmful or negative consequences. It can, however, help to (re)build relationships or to foster understanding.[50] In some instances, cultural diplomacy cannot even get out of the starting gate. Cultural diplomacy functions best when people can move easily across borders. But security concerns can make academic exchanges and tourism, both contributors to cultural diplomacy, more challenging in certain moments.

Nonetheless, cultural diplomacy may be essential to the work of the diplomat. Heine notes in Chapter 2 of this volume that some perceive the art of negotiating agreements to be the stock in trade of diplomats. But he counters that 'the real task is getting to the negotiations. One effective way to do so is by *bridging the gap between home and host country*—that is, by bringing the societies closer' (emphasis in original). Cultural diplomacy's purpose is exactly this.

Notes:

(1.) Simon Mark, *A Comparative Study of the Cultural Diplomacy of Canada, New Zealand and India*. Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Studies, The University of Auckland, 2008, 5.

(2.) US Department of State, *Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy* (Report of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy, September 2005).

(3.) R.E. Cavaliero, 'Cultural Diplomacy: The Diplomacy of Influence', *The Round Table* 298 (1986), 139–44 at 143.

(4.) Mark, *A Comparative Study of the Cultural Diplomacy of Canada, New Zealand and India*, 39.

(5.) Joseph Nye, 'The Decline of America's Soft Power', *Foreign Affairs* 83:3 (May–June 2004), 16–20.

(6.) Milton Cummings, 'Cultural Diplomacy and the United States Government: A Survey', *Center for Arts and Culture* (2003), 1.

(7.) Walter Laqueur, 'Save Public Diplomacy: Broadcasting America's Message Matters', *Foreign Affairs* 73:5 (September–October 1994), 19–24 at 20.

(8.) Mark, *A Comparative Study of the Cultural Diplomacy of Canada, New Zealand and India*, 3.

(9.) US Department of State, *Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy*, 1.

(10.) Maurits Berger, 'Introduction', *Bridge the Gap, or Mind the Gap? Culture in Western-Arab Relations* (January 2008), Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', 3–7 at 3. Available at <http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/ 2008/20080100_cdsp_paper_berger.pdf>.

(11.) Berger, 'Introduction', 6.

(12.) Peter Katzenstein, 'Open Regionalism: Cultural Diplomacy and Popular Culture in Europe and Asia', paper prepared for the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, August 2002. Available at <http://ics-www.leeds.ac.uk/papers/pmt/ exhibits/1133/Katzenstei.pdf>.

(13.) Katzenstein, 'Open Regionalism: Cultural Diplomacy and Popular Culture in Europe and Asia', 17.

(14.) Jean Tardif, 'Globalization and Culture', *Permanent Forum on Cultural Pluralism* (July 2004), <http://www.planetagora.org/english/theme1_note.html>, 1.

(15.) Former Canadian Ambassador to Bhutan, personal interview, 23 May 2011.

(16.) Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *Civilizations in World Politics: Plural and Pluralist Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

(17.) Laqueur, 'Save Public Diplomacy: Broadcasting America's Message Matters', 20.

(18.) Cynthia Schneider, 'Diplomacy that Works: "Best Practices" in Cultural Diplomacy', Cultural Diplomacy Research Series, Center for Arts and Culture (2003), 14.

(19.) Schneider, 'Diplomacy that Works', 14.

(20.) Schneider, 'Diplomacy that Works', 14.

(21.) Ramesh Thakur, 'Asia-Pacific Challenges for Diplomacy', revised paper of keynote lecture 'Diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific: Changes and Challenges', delivered at Diplomatic Update 2006, Asia-Pacific College of Diplomacy, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia, 12–14 November, 7.

(22.) US Department of State, *Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy*, 11.

(23.) See Chapter 3, this volume.

(24.) Harold Nicolson, *Diplomacy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), 17.

(25.) Thakur, 'Asia-Pacific Challenges for Diplomacy', 1.

(26.) A. Haigh, *Cultural Diplomacy in Europe* (Strasbourg: Council for Cultural Cooperation, 1974), 28.

(27.) Cited in Ramin Asgard, 'U.S.-Iran Cultural Diplomacy: A Historical Perspective', *Al Nakhlah* (Fletcher School, Tufts University, Spring 2010). Available at <http://mashreghnews.ir/Images/News/AtachFile/8-3-1390/FILE634422673069531250.pdf>.

(28.) Mark, *A Comparative Study of the Cultural Diplomacy of Canada, New Zealand and India*, 43.

(29.) I am grateful to Lucie Edwards for this example.

(30.) J. Channick, 'The Artist as Cultural Diplomat', *American Theater Magazine* (May–June 2005), 1.

(31.) See Harvey Fiegenbaum, 'Globalization and Cultural Diplomacy', Art, Culture and the National Agenda Project, Center for Arts and Culture (2001), 31 and US Department of State, *Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy.*

(32.) Liam Kennedy, 'Remembering September 11: Photography as Cultural Diplomacy', *International Affairs* 79:2 (2003), 315–26 at 318.

(33.) Kennedy, 'Remembering September 11: Photography as Cultural Diplomacy', 323.

(34.) C. Huygens, 'The Art of Diplomacy, the Diplomacy of Art', *Bridge the Gap, or Mind the Gap? Culture in Western-Arab Relations* (January 2008), Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', 17–29 at 18. Available at <http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2008/20080100_cdsp_paper_berger.pdf>. See also Cavaliero, 'Cultural Diplomacy: The Diplomacy of Influence'.

(35.) Berger, 'Introduction', 4.

(36.) I am grateful to Lucie Edwards for pointing this out.

(37.) Thakur, 'Asia-Pacific Challenges for Diplomacy', 1.

(38.) Thakur, 'Asia-Pacific Challenges for Diplomacy', 1.

(39.) Thakur, 'Asia-Pacific Challenges for Diplomacy', 2.

(40.) Former Canadian High Commissioner to India, personal interview, 14 March 2011.

(41.) Former Chilean ambassador to South Africa, intervention, 14 March 2011.

(42.) Former Canadian ambassador to Bhutan, personal interview, 23 May 2011.

(43.) Daniel J. Wakin, 'North Koreans Welcome Symphonic Diplomacy', *New York Times* (27 February 2008). Available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/27/world/asia/27symphony.html>.

(44.) US Department of State, *Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy.*

(45.) US Department of State, *Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy.*

(46.) Cited in US Department of State, *Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy*, 12.

(47.) Richard Arndt, 'Cultural Diplomacy and the Public Agenda', paper prepared for the Center for Arts and Culture, p. 9, cited in Harvey B. Feigenbaum, 'Globalization and Cultural Diplomacy', Center for Arts and Culture, Issue Paper, November 2001. Available at <http://ics-www.leeds.ac.uk/papers/pmt/exhibits/159/culdip.pdf>, p. 27.

(48.) Laqueur, 'Save Public Diplomacy: Broadcasting America's Message Matters', 22.

(49.) US Department of State, *Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy*, 14.

(50.) Schneider, 'Diplomacy that Works', 15.

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